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Métis Voyageur

Été et Otawn
Youth gather to learn Métis culture, history and way of life at the MNO summer and fall Cultural Camps. Pages 14 & 15

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Youth gather to learn Métis culture, history and way of life at the MNO summer and fall Cultural Camps. Pages 14 & 15

Métis Achievers
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MNO’S 25th Annual General Assembly
Special Insert
Message from the President

The pages of this Métis Voyageur highlight several momentous months for the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO).

Certainly, the principal highlight was the 25th MNO Annual General Assembly (AGA), hosted by the MNO Peterborough and District Wapití Métis Council. We should all recognize the council and Provincial Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) Region 6 Councilor Tom Thompson for all their work in preparing for and hosting our milestone AGA in their beautiful city.

The AGA section features beautiful photos that show all the energy, excitement and Métis spirit of our annual assembly (special section). At AGAs, MNO citizens and leadership gather to discuss and debate. This year was no different, as we set a course for moving the MNO forward.

On behalf of the PCMNO, I want to thank everyone involved in planning and executing the AGA, from MNO staff to citizens and also our specific regional councils. Without the hard work and support of everyone involved, the AGA wouldn’t have been possible.

Most of all, I want to thank all of the citizens who attended, made their voices heard and participated in what is our most important gathering and a fundamental part of our governance structure. I’m looking forward to seeing the incredible progress we can make throughout the next year.

Métis youth making memories

During Été et Otawa, the third and fourth Métis Youth Cultural Camps, our youth had the amazing opportunity to work and learn together about Métis way of life, culture and history. This summer, youth set off on a memorable canoe journey retracing the route of their Métis ancestors and this fall, another group set off to learn about harvesting before winter. After reading and hearing about their adventures and what they learned, it is abundantly clear how important it is to provide these opportunities for our youth and all Métis citizens.

Finding inspiration in community

I always thoroughly enjoy hearing about all the wonderful work of our community councils. Made up of volunteers, they devote so much time to sharing what it means to be Métis with others.

The community section of this paper (pages 16-19) provides just a sample of the good work that’s happening across the province to promote Métis culture, history and to introduce contemporary Métis issues to our allies and supporters. If I’m ever in need of inspiration, I can always find it in the work of the Métis community and the achievements of MNO citizens.

Our citizens are immensely talented and the extent of that is evident in the achievements section (pages 21-22). MNO citizens are proudly repping the best in their fields. With Métis-inspired beadwork being shown on an international runway to MNO citizens winning a fishing derby, being Métis is a strength that binds us and our resiliency knows no end.

Tributes and celebrations

We have also celebrated and acknowledged two vitally important days for Métis people. On June 21, MNO leadership and citizens recognized National Indigenous Peoples’ Day and on Sept. 19, we celebrated Powley Day. Both provide the opportunity to remember the struggles of our Métis past, but are also a great opportunity to see how far we’ve come. We must always remember to be proud of who we are, where we come from and where we are headed.

As many of you know, Region 7 PCMNO Councilor Pauline Richardson has resigned from her position. Councilor Richardson served on several PCMNO committees and was a passionate advocate for citizens of her region and for the rights of Métis people in Ontario. David Dausseau will now represent Region 7 on the PCMNO after being appointed on Jan. 13 (page 3).

MNC General Assembly

This fall, the MNO executive and PCMNO attended the Métis National Council (MNC) General Assembly in Winnipeg (pages 5-6). During the Assembly, delegates narrowly voted to place the MNO on probation for one year. This decision of the MNC has no impact on MNO citizenship and Métis rights, or on the MNO’s day-to-day operations, its relationships with Canada and Ontario or its direction. The MNO continues to be the government for Métis people in Ontario and continues to work on behalf of all of its citizens. Discussions about next steps are ongoing and will take place with all MNO leadership and citizens.

As we face tests like this one, it’s important that we all continue to work together and move forward united in the aspirations outlined in the MNO Statement of Prime Purpose, which has guided the progress of the MNO for more than a quarter century.

Moving forward on self-government

The MNO is taking unprecedented steps toward achieving its goal of Métis self-government. A full update on our progress can be read on pages (12-13). We have created a committee tasked with leading negotiations with Canada and its work has been informed by the recommendations from the MNO Commission on Métis Rights and Self-Government What We Heard Report and is guided by the MNO Statement of Prime Purpose.

We are now negotiating with the Government of Canada to lock-in through legislation recognition of the MNO as a government.

We are now negotiating with the Government of Canada towards recognition of the MNO as a government. This is an exciting approach and quite unique as normally this wouldn’t happen until the very end of what is often a decades long negotiations process. This will lock in recognition that future governments won’t be able to take away, and provide time and resources to consult with all Métis citizens on building a constitution and approving our final self-government agreement. We are working hard to achieve this vital step on our path towards full Métis self-government.

The time is finally here for reconciliation and the recognition of Métis governments. This is an important and exciting time for the MNO and we must all work together to finish the work that began with our founding over 25 years ago.

Merci - Thank you - Manee, Margaret Froh
David Dusome to serve as Reg 7 PCMNO Councilor

David Dusome will represent Region 7 on the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO).

The announcement comes after Dusome, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Georgian Bay Métis Council President, was appointed during a secret ballot vote at the PCMNO meeting on Jan. 13.

“I love the Métis and I’m passionate about moving forward the needs of Region 7 and moving forward all our regions together,” Dusome said. “I love what we stand for and I’m looking forward to working with the PCMNO and our Senators and pushing the good work of the MNO forward.”

Dusome has been involved with the MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council since 2007, first as treasurer. Late last year, on Nov. 15, past Region 7 Councillor Pauline Richardson resigned from her position. Her resignation began the process to fill the vacancy on the PCMNO following the MNO Bylaws. “If any vacancy occurs the PCMNO may appoint as a replacement a citizen of the MNO, and that person shall hold office until the next election.”

The PCMNO announced that MNO citizens wishing to fill the position should make their intentions known by submitting a short letter and current résumé. Applications for the position were accepted until Jan. 4.

The Region 7 MNO citizens that expressed their interest were reviewed by the PCMNO at their meeting on Jan. 13, in Toronto. “On behalf of the PCMNO, I want to congratulate David on his appointment. We look forward to working with him to better the lives of MNO citizens and communities and know he’ll be a strong advocate for MNO citizens in Region 7,” stated MNO President Margaret Froh. “David joins the PCMNO during an exciting time as we are making unprecedented steps toward self-governance and the recognition of Métis rights. With all of his experience with the MNO, I’m confident David will be an excellent addition to the PCMNO.”

Dusome will serve as Regional Councilor until the MNO election in 2020.

Quotable PCMNO:

“Our path to self-governance has been a long journey, but worth it. It’s incumbent that we know who we are. It’s not always an easy process, but it’s necessary. As we move forward we need to be thinking larger, as a Nation, rather than individuals.”

– PCMNO Senator Ray Bergie

PCMNO REPORT

MNO Cultural Gathering in Region 7

by MNO Staff

In November, MNO citizens from across the province journeyed north for a two-day cultural gathering in Roussseau, Ont.

This year, PCMNO regional councillors provided information on the event to their local MNO Community Council Presidents, who then selected three community representatives to attend. Youth and women representatives also participated.

Held from November 20 to 21, participants engaged in a variety of activities which ranged from lectures to events and workshops. Speakers like Ryan Shackleton, Director of Know History, shared untold Métis stories and hidden records of the past, and Métis author, Maïa Caron, presented on healing and building old kinship networks.

Participants wishing to stay indoors attended programs on beadning, blanket-making and fiddleling; while the more adventurous participated in guided snow shoe walks, horse-drawn wagon rides, and even beaver skinning, led by Region 5 Captain of the Hunt Denis Lefèvre. An additional objective of the Cultural Gathering was to inform attendees of the many programs and services offered by the MNO.

Those in attendance are encouraged to fill out an evaluation of their experiences.

Updates:

Sixties Scoop Symposium

In October, Métis survivors met in Winnipeg, Man. for a symposium on the Sixties Scoop.

During the Scoop, Indigenous children were removed from their families and communities and adopted into non-Indigenous families. Following a class action lawsuit in 2017, the federal government committed hundreds of millions of dollars as part of reconciliation for First Nation families—however Métis were not included.

“It was very heartfelt several days, listening to these stories,” said MNO Vice-Chair Sharon Cadeau, who attended the event. “It was very, very difficult.”

Addressing the issues of the Sixties Scoop is one of the priorities established by the Canada-Métis Nation Accord. Survivors are encouraged to reach out to the MNO. Please contact Alisha (alisha@metisnation.org). Privacy and confidentiality will be respected.

Captains of the Hunt Update

This past September, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Captains of the Hunt met in Toronto to discuss legal updates and challenges facing Captains and harvesting citizens.

The Framework Agreement on Métis Harvesting was raised at the meeting, and the Captains discussed their vision for the implementation of its components. MNO President Margaret Froh referenced Article 16, which among several recommendations, prioritizes the need for an agreed upon map determining the geographic scope of Métis harvesting rights in Ontario.

“As Captains, we need to address the map first before we can move into other areas,” explained President Froh.

Métis Voyageur
Issue no: 301, February 2019
Métis sign Housing Sub-Accord with Canada

MNO President presents at Union Gas lunch and learn

MNO President meets with youth in Saskatoon

MNO President Margaret Froh connected with Métis Nation youth at the General Assembly of the Métis Nation in Saskatoon on July 18. Youth gathered for a conference to discuss how to support Métis youth in building connections to their peers, communities and culture.

by MNO Staff

Governing Member Presidents from the Métis National Council, including the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), signed the Canada-Métis Nation Housing Sub-Accord with the federal government at the General Assembly of the Métis National Council. MNO President Margaret Froh and Dr. Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, were among those who signed the Housing Sub-Accord in Saskatoon, Sask., on July 19.

This is the second Sub-Accord under the Canada-Métis Nation Accord signed in 2017. Earlier this year, a similar Sub-Accord was signed on skills and employment. Both housing and employment and training were year-one priorities under the Canada-Métis Nation Accord.

The Housing Sub-Accord, which was co-developed by the Métis Nation and federal government, gives the governing members of the Métis Nation control over the design, delivery and administration of housing services. The federal government’s 2018 budget outlined a $500 million investment over 10 years to support the Métis Nation’s housing strategy.

“Under the Canada-Métis Nation Accord, we are moving the Métis Nation forward,” stated MNO President Froh. “This new Sub-Accord means that we will have the funds to create a Métis-specific housing strategy to best determine how housing funds for Métis across the homeland and in Ontario are used and distributed to best serve our citizens,” stated President Froh.

“With new investments in housing, the Métis Nation of Ontario can build capacity and programs that will help those most in need,” she added.

According to the federal government, nearly one in five Indigenous people live in housing that needs major repairs and one in five live in housing that is overcrowded.

“The needs of the Métis Nation are best identified by the Métis Nation and we need to work in partnership to address them. The agreement is one step in demonstrating our government’s commitment to renewed relationship with the Métis Nation – one based on the recognition of rights, respect, cooperation and partnership. I look forward to continued dialogue supporting the interests and aspirations of the Métis Nation and those of all Canadians,” said Minister Bennett.

Housing programs and services for the MNO are operated by Infinity Property Services, an agency of the MNO. For more: www.infinitypropertyservices.ca

Submitted by Jeannine Mayer, MNO Chief Operating Officer

with information from Union Gas

Union Gas employees in the company’s Toronto office marked this year’s National Indigenous Peoples Day with a lunch-and-learn session led by Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Margaret Froh.

President Froh shared a detailed and engaging presentation about the origin, culture, historical challenges and modern-day issues of the Métis people with an audience of about 50 Union Gas employees, including Union Gas President Steve Baker. Provincial Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) Executive Senator Joseph Poitras delivered an opening blessing for the session and MNO Chief Operating Officer Joanne Meyer also participated in the event.

“For National Indigenous Peoples Day, I felt it was not only important to celebrate the history, accomplishments and culture of the Métis, but also to also help educate others about our people,” stated President Froh.

“Union Gas has been a partner to the Métis Nation of Ontario for many years and has worked proactively to make sure we are included and consulted in its projects and campaigns. I applaud their efforts to learn about Indigenous peoples through these educational talks and events.”

The company’s Associate General Counsel Armanda Pinho, who introduced the trio of guests, said, “Union Gas has a long history of strong partnerships with Indigenous communities across Ontario. We are fortunate to have leaders from the Métis Nation of Ontario with us on this special day.”

The event was one of about a dozen held between June 18 and 22 in Union Gas offices across Ontario. The events were supported by 21 employees who volunteered as Indigenous champions in their respective offices.

The company decided to build the week-long education campaign around National Indigenous Peoples Day to help its 2,300 employees build understanding of Indigenous peoples, their nationhood and the significant contributions they make to society.

“Our relationships with Indigenous communities are built over decades and guided by a set of principles that recognize their treaty rights, connections to the land, and the valuable role they play in our business today and into the future. Engaging our employees and increasing their awareness of the heritage, diverse cultures and achievements of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples is one way we will continue to build and strengthen these partnerships,” said Lindsay Boyd, Manager of Indigenous and Municipal Affairs for Union Gas.

Senator Yvonne Boyer visits with MNO reps

Ahead of an Indigenous languages engagement session the following day, Canadian Senator Yvonne Boyer (right) visited with representatives of the Métis Nation of Ontario in Toronto on July 11, including MNO President Margaret Froh, PCMNO Senator Verna Porter-Brunelle and MNO citizen Victor Brunelle.

MNO President Margaret Froh, PCMNO Secretary-Treasurer Tim Pile, MNO Chair France Picotte, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations Dr. Carolyn Bennett, MNO President Margaret Froh, PCMNO Region 1 Councilor Theresa Stanlund and PCMNO Region 4 Councilor Ernest Gatien.

MNO President Margaret Froh, PCMNO Secretary-Treasurer Tim Pile, MNO Chair France Picotte, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations Dr. Carolyn Bennett, MNO President Margaret Froh, PCMNO Region 1 Councilor Theresa Stanlund and PCMNO Region 4 Councilor Ernest Gatien.

MNO Staff
The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) will always represent the collective aspirations, rights and interests of all of its citizens, as it has for the past 25 years.

That’s the message MNO President Margaret Froh and MNO leadership is sharing following the Métis National Council (MNC) General Assembly’s decision to place the MNO on probation for one year. That narrow vote, 29 in favour and 24 opposed, took place on Nov. 28, 2018.

“We have spent 25 years fighting to protect and defend the rights of Métis people in Ontario and we will not turn our backs on that now,” said President Froh. “What the MNC has built has been built by Métis citizens throughout Ontario, it will be up to all of us to decide the kind of relationship we want to have with MNC. The MNO has always stood on its own and stood strong as a Métis government and we always will.”

The decision to place the MNO on probation was taken after the MNC released a report entitled, “Addressing the Integrity of the Integrity of the Historic Métis Homeland,” by MNC President Clément Chartier. The report contained a number of errors and omissions and the MNO was not consulted during its creation and did not contribute to it.

It makes a series of claims, including that the MNO has failed to apply the citizenship criteria of the historic Métis Nation homeland, adopted by the MNC General Assembly in 2002 (National Definition) and has consistently ignored and been in breach of MNC General Assembly resolutions on citizenship and grandfathering. It also argued that the MNO has attempted to extend the boundaries of the historic Métis Nation homeland by a unilateral declaration in 2017 of “new historic Métis communities” without the consent of the MNC.

The MNC resolution gives the MNO one year to comply with a number of conditions in order to lift the probation decision:

• That all MNO members must meet the criteria for citizenship in the Métis Nation set out in the 2002 General Assembly citizenship resolution (National Definition) to be eligible for enrollment and are connected to the historic Métis Nation homeland as set out in the homeland map;
• That the MNO must abide by the 2004 Métis Nation directive providing that all members shall re-register under the 2002 criteria with no grandfathering-in of members;
• That a committee of the MNC Board of Governors shall be established to organize a registry review of all MNO members to ensure the above two conditions are met, as well as provide general oversight; and
• That a panel of registrars from the western Governing Members working under the direction of the above committee shall conduct the registry review of existing MNO members and will ensure that all future citizenship applications shall abide by the 2002 criteria.

During the town hall, President Froh clarified that the decision by the MNC has no impact on MNO citizenship—including current citizens or individuals applying for citizenship. The MNC decision also has no impact on harvesting rights or on program or service delivery.

“We have always believed that our Métis governments, from Ontario to British Columbia, are much stronger by working together,” stated President Froh. “We are extremely disappointed in this decision as it fundamentally ignores what MNO continues to fight for Métis rights and recognition. The MNO’s government-to-government relationship with Canada and Ontario to advance Métis rights remains solid and strong.”

Additional meetings with leadership, MNO Chartered Community Councils and citizens will be scheduled to provide further updates and to discuss any decision about what relationship the MNO will have with MNC.

Flip the page for Frequently Asked Questions on the MNC resolution.

The full report, as well as further reaction, FAQs, videos and more is available on the MNO website: www.metisnation.org

Margaret Froh, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario

Métis National Council General Assembly places MNO on probation

“We have spent 25 years fighting to protect and defend the rights of Métis people in Ontario and we will not turn our backs on that now.”
MNO responds to MNC General Assembly resolution: Frequently Asked Questions

What does this MNC resolution mean for my MNO citizenship or my harvesting rights?
This decision has no impact on MNO citizenship or harvesting rights.

What does this mean for the MNO's day-to-day operations?
This decision has no impact on MNO program and service delivery operations. The MNO continues to provide services and programs – business as usual.

Does the Métis National Council provide funding to the MNO?
No, MNO’s funding relationships are through direct funding agreements with federal, provincial and other funding sources.

How long has MNO been a part of the MNC?
The MNO has been one of the governing members of MNC since 1994.

Does this decision about putting MNO on probation mean the MNO is leaving MNC?
The existing relationship with the MNC is embedded in the MNO Statement of Prime Purpose. The decision about what relationship the MNO will have with MNC requires further discussions with leadership, MNO Chartered Community Councils and citizens.

The MNC President's report talks about MNO not applying the MNC definition criteria – what is the MNC definition?
The MNO adopted the MNC’s National Definition in 2004. Click here to read the National Definition of Métis and to read more about the MNO Registry Policy.

The MNC President's report talks about MNO expanding the boundaries – what is the historic homeland boundary?
Prior to this recent MNC Assembly no hard lines had been drawn around the historic Métis Nation Homeland. There have been many discussions at MNC Assemblies about the varying definitions of the historic northwest and the historic homeland boundary and it was consistently communicated that it extended into parts of Ontario and British Columbia.

What does this mean for the ground-breaking Métis rights Powley decision?
It means nothing. This decision has no impact on the Powley decision or the recognition of Section 35 Métis rights. Métis rights holders are Métis rights holders whether they are from Section 35 rights bearing communities in Ontario or connected to what MNC is now defining as the boundaries of the Historic Métis Homeland.

What does this mean for MNO's relationships with Canada and Ontario?
MNO continues today as it did prior to this decision to engage in a government-to-government relationship with Canada and Ontario to advance a mandate of Métis rights and self-government and to improve the socio-economic well-being of Métis citizens, families and communities. Over the last 25 years, the MNO has worked directly with both levels of government to develop its program and delivery infrastructure of more than 30 points of service, with over 200 staff and an annual operating budget of over $40 million.

What about the Canada-Métis Nation Accord, the Permanent Bilateral Forum (PBF) with the Prime Minister and federal Cabinet, and all the policy and investments made through this process?
The MNO, as one of the Métis National Council’s governing members, is a signatory to the Accord and to several sub-accords under this agreement. While the MNO has been placed under probation, it remains a part of the MNC and as such continues to participate in the PBF, policy development and the investments that are being made through that Canada-Métis Nation Accord process.

What impact does this decision have on the MNO-Canada-Ontario Framework Agreement to Advance Reconciliation?
It has no impact on that work. The MNO signed this agreement back in December 2017 and this work continues today as it did prior to the MNC Assembly decision.

“\[This decision has no impact on MNO citizenship or harvesting rights.\]”

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How can it be? The Powleys not included in the Metis Nation

We fought hard and we did it for all the right reasons and we were successful in securing the Powley decision which was a total game changer in the history of Metis people in Canada."

Margaret Froh, President Métis Nation of Ontario

In 1993, father and son Steve and Roddy Powley were charged with hunting a moose without a license near Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. The Metis Nation Ontario (MNO) went into considerable financial debt to support the Powleys' fight to the Supreme Court of Canada, which upheld the ruling of the lower court giving Metis peoples' rights under Sect. 35 of Canada's Constitution for the first time ever.

The official Metis Nation homeland map, however, does not include the Powleys' home community of Sault Ste. Marie. The map, approved last month at the Metis National Council general assembly, outlines a home-land stretching from northeastern British Columbia into a portion of the Northwest Territories and then east across the Prairies in Ontario as well as parts of northern states in the U.S. and Canada. Also at the general assembly, held Nov. 28 and Nov. 29, the MNO was placed on probation for one year for failing to meet citizenship requirements, unilaterally accepting six historic Metis communities and members that did not adhere to the citizenship criteria adopted at a MNC general assembly in 2002.

The whole situation – the exclusion of the Powleys' community of Sault Ste. Marie from the Metis Nation homeland map, MNO's probationary status, and having no input into the report “Adressing the Integrity of the Historic Metis Nation Homeland”, which condemned MNO's actions – has MNO President Margaret Froh angry.

“We fought hard and we did it for all the right reasons and we were successful in securing the Powley decision which was a total game changer in the history of Metis people in Canada.”

Froh said the Powley decision (2003) is referred to by legal counsel Jason Madden, co-managing partner of Pake Sutler Teillet LLP which represents MNO, as part of “the trifecta of Metis case law” that has moved Metis rights forward. That trifecta also includes the Manitoba Metis Federation decision (2013) that says Metis have outstanding land claim and the Daniels decision (2016) that gives the federal government jurisdiction for Metis people.

“These three cases put together create the foundation for moving forward with this recognition around self-government within each of our responsible jurisdictions, advancing Metis rights,” said Froh. However, moving forward has become more complicated, she admits, as the federal government may need to expand its reach.

“This is the challenge that has now been created with the decision that the assembly has made,” said Froh. According to the MNC, Metis are persons of historic Metis Nation ancestry, which, as of late last month, is now defined by a specific Metis homeland map. The MNC and MNO intersect on only one historic Metis community and that is the descendants of the Half-breeds of Rainy River and Rainy Lake who collectively adhered to Treaty No. 3 in 1875.

However, the MNO and the Ontario government have identified six other historic Metis communities and those people hold citizenship in the MNO, but are not part of the national registry.

To get full re-admittance to the MNC, the MNO must, in part, rescind its declaration of the six historic Metis communities and have its citizenship criteria align with MNC.

Froh says the next step for the MNO executive is to meet with its leadership and citizens to determine the path forward. One option is to look at the political relationship that can be formed with the MNC and the rights-bearing Metis communities in Ontario that now fall outside the Metis homeland. Another path forward could be for the MNO to strike out on its own.

While the federal government has signed an accord with the MNC, it is also part of a trilateral agreement with the MNO and Ontario government.

“What is very clear from Canadian laws is that there is no hierarchy of Metis rights. Metis rights have to be reflected and recognized whether they fall in or outside what has now been defined as the historic boundaries of the Metis Nation homeland,” said Froh. Belcourt goes a step further.

“The government of Canada will not sign an agreement with one organization knowing full well that a whole bunch of people are not included in that agreement. So, if (MNC) kicks the MNO out, all it means, as far as I'm concerned, is that the government of Canada will be obliged to enter into an agreement with the Metis National Council and a separate agreement with the Metis Nation of Ontario. There's just no other way,” he said.

While Froh is frustrated with how things have transpired, she holds to two truths. The first is that the Metis government is stronger when it stands together.

The second, “Everything the MNO has built has built that ourselves. When other governments refused to acknowledge us, denied the existence of Metis, denied our rightful place, we persisted and we fought and we fought for rights, we fought for recognition and we fought for the interest of our citizens in Ontario and that, when you see that through the Powley decision, that actually benefited all Metis.”
Michif & Reconciliation

MNO participates in Indigenous language forum

by MNO Staff

A large delegation from the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) participated in an Indigenous languages engagement session in Toronto on July 12.

The information gathered during the session will inform the Indigenous Languages Legislation that will reflect the geographical, political, legislative and cultural context that impacts language preservation, promotion and revitalization. The session was one of 30 hosted by the department of Canadian Heritage between June and September with Métis, First Nations and Inuit across the country.

The session focused on the preservation of Michif, which is the language of Métis people once spoken across the Métis Homeland. Like most Indigenous languages, the number of Michif speakers declined due to the colonization process that attempted to stamp out the use of languages other than English and French.

More than two-thirds of the 90 Indigenous languages still spoken in Canada are “endangered” according to UNESCO’s endangered languages criteria; the remaining third are defined as “vulnerable.” The number of overall speakers is also declining.

“The efforts to preserve and promote Michif, and all Indigenous languages, are an essential part of reconciliation,” stated MNO President Margaret Froh. “Michif is an important part of Métis culture and heritage and we look forward to seeing how our input is used in the development of future legislation.” Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced in late December 2016, his government’s intention to introduce a languages act. A bill is expected to be tabled this fall with it reaching Royal Assent sometime in 2019. Following the Prime Minister’s commitment to an Indigenous languages act, the 2017 budget included $69 million for the Aboriginal Language initiative, supporting a range of community language projects; $14.9 million for the digitization of existing Indigenous language and cultural materials and the development of an Aboriginal Oral Testimonies Project; as well as $6 million for the National Research Council to develop technologies aimed at preserving oral histories.

The MNO maintains a Michif language speaker group that has developed resources for schools and online to help preserve the Ontario dialect of Michif and teach young Métis their language. “Future legislation that supports the preservation, revitalization and promotion of Michif and Indigenous languages will help support the goals of our dedicated Knowledge Holders and Michif-speakers whom have already undertaken this important work,” said MNO Chair and Chair of the Michif Language Speakers Group France Picotte. “I look forward to progress being made in this area, as it is a crucial part of Métis culture.”

MNO Honourary Senator celebrates Mâmawî Together

submitted by Carolyn Kropp
Mâmawî Together board member
Written by Karl Zachogne

The 6th annual speaker series was held on May 23 and 24 at the University of Ottawa. It was a three-part event that included an evening program, academic panel discussions, as well as its second Youth for Reconciliation Day. During the event, the group also launched the Mâmawî Together National Challenge, an initiative encouraging schools across Canada to commit to a legacy reconciliation project.

Projects can include special projects and annual commitments that will have a meaningful and long-lasting impact in increasing Indigenous education and reconciliation activities in schools. Five schools in the Ottawa area have already taken up the challenge.

The initiative was endorsed by Senator Murray Sinclair, former Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Mâmawî Together was founded in 2009 in Ottawa, as a parent-led Indigenous awareness and education initiative. The group, now a registered not-for-profit, is named after the Algonquin word for “Together”. It works to increase Indigenous awareness, education and reconciliation activities in schools and the broader community in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action.

For more information on Mâmawî Together, the National Challenge video endorsement from Senator Sinclair, legacy project ideas and toolkits for schools visit mamawitohgerot.com.

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Honourary Senator Reta Gordon spent the afternoon of July 14, as an honoured guest at the Mâmawî Together barbecue celebrating the achievements of the volunteer-led 2018 Mâmawî Together Speaker Series.

Telling the stories of Ottawa’s urban Métis

submitted by Elena Abel
Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition
Community Developer

Two Métis community members were recently interviewed by the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition (OAC) for a series of videos profiling Ottawa’s urban Indigenous community.

The OAC reached out to Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Honourary Senator Reta Gordon and Elder Lois McCallum to take part in the project.

The short films will highlight the city’s cultural landscape using stories from community artists. Aboriginal student centres, interviews from the leadership of local service organizations and elders. Gordon hosted the OMC in her home and she and McCallum told wonderful stories of the development of the Métis community in Ottawa. Both women expressed pride in the young people who are connecting with their culture and who are willing to share it with others.

They spoke of the change that has been seen in Ottawa, with the growth of the community, and the number of organizations here to support them.

The OMC is grateful to Gordon and McCallum for sharing their stories. For more information about the project, visit www.ottawaboriginalcoalition.ca.

Established in 2001, the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition is an alliance of Aboriginal delivery organizations that provide front-line programs and services to Aboriginal people living in the National Capital Region.
The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) was well represented during an Eagle Staff Ceremony at Canadian Forces Base Borden.

On Aug. 10, MNO Veterans’ Council Sgt.-At-Arms Doug Woods and MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council Senator Ken (Two Dogs) Fraser were among the guests who attended the ceremony. The staff was created by members of the local Indigenous community and 3 Canadian Ranger Patrol Group. It features feathers and patches collected from several Indigenous communities and councils throughout Ontario and the MNO patch is located third from the top.

The Eagle Staff, which took two years to make, was presented by Master Corporal Talbot to Base Commander Col. Andrew Atherton. It recognizes past and present Indigenous members of the Canadian Armed Forces.

“At the end of the ceremony, the Eagle Staff was the handed over to the Base Commander, a symbolic moment to which he stated, “It is with a great sense of respect, pride and duty that I make this solemn oath that I will uphold the tradition of this sacred symbol, and look upon it always with strong mind and a positive spirit.”

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) leaders and citizens attended the annual Back to Batoche festival in Saskatchewan to celebrate Métis history.

The event marks the decisive 1885 Battle of Batoche.

The festival first began in 1970 as a way to showcase Métis history and culture. This year, it took place from July 19 to 22.

The annual event included fiddle music and square dancing, as well as Voyageur Games including the hatchet throw, slingshot, log carry and flour sack carry.

Métis youth operated a MNO pavilion during the festival, teaching about beadwork and speaking about the history of Ontario Métis communities.

On July 22, the MNO Veterans’ Council participated in a procession from the festival grounds to the cemetery of the Batoche National Historic Park for a mass to remember those who fought in the 1865 Northwest Resistance.

MNO Veterans’ Council Chair Brian Black and veterans from across the homeland carried flags during the procession. Black participated in the opening ceremony, the weekend’s activities and the closing ceremonies at the Batoche National Historic Site of Canada grave site. As the parade marched into the graveyard, an eagle flew directly overhead.

Throughout the weekend, family togetherness and fellowship were abundant.

MNO veterans attend Back to Batoche

submitted by Brian Black
Chair, MNO Veterans’ Council

Eagle Staff presented to Canadian Armed Forces

submitted by Brian Black
Chair, MNO Veterans’ Council

Métis veteran presented with Warrior Blanket

Representatives of the MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council and MNO Veterans’ Council presented Métis veteran Earl Cousineau (second from left) with a Warrior Blanket on Sept. 5 at the MNO office in Midland. The blanket is one of 30 made and donated by MNO citizen Irene Robitaille, who asked that the blankets be distributed to deserving Métis military veterans throughout Ontario. Pictured (left to right) are MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council President Dave Dusome, Cousineau, MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council Senator Ken Fraser and MNO Veterans’ Council Sgt.-At-Arms Doug Woods.

submitted by Doug Woods, MNO Veterans’ Council Sgt.-At-Arms
Reconciliation with the Métis: The time is here

submitted by
Jason Madden
Métis lawyer & MNO legal counsel
Canadian Lawyer

I ve years ago, I wrote an article for Canadian Lawyer, Reconciliation with the Métis: The Time Has Come. On Sept. 22, the joint announcement made by Canada and the Manitoba Metis Federation, may finally signal that the time is now.

This announcement included a commitment from Canada to transfer $154.3 million to the MMF to begin to address its outstanding constitutional grievance against the federal Crown that was recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada in 2013 and initiate formal self-government negotiations with the MMF to recognize it as an Indigenous government in Canada.

While the word “historic” is bandied around in most government announcements dealing with Indigenous peoples nowadays, this one is notable because the formal recognition of the MMF — as a Métis government — will very likely set a precedent for other Métis groups in discussions with Canada in Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Significantly, this announcement represents the first federal Cabinet mandate to negotiate with a Métis government south of the 60th parallel in 148 years. The last time a federal mandate was secured was in 1869/70, when Louis Riel’s people formed a provisional government and forced negotiations with Canada through the Red River Resistance.

Instead of armed conflict this time, Canada’s negotiation mandate with the MMF is in response to repeated Supreme Court of Canada decisions affirming Métis rights, claims and the need for negotiations over the last 15 years. In 2003, Métis rights — as existing Aboriginal rights protected within the meaning of s. 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 — were confirmed in a case called R. v. Powley.

In 2013, in Manitoba Metis Federation v. Canada, the highest court in the land confirmed that Canada had breached the honour of the Crown by failing to provide the 1.4 million acres of land promised to the children of the Manitoba Métis as a part of the 1869/70 deal made with Riel’s people.

In 2016, in a case advanced by well-known Métis leader Harry Daniels, Daniels v. Canada, the Supreme Court of Canada further confirmed that Métis are included with the term “Indians” in s. 91(24) of the Constitution Act, 1867, which grants “exclusive Legislative Authority” to Parliament for “Indians, and Lands reserved for the Indias.”

This means that Canada has always had constitutional jurisdiction to establish nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationships with the Métis in the same way as it has with First Nations and Inuit.

This refusal of Métis law, combined with the drive and determination of the MMF’s current elected leadership and the Trudeau government’s Indigenous agenda, led to this “historic” moment for the Manitoba Métis.

Lost in the focus of the $154.3 million to be provided to the MMF, however, is the significance of the commitment to finally recognize the MMF as the government of Manitoba Métis.

Why this is so significant is that, unlike most First Nations who had Canada’s colonial Indian Act imposed on their traditional government structures, the very idea of Métis Nation self-government has historically been denied, dismissed or ignored. In response, over the generations, the Métis Nation has built its own democratic, self-government structures from Ontario westward to represent Métis citizens and communities.

While these Métis Nation governments such as the MMF have been tacitly recognized by some governments and have successfully built program and service delivery structures for their members and communities, their inherent jurisdictions — as Métis governments — are still for the most part denied.

Canada’s colonial legacy still looms large. Often, these Métis Nation governments are still denied, dismissed or ignored when it is politically convenient to do so. The most recent example of this can be seen with the premier of Manitoba, Brian Pallister (yes, that’s right, the premier of Manitoba) referring to the MMF as nothing more than a “special interest group” less than six months ago.

In addition, dubious “Métis” pop-up groups in Quebec and the East Coast have been able to proliferate because governments have delayed in dealing with the only recognized Métis people — the Métis Nation.

Meaningful reconciliation with the Métis Nation requires that the well-established governments of the Métis Nation finally be recognized by Canada on a nation-to-nation, government-to-government basis. Far from being “put under the thumb” of federal legislation, these self-government negotiations seek to have Métis jurisdiction and the governments Métis have painstakingly built for themselves recognized as such.

This is why last week’s announcement is such a turning point for the Métis Nation. This formal recognition will require Canada, provincial governments and industry to come to grips with Métis governments in the same way that they deal with First Nations.

While this will represent welcomed clarity for those who have always respected and dealt with these Métis governments, for those that have continued to deny, dismiss or ignore the reality of Métis rights and self-government, it will likely represent a shock to the system.

Irrespective of where or when these Métis Nation governments become formally recognized, this announcement breaks the reconciliation “glass ceiling” that has been in place for the Métis Nation for generations. There is no turning back now.

Jason Madden is a Métis lawyer and partner in the law firm Pape Salter Teillet LLP. He has been legal counsel in much of the litigation advanced on Métis rights and claims from Ontario westward over the last 15 years. He is legal counsel for the MMF in its negotiations with Canada.

Métis Voyageur
Issue no. 101, February 2019

MNO Veterans’ Council
Senator attends change of command parade

submitted by
Guy Mandeville
MNO Veterans’ Council Senator

Métis Nation of Ontario Veterans’ Council Senator Guy Mandeville recently attended the Canadian Forces Postal Unit change of command parade at Canadian Forces Base Trenton.

The June 26 ceremony was presided over by Commander of the Canadian Forces Central Base Support Group Col. Carla Harding, CD.

Maj. Jane Ann Swim, CD relinquished command of the unit to Maj. Pauline Hancock, CD. Senator Mandeville was first assigned to the Postal Unit in 1976 and served there until his retirement in September 2009. With the unit, he served in a number of UN Peacekeeping Missions, including in Egypt, Israel and Germany.

He has worked in many roles within the unit, holding jobs including Postal Museum Curator and historian.

Since his retirement from the Canadian Forces, he has been an avid supporter of the Canadian Forces Postal Unit at CFB Trenton.

* * *

Canadian Forces Recruiting Officers participate in a relay race during a Métis 101 presentation at Canadian Forces Base Borden on June 18.

submitted by
Greg Garratt, MNO Veterans’ Council Secretary/Treasurer

Canadian Forces Recruiting Officers from across Canada learned about Métis culture and traditions during a presentation by the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO).

The information was presented on June 18 by MNO Veterans’ Council Secretary/Treasurer Greg Garratt and MNO Education Officer Michael Smith. The goal was to provide knowledge about Indigenous culture so Recruiting Officers can better understand and speak with Indigenous youth when they walk into a recruitment office.

Officers learned about Métis, First Nation and Inuit cultures and later participated in some Métis games. The history of Métis veterans in Canada, medals earned and the historic role Métis played in the War of 1812 were also highlighted.

It was a great educational and fun learning day for all.

During the final stages of one game, Garratt decided to play a prank on the final two competitors by yelling the command “room.” Anyone who has served in the Canadian Forces knows the command is given when an Officer enters a room. It signals the need for everyone to sit or stand at attention as appropriate.

After a brief moment, the competitors realized the prank played and finished the game, but it was a fun moment they will remember for a long time.

Métis Nation of Ontario Veterans’ Council Senator Guy Mandeville, CD (centre) stands with Maj. Jane Anne Swim, CD and Maj. Pauline Hancock, CD. Senator Mandeville was present for the change of command parade at Canadian Forces Base Trenton on June 26.

CF Recruiting Officers learn about Métis people

* * *

MNO Veterans’ Council Senator attends change of command parade

submitted by
Guy Mandeville
MNO Veterans’ Council Senator

Métis Nation of Ontario

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MNO Veterans’ Council Senator attends change of command parade

submitted by
Guy Mandeville
MNO Veterans’ Council Senator

Métis Nation of Ontario
A piece of musical Métis history

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Margaret Froh along with representatives from the MNO Métis Council and Peterborough Mayor Daryl Bennett visited the Peterborough Museum and Archives for a special viewing of Louis Riel’s accordion.

According to information the museum has on file, the accordion was found in the belongings of Louis Riel in Batoche and was taken by Canadian soldier Walter Stewart after the 1885 Resistance in which many Peterborough men served.

The accordion has the initials “L.R.” inscribed on it. It was donated to the original Peterborough museum in 1911 by Peterborough Mayor Andy Dufrane, City of Peterborough Community Services Policy Analyst/Recreation Division Coordinator Rob Anderson and Peterborough Museum & Archives Museum Curator Kim Reid were present for a special viewing of Louis Riel’s accordion on July 10 at the museum’s curatorial centre.

Métis music in the archives

A new project led by Indigenous Music expert aims to address the issues of misrepresentation and appropriation among other archival documents.

The overarching goal of this project is to facilitate increased access to Métis musical belongings for Métis across the homeland and to support the resurgence of Métis musical practices.

The project comes after the University of Aberdeen in 2005 opened an exhibit titled Nimitaak: Fiddle Dancing through Scots and Eeyou Cultures in July. A collaboration between the Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute in Quebec and the Elphinstone Institute in Scotland, the exhibit showcases Moose Cree fiddling and its connections to Scotland.

The exhibit includes a fiddle "in the white" (that is, a fiddle with no varnish) that is described as a Métis fiddle in the University of Aberdeen catalogue. The fiddle was purchased in Winnipeg by University of Aberdeen catalogue. The fiddle was purchased in Aberdeen in 2005.

The image of this fiddle conjures a mix of excitement and dismay, not to mention many questions. What is the story behind this fiddle? Is it really a Métis-made fiddle? How is it being represented in the exhibit? And most importantly, if it is a Métis fiddle, shouldn’t it be housed in the Métis homeland instead of across the ocean?

As this example illustrates, archives contain a great deal of information about musical practices of the past. They provide an exciting opportunity to hear Métis ancestors perform and talk about music and to see and even touch belongings used in the performance of Métis music. Yet on the other hand, archives all too often enable misrepresentation and appropriation.

If you have questions about this project, have or know of items that should be included on the list, would like to have a copy of the list, or would like to be involved in the project in some other way (including as a research assistant), please contact Monique Giroux at (403) 394-3969, or monique.giroux@uleth.ca.
The Path to Self-Government

Since its creation in 1993, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) has moved forward as a government to advance the rights, interests, and aspirations of Métis citizens in Ontario. The MNO Statement of Prime Purpose declares that our “rights are recognized and affirmed under Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982” and that we have the “inherent right of self-determination and self-government.” The MNO has been directed through arrangements that inform the work of the MNO-Canada-Ontario Framework Agreement to Advance Reconciliation.

What is reconciliation?

While the term “reconciliation” is increasingly used to describe any initiative done with or for the benefit of Indigenous peoples, real reconciliation requires that substantive issues such as Métis rights, self-government, and outstanding claims against the Crown be dealt with. The Supreme Court of Canada has held that reconciliation is a process guaranteed to Aboriginal peoples by Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. This process requires that Aboriginal rights and claims protected by Section 35 be determined, recognized, and respected by governments through honourable negotiations leading to just and lasting settlements (i.e., modern day treaties or other constructive arrangements).

What is the MNO-Canada-Ontario Framework Agreement to Advance Reconciliation all about?

The Framework Agreement is about building and strengthening a government-to-government relationship with the Métis Nation of Ontario and to advance reconciliation.

Why was the signing of the MNO-Canada-Ontario Framework Agreement to Advance Reconciliation important?

MNO has been directed by a series of resolutions passed at MNO Annual General Assemblies to engage with Canada and Ontario to establish negotiations processes that advance self-government, Section 35 rights and to address outstanding claims of Métis communities.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is reconciliation?

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MNO has been directed by a series of resolutions passed at MNO Annual General Assemblies to engage with Canada and Ontario to establish negotiations processes that advance self-government and recognize Métis rights, interests and outstanding claims.

This Agreement marked a significant breakthrough because Canada has historically denied Métis self-government, rights and claims. These denials led to long and expensive litigation such as Powley, MMF and Daniels. The MNO seeks to advance reconciliation and self-government without having to spend decades and millions of dollars in the courts.

Métis living south of the 60th parallel have been excluded from Canada’s claims negotiation processes for almost 50 years. Despite Métis inclusion in Section 35 and successive court victories, Canada has not amended its policies to include Métis. As a result, there have been no negotiations of real substance on Métis self-government, rights and outstanding claims.

The Framework Agreement establishes a formal negotiations mandate to deal with the unique rights, needs and aspirations of Ontario Métis.

Unlike previous federal policy approaches to dealing
TAKING THE NEXT STEP

At a negotiations committee meeting on Nov. 15, 2018, Canada discussed with the MNO negotiations team an approach to advance self-government. This approach would work to ensure MNO has a foot in the door to self-government and at the same time safeguards that there will still be plenty of time for Métis rights-holders to be meaningfully engaged and involved in all aspects of building and ratifying a constitution before full self-government can be realized. The negotiations committee expressed support for this new approach and moving forward with the development of a draft template Métis self-government agreement to be brought back for further review.

On Jan. 12, 2019 discussions were held with all MNO Regional Consultation Committees to review the details of the confidential draft agreement. As negotiations have been ongoing the agreement has had to remain confidential but updates continue to be provided to leadership and MNO Citizens more widely. It should also be recognized that self-government will only be fully realized when Métis Section 35 rights holders all across Ontario have been fully engaged and consulted and have through a province wide referendum developed, approved and ratified the Constitution and this agreement specifically.

For more than 25 years, the MNO has been pressing government to move forward on its promise of reconciliation. This is the next step. This new process is an opportunity for the MNO to lock in a self-government negotiation mandate now that will be difficult for any future government to take away. It also means that the MNO will have time to properly engage and consult with all Métis citizens across Ontario on self-government and on their visions for the future. Once this recognition is locked in, the real work begins.

THE JOURNEY AHEAD

With self-government now within reach, we must discuss and decide what kind of government we want as we move toward full Métis self-government. This will require direct engagement and consultation.

The MNO will have to create a constitution informed by its Métis citizens during an extensive consultation process. The constitution will set out governance structures, how decisions are made, the rights and values of citizens, requirements for citizenship, the process for making laws and how to resolve disputes.

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WE WILL DO THIS WORK TOGETHER

Fully recognized self-government will not be realized until Métis rights-holders all across Ontario are engaged and ratify a constitution, through a province-wide referendum.

The MNO is taking self-government seriously and will follow a communication and engagement plan to ensure Métis are informed and engaged throughout the process.

Self-government is a goal that has driven the MNO since its founding. To achieve it, Métis will have to work together to move the process forward and make it happen.

MNO establishes a negotiations committee

The committee is tasked with representing Métis citizens during meetings with Canada to advance priorities in Framework Agreement, including self-government.

2019 ANOTHER STEP CLOSER TO MÉTIS SELF-GOVERNMENT

The MNO is working with Canada on a Métis Government Recognition Agreement and to lock in a mandate to negotiate Métis self-government as an Indigenous government based on the inherent right of self-government.

Who will be part of developing and ratifying a constitution?

The constitution will set out governance structures, how decisions are made, the rights and values of citizens, requirements for citizenship, the process for making laws, how to resolve disputes, etc. Métis citizens in Ontario that meet the MNO’s definition of citizenship will be responsible for developing and ratifying the constitution. It will be up to Métis rights-holders to work together to decide what their government will look like and what protections will be built into it to ensure the rights of future generations are protected.

Does this process include all Section 35 Métis rights holders in Ontario including those that ancestrally connect to the West and to communities within Ontario?

Yes, this new process involves all Section 35 rights holders. This new process requires that Métis citizens that meet the MNO’s current definition of Métis citizenship be meaningfully engaged and consulted in the development of laws, policies and in building and ratifying a constitution.

Does this work to advance Métis self-government have anything to do with the Métis National Council (MNC)?

No, the MNC has absolutely no role in these negotiations. Métis self-government has been at the heart of the MNO’s mandate since 1993. This is about advancing the Section 35 rights of Métis citizens in Ontario and protecting and advancing these rights for future generations of Métis in Ontario.
The water lapped softly and as the sun came up on the north shore of Lake Huron, Métis youth began to stir in their tents.

As the day began in Blind River, so did an almost week-long canoe journey for Métis students in Grades 10, 11 and 12, participating in the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Été: A Métis Summer Camp Experience.

Their journey to retrace their ancestors’ route began on July 30 when campers learned about boat safety, on-water communication and how to navigate, paddle and maneuver the canoes. Each day they paddled up to 30 kilometres on their way to Sault Ste. Marie.

On the way, they set up camp, participated in cultural activities, including finger weaving, voyageur games, embroidery and jigging, and stopped at Métis historic sites.

The group’s first set of stops was at a Métis trading post and the Mississauga Delta Cemetery.

Several ancestors of MNO North Channel Métis Council President Yvonne Jensen are buried at the gravesite. She paddled alongside the campers to the site and shared some family history with them. Among those who are buried there is Henry Sayer, a Métis man who worked for both the North West Company and Hudson Bay Company.

Jensen enjoyed sharing the stories of her ancestors with the campers while they searched the grave site.

“We need to carry on our history. We are trying to teach our own children, so I think it’s important for everybody to know what was in this area,” she said. “This is an opportunity I never had as a youngster, so for these kids to be able to do this and do the route of the voyageurs, I think is just fantastic.”

After their first day of paddling, the excitement of the campers was more obvious than their sore shoulders or blistered hands.

“So far it’s been amazing. My shoulders already hurt, but I’m having a really good time,” said camp participant Jacxsen Cress. He added that the experience taught him about hard work and perseverance.

“You have to be consistently working hard and that’s true too if you want to achieve goals. You have to work hard for a long time. You can’t quit when it hurts.”

Later in the week, campers visited Fort St. Joseph National Historic Site, which was the most westerly fort in Upper Canada and home to soldiers, fur traders, Indian Department officials and Indigenous peoples. The youth explored the ruins with a tour from Parks Canada staff.

“This camp has given me the opportunity to learn more about my culture and the challenges of the people who used to live before faced,” said Métis youth Leah St. Germain. “Everything I face now seems so, so difficult, but then you look at what they had to do, canoeing for days and days. It kind of puts things into perspective for me.”

Combining the Métis Youth Cultural Camp with a canoe journey was important for connecting youth to their ancestry, said MNO Manager, Education, Way of Life and Special Projects Scott Carpenter.

“Our historical ancestors were a vital part of the fur trade and they played an ever-increasing role in the fur trade in the 1700s and 1800s. It’s part of who we are. We are known as the children of the fur trade and the youth are able to experience what that really means,” he said.

The activities were part of the third of five seasonal camps organized by the MNO and funded by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.
A Métis Autumn Camp Experience

Sitting around a fire, a group of Métis youth from across Ontario pressed hot coals into pieces of driftwood to hollow out the bowl of a spoon.

In a nearby cabin, others prepared for dinner, traced patterns for woolen mittens or chose delicate beads to add to their crafts.

At the same time, a final group arrived back from hunting with a grouse in hand.

Those 19 Métis youth participated in Otawn: A Métis Fall Camp Experience from Oct. 25-28 at Horwood Lake Lodge, near Timmins.

The campers, in Grades 10 to 12, enjoyed a packed schedule of activities that included jigging, fishing, hunting, making wool mittens, whittling spoons from driftwood, cooking and more all centered around the fall season and preparing for winter. The camp also celebrated Métis history, as well as traditional and contemporary Métis culture and way of life.

The activities were part of the fourth of five seasonal Métis Youth Cultural Camps organized by the MNO and funded by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

"Every camp is different," said Nathan Freeman, who is from Acasta. "There are new people that come and it's great to come back and learn more and share with new people," he said.

The campers are grateful to learn more about Métis history and way of life, and for the friendships they make. They also look forward to sharing the experience with others at home.

"It's important for Métis youth to understand who they are and what the traditions are because I know that my parents didn't have the opportunity to know about it and what Métis did. And now I'm going back and teaching them," Freeman added.

The campers were joined by Region 3 MNO Captain of the Hunt Andy Lefebvre who taught them about harvesting on the land.

While hunting, campers learned more about the health benefits of chaga mushrooms, found on birch trees. They also inspected moose tracks determining the sex of the animal, speed and direction of travel.

"There are definitely some cool tricks," said Logan Daoust. "I've been hunting before, but I learned about how animals use their ears to find different predators and about the shape of their ears and the positioning."

Among the campers, there's a camaraderie that begins the moment they meet, whether it's at the airport or around the campfire.

"Right off the bat, within a day or a couple of hours, we all make friends because we are all so similar. Even though some of us have different interests, we are all close," said Alexia Deschamps, from Sudbury.

Though a little shy the first day, it doesn't take long for first-time campers to become part of the group.

"When I first came here, I was quiet. Since it's a small group you just get thrown in there and there's no choice but to open up. And that's not bad, it's actually great," said James Juneau from Midland.

"It's a great experience; everyone here is a positive influence. The food is great. The activities are wonderful and the view is beautiful. It's a great place to be."
Creating connections through art

submitted by Amanda Farrell
Métis Métis Family Wellbeing Program Coordinator

On July 24, North Bay office Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Healing and Wellness staff with the support of MNO North Bay Métis Council hosted a Summer Métis Family Celebration. Families were invited to participate in art, bannock making, a nutrition workshop and community art project.

The idea for the event was to shed light on how various arts forms play a role in creating and promoting healthy relationships, families and communities.

For example, art is a form of wilderness tradition used traditionally for harvesting, culinary arts play a role in nutrition and the community art united participants through paint and creativity.

Indigenous Community Art Facilitator Christine Charette led the community art project guided participants through the artistic journey.

“Making art in the Métis community allows for the participation of everyone. It makes the creative process accessible and this makes everyone happy,” Charette said.

She added the satisfaction that comes from making something is a feeling everyone can enjoy.

“I feel it’s a crucial part of my life. It gets me out of the house to meet new people and talk about new things. It also keeps me active, so I really look forward to the days that I get to volunteer.”

Volunteers are an essential part of the MNO Community Support Services program and more volunteers are always needed.

Opportunities include providing medical transportation, friendly visiting and community supports to program clients.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact your local MNO Community Support Services Coordinator.

The art displayed above was created during the North Bay Summer Métis Family Celebration. Attendees also participated in bannock making, archery and a nutrition workshop.

“When we make this wonderful thing together, our community not only grows closer, and richer in the process. I always hope that the take away is that the art process can continue at home alone, or with the family, so that the Métis culture and traditions find a place to flourish and grow in creativity. Creativity is healing, and our path here is endless. Together Métis art keeps us strong.”

Historically, Métis people used art to represent themselves, their history and culture. Examples of this include: birch bark canoes, floral beadwork, leather crafting, snow shoes, finger weaving, embroidery and so much more. Creating each piece provided an opportunity for personal growth and community connection.

Now, life is full of technology, eating at restaurants, shopping or driving, but connections can be re-established by getting back to nature and creating and reflecting on art.

As Louis Riel said: “Les miens dormiront pendant 100 ans, et quand ils se réveilleront, ce seront les artistes qui leur rendent leurs esprits.”

“My people will sleep for 100 years but when they awake, it will be the artists who will give them their spirit back.”

Art can be your recipe or the way you present a homemade meal before serving it to your family. It’s the layout of your garden and your audience is the people you share the harvest with. You can gather and celebrate with music and make connections through song and dance.

The creation of art also promotes healing and wellness. As a nation, we can heal together by establishing a connection through community. Some examples include skipping out on fast food and instead growing a garden, harvesting it, using your grandmother’s recipe and sharing the meal with others or choosing the canoe trip or rustic cottage over the all-inclusive cruise ship.

There are just some ways to promote wellness, create an emotional connection with family and friends and enhance physical health through outdoor activity and nutrition.

Our spirit is nurtured through our ancestral connection and culture. Let us all feel inspired to rediscover Métis culture, empower one another and heal our communities.

Bancroft Volunteer Appreciation Day

submitted by Rose-Anne Boyle
MNO Community Support Services Coordinator

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) volunteers in Bancroft were recognized for contributing time and energy during Volunteer Appreciation Day on June 6.

MNO staff wanted to show the MNO Community Support Services program volunteers their time, generosity and commitment to the MNO is recognized and truly appreciated.

Volunteers were served a special lunch, prepared by MNO staff and as a token of appreciation they were gifted a car cleaning kit.

During the event, they also participated in annual training that involved reviewing the MNO Community Support Services Program - Volunteer Handbook.

While each volunteer has his or her own reasons for going their time, Sandra Searle finds the experience incredibly rewarding.

She has been volunteering with the MNO Community Support Services program for a little more than a year.

“Volunteering for me is really a two-way street. I get to help people to do the things they wouldn’t be able to do independently. I love to drive, so being able to help someone get to an appointment makes me feel good,” she said.

She added it’s a crucial part of her everyday life.

“The art displayed above was created during the North Bay Summer Métis Family Celebration. Attendees also participated in bannock making, archery and a nutrition workshop.”

Métis spirit shines through rainy Heritage Celebration

submitted by Terri Head
President, MNO Oshawa and Durham Region Métis Council

It was a rainy weekend in June but that didn’t stop the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Oshawa and Durham Region Métis Council (ODRMC) from hosting another great Heritage Celebration.

The amazing line up of entertainers for the 12th annual event, including Arno, Amanda Rheaume, Leah Belle, Ivan Flett Memorial Dancers, Alix and Liam Blöte, Aurèle Di-vette, All Our Relations Drum Circle and the Gravel Road Fiddlers, kept the audience tapping their toes all day long.

The event took place on June 23 and 24 at Memorial Park in Oshawa, which also featured a number of vendors and exhibitors. Among the other activities for attendees were Voyageur Games, a silent auction, storytelling and cultural workshops in fiddling, jigging, spoons and more.

A highlight of the event was a talk by Trent University Durham gradu- ate Sean Badgley who spoke to the audience about reconciliation. Badgley studied the history of Canada’s Indigenous peoples, and the history of Indigenous rights activism.

“To me, reconciliation means respecting and advocating for the rights of Indigenous people, their histories, cultures and traditions. In addition, reconciliation means working towards righting the wrongs of the past, learning from those wrongs, and making sure that they do not happen again,” he said.

In 2015, he started volunteering at Oshawa Community Health Centre drum socials and in September that year was asked to be Trent University Durham’s first Firekeeper, a job he held for three years.

“When my position as a Firekeeper, I also learned firsthand the importance of elders and Indigenous traditions, protocol for the territory we are situated on, and an immense number of details that no book could teach you, which I am beyond grateful for,” he said.

“And all of this, helped form my views on reconciliation… Things as simple as learning about the traditional territory you are standing on, learning the about the treaties associated with it, or learning some of the languages of Indigenous nations, which can even be learned through an app on your phone, can be some steps in working towards reconcil- iation, and respecting the history and cultures of Canada’s Indigenous Peoples.”

The MNO ODRMC would like to thank guest speakers MNO Presi- dent Margaret Froh, Oshawa Mayor John Henry and Oshawa Member of Provincial Parliament Jennifer French for their attendance and participation.

Hopefully the rain stays away next year!

The weekend of June 23 and 24, the MNO Oshawa and Durham Region Métis Council held its 12th annual Métis Heritage Celebration in Memorial Park in Oshawa.
Métis youth meet at Camp Kitchikewana

submitted by
Larry Ferris, MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council Chair
With information from
Erin Hadaway, MNO Moon River Métis Council Treasurer

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Georgian Bay Métis Council (GBMC) and Moon River Métis Council (MRMC) youth attended a three-day adventure at Camp Kitchikewana from June 13 to 15. There were 22 youth and five councilors attending from the MNO GBMC and five youth from the MNO MRMC. The camp, run by the YMCA, is located on Beausoleil Island National Park in Georgian Bay and was the first place Métis stayed when they came to the area.

This is the eighth year the MNO GBMC organized the excursion for youth and the first time MNO MRMC joined in. It provided an excellent opportunity for Métis youth from the two councils to get to know each other.

During the camp, youth learned about the healing benefits of Métis sals of Knowledge Holder Janice Ferris, tied finger weaving and beading with Knowledge Holder April LaCroix-Bellinger and bead Métis stories from MNO MRMC Treasurer Erin Hadaway. They also learned about orienteering and how to start a fire, went canoeing, kayaking and swimming. On a medicine walk, they found turles and several types of snakes. Later during a Parks Canada presentation, the youth were able to hold a live his-snake named Pineapple.

Camps ranged in age from five years old to 16. The experience provided a wonderful opportunity to watch older Métis youth help out the younger participants. The campers bonded quickly. Though they met just a few days before, they looked like they had been friends for years. The sense of community was amazing and was supported by MNO GBMC Youth Representative Dalton Latornde and his brother Devin, former youth campers, who came back as councilors. The Métis youth bonded as a community and worked to support each other, creating a successful experience for everyone and increasing everyone’s self-confidence in the process.

The children were awesome ambassadors for the Métis people and will be great future leaders. The experience was possible thanks to the support from MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council and the financial support from Ontario Power Generation.

Métis culture on display at solstice festival

submitted by
Carole Langlois, Councillor MNO Ottawa Region Métis Council

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Ottawa Region Métis Council (ORMC) was among the many Indigenous groups to participate in the Ottawa Summer Solstice Indigenous Festival on June 23 and 24.

The festival is a highlight of the summer for the local council. With participation of Métis, Inuit and First Nations, it showcases the diversity of Canada along with strawberry plant teachings. Often referred to as the heart berry because of its shape, it is an important food and medicine in many Indigenous cultures. The berry is also a reminder of reconciliation and teaches how to maintain relationships in families and communities. Representatives also explained the significance of the Métis sash, including its many practical uses during the fur trade and the important role the sash plays in Métis history.

Any Métis gathering would not be complete without traditional jiggering and fiddling. Accordingly, Jonas Wesealake-George filled the air with the sounds of his fiddle and many toes could be seen tapping as people stopped at the MNO ORMC booth and listened to him play Gérardine Spence, from northern Manitoba, jiggered to Wesealake-George’s Métis music. They did a wonderful job performing on two very hot days. MNO ORMC Councilor Marie-Louise Perron, Jeff Dusome and Anthony Brassoupe also joined Wesealake-George for a few tunes. A very big thank you goes out to Senator Parm Burgie, Councillor Marie-Louise Perron and Youth Representative Iain Best who were responsible for all on-site activity and were the hosts at the booth. Also, thank you to Céline Normand for volunteering her time Saturday morning. Their help and hard work made MNO ORMC’s presence at the festival possible.

Art Bennett recognized for work as MNO Captain of the Hunt

submitted by
Yvonne Jensen, MNO North Channel Métis Council President

Representatives from the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) North Channel Métis Council (NCMC) celebrated Art Bennett’s work as Region 4 Captain of the Hunt at the end of March. Bennett, who has also served on the Provincial Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) and as President of the MNO NCMC, was presented with small leather moccasins to hang from his car’s rear-view mirror and a leather tobacco pouch during a small celebration. He has held the position for more than seven years. “It totally blew me away, I was not expecting that. I felt humbled for them to do that for me,” Bennett said in an interview. MNO MCMC President Yvonne Jensen, said the council wanted to recognize Bennett for everything he’s done to represent harvesters as Captain of the Hunt and for his contributions to the wider Métis community.

“He’s been involved since the beginning,” Jensen said, referencing his past positions with the MNO, community council and his being a cousin to the Powleys. Bennett was asked if he’d become Captain of the Hunt when called by former MNO President Gary Lipinski.

“I’ve always been involved in the MNO and the North Channel Métis Council,” Bennett said. “I liked the interaction with the harvesters, getting out and seeing them and getting out in the bush.” Bennett is also Vice-Chair on the board for the Métis Voyageur Development Fund, which provides funds to Métis owned and controlled businesses.
Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Councils are the cornerstone of a strong foundation for the MNO in its push toward its inherent right to self-government. Since December, the following MNO community councils have had elections. Thanks and congratulations go to all the candidates who participated in these elections and to the new council members listed here:

**COUNCIL CORNER**

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Councils are the cornerstone of a strong foundation for the MNO in its push toward its inherent right to self-government. Since December, the following MNO community councils have had elections. Thanks and congratulations go to all the candidates who participated in these elections and to the new council members listed here:

**MNO North Channel Métis Council**
- President: Yeomie Jensen
- Chair: Allen St. Pierre
- Senator: Fern McCoy
- Secretary/Treasurer: Todd Shawn
- Women’s Representative: Michelle McCoy Smith
- Councillors: Reg Bennett, Roly Blanchette, Pete Descoteaux

**MNO Moon River Métis Council**
- President: Tony Muscat
- Chair: Erin Hadaway
- Senator: Larry Duval
- Secretary: Rose LePage
- Treasurer: David Cruise
- Women’s Representative: Ruth Wagner
- Councillors: Eugene Bouché, Victor Brunelle, Marc Mantha

**MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council**
- President: David Duomme
- Chair: Gwen Lindsay
- Senator: Ken Fraser
- Secretary: Lorraine Mountney
- Treasurer: Laurie Barrantes
- Women’s Representative: Patricia Taylor
- Youth Representative: Dalton Latondress
- Councillors: Heather Garratt, Justin Dumont, Tricia Paradis, Ron LePage

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**GAMING ADDICTION**

Video games have been compared to “kiddie crack” and obsessive gaming often opens the door to problem gambling issues developing in children. (source: Hugh McBride)

The World Health Organization officially recognized gaming disorder – an addiction to playing video games – as a diagnosable mental health condition. The Métis Nation of Ontario commissioned developing resources last year and has now included digital media (the Internet, smartphones, and video games) awareness into our Gaming-Gambling Awareness Program.

**What is Digital Dependency?**
When you are dependent on your digital devices and need constant connection to the internet.

**What is Digital Addiction?**
When using technology is making a negative impact in your life, and taking time away from responsibilities.

Digital addiction includes:
- Gamings
- Smart Phones
- Internet
- Social Media

**GAMING ADDICTION WARNING SIGNS:**
- Lies or is secretive about gaming activities.
- Unexplained absences from school or sudden drop in grades.
- Appears to be “tucked in” to the game and is frequently hard to arouse.
- Has outbreaks or gets angry when it is not able to play the game.
- Takes money from others to purchase add-ons or to advance online game status.
- Spends money on gaming that was intended for a different use (lunch, bus fare, etc.)
- Sleep disruption.
- Arguing with parents about gaming, smartphones, and internet activities.
- Loss of interest in other extracurricular activities.
- Stops going out with or playing with friends outside of the video game.
- Neglecting hygiene.

Message for Parents: Screens are not toys. Younger children are spending too much time on screens, which could impact their development.

(Source: Dr. Michelle Ponti - Canadian Paediatric Society)

**HELPFUL HINTS:** To ensure that your children have a healthy relationship with digital media manage where, what and when your children play, set time limits, and to teach them balance with other activities:
- Kids under 2 years old should not be getting any screen time at all.
- Children between 2 to 5 years old should limit screen time to less than one hour per day.
- Video games should be played no more than one or two hours per day.
- Do not let your toddler play on your smartphone.
- Keep computers, iPads and smart phones out of your child’s bedroom.
- Avoid all screens at least an hour before bedtime.
- Set a rule that approved games can only be played after homework, chores or other responsibilities.
- Get children involved in other activities.
- Use Content-filtering software and block sites that require your children to pay to play.
- Never give credit card information or bank details to your kids to access gaming websites.
- Spend time together, including having regular family dinners.
- Help your children develop healthy coping strategies for the stresses of adolescence.

(Source: American Academy of Pediatrics)

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**Community council partners with museum for film screening**

Submitted by:
Senator Gay Mandeville CD
MNO Veterans’ Council

Leading up to National Indigenous Peoples Day, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Grand River Métis Council (GRMC) and Waterloo Region Museum partnered for a screening of the documentary *Women in the Shadows*, which was followed by a panel discussion and question and answer session.

The event was one of three that took place at the museum, highlighting Métis, First Nations and Inuit films. Women in the Shadows was shown on June 18. The film, released in 1991 by the National Film Board of Canada, was directed by Norma Bailey and was written and filmed by Christine Welsh. Her intent was to create the film to help her reconcile with her Métis past. Filmed in Saskatchewan from the Qu’Appelle Valley to Hudson Bay, the documentary traces the filmmaker’s quest for her Métis foremothers in spite of her relatives’ reluctance to speak about their Métis roots. The film articulates Métis women’s experiences with racism in both a current and historical context, and examines the forces that pushed them into the shadows.

After the viewing, David Neufeld, Education Coordinator at the Waterloo Region Museum, held a panel discussion with questions from the audience. The panel included MNO GRMC President Jennifer Parkinson, Councillor Diane Kilby and MNO Veterans’ Council Senator Gay Mandeville.

The discussion was informative for many in the audience, who learned that Métis hid their identity after the Northwest Resistance of 1885, for fear of being branded traitors to Canada. The landmark inclusion of Métis in Canada’s Constitution in 1982, helped bring increased acceptance and pride. The Métis Nation across the homelands continues to negotiate with the federal and provincial governments for their rights, recognition and to advance reconciliation.

Though the film was made in 1991, the discussion showed how relevant it is still. It is eye opening and brings to the forefront why many Métis didn’t talk about their ancestry.

All Métis present at the event expressed pride in the Métis Nation and thanked the Waterloo Region Museum for their support during the National Indigenous Peoples Day presentations.
Day-tripping to Beausoleil

submitted by
Larry Ferris
Chair, MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Georgian Bay Métis Councilor and Grand River Métis Council, (GRMC) teamed up with the Midland office of the MNO staff to organize a day trip to Beausoleil Island for about 30 Métis people. Georgian Bay Island National Park provided a wonderful boat ride from Honey Harbour to Beausoleil Island on July 30. Parks Canada staff, some of whom are Métis, volunteered to work that day to meet the group. The staff was wonderful and looked after every need so that everyone had an amazing day. They provided rides for visitors with mobility issues and made everyone feel important and welcome.

About 30 people from the MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council area travelled to Beausoleil Island on July 30 to learn more about the Métis history of the island.

Celebrating Métis entrepreneurship

submitted by
Jennifer Parkinson
President - MNO Grand River Métis Council

At St. John, a Métis Nation of Ontario citizen and MNO Grand River Métis Councilor, never let go of his dream to own a radio station. His is a story of Métis entrepreneurship.

He started out as an announcer at CHUM Toronto (now part of Bell Media), and soon moved into management positions that took him across the country. He moved from Toronto to Halifax, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Kitchener, Sarnia, back to Halifax and then returned to Ontario to become Vice President (Ontario) for Power Corporation - Broadcast Division.

After seven years, St. John joined Conestoga College in Kitchener and spent five years as Vice-President of Continuing Education. Training and Development. He also held the position of Communication Studies Chair. During his time at Conestoga College, he also worked as a consultant for the Government of Poland as they moved from state-controlled media to a public and private system.

St. John moved from Conestoga College to lead SHAD International as the President and Chief Executive Officer. SHAD is an award-winning enrichment entrepreneurship program and network that empowers exceptional high school students to recognize their own capabilities and envision their extraordinary potential as tomorrow’s leaders and change makers.

It was during his time with SHAD that St. John met Suzanne Rochon-Burnett, the first Métis woman to own a radio station, a MNO founder and trailblazer for whom the MNO named its annual volunteer of the year award.

He helped her launch a new FM station in Niagara and they became good friends. During this time, he also mentored Tony Belcourt, who was MNO President. Belcourt and Rochon-Burnett encouraged St. John to further explore his roots, which he was able to trace to St. Luc Cardinal and Marguerite Desjarlais from the Métis Nation Homeland in Alberta.

In 2000, St. John was also awarded the Alumnus of Distinction from Mohawk College in Hamilton. Four years later, St. John finally realized his dream by purchasing the radio station from Suzanne. For the past 14 years, he has been the President of RB Communications in Ontario and the Executive Producer of Holgate Productions, the documentary film division based in Toronto. St. John has always been involved in the community serving on many boards and committees.

He recently provided a tour of his Welland radio station in Wainfleet to fellow members of the MNO Grand River Métis Council, including Councilor Diane Kilby, Treasurer Leslie Muma and President Jennifer Parkinson.

They had the opportunity to see how one Métis entrepreneur made his dream come true.

MNO ice fishing event attracts dozens in Kenora

submitted by
Leanne Rush
MNO Métis Family Wellbeing Coordinator

Cars lined up the side of the Kenora’s ice road for the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Community Family Ice Fishing event on March 17. Registration was full and extra holes had to be drilled to accommodate the almost 100 participants, who received a cooler bag with snacks and an ice fishing rod.

The annual event, now in its second year, was organized by MNO Métis Family Well Being Coordinator Leanne Rush and Triple Play's Deb Novak. Along with angling for the largest and smallest catch, attendees also enjoyed cooking bannock on a stick over an open fire thanks to Theresa Jamieson from the Ontario Native Women’s Association. Free hot dogs and homemade chili were also available.

Youth were also encouraged to join in a broomball game, try the minnow races or take an exciting dog sled ride with a team of Alaskan huskies.

Four conservation officers from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry drilled all the holes and assisted everyone with tying on hooks and measuring their catch of the day. The event highlighted just how important the MNO partnership with the Ministry is to the community.

If you would like more about the MNO Métis Family Wellbeing programs and events in Kenora, please contact Leanne Rush at 807-468-3569 or email Leanne@metisnation.org.

The MNO’s second annual Community Family Ice Fishing event in Kenora on March 17.
ACROSS OUR COMMUNITY

MNO Toronto and York Region Métis Council meets with Senator Boyer

Representatives from the MNO Toronto and York Region Métis Council (TYRMC) met with Canadian Senator and MNO citizen Yvonne Boyer in September to share with her the opportunities and challenges facing the Métis community. Pictured (left to right) are TYRMC Women’s Representative Shirley Debassige, Secretary/Treasurer Marilyn Hov, MNO President Margaret Froh, Senator Boyer, TYRMC President Tera Beauchamp and Chair Todd Ross. submitted by Joanne Meyer, MNO Chief Operating Officer

MNO Sunset Country Métis Council passes resolution to fly pride flag

At their Annual General Meeting, on June 20, MNO Sunset Country Métis Council (SCMC) unanimously passed a resolution to proclaim the week of July 9 to 15 as Borderland Pride Week. With the support of MNO citizen attendees and Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario Region 1 Councilor Theresa Stanlund, council resolved that they wholeheartedly support their LGBTQ2S friends and flew the rainbow pride flag alongside the Métis flag at the MNO Sunset Country Métis hall throughout Pride Week. Pictured (left to right) SCMC Secretary/Treasurer Corey Chowhan, President Brady Hupet, Women’s Representative Sarah Marusyk, Senator John George, Youth Representative Kimmy Daley, Councilor Karen Chowhan, Councilor Judy Kyle and Councilor Wade Nelson. Absent, SCMC Chair Roz Calder. submitted by Sarah Marusyk, MNO Sunset Country Métis Council

MNO represents at Nipissing Powwow

MNO North Bay Métis Council Senator Marlene Greenwood and 2017 MNO Canoe expedition participant Samantha LaVallee took part in the Welcome Powwow at Canadore College and Nipissing University. The 13th annual powwow took place on Sept. 14 beside the Education Centre pond. A booth was set up to provide information for students about MNO programs and opportunities. Both Canadore and Nipissing now have bursaries for Métis students. submitted by Marlene Greenwood, MNO North Bay Métis Council Senator

Arts on the Trail in Elliot Lake

MNO North Channel Métis Council Senator Fernand McCoy was one of the many talented musicians and artists showcased during Elliot Lake’s annual 2018 Arts on the Trail. In his full Métis regalia, Senator McCoy enjoyed playing music for those who came to listen on September 29, 2018. The event featured three different venues, live musicians, demonstrations and open art studios. submitted by Yvonne Jensen, MNO North Channel Métis Council President

Senator participates in national gathering

On the weekend of June 9 and 10, Métis Nation of Ontario Honorary Senator Reta Gordon participated in the Native Women’s Association of Canada’s Indigenous Post-Secondary Education National Gathering at the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health in Ottawa. With her guidance, the students participated in a weekend full of healing and medicine. The goal of the event was to create a safe space for women to build community with each other. submitted by Reta Gordon, MNO Honourary Senator

MNO Atikokan and Area Métis Council celebrates Canada Day

MNO Atikokan and Area Métis Council President Marlene Davidson, Senator Brian Goul酥, Councilor Elizabeth Fiore, MNO Aging At Home Coordinator Korri Loevelay and Métis youth Keira Cameron celebrated Canada Day at the Atikokan Canada Day Carnival. The group set up a Métis booth on Main Street, which highlighted MNO programs and services, had a door prize draw and those who stopped by also tried Métis games. The carnival also featured food vendors, games, live music and more. submitted by Marlene Davidson, MNO Atikokan and Area Métis Council President

Auriele Diotte participates at Masters’ Indigenous Games

Auriele Diotte, who is part of the Olivine Bousquet Métis Dancers, and MNO Oshawa and Durham Métis Council Senator Cecile Wagar attended the Masters’ Indigenous Games Opening Gala at the Royal Ontario Museum on July 12. During the event, Diotte took the stage and showed off her jiggering. The Games took place from July 12 to 15 at a number of venues in the Toronto area. They provide an opportunity for Indigenous adults, 20 years old and up from across North America, to compete in a variety of contemporary and traditional sporting activities. Some of the sports include, archery, arctic games, basketball, canoeing, golf, tomahawk throwing, tug of war, standing kick, teepee raising and more. submitted by Joanne Meyer, MNO Chief Operating Officer
Métis citizen Justine Woods brings her culture to high fashion

Justine Woods began sewing at age six, making gifts and clothes for family and friends in Midland, Ont. Her peers wanted to be princesses. She wanted to create their outfits.

“I wanted to be a fashion designer and that never changed,” Woods, a Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen, said in an interview. “I feel so fortunate to wake up every day and to be doing something that’s my passion and something that I love.”

When Woods went to Ryerson University to study Fashion Design, she started doing more research to understand her heritage.

“Expressing my individual Métis identity has become important in my life and important to me.”

During her final year at Ryerson, Woods received support from the MNO Métis Training Purchase program, for help with tuition, books, other program-related costs and living expenses.

Her undergraduate program culminated with a thesis project, a five-piece runway collection showcased in April. When it came time to complete the designs, Woods decided to add a Métis detail.

“I wanted to do something that was bringing a bit more of an awareness and emphasis on Indigenous art forms. For me as Métis, this floral beading is a big part of expressing that tradition.”

Floral beadwork has become one of the most distinctive symbols of the Métis and beading is a tradition practised by many Métis to this day.

Not only is Woods’ collection, which she began working on the previous fall, beaded by hand, a majority of the menswear pieces are also handmade and hand-stitched.

When she first proposed the idea, creating a bespoke - hand-made and tailored- menswear collection, and adding Métis inspired beading patterns, Woods said her professors were a bit skeptical about whether she could complete it in time.

The nine-week timeline had strict deadlines.

“I was even nervous for myself,” Woods admitted.

To complete the work, Woods sewed the garments in the university’s lab and then took them home at night to work on the beading for another five to six hours. The beading for the sleeves of one jacket took more than 40 hours.

“I just really love that feeling of knowing I started that piece with one bead and it blossomed into that design of tiny little beads. It’s a feeling that I just love. I’m not going to be able to stop beading.”

Part of what inspired her to add the beaded details was the beautiful craftsmanship that meshes traditional tailoring with glass beading,” he wrote. “I was really struck by the beautiful craftsmanship that combined traditional tailoring with glass beading,” he wrote. “I was really struck by Justine’s passion about telling a story of her heritage through fashion.”

Justine is so focused on her work that she does not need to follow trends. She struggles with the challenges of being of Métis heritage and seeks to find solutions through her creative work. I’m just so proud of her conviction.”

After showing her collection in London, Woods headed to the Academy of Art University in San Francisco to pursue a Master of Fine Arts Degree in the School of Fashion. Her studies began in the fall.

“I want to continue to identify as an Indigenous from Canada. I feel that it is important to stay with my roots, but it’s an opportunity to further share this art form.”

Her hard work paid off. After her creations debuted down the runway at Ryerson’s Mass Exodus Fashion Show on April 6, her designs were chosen to appear in an additional show for fashion designers and industry insiders to see. Her work was one of 15 chosen for the curated VIP show.

Less than a month later, she learned her collection was chosen by a panel of judges to represent Canada at Graduate Fashion Week in London, U.K. in June. More than 40 competitors from 22 countries showcased their undergraduate work at what is the world’s largest event for fashion graduates. She was the only person representing the country competing in the event.

“I am so incredibly excited and honoured to have been chosen. It’s such an amazing opportunity and I feel so lucky to be able to show the world these Métis beading practices I have incorporated into my garments,” she said after hearing the news.

Having her collection on the London Catwalk meant there was more work ahead. She planned to add even more beadwork to her garments and made some changes to how they were styled and accessorized.

“I’m willing to work hard over the next month to produce something that will make my school, Canada and Indigenous communities across Canada proud.”

Ryerson’s School of Fashion Chair Robert Ott said he found Woods’ work intriguing and called her collection “personal, powerful and passionate.”

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“I want to continue to identify as an Indigenous from Canada. I feel that it is important to stay with my roots, but it’s an opportunity to further share this art form.”

Indigenous people have not been fully seen, or fully noticed and I feel that by continuing to do this, it’s my way of emphasizing the beauty and the importance of the culture and people

MNO citizen and fashion designer Justine Woods used Métis beading on the menswear collection she presented at Ryerson University as part of her thesis. Her collection was also featured on a catwalk in London, U.K.
MNO citizens win fishing tournament

submitted by
Nancy Hatch
MNO citizen

The father/daughter team of Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizens Amber and Bruce Griffiths led from start to finish at the Bronzeback Classic fishing tournament in Kenora. The annual tournament took place on July 21 and 22 and drew families, friends, local anglers, and tourists to compete. The team with the heaviest combined Smallmouth Bass catches wins the tournament. The Griffiths’ team’s two-day winning weight was 30.80 pounds. One hundred and ten teams participated. At the event, Bruce said this is the third year fishing with his daughter, and it’s been a good partnership. “We had fun today. Yesterday when we got all the big fish coming in, my daughter was dancing in the boat, so she was pretty happy!” The Griffiths had the big weight on day one as well as 16.48 pounds.

This is a condensed version of a story that was originally published at www.cpl.ca/news

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen receives Joe Lewis Eternal Warrior Award

submitted by
Reta Gordon
MNO Honourary Senator

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Perry William Kelly has done it again. At the 50th edition of the Battle of Atlanta karate tournament, held June 14 to 16, Kelly won silver medal and picked up a Joe Lewis Eternal Warrior Award. Kelly came within two points of winning gold in the over 60 years old/under 190 pound division. In the dying seconds of the fight, he landed a kick only seen by one of the judges. “Like I tell all my students, if you either win or you learn,” said Kelly, an instructor in five martial arts. “Next time, I’ll make sure to throw that kick from a position where all the judges can see it.”

After the fight, the tournament founder, Grand Master Joe Corley, presented Kelly with the Joe Lewis Eternal Warrior Award. It recognizes achievements as a combat athlete and his 30-year career as a martial arts writer and an innovator in law enforcement officer safety for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Correctional Service of Canada.

In the last three years, Kelly put together a string of gold medal performances in national and international tournaments culminating in his over 50 World Championship win at the 2017 World Police and Fire Fighter Games. His training features weekly sparring sessions with members of both the Canadian Karate and Muay Thai teams, and pro Mixed Martial Arts fighters, often a third of his age.

The nephew of MNO Honourary Senator Perry William Kelly, a MNO citizen from Métis Nation of Ontario, won silver during a recent karate tournament in Atlanta, Ga.

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Amber and Bruce Griffiths, a father/daughter team, won the Bronzeback Classic Bass tournament in Kenora.

MNO citizen travels the globe for social justice

submitted by
Scott Carpenter
MNO Manager, Education, Way of Life and Special Projects
written by
Giselle Winton Sarvis
Midland Mirror

André Moreau of Penetanguishene, is seen in Pangnirtung, Nunavut where he is working with the government on adoption law.

André Moreau has put into action his belief that equity, economic stability, education and social supports are at the crux of achieving justice in a community.

His interest in social justice has also led him to work as a summer intern in Uganda in 2016, where he worked on legal research pertaining to right to access to emergency medicine and advocating for sexual reproductive health with the Center for Health, Human Rights and Development. For his efforts in the social justice field, Moreau was the 2017 winner of the Justice Main Award, which is given to individuals who demonstrate a commitment to bringing justice to their community through academic study and community involvement.

“André has put into action his belief that equity, economic stability, education and social supports are at the crux of achieving justice in a community,” read the award statement.

The McGill University law student will complete his last semester of school in Budapest, Hungary from September to December. Moreau’s next step after graduation is to do 10 months of articling. He has recently confirmed a position in Ottawa for the National Judicial Institute, which looks after training for judges.

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This is a shortened version of a story that originally appeared online at www.simcoe.com

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Larry “King” Hupe
1930-2018

Larry Hupe, age 87, passed away peacefully at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre with his family surrounding him, on June 25, 2018. He was born in Normanda, Que. on Oct. 7, 1930 to Albert and Bertha Hupe. Larry is survived by his wife of 55 years, Joyce, three sons, Derek (Astrid), Chris (Cathy) and Dale (Fran); three daughters, Kandi (Dave Rithaler), Cindy (Bruno Mercier) and Penny (Peter Nemiska); numerous grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces, nephews; and his special buddies, cat Spazz and dog Sox.

He was predeceased by his parents Albert and Bertha, infant brother Norman and sister Gertrude Larocque. Creemation has taken place and we will honour his wishes for no funeral service. A Celebration of Life will be held in the near future.

submitted by Joyce Hupe

Tell Someone
submitted by Anne Huguenin

It takes a much bigger man
To treat a woman well
To him it was heaven
To her a living hell
For the tools he liked to use
To beat her to the bone
Leaving her black and blue
No one's fault but his own
Like watching a violent train wreck
One that had no end
Marks he left around her neck
As she made excuses to a friend
Physical and emotional wounds
Triggers that never go away
Scars of that tortured glossom
She must live with every day
So many times she tried to flee
Fear held her tight and close
Confusing for some to see
This was not the life she chose
Threatened by words he said
A price no one should pay
An axe slammed towards her head
Nightmares that haunt her to this day

He abused her, and violated her
Wherever he did please
It didn't matter where they were
To him, her duty to appease
Flowers meant to soften
With an "I'll never do it again"
Where words she heard to often
Just hollow words in the end
No one heard her silent weeps
She couldn't see the light
She was drowning deep
With no life boat in sight
In her pleading prayers
Her will to live was dead
In her pleading prayers
Her will to live was dead
In her pleading prayers
Her will to live was dead
She prayed for God to take her
But He gave her strength instead
There are many just like him
Cowards at second glance
She is not a victim
But a survivor of circumstance
She ran away and never did look back
Leaving her black and blue
To him, her duty to appease
It didn't matter where they were
Wherever he did please

Hunters, Trappers, Patriots, Soldiers
submitted by Robert McDonald

Young First Nations, Inuit and Métis, many still boys,
Most approaching the prime of their lives, drawn by the radio noise;
Entire communities were nearly emptied, armed with Indigenous pride;
From the four corners they went - they'd walk or else on horseback they'd ride;
150 thousand or more signed up to join the cause;
For they had something to offer – these expert hunters and trappers;
Skills that would come to serve them well - as sharp shooters and trackers;

With Moccasins on feet, deep into the night, like rabbits they went,
Guided by the stars, teams of young scouts, in search of the enemies tent;
They had no doubt; they were serving their country well;
Fighting for freedom in far off lands, enduring a living hell;
From Vimy Ridge to Pausschendaele, Dieppe to Juno Beach;
Hill 19 to Berlin, from the mud and the misery; they fought hard in the streets;
When it was all over, these Indigenous soldiers - first boys, now men had heeded the call;
While many returned home, several others took the ultimate fall;
Their spirits still lay in that land so far away;
Lying in wait to someday return home, or so their Whispers Say.

What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery whereby traffickers use force, fraud or coercion to control victims for the purpose of engaging in commercial sex acts or labour services against his/her will.

By educating ourselves, we can help to prevent and heal from the impacts of human trafficking.

For more information, please contact
MNO Ending Violence Against Indigenous Woman Team:
EVAIW@metisnation.org
The Infinite Potentials Strategy will allow Métis youth from across the province to build meaningful relationships with one another and with their communities, develop their leadership, personal and professional skills, and empower them to collaboratively explore and celebrate their Métis identity.

Through developing a strong and engaged network of Métis youth within the province, local and regional communities will benefit immediately from having access to a growing pool of engaged and motivated young people, who can assist at local events, initiatives and community building.

The role of a Youth Mobilization Lead (YML) will consist of organizing ongoing activities related to your Priority Working Group (PWG). The five PWG's include Environment, Health and Wellbeing, Language and Culture, Nation Building and Education. YML's have the opportunity to choose which PWG best suits their interests and personal gifts and will be responsible for reaching out to other Métis youth across Ontario, creating safe pathways for involvement. YMLs will take part in monthly conference calls to discuss the progress and accomplishments of the initiatives being developed within their group.

If a Youth Mobilization Lead position does not fit your schedule, you still have the ability to volunteer as a General Participant in any PWG of your choice. This position still allows for you to connect with other Métis youth and take part in the activities being implemented.

**A Real World Example**

Here is an example of an initiative that was brainstormed at the 2018 Youth Conference: *“Water you doing for the environment?”*

- One day a month – Canoe cleanup along the waterways
- Invite knowledge holders to give medicine walks, harvesting information, awareness talks on environmental reciprocity
- #canUCleanup #InfinitePotential

This example gives you an idea of a creative activity that was designed by youth in the Environment PWG. Not only does it benefit the environment, it can engage other Métis youth and teach them about their heritage and identity. You can be as creative as possible and we will work to help your ideas become a reality!

**Infinite Potential Project Leads**

MNOYC President: Mitch Case
MNOYC Chair, Paul Robitaille
MNOYC Region 7 Rep: Jordan Playne
MNO Post-Secondary Rep: Katelyn Lacroix
IPS Project Coordinator: Melissa St. Amant (main point of contact)

This strategy is completely run by youth and has the ability to empower all young Métis people across the province.

**CONTACT:**

MELISSA ST. AMANT, Infinite Potentials Project Coordinator
Infinitetentials@metisnation.org
705-770-7899
Métis Nation of Ontario’s 25th AGA held in Peterborough, Ontario

Métis culture, growth and progress on self-government celebrated at MNO Annual General Assembly
Ours is really an incredible story but there is so much more to that is yet to be written,” said Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Margaret Froh at the MNO Annual General Assembly in Peterborough.

President Froh made her remarks during her State of the Nation Address where she reflected on progress towards self-government made both recently and over the MNO’s 25 year history. Over 400 MNO citizens, guests and partner representatives from across Ontario attended the three-day gathering where MNO leaders reported on recent agreements with the federal and provincial governments that have advanced the Métis rights agenda.

President Froh stressed the importance of the MNO-Canada-Ontario Framework Agreement for Advancing Reconciliation that she described as “monumentally historic.” She stated that the MNO is fully prepared to keep advancing its mandate of self-determination and self-government on behalf of the rights of Metis people throughout Ontario. This she stated “is about respect for our rights, our government and our people and we will continue to advance these collective goals as we build for the future.”

The MNO Peterborough and District Wapiti Métis Council hosted the AGA. In addition, important decisions and discussions took place on Métis rights and economic development. Delegates also heard about the Registry and Self-Government Readiness Process that is gathering key citizenship data and that has already resulted in the development of a cutting-edge database that will further strengthen the integrity, capacity and efficiency of the MNO Registry’s system. Citizens also celebrated the 25th anniversary of the MNO and participated in numerous Métis cultural celebrations and activities. President Froh stated: “Over the past 25 years the MNO has made many advances,” and she credits much of MNO’s success to “grit, determination and our ongoing commitment to rights of a people with a distinct culture, history, language and way of life.”

That commitment is recognized every year during the AGA through the Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award. This year, Rochon-Burnett’s daughter Michele-Elise Burnett presented the award to MNO Great Lakes Métis Council President Peter Coture.

Many dignitaries attended the AGA and brought greetings including: Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister Carolyn Bennett, Status of Women Minister Maryam Monsef, Director of First Peoples House of Learning at Trent University Dawn Lavell-Harvard, Métis National Council President Clément Chartier, Métis Nation British Columbia President Clara Morin Dal Col, Peterborough Mayor Daryl Bennett, Curve Lake First Nation Chief Phyllis Williams, Hiawatha First Nation Chief Laurie Carr, Member of the Provincial Parliament for Peterborough-Kawartha David Smith and Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak – Women of the Métis Nation President Melanie Omeniho.
Métis Voyageur
October 2018, Issue no. 101

Métis Peterborough and District Wapiti Métis Council President Andy Dufrane welcomes everyone to Peterborough for the milestone 25th MNO AGA.

On behalf of the MNO, MNO Vice-Chair Sharon Cadeau and Chair France Picotte present Region 6 PCMNO Councilor Tom Thompson with a print of artwork by MNO Youth Council Region 1 Representative Kelly Duquette.

Special guests brought well wishes to the AGA:
(from top to bottom) Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations Dr. Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Status of Women Maryam Monsef, Nuclear Waste Management Organization President and CEO Laurie Swami and Dawn Lavell-Harvard, Director of First Peoples House of Learning at Trent University, pictured with MNO Vice-Chair Sharon Cadeau.

Getting the crowd on their feet:
MNO citizen Amanda Rheams performs her song We Aspire, which is based on the MNO Statement of Prime Purpose.
In her address, MNO President Margaret Froh reflected on progress towards self-government made both recently and over the MNO’s 25 year history. “Over the last 25 years The MNO has made many advances and we have to acknowledge and respect the foundation that was built in its earliest days with no real resources, with no government to give them respect, just grit and determination and that good old fashioned Métis resiliency," she said.

Accompanied by the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario, MNO citizen Amanda Rheaume sings O Canada and We Aspire as the MNO AGA gets underway inside the Showplace Performance Centre.

MNO President Margaret Froh delivers the State of the Nation Address on Aug. 17.

STATE OF THE NATION: (right) In her address, MNO President Margaret Froh reflected on progress towards self-government made both recently and over the MNO’s 25 year history. “Over the last 25 years The MNO has made many advances and we have to acknowledge and respect the foundation that was built in its earliest days with no real resources, with no government to give them respect, just grit and determination and that good old fashioned Métis resiliency,” she said.

During the opening ceremony, guests bring warm wishes for a successful and productive AGA (left to right) Peterborough Mayor Daryl Bennett, Métis National Council President Clément Chartier, Curve Lake First Nation Chief Phyllis Williams, Hiawatha First Nation Chief Laurie Carr, MPP Peterborough Kawartha Dave Smith and Canoe Museum Executive Director Carolyn Hyslop.

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TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS:
MNO citizens raise their IDs to be counted for quorum during the start of business sessions. (top)

PC MNO Youth Representative Mitch Case and Region 6 Youth Representative Aly Dusome speak to a resolution. (middle)

Métis lawyer and MNO citizen Jason Madden. (bottom)

Know History Director Ryan Shackleton.

PCMNO Region 4 Councillor Ernest Gatien speaks to a resolution on the floor.

The AGA Resolutions Committee at work.

Métis Lawyer and MNO citizen Jason Madden speaks about contemporary Métis legal cases and issues at the 25th MNO AGA inside Peterborough’s Showplace Performance Centre.

The Supreme Court of Canada will hear a case fall of 2018.

The Work of the Métis Nation along Indigenous have been granted status.

PCMNO Youth Representative Mitch Case and Region 6 Youth Representative Aly Dusome speak to a resolution. (top)

Know History Director Ryan Shackleton.

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS: MNO citizens raise their IDs to be counted for quorum during the start of business sessions.
The MNO AGA isn’t all about business. MNO citizens and guests look forward to a number of cultural activities, and opportunities to learn more about Métis history, heritage and way of life. This year, voyageur games were played at the Canadian Canoe Museum, the tradeshow was held at Showplace Performance Centre and Know History joined the MNO AGA to help with genealogical research.

OUR GRACIOUS HOSTS:
MNO Peterborough and District Wapiti Métis Council (PDWMC) Women’s Representative Taryn Blackstock, MNO Chief Operating Officer Joanne Meyer, MNO PDWMC Councilor Luke Thompson, MNO PDWMC Senator Terry Bloom, MNO PDWMC Chair Christa Lamelin, MNO President Margaret Froh, MNO PDWMC President Andy Dufrane and MNO PDWMC Councilor Barbara Card.

FAMILY TIME: Emlyn Cameron (top) poses with her grandmother MNO Atikokan Métis Council President Marlene Davidson and sister Region 1 Youth Representative Kelly Duquette for a quick family photo.
At the AGA, Peter Coture, who has been called the best fish cleaner of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), was recognized for his volunteer efforts.

Every year since 2006, the Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award has been presented to a MNO citizen who has made ongoing contributions to the Métis Nation and his or her own community.

“One of the realities of the Métis Nation of Ontario is we are driven by our people and all of that volunteer time that all of you put in to ensuring that we are doing the things that we need to do for our families and our communities,” said MNO President Margaret Froh.

When Peter’s name was announced, the audience gave the MNO Great Lakes Métis Council President a standing ovation.

“I’m not much of a speaker or anything, I’m more of a doer, but I want to thank everyone for this and it’s well appreciated,” he said.

For the first time, the award was presented by Suzanne’s daughter Michele-Elise Burnett, who spoke powerfully about her mother’s legacy and the need to recognize those in the Métis community that go above and beyond each day to make their communities better and stronger.

“Let us always remember where we came from, honour those who trail blazed relentlessly and at times with blood, sweat and tears to create the MNO dream. Let us be grateful to those that continue in their footsteps by giving generously by being strong, unwavering advocates of the Métis Nation and giving selflessly and being the backbones of success of today’s MNO,” Burnett said.

Peter was nominated by several individuals in the MNO Great Lakes Métis Council region for his more than 20 years of work with the council and for his willingness to help everyone in the community.

“He is a vital figure in the Owen Sound grassroots Métis movement. With his selfless commitment of time and energy, he helps to preserve our Métis heritage by teaching traditional hunting and forest management techniques and preserving our history,” Burnett said.

The nomination noted Peter’s crucial participation in the erection of a Mudtown plaque recognizing Métis history in Owen Sound.

“But perhaps the most important thing you need to know about Peter is that he puts his words into practice,” she added. “And no Métis freezer in the area lacks for fresh fish for dinner.”

On his nomination papers, Helen Marietta praised Peter for his compassion and respect.

“He’s always out seeing our elders if they need anything and if he can help them in any way. He keeps everyone well informed on what is happening; he is well trusted by council and our citizens,” she wrote on the form. “He always puts our children and our way of life first and foremost and he has worked very hard to earn and keep our respect.”

“He volunteers more time than most people work,” added MNO Great Lakes Métis Councilor Murray Hillyer.

As President, Peter plays an active role in bringing the concerns of local MNO citizens forward during consultations with local industry.

“Pete always gives his time to the greater cause and he has all Métis peoples’ rights and ideas in mind when in meetings and in public,” said James Coture, Peter’s son, who is also part of the community council. “He has tried to move forward all of our people in every way possible.”

For more information about the award, the nomination process and past participants, visit www.metisnation.org/culture-heritage/srb-volunteer-award/.
Métis lawyer and MNO legal counsel Jason Madden provided an update about Métis rights and self-government during the MNO’s Annual General Assembly in Peterborough on August 18.

“Trifecta” of Métis Law

Madden spoke on the recent significant gains made across the Métis Nation Homeland on Métis rights and self-government. He said that recent and historical developments have ushered in new opportunities for negotiations with Métis Nation governments south of the 60th parallel. In particular, he cited what he called the “trifecta of Métis law,” R. v. Powley, Manitoba Métis Federation v. Canada as well as recent political commitments and will at the federal level. Framework Agreements have been signed with Métis governments in Manitoba (November 2016), Alberta (November 2017) and Saskatchewan (July 2018). In December 2017, the MNO signed its Framework Agreement with Canada and Ontario that sets out a process to establish a “nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationship” between the MNO and the Crown. The objectives of this agreement are to formally recognize the MNO’s jurisdiction and law-making power as a “Métis government,” make strategic investments in areas such as health, education and housing, as well as negotiate rights and outstanding claims against the Crown.

“Regional claims”

Madden also highlighted that the MNO-Canada-Ontario Framework Agreement contemplates the potential of “regional claims” being advanced by rights-bearing Métis communities represented by the MNO, either individually or together. These claims against the Crown may relate to land-related promises made to Métis communities or actions taken by the Crown that damaged Métis economies and way of life related to fisheries or flooding. Madden noted the land related petitions advanced by Métis in the Georgian Bay region as well as the promise made to Métis at Saulte Ste. Marie with respect to keeping “full and free possession” of their lands will need further research and investigation. He also noted that in December 2017, the MNO and Canada already signed an agreement to advance reconciliation with the Northwestern Ontario Métis community in relation to the Treaty 3 Halfbreed Adhesion, which promised Métis lands for a village and harvesting area as well as the same benefits under Treaty 5 promised to First Nations. Madden highlighted that similar to how the Powley case was a “test case” that benefited other Métis communities, these negotiations with respect to the Treaty 3 Halfbreed Adhesion will serve as a template for other Métis communities seeking to pursue their claims.

An MNO Constitution

Finally, Madden spoke about how the next steps in the MNO’s self-government discussions with the Crown will need to focus on developing a constitution based on the Métis inherent right to self-government and self-determination. This next step will require the MNO to move away from its corporate bylaws to a constitution ratified by its citizens. He highlighted that the Métis self-government metamorphosis is well on its way across the Métis Nation. Within Ontario, this process will require the MNO to clarify key questions such as exactly who it represents, including, its relationship with the larger Métis Nation, who its citizens are, in a future Métis government will be, how the rights and liberties of Métis citizens and Métis communities will be protected in a future government, what the MNO’s future self-government will look like, amongst many other things. He noted that while corporate bylaws can be more easily changed and groups can more easily go their own way, constitutions are forever. In order to get to a constitution, deep and meaningful consultations are required with MNO citizens, and, just as importantly, the rights-bearing Métis communities that make up the MNO need to agree to any new arrangement. Madden also noted that the MNO’s ongoing Registry Review process is key to answering the question of exactly who the MNO represents in order to develop a constitution that all parties can agree to.

An Exciting Time

Madden concluded by saying that this is an exciting time for the Métis Nation and the advancement of Métis rights and self-government from Ontario westward. He indicated that there will likely be some additional important announcement on progress made with respect to Métis negotiation in the fall of 2018 as well as the potential introduction of federal legislation dealing with the Prime Minister’s previously announced Indigenous Rights and Recognition Framework. A copy of Madden’s presentation is available online at www.metisnation.org.
Métis Nation of Ontario Senators

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Senators gathered for their annual meeting in the days ahead of the MNO Annual General Assembly (AGA) in Peterborough. Participating in a meet and greet event, as well as self-defence training and important discussions about the MNO, the pre-AGA conference provided an opportunity for Senators to reconnect and share their experiences over the past year. Their place at the MNO AGA is a special one as they provide guidance and spiritual grounding throughout the event.

MNO Senators who attended the 25th MNO AGA in Peterborough in August:
Front (left to right) Ray Bergie, Verna Porter-Brunelle, Reta Gordon, Rene Gravelle, Roland St. German, Joe Poitras.
Middle (left to right) Richard Meilleur, Guy Mandeville, Cecile Wagar, Christina Acton, Parmallia Burgie, Patsy Dwyer, Karen Cadrin, Gerry Courville, Marlene Chiesa, Ken Fraser, Gerry Bedford, Joycelyn Rose, Maryjane Buttenham, Brenda Pinhey, John George, Carol Levis, Terry Bloom.
Back (left to right) Kevin Ruth, Robert Lloyd, Alphonse Roussin, Larry Duvall, Ken Simard, Brian Goulisquet, Jim Turner, Fearn McCoy.

MNO Senators had a busy schedule at the MNO AGA, but they also took time to enjoy some lighter moments. (Top left) Ken Simard practises some self-defence moves during a workshop. (Top right) PCMNO Senator Verna Porter-Brunelle steps out of the canoe and gives the all clear. (Bottom left) MNO Niagara Region Métis Council Senator Gerry Laframboise, MNO Mattawa Métis Council Senator Joycelyn Rose and MNO Veterans’ Council Senator Guy Mandeville catch up during the Senators’ Meet and Greet. (Bottom right) No gathering is complete without some Métis music, featuring MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council Senator Ken Fraser on the spoons and MNO Sudbury Métis Council Senator Richard Meilleur on the harmonica.
The MNO chartered Community Councils were represented at the MNO AGA by either their president or a designate, who also attended a Presidents Meeting to discuss issues of common interest and concern throughout the Métis Nation of Ontario. The Presidents were a lively and engaged group at this year’s AGA, at the business sessions and the AGA’s various cultural events.
In the days ahead of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Annual General Assembly (AGA) in Peterborough, Métis youth from across the province gathered for the second Ontario Métis Youth Leadership Conference.

More than 70 youth participated in the two-day conference, which kept them busy with a variety of exciting, interactive and meditative workshops.

Those in attendance included out-of-province youth representatives, youth involved in the MNO’s Summer Youth Cultural and Infinite Reach programs, the MNO Youth Council, MNO community council youth representatives and others.

Some of the guest facilitators included Dylan Miner, who helped youth learn birch bark biting and screen printing, MNO Toronto and York Region Métis Council President Tera Beaulieu, who worked with youth to understand mental wellness and healing and Lisa Shepherd, who taught workshops on beading, plant medicines and floral designs and spent an evening teaching jigging.

MNO Region 1 Youth Representative Kelly Duquette’s popular painting workshop returned for a second year and Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) Youth Representative Mitch Case and Métis Nation British Columbia Minister of Youth Cassidy Caron taught attendees about how resolutions become bylaws.

Youth also had the chance to discuss what it means to be a two-spirit person with University of Manitoba instructor Chanatal Fiola, PhD, and learn about the Feminist Twins’ journey as activists and event planners.

The second day of the conference, youth listened in on a panel discussion about the past, present and future of the Métis Nation with MNO Chair France Picotte, Case and PCMNO Chief Strategy Officer Jennifer St. Germain.

That day, the MNO Veterans’ Council mingled with the youth, hearing their ideas and sharing stories. The council also presented the MNO Youth Council with a blanket that they plan to use as the backdrop for a beading project.
Once again, much has transpired over the past year. The Métis Nation of Ontario Veterans Council represented the MNO and participated in several noteworthy events over the past year:

- Ottawa Commemorations in April 2017
- Attended Oshawa Métis Celebrations
- Attended the Aboriginal Veterans’ Day in CFB Borden
- Made a presentation to Bruce Power in Kincardine
- Tour of Bruce Power Facility
- Attended the Change of Command in Trenton
- Sent representative to Batoche Days, Batoche
- Attended the Black Creek event
- Memorial Cup event in Windsor (front and center)
- 2017 Volunteer of the Year (second year in a row)
- Women in the Shadows Event in London
- Veteran Alex Boucher’s 105th Birthday
- Attended meeting in British Columbia
- Presentations in Borden, Trenton and London
- Remembrance Day ceremonies across the province
- Métis Youth/Veteran event in Penetanguishene
- Moosonee / Moose Factory presentation
- Fundraising events in Windsor
- School events
- Bring a Veteran to Dinner event in Orillia
- Representation at Celebration of Life in Penetanguishene for Departed MNO Veteran
- Representation at Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women event in Wasaga Beach
- Representation in Midland parade for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women
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- Fundraising events in Windsor
- School events
- Bring a Veteran to Dinner event in Orillia
- Representation at Celebration of Life in Penetanguishene for Departed MNO Veteran
- Representation at Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women event in Wasaga Beach
- Representation in Midland parade for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women
- It is great to see that we are engaging out there, providing awareness of Métis veterans. Promoting the Métis Nation of Ontario and its veterans is ongoing and an important part of our mandate.

Thank you to all that have participated and contributed to this awesome outcome. The MNO Veterans’ Council is still very much active and looking forward to another great year.

* Due to scheduling issues during the MNO AGA, the MNO Veterans’ Council did not hold its Annual General Meeting.

The Captains of the Hunt (COTH) met with harvesters and citizens throughout the MNO AGA to receive input and discuss issues surrounding the upcoming fall harvest season. The COTH act as liaisons between the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and the MNO and its citizens on all harvesting-related issues and inquiries. One COTh represents each of the Traditional Harvest Territories within Ontario and is mandated by the MNO to have full authority over the Métis Harvest in their respective region. The MNO welcomes several new Captains of the Hunt this year.

**Métis Veterans**

**MNO Veterans’ Council Report**

- Joseph Paquette
  MNO Veterans’ Council President

**This is the MNO Veterans’ Council’s unofficial report of its activities, as it has not been passed by the council’s representatives**

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It is great to see that we are engaging out there, providing awareness of Métis veterans. Promoting the Métis Nation of Ontario and its veterans is ongoing and an important part of our mandate.

Thank you to all that have participated and contributed to this awesome outcome. The MNO Veterans’ Council is still very much active and looking forward to another great year.

* Due to scheduling issues during the MNO AGA, the MNO Veterans’ Council did not hold its Annual General Meeting.
It has been one year since we have updated our name to the Métis Nation of Ontario Women’s Council. At this time I wish to introduce you to our Regional Women’s Reps:

Region 1 - Colette Surovy
Region 2 - Kelly Camacho
Region 3 - Lillian Ethier
Region 4 - June Smart
Region 5 - Berni Picco
Region 6 - Cora Buen
Region 7 - Patricia Taylor
Region 8 - Pearl Gabona
Region 9 - Suzanne Jackson

Our Women’s Council representatives and Regional Women’s representatives are the heart and soul of our nation; many times forgotten, they are my unsung heroes.

At this year’s MNO Women’s Council Annual General Meeting (AGM) the women re-placed our Mission and Vision Statement. Our Vision and Mission statement was re-moved from our Terms of Reference. We felt that these should be stand alone and are something we all still find relevant. I am so very proud of the update and all the women that supported our change and I look forward to the future.

The MNO Women’s Council has an inclusive understanding of womanhood. Women experience their lives differently based on their culture, home life, region, age, gender/gender identity, sexual identity, religion, education, and many other factors. The MNO Women’s Council (MNOWC) values each woman’s experience and seeks to create a respectful space that includes Two-Spirited, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Inter-Sexual (2SLGBTQ) women.

I wish to thank Berni Picco and her team of volunteers that helped work our Fundraising Table, I am pleased to announce that we raised $2002.50. Thanks to all the people that donated and purchased from our table. We are all looking forward to next year.

We are currently working on year two of our three-year project with the Status of Women. This is only the start of so many good things to come.

MNO Women’s Council Report

Participants and guests at the MNO Women’s Council gathering prior to the 2018 MNO Annual General Assembly in Peterborough in August.

MNO Women’s Council Report

There were hugs all around as things got underway at the MNO Women’s Gathering.

MNO Veterans’ Council Women’s Representative Shelly Claus during a workshop at the Women’s Gathering.

Métis Women

MNO Women’s Council Report

Participants and guests at the MNO Women’s Council gathering prior to the 2018 MNO Annual General Assembly in Peterborough in August.

Métis Women

MNO Women’s Council Report

Participants and guests at the MNO Women’s Council gathering prior to the 2018 MNO Annual General Assembly in Peterborough in August.

Métis Women

MNS Women’s Council Report

Participants and guests at the MNO Women’s Council gathering prior to the 2018 MNO Annual General Assembly in Peterborough in August.
Collaboratively implementing Canada’s plan for the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel

NWMO President and CEO Laurie Swami takes part in the 25th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) President and CEO Laurie Swami recently joined more than 400 citizens and guests from across the province at the 25th Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) in Peterborough. The three-day gathering focused on Métis rights and self-government, and celebrated the 25th anniversary of the MNO with numerous Métis cultural celebrations and activities taking place throughout the city.

"I was honoured to participate in the 25th AGA," said Ms. Swami. "It is always a delight to join in the celebration of the rich culture and tradition of the Métis people."

At the launch of the AGA, Ms. Swami spoke about the NWMO’s commitment to continuing our work with the MNO to develop inclusive engagement and a learning process that foster community well-being.

"It is important that we ensure that Canada’s plan for the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel is inclusive, respectful and transparent," added Ms. Swami.

Ms. Swami was invited to take part in the traditional voyageur canoe trip with MNO leadership, dignitaries and special guests. The ceremonial canoes honour the spirit of the Métis ancestors who paddled along waterways and watersheds for the fur trade.

The AGA was also an opportunity to directly engage with individual MNO citizens throughout the three-day event to provide an update on the NWMO’s site selection process and engagement activities.

There are five areas currently engaged in studies to determine a potential host for the deep geological repository and associated facilities, including a Centre of Expertise. Three are located in northern Ontario – the townships of Hornepayne, Ignace and Manitouwadge. In southwestern Ontario, the Municipality of South Bruce and Township of Huron-Kinloss are also part of the process.

Ultimately, the project will only be sited in an area where it can be implemented in partnership with municipal, First Nation and Métis communities. The NWMO expects to identify a preferred site to be the sole focus of study by about 2023. Further planning timelines include construction starting around 2033 and the facility being operational in 2043.

We invite you to learn more.
Please visit our website: www.nwmo.ca
An evening celebration of Métis culture included: (Clockwise from top left) Métis youth perform the Red River Jig. Auriele Diotte entertains with a spirited jiggling performance. Her energetic choreography was cheered on by the crowd. Ginny Millmoyle performs as part of The SweetGrass Band, a bluegrass group from Alderville First Nation. MNO citizens Alicia and Liam Blore had attendees clapping and toe tapping with the fiddle and guitar. MNO citizen Larry O’Connor amuses the crowd in between sets and introducing the new acts.

OUR COMMITMENT

Hydro One is committed to working with Indigenous peoples and communities in a spirit of cooperation and shared responsibility that demonstrate mutual respect for one another.

We’re always working to find the right balance between meeting our energy needs for the 21st century and being good stewards of the environment.

Forging strong and meaningful relationships based upon trust, confidence and accountability is an important part of working with the Indigenous communities we serve.

Contact us at 1-877-955-1155
bit.ly/Hydro-One-Indigenous-Relations
WHEREAS a foundational principle of good governance is the right of Citizens to have their voices heard and meaningfully considered in decision-making that affects them; and
WHEREAS the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is quickly moving towards self-govern- ment, which has involved beginning the process of Constitution building and negotiating numerous agreements, which affect MNO Citizens across the province;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 25th MNO Annual General Assembly (AGA) direct that there be a province-wide community engagement process on the issues related to economic development and self-sufficiency, self- government, and other citizen-related issues as outlined in the MNO Commission on Métis Rights and Self Government Final Report and as discussed at the 2018 AGA; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario and the MNO Secretariat seek out the necessary resources to implement the aforementioned engagement process; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that quarterly updates on these discussions be provided and a report provided to the 2019 MNO AGA.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS

MOVED - Amanda Pont-Shanks
SECONDED - Derrick Punt

WHEREAS Métis across the province live with discrimination, racism and lateral violence on a regular basis; and
WHEREAS many Métis struggle with ignorance, lateral violence, and bias from other Indigenous organizations; and
WHEREAS there is lateral violence within our own Métis community, which causes a divide in the Nation; and
WHEREAS there is a demand for cultural competency training from entities such as, corporate sectors, Medical Services, Local Government, Law Enforcement, Community Service Groups, and Small Businesses; and
WHEREAS Community Councils are voluntary and most Community Councils do not have the time, capacity or funding to deliver effective and consistent cultural competency training; and
WHEREAS the Métis Nation of Ontario’s (MNO) Statement of Prime Purpose states that the MNO will commit to “improve health and wellness of the individual, the family and the whole Métis community”; therefore

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario will undertake to develop and implement a cultural competency training program that will support Métis people of all ages, and provide meaningful employment and life in our communities.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS

MOVED - Suzanna Jackson
SECONDED - Shirley Debassige

WHEREAS the Voyageur canoe is symbolic of the Métis Nation and it is an honour to have a designated seat in the canoe during the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Annual General Assembly (AGA) Grand Entry; and
WHEREAS honouring Women is part of our culture; and
WHEREAS the MNO is striving toward equitable representation of all our communities; and
WHEREAS the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario and all other Provincial Councils within the MNO structure, with the exception of the Métis Nation of Ontario Council, have a recurring seat in the canoe during the MNO AGA Grand Entry; therefore

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Women’s representative from the hosting AGA Council or their MNO Women’s Regional Representative or their MNO Women’s Council designate chosen by the other MNO Women’s Regional Representatives, have a reserved seat in the Voyageur Canoe for its Grand Entry at all MNO AGAs.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS

MOVED - Alexandre Young
SECONDED - Courtney Vaughan

WHEREAS the MNO has put importance on supporting and funding four previous Canoe Expeditions including 2017’s, which focused on skill and educational outcomes, non- Federally recognized programs and Employment Training (SET) program dollars to provide multiple outdoor and leadership certificates through Challenges Canada and college credits as part of an MOU with Confederation College; and
WHEREAS there is a high interest from communities past and current including the opportunity to participate in a canoe expedition and following the canoe expedition on social media;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the MNO Annual General Assembly 2018 direct the PCMNO and Secretariat to:

1. Seek funding in order to support a 2019, and annual canoe expedition(s), of different duration, which includes employment skills and training opportunities such as certifications and college credit, thus promoting employability and transferable skills; and
2. Collaborate with Aboriginal Sport and Wellness Council of Ontario and any other interested parties in the organization of canoe expeditions for the purpose of financial support and labour that is involved with the planning and execution of canoe expeditions.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS

MOVED - Alexander Young
SECONDED - Courtenay Vaughan

WHEREAS the MNO of Ontario (MNO) has invested substantially in equipment to outfit participants for canoe and camping related activities, including the purchase of two new 36 foot Montreal Canoe and hauling trailers, cargo trailer and everyday camping and cooking gear to outfit 25 or more participants; and
WHEREAS the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) as a governing body, MNO citizens and MNO staff would benefit from the opportunity that would be derived from the Canoe Expedition that would raise Métis cultural and historic awareness by educating the general public, visiting communities, and by obtaining media coverage; and
WHEREAS Canoe Expeditions relive and retrace the historic fur trade routes of the Voyageurs demonstrating Métis pride and Way Of Life as well as developing participants’ Métis identity, self-reliance, endurance, healthy living habits, and many other transferable skills applicable to employment and life in our communities; and
WHEREAS in the past the MNO has put importance on supporting and funding previous Canoe Expeditions including 2017’s, which focused on skill and educational outcomes, non- Federally recognized programs and Employment Training (SET) program dollars to provide multiple outdoor and leadership certificates through Challenges Canada and college credits as part of an MOU with Confederation College; and
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