This past Remembrance Day, Métis Nation veterans, youth and dignitaries travelled to the Juno Beach Centre in Courseulles-sur-Mer, France, to dedicate a memorial to Métis who served in the world wars.

“We all owe a debt to the Métis Nation citizens who fought, who were wounded and who died defending their people, their country and world freedom,” said Métis National Council President, Clément Chartier. “This memorial will help ensure their service and sacrifice will not be forgotten.”

The memorial includes an exhibit highlighting Métis culture, the contributions of Métis soldiers, aircrew and sailors during the world wars and features a Red River Cart—one of the most widely recognized symbols of the Métis Nation.

Over a dozen Métis veterans were joined at the Remembrance Day, November 11, 2009, dedication ceremony by President Chartier; David Chartrand, Manitoba Métis Federation President and MNC Minister for Veterans Affairs; and, the Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister for Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and non-Status Indians.

“I am proud to participate in this historic event, where the sacrifices made by Métis service men and women are receiving the attention they deserve,” said Minister Strahl. “I look forward to the November 11th special dedication service at Juno Beach Centre where on behalf of all Canadians I will thank Métis veterans for the contributions and sacrifices made during the two world wars, the Korean war and the battle in Afghanistan and peacekeeping missions around the globe.”

President Chartier thanked Minister Strahl on behalf of the Métis Nation for his support, along with the Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and non-Status Indians.

“I am proud to participate in this historic event, where the sacrifices made by Métis service men and women are receiving the attention they deserve,” said President Chartier.

“MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

Métis Veterans’ Memorial Unveiled at Juno Beach

WE ALL OWE A DEBT TO THE MÉTIS NATION CITIZENS WHO Fought, WHO WERE WOUNDED AND WHO DIED DEFENDING THEIR PEOPLE, THEIR COUNTRY AND WORLD FREEDOM.

Clément Chartier
Métis National Council President

MÉTIS EDUCATION

SPECIAL SECTION ON MÉTIS AND THE EDUCATION SYSTEM
PAGE 22-26

LOUIS RIEL DAY

EVERY NOVEMBER 16th MÉTIS ACROSS NATION HONOUR LOUIS RIEL
PAGE 11

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

LOUISE GOULDING IS NAMED THE ‘09 WINNER OF MNO’S VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD
PAGE 14

AFTER POWLEY

GROUNDBREAKING COURT CASE USHERED IN NEW ERA FOR MÉTIS RIGHTS
PAGE 3

Photo:
Personnel of the Royal Canadian Navy landing on Juno Beach in Normandy, France on June 6th, 1944.

PHOTO: Archives Nationales du Canada

More Juno and veterans coverage on pages 15-18
Happy New Year
Happy Birthday

T his is the “Year of the Métis”, and it has begun with a brand new Métis citizen. Kyler Michael Louis Wass was born New Year’s Day, January 01, 2010, at 3:50 A.M., weighing in at 9bs 8oz.

Kyler is not the first baby born in Ottawa but the first baby to be born at the Queen’sway-Carleton Hospital. Kyler is welcomed by proud parents, Mike and Jaye Wass of Ottawa, proud grandma, Beth Peterson of Apsenior, proud first time grandparents, Jolene and Colin Wass of Clayton, and, first time great grandparents, Agnes Remillard and Joyce Wiss both of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Happy New Year to everyone! Jolene Wass, PCMNO Region 6

New Arrival

In Memory of Marie Gendron

The moment that you died, Our hearts were split in two,
The moment that you died, The other died with you.

M om, who loved her Lord and Saviour and her family with all her heart, has stepped out of time and into His presence for all eternity, this 15th day of December, (2009) in her 92nd year. Her faith in Jesus Christ gives way to sight and her anticipation that the best is yet to come, yields to this realization. She is now in the presence of her Saviour whom she placed her faith and trust in so many years ago.

Beloved wife of the late Arthur Gendron (1988), loving mother of Laurie (Annette) Gendron; the late Lloyd Gendron (1993); Loraine (Jim) Hason, Patricia (Derek) Farnau, Mike Gendron; Carol (the late Ken - 2003) Farnan; Charles Farnan; Mike Gendron; Carol (the late Lloyd Gendron (1993); Loraine (Annette) Gendron; the late Leopold Canal.

She also loved nature, watching the boats go through the canal, feeding the birds and watching the squirrels. She loved to have tea with family and we will definitely miss her and our annual trip to St. Jacob’s market. Mom loved her life for those she loved. Until memory fades and life departs, you will live forever in our hearts.

The funeral service was held on December 18, 2009, at the Port Colborne, Brethrens in Christ Church, with Rev. Brian Lofthouse officiating. Interment followed at Oakwood Cemetery. If so desired, memorial donations may be made to the Sick Kids Foundation. Online condolences at www.armstrongfuneralhome.ca.

The next Voyageur deadline is March 1st, 2010

Publication #:
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Summer is over and the cool crisp air is here. I love to snuggle up in a blanket with a good book. Do you enjoy reading? What is your favourite book? Grab a blanket, your favourite book and enjoy your snuggle time.

P.J.'s book of the month is called "Fiddle Dancer" by Anne Patton and Wilfred Burton. It is the story of Nolin, a young Métis boy. He is learning about his heritage while his moushoom (grandfather) teaches him to dance.

P.J. wishes you a happy winter and happy reading! If you would like to know more about this book, visit this site: www.willowawards.ca.
Métis Nation News

Premier supports MNO

by JANET LEADER


On December 17th, at a private meeting at Queen’s Park, the Premier presented a copy of the letter in which he made this request. The letter states that as Premier, he believes that the Declaration reinforces his government’s commitment to “engaging in meaningful and constructive dialogue on the future of Canada’s Aboriginal peoples” because of the significance ascribed to the Declaration by Métis and First Nations people.

The Premier goes on to say that reconsidering its position will help to demonstrate a willingness on the part of Canada to engage in real dialogue that will help to demonstrate a will- ingness to engage in meaningful and con- structive dialogue on the future of Canada’s Aboriginal peoples” because of the significance ascribed to the Declaration by Métis and First Nations people.

“I am extremely encouraged both by the gesture and the lan- guage in the letter I received yes- terday from Premier McGuinty,” President Lipinski said. “This proactive approach to fostering a more positive relationship with the Métis proves once again the commitment on the part of the province to live up to the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement which was signed in November, 2008.”

In the letter, Premier McGuinty also points out that Canada would not be alone in reconsidering its position on the UN Declaration. Australia has already changed its position and signed on, and both New Zealand and the United States are recon- sidering.

The letter was only one of sev- eral topics covered in the meet- ing which was also attended by France Picotte, Chair of the MNO.

Six years after Powley

By GARY LIPINSKI
President, Métis Nation of Ontario

Greetings: As many of you are aware, Saturday, September 19, 2009 marked the sixtieth anniversary of the Supreme Court decision in R v. Powley. This decision, which was signed in November, 2008. It is fair to say that in spite of

 POWLEY DAY:

SSM Honours Métis Heroes

By SHAWNA HANSEN

This year our community combined Powley Day and Louis Riel Day, and what a merrily day it was here in Sault Ste. Marie on November 16, 2009.

Those who stood out in the cold to watch our flag rise at City Hall were later greeted by the friendly staff at our offices who provided everyone with a wonderful feast of both traditional and non-traditional foods.

After a presentation on dual diagnosis and our culture we offered participants an opportun- ity to learn how to bead, and what the various types of beading are. Everyone was given a chance to create their own sim- ple design and bead it. It is far to say that in spite of a tremendous amount of hard work and sacrifice by many Métis, our pursuit of full recog- nition of Métis rights continues. There is still much work to be done with the province and especially with the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) to ensure the acceptance of those rights when they are asserted. We will continue to push for- ward on the priority issues that you have raised with your Cap- tains of the Hunt at the MNO/MNR working table, and will report progress and move- ment as it occurs.

Métis deliver important history lesson to Senate Standing Committee

On December 2nd, Gary Lipinski, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario joined Métis National Council (MNC) Senator, Clem Chartier, and the MNC Board of Governors for a presentation to the Senate Standing Committee on Abo- riginal Affairs. President Lipinski outlined the new era of Métis rights in the Province of Ontario result- ing from the historic Powley decision. “This new legal reality must change the Crown’s longstanding ‘wait-and-see’ approach to Métis rights,” he said. “Wilful blindness or deny- ing the existence of Métis rights is no longer an option if the federal government does not want to see even more Métis litigation and delays in Canada’s economic recovery.”

The president said the MNC’s relationship with the provincial government has improved since Powley, pointing to the agreement which recognizes Métis harvesting rights and regional rights-bear- ing Métis communities in the province. This agreement remains the only one of its kind within the Métis Nation.

He added that the value of all the work being done by the province and the MNO is that capacity building at the com- munity level is diminished because “unfortunately, a key partner—the federal government—has been missing from this collaborative work. While there appears to be some federal progress on the Crown’s duty to consult with First Nations, Métis communities are not being asked or they do not have the necessary capacity to effectively partici- pate in consultation and accommodation processes. Both strategic and sustained investment by the federal gov- ernment is required.”

The president went on to say that access to and participa- tion in economic develop- ment is key to Métis citizens and communities reaching their full potential. He con- cluded his remarks by asking the federal government to establish a Métis Capital Invest- ment Corporation in Ontario similar to the ones for which they provided funds in west- ern Canada years ago.

A complete transcript of President Lipinski’s presentation is available on the web site at www.metisnation.org.

Additional details on the MNC presentation can be found on the MNC web site at www.metisnation.ca.
MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL | ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY: 2010 named “Year of the Métis Nation”

Seventy-five delegates from the council’s governing members met November 21st and 22nd, 2009, in Vancouver, BC. Several resolutions were passed including one pledging support to establishing a Métis veterans’ monument, another calling for a national Métis youth assembly to be held next year and further proclaiming 2010 to be “Year of the Métis Nation.”

The assembly received updates and reports on many issues important to the Métis Nation, including the current state of harvesting rights across the Homeland, and the progress being made in relations with the federal and provincial governments through the Métis Nation Protocol. Governance issues and the MNC Economic Development Committee Symposium, December 15th to 16th, 2009, in Calgary, AB were also discussed.

There are many opportunities and challenges in the coming years,” said President Chartier. “With such a productive assembly, the MNC is confident we are prepared to move forward with an ambitious agenda for the Métis Nation.”

President Chartier thanked the Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis, for attending the assembly’s opening ceremonies and bringing greetings on behalf of the Government of Canada. He also thanked Commissioner Wilton Littlechild who came to discuss Métis participation in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. (see page 5)

Méרס Memorial for Ontario

The Government of Ontario – MNO Framework Agreement was signed in November, 2008. The Framework identifies a number of objectives including the recognition and preservation of the distinct history, identity and culture of the Métis people and their contributions to Ontario.

One avenue by which to recognize the historic and ongoing contributions of the Métis is by exploring the establishment of a Métis memorial.

The Métis Nation of Ontario has established a “Coordinating Committee” to manage the work related to identifying potential sites and the establishment of a Métis Memorial in Ontario.

This fiscal year, ending on March 31, 2010, the Coordinating Committee will oversee the work associated with a scan of research literature to facilitate the identification of possible Memorial sites in Ontario. Métis citizens are encouraged to share any knowledge they may have about significant sites in Ontario that are of importance to Métis people and that may serve as an appropriate location for a Métis memorial based on its commemorative value.

Please contact Joanne Meyer, Director of Intergovernmental Relations at (416) 977-9881 or at joanne@metisnation.org.

Housing:

Help for aspiring Aboriginal homeowners

First Nation, Inuit, Métis Urban & Rural Housing homeowner profile

At the end of November, Rachael Anishinaabe and her three children got the keys to their new home, Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS) runs the new off-reserve FIMUR Aboriginal Homeowner Program which provides up to $50,000 for eligible applicants with assistance for a down payment and other related closing costs.

When asked what this new home meant to her, emotions ran high. “It’s overwhelming,” said the mother of three as she wiped the tears of joy rolling down her cheeks. “I’m really happy. My kids are really happy.”

Rachael is no stranger to happy endings. This First Nations’ mother brought home three medals from the North American Indigenous Games last year. Rachael is an avid runner and showroom manager who managed to squeeze in time for training early in the morning and late at night.

Don McBain, Executive Director of OAHS, comments: “The FIMUR Homeowner Program will help many Aboriginal individuals and families get access to safe and affordable homes.”

This funding is provided by the Province of Ontario from the federal off-reserve Aboriginal Housing Trust. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) was also able to assist by insuring the mortgages so that lenders could participate.

The FIMUR Homeownership Program provides an important boost to Aboriginal economies. McBain notes: “Whenever someone buys a home, there are economic benefits provided to many service providers. This includes real estate agents, home inspectors, mortgage brokers or bankers, and the list goes on.”

For more information on OAHS or the FIMUR, visit: www.ontarioaboriginalhousing.ca or call 1-866-391-1061
ABORIGINAL WOMEN:

France Picotte speaks at Women’s Leadership conference

BY REBEKAH WILSON

On October 15, 2009, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada, the Honourable Justice Murray Sinclair, Chair of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions, along with Indian residential school survivors and their descendants, and church leaders participated in “Witnessing the Future”, a ceremony intended to re-launch Canada’s Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation process.

In attendance was the Métis Nation of Ontario’s (MNO) own Executive Senator, Reta Gordon. The observance opened with words from the Truth and Reconciliation Commissioners. Following this, about 40 young people, mostly Aboriginal, each spoke of what they wished the future to look like. Then they paraded at the front of the gathering and each offered a small gift to each of two baskets, one held by an Inuit Elder representing his Nation and the other basket held by a Reta Gordon, representing the Métis Nation.

“Then came one of the most heart-wrenching gatherings I have ever attended. There were 10 Elders who told their stories in a video of the terrible time they spent in residential schools. The participants were all sitting in a row and each of them was accompanied by a grandchild. As they showed a clip of one woman sharing her story of how she suffered abuse, her grand daughter started to sob out loud, and the Elder, starting everyone in the audience crying, causing attendants to distribute tissues—even the Governor General needed one. It was such an emotional experience that even as I write this (two months later) I am doing so through tears. The pain of these little children is still held in the hearts of the Elders they are today. I cannot imagine what they must have suffered and continue to suffer every day.”

The conference also recognized young women who are active in their Aboriginal communities by presenting them with financial assistance for post-secondary education. The two recipients of the Scottish Bank Women Leaders Scholarship Award, Sharna Willis and Sophie Lavigne, each received a bursary of $1000. Ms Willis is currently a Mohawk College student, while Ms Lavigne, will use the bursary toward her final year of studies in human kinetics.

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REUNITED SCHOOLS | TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

GG hosts ceremony to re-launch Truth and Reconciliation process

BY RETA GORDON

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MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

France Picotte presents a Métis sash to Governor General the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean.

PCMNO Senator Reta Gordon presents a Métis sash to Governor General the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean.

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Métis Nation mourns death of former MMF President

Gary Lipinski, President of the MNO, expressed his sympathy to the family and friends of Senator Ed Head. Senator Head was a founding member and former President of the MMF.

“Senator Head was a committed advocate and through his efforts was able to make significant progress in advancing Métis rights in his home province,” President Lipinski said. “Those gains, felt so profoundly in his home province had a ripple effect and Métis in Ontario and across the Métis Nation Homeland have also experienced significant gains from his efforts.”

Fellow Head worked as a trappper, diamond driller and guide before becoming involved in Métis politics, and with The Métis and the newly founded Native Communications Inc. in Manitoba.

Elected president of the MMF in 1975, Senator Head was given the title of “Senator” in 2004 for his service to the Métis Nation. He was also named to the Order of Manitoba for his work in building the province.
On October 29th, Aboriginal affairs ministers and the leaders of five national Aboriginal organizations agreed to work together, as the Aboriginal Affairs Working Group (AAWG), to improve the quality of life for Aboriginal peoples in Canada. This can only be achieved by closing the socio-economic gap that exists between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Through a revitalized historic process, we will work collaboratively on the most critical challenges facing Aboriginal people, education and economic development. Through this new national process, it is my hope that our work will lead towards a future First Ministers’ Meeting,” said Brad Duguid, Ontario Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

The creation of the working group, with membership from all five national Aboriginal organizations, fulfills a direction from all premiers in their discussions last summer in Regina, SK, with the five national Aboriginal organization leaders.

Ministers and leaders confirmed that establishing a strong and a lasting working group process of provincial and territorial ministers responsible for Aboriginal affairs and national Aboriginal leaders is critical to improving socio-economic conditions for all Aboriginal peoples.

Further, they agreed that many priorities are shared between working group members and the federal government. Where policies and programs exist or are contemplated in shared priority areas, federal government participation will be critical to achieving concrete, measurable results for all Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

Minister Strahl thanked the provincial, territorial and Aboriginal working group for inviting him to their meeting. On behalf of the federal government, he looks forward to reviewing the recommendations of the working group and to working closely with the provinces, territories and Aboriginal organizations through the partnerships approach established over the last couple of years, which has already yielded results. The minister also said he would make his officials available to assist the working group officials.

The working group reiterated the premiers’ call for a First Ministers’ Meeting on Aboriginal issues, and committed to report its recommendations to them just before the next Council of the Federation meeting scheduled for August 2010 in Manitoba. Ministers and leaders chose two priority areas to be dealt with through the working group’s new process. These priorities include: education and skills training and economic development.

Education and Skills Training

Ministers and leaders agreed to work with ministers of education on specific priority areas identified through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, in addition to agreements and processes already in place. There would be an initial focus on K-12 education, with expanded opportunities on other elements along the lifelong learning continuum in the medium to long term.

Topics for further discussions could range from early childhood development to enhanced post-secondary opportunities for all Aboriginal peoples.

Economic Development

Increasing economic opportunities for Aboriginal peoples is a key priority. The working group will focus on finding ways to explore, enhance and advance economic development in ways that respect the needs and interests of all parties concerned.

Topics could address areas such as impediments to economic development, supporting entrepreneurship, or improving trade opportunities and energy sources for Aboriginal communities and peoples.

Health & Well-being

In addition to the two identified priority areas, participants acknowledged that the area of health and well-being is fundamental to achieving progress in those two identified areas. Integral to this area is responding to the issues of violence against Aboriginal women, and missing and murdered Aboriginal women which requires a national, coordinated effort. They agreed that health and well-being would be discussed more broadly at a meeting of the working group in April 2010.

Recommendations adopted by the Working Group

1. That provincial and territorial Ministers responsible for Aboriginal Affairs and the five national Aboriginal organizations (1) leaders commit to ongoing dialogue by participating on the Aboriginal Affairs Working Group with a view to identifying and implementing concrete and tangible actions to improve outcomes for First Nation, Inuit and Métis peoples in the priority areas discussed at the October 29, 2009, meeting.

2. That education and economic development be tabled as topics for further exploration at the meeting of Ministers and national Aboriginal organization leaders on October 29, 2009, with the aim of jointly selecting specific areas for further exploration and initial work.

3. That provincial, territorial and Aboriginal officials be directed to begin immediate work, with their federal counterparts, within the selected topics and return to the Aboriginal Affairs Working Group with recommendations for concrete and tangible activities that could be taken by governments and national Aboriginal organizations. This work would take the form of one or more discussion documents or action plans with recommended areas for actions to be tabled at the next Working Group meeting proposed for April 2010.

4. That provincial and territorial Ministers and national Aboriginal organization leaders connect the work of the Working Group to other forums and processes as appropriate; and work toward a First Ministers’ Meeting on Aboriginal issues in 2010. The First Ministers’ Meeting would serve as the key vehicle to launch a plan to achieve concrete and tangible outcomes for First Nation, Inuit and Métis peoples consistent with the objectives of each of the parties.

5. That special attention is paid to the need for a distinct basis of dialogue for First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples consistent with the objectives of each of the parties.

6. That the approach should fully integrate the needs and perspectives of women, urban populations, youth and other issues.

FEDERAL RELATIONS | ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS WORKING GROUP

Government & Métis leaders meet Cross-Canada cooperation on Aboriginal priorities key to achieving concrete results

Ministers and leaders of the National Aboriginal Organizations meet in Toronto, Oct. 29, 2009

Métis Nation leaders, Minister Strahl meet to discuss economic development

The Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, welcomed the new Metis National Council President Chartier and Aboriginal Affairs Ministers from the five western-most provinces met in Calgary during the week of December 18th to discuss Métis Nation economic development.

This meeting of Ministers and Métis leaders stems from part in from the Métis Nation Protocol, signed in September, 2008, by President Chartier and Minister Strahl. The Protocol commits the Government of Canada to work with the MNC and its governing members on issues important to the Métis Nation.

“This was a historic meeting that brought federal, provincial and Métis leadership to share best practices on Aboriginal economic development issues, challenges and opportunities facing Métis people across the country,” said Minister Strahl.

“Through our Federal Framework for Aboriginal Economic Development, we are committed to fundamental change in the approach to supporting Aboriginal economic development, one that finds concrete solutions to ensure that Métis, First Nation and Inuit fully share in economic opportunities across Canada”.

On December 15, 2009, in Calgary, Alberta, the Ministers and Métis leaders discussed the challenges and opportunities of fostering the Métis Nation’s economic development initiatives and programs. It was agreed we would meet again in 2010 and report back on tangible results achieved.

“Making communities communities ‘investment ready’ is one area where the partnership of federal, provincial and Métis governments will pay the biggest dividends,” said President Chartier.

“The economic opportunities before us are great and I am confident we can, and will, work collaboratively towards their realization.”

The meeting was followed by a two-day Métis Economic Development Symposium aimed at bringing together leaders from the five western-most provinces, the federal government, the Métis National Council and its Governing Members, the Métis Settlements General Council and private sector to discuss new and innovative ways to more effectively utilize existing provincial and federal programs and services to support Métis Nation economic development goals.
Aboriginal Affairs Minister talks harvesting with Fort Frances Métis

During October, 2009, Ontario’s Aboriginal Affairs Minister, Brad Duguid, had a chance to hear directly from the Métis on the challenges they face in the fishing, logging and trapping industries. The opportunity arose during a weekend visit to Fort Frances, the first of several community visits planned for the Minister by the MNO Lands, Resources and Consultations Branch. The visits are designed to bring Métis issues to the Minister in a personal way and provide an opportunity for him to engage with Métis citizens on a one to one basis.

A cool Fort Frances day greeted Minister Duguid and his Executive Assistant, Tamar Heisler, as they stepped off the plane. The visit was hosted by MNO President Gary Lipinski and Simcoe-Muskoka Council President Clint Calder.

The visit began with a tour of Fort Frances with stops at the Calder Memorial and Fisher’s Point Park. Brian Tucker of the Lands, Resources and Consultations Branch joined the group and Minister Duguid was briefed on the history of the local community and the contributions of Métis families to the town and the region.

The second stop was at Blaine and Janice Tucker’s commercial fishery. Blaine was at the controls as the boat sped across Rainy Lake to the fishery. First, the group joined Blaine to lift a commercial fishing net. Back at the fishery, Blaine gave a fish processing demonstration and a tour of the fishery facilities. Throughout the day President Lipinski, Blaine, and Brian used every opportunity to speak to the minister about the fishing, trapping and logging industries in the area with a focus on the challenges for Métis.

The final stop was the Sunset Country Métis Hall, where preparations were underway for the Fall Harvest Dinner. Minister Duguid and Tamar Heisler met with local Métis and were introduced to wild rice harvesting and preparation, trapping and furs, and beading and sewing.

The visit, which was organized to demonstrate to the Minister and the province the New Relationships Funding (NRF) in action, was deemed a success by the MNO. The Lands Resources and Consultations Branch has plans for many similar visits across the province. Not only is it an opportunity to ensure the province is made aware of the other NRF successes, it is also a chance to demonstrate the unique, community based governance structures that support the Métis Nation of Ontario.

Site 41 protest organizers receive recognition

Last summer the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) supported the Council of Canadians and its efforts to have Simcoe County halt construction of the North County Landfill known as “Site 41.”

“The Métis Nation of Ontario wants to add its voice to the growing chorus of individuals and groups who are strongly opposed to Site 41,” said Gary Lipinski, MNO President. “We endorse the plan by the Council of Canadians to pursue appropriate legal action aimed at halting construction activity at the site.”

Finally, on September 23rd Simcoe County councillors voted to permanently close the site. After Site 41, the proposed garbage dump in Tiny Township that would have opened this past fall.

On November 26th, as part of World Peace Week, the YMCA of Simcoe-Muskoka presented protesters Elizabeth Brass Elson, Vicki Monague, and Shelley Easson with the YMCA Peace Medallion. The women accepted on behalf of the Anishinabek Kweag and all of the peaceful protesters at dump Site 41.

The YMCA Peace Medallion recognizes the achievements of individuals and groups in local communities who—without any special resources—demonstrate in their lives and activities the values expressed in the World Alliance of YMCA’s 1981 Statement of Peace, which states, in part: “Peace has many dimensions. It is not only a state of non-violence, but cannot expect to live in a world of peace if we are unable to live in peace with those close to us—even those who differ from us.”

Martina Wahl, a team leader at the Midland YMCA Employment Resource Centre, emphasized and praised the peaceful nature of the Anishinabek Kweag protest. “Weapons, drugs and alcohol were expressly forbidden at the camp,” she said. “Those who offered to come to show support through force were turned away. Even when some protesters were arrested for blocking the gates, respectful and cordial relationships (with police) continued.”

During the 137 days that the peaceful protest camp was in existence thousands of people became inspired to join in the cause to prevent the danger to the Alliston Aquifer.

A few thoughtful women inspired an immense political undertaking, while never varying from their original purpose of a small peaceful protest camp.

MÉTIS SENATORS:

The next time you’re surfing the web you might like to check out Durham Region’s Art of Transition website (www.artoftransition.ca/?p=66). This link will take you to a short video of Senator Olivine Bouquets tiederna of Oshawa, speaking about respect for the land.

ARCHAEOLOGY:

Bones of 1,000 year old Aboriginal person found on BC First Nation

Bones found at a Saanich B.C. construction site are believed to be the 1,000-year-old remains of an 18-year-old aboriginal person. An archaeologist who reviewed the site said, “We don’t know if the bones are from one individual, or several individuals.”

The bones, which include part of a skull, a knee and a leg, are being examined by the Provincial Archaeology Branch and the police in an effort to confirm the bones’ heritage and whether more bones may be found at the site.

The property where the bones were discovered may have been an aboriginal settlement at one time and had been designated as an archaeological site in October, 2008, when an Archaeological Impact Assessment was conducted there. Under the Heritage Conservation Act, the landowner was required to obtain a permit before digging. However, it seems that no permit was granted for the new-home construction.

It appears that the Songhees First Nation will take possession of the bones. Charges could be laid if the conservation act was violated.

For more information on the Songhees First Nation visit www.songheesnation.com
Aboriginal culture comes to life at FESS

Métis cultural outreach:

**Métis youth carry Olympic Torch**

The first of four Métis youths from Ontario who had the honour of carrying the Olympic Torch on one leg of the 2010 Olympic Torch Relay across Canada completed her run in Ottawa on December 12th. Thirteen-year-old Jessica Contant from Cochrane was nominated by her community. She carried the torch at the beginning of the relay’s Ontario leg, travelling with it from Gatineau, Quebec, to Ottawa. Contant met the relay convoy in Quebec and travelled by bus with several other torchbearers to Ottawa. She proudly carried the torch for 580 metres just as the sun began to set. “It felt great carrying the torch,” Jessica said. “It was an honour and I’m glad I was chosen.”

Contant was met with cheers and a congratulatory cake by proud members of her family and the Ottawa Métis Council. While in Ottawa, the torch made a stop at 24 Sussex Drive, where it was met by Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s wife, Laureen, and her daughter, Rachel. A “cauldron lighting” ceremony took place on Parliament Hill, where members of the public gathered for hot chocolate, beaversails, and the lighting of Ottawa’s Christmas display.

The grade 10 student is especially excited about being able to share her experience with her community and schoolmates through presentations she will be making in her hometown of Cochrane in coming months.

Following its time in Ottawa, the torch continued travelling west to Kanata and Carleton Place. Meanwhile, Janine Landry was into her fourth week as a “Flame Attendant”. She met up with two Métis youths from Ontario on December 29th when James Callaghan carried the torch in Collingwood and Alexander Young carried it in Midland.

PCNMO Youth Representative, Nicholas Callaghan, carried the torch on the relay’s journey from Timmins to Sudbury. On January 2nd, while James Callaghan carried the torch in Collingwood and Alexander Young carried it in Midland.

Jessica Contant of Cochrane carries the 2010 Olympic flame in Ottawa on December 12, 2009.

**Métis elder carries Olympic Torch**

On the many honours Métis Elder Elsie Yanik has received over the years, the idea of carrying the Olympic torch never entered her mind.

The Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic Games selected 92-year-old Elsie Yanik as the final torch bearer for the Port McMuray leg of the relay on November 6. Yanik has received many awards for her volunteer work over the years including the Wild Rose Foundation Volunteer of the Year Award, the Lifetime Achievement Governor General’s Commemorative Medal, four regional Aboriginal Recognition Awards, and the Keyano College Distinguished Citizen Award.

“I thought it was a joke; one of my friends playing a joke,” Yanik laughed. “I’m so excited and it’s hard to believe. It’s a great honour for me... I just hope they don’t ask me to run.”

**Aboriginal culture comes to life at FESS**

Students at Fort Erie Secondary School (FESS) had a unique opportunity to experience and become engaged in Aboriginal culture during the fall of 2009. Over the course of six weeks, professional canoe builder Marcel Labelle constructed a traditional birch bark canoe on-site at the school. Usually the keel and ribs of such a craft are constructed first, using cedar planks split from a log. Then the “skin” is placed over the form. The birch bark skin is sewn to the gunwales with spruce root and then the ribs are inserted and the birch bark is stretched over the form. The seams are sealed with spruce resin. Only the outer bark of the birch tree is harvested, leaving the living layer intact. Typically the bark is peeled away from the tree in long pieces—the length of the canoe if possible. The bark is like tough leather. It is difficult to tear.

Labelle described the project as a hands-on learning experience. “I will be giving students a chance to be part of this build from start to finish. They will be able to do everything from splitting the rings used to sew the canoe to constructing the ribs for the craft.” Absolutely nothing is store bought.

FESS teacher, Rhonda Maracle-Gerritsen, says this project dovetails with the school’s Native Studies program. “First Nations people have a very proud tradition of canoe building. It will be very inspiring for students to witness first-hand the expertise, care and traditions that are part of canoe building.”

On Wednesday, October 28, the school held a celebration to honour the beginning of construction. Students from the Native Studies class joined with the Ohniya-kara drum group for an afternoon of song and dance.

The canoe build was an Aboriginal arts project funded through the Ontario Arts Council. Once completed, the canoe will be donated to the Niagara Region Métis Council.

Marcel Labelle is proud of his Métis heritage. His mother is Iroquois and French and his father is Algonquin and French. Marcel grew up in northern Ontario and spent most of his childhood on the trap line. This is where he learned how to live with and from the forest. Today, he builds traditional birch bark canoes and demonstrates his craft at many venues.

**A Métis man meets the mascots**

“While I was walking around in the crowd talking to people I was asked to have my picture taken with the mascots,” Stephen said. “It was a day I will never forget, and will never see again, it was a once in a lifetime opportunity for many of us. I was also privileged to be able to share with the many who asked who I was and who the Métis people are.”
**HISTORIC SAULT STE. MARIE MÉTIS COUNCIL:**

Métis colours fly with flags of all nations

**by JACK LEROUX**

Last summer the City of Sault Ste. Marie decided to honour its multicultural roots by installing flags representing the origins of its citizenry. The City Council approved a budget of up to $50,000 for the project to erect 21 flagpoles in Clergue Park, adjacent to the Ross Ramsey Way entrance of the waterfront park. The project was inspired by Sudbury, where 57 flags of various nations are proudly flown over the Paris Street Bridge, symbolizing multiculturalsim, unity and peace and demonstrating pride and respect for all cultures.

On October 18th, 2009, the following flags were raised: First Nations, Métis, Canada, Austria, Belgium, Croatia, England, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Scotland, Sweden, United States, and Wales.


We are indeed fortunate to have hired an office coordinator to take charge of our gathering place. We welcome Melanie Hamilton, who will be the person you meet at the telephone or at the office. If you visit in person, Melanie has been involved in the Métis community from a very young age and is not stranger to many of you. The office number is 519-370-0435.

We appreciate those volunteers who have served the past two years, and thank them for their time participation in vital community, social, business and cultural events. If you are self-employed and have a business of your own, you are asked to register it for future reference by calling Ray Racicot, our Protocol Committee Rep at 519-363-3663. Métis specific companies are being sought to provide an Aboriginal presence in the workforce. There are many educational and social services for youth, education in health care; for apprenticeships; for re-entering the workplace; for returning to school; for those needing to travel a distance to work; for those with disabilities, etc. The MNO website keeps you posted on educational opportunities.

— by Senator Leaora Wilson

**Another successful Métis Summer Picnic**

The Harrison Park Community Centre buzzed with activity on June 26th, 2009, as the GBPMC held their annual Aboriginal Day Picnic. The appearance of the picnic, past president Dixon held a hallowed workshop. The hallowed was served at the picnic, along with bison stew, venison stew, rice dishes, baked beans, many salads, and desserts provided by community members.

The day of the picnic began with a downpour, but by the day was over, the rain had let up. People arrived in everything from campers to motorcycles to mini scooters. We had seniors in their 90’s, babies under one year, and many ages in between. We marched to the hall for our grand entry with flags (Canada, Métis and Unison Jack) flying proudly, pained by several invited dignitaries. Past president Dixon performed a smudged and Senator Wilson delivered a prayer. Senator St Germain took a dish of traditional food to our ancestors at our historic Métis community, now Hibou Park.

The RCB Band and the Rudy and Joan Coursier Band performed during the afternoon. We are fortunate to have these masters among our citizens. Our resident jigger began juggling lessons outside, and gave basic instructions, avoiding the puddles, instilling hope that one day we will have a jigging group who will go further and become more adept.

**NEW PROTOCOL REP FOR GBPMC**

Newly elected President Ray Racicot is doing our community proud as our GOSM protocol rep for MNO Georgian Bay Region and is heavily involved in local ‘Duty To Consult’ issues. It is hoped that as a result of the hard work of Ray and colleagues, the community at large will develop better awareness of our people and our place in the history of this area. — Senator Leaora Wilson

**Owen Sound & Saugene Métis amalgamation**

Hank Rowlinson represented the MNO at a general assembly of affiliated area Métis in Owen Sound on October 7th. The key proposal was to amalgamate the former Saugene Chapter with Grey-Owen Sound, so the territory could seamlessly sustain MNO representation.

The proposal received unanimous support and a new charter will be drawn up and signed. — Senator Leaora Wilson

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 12**

**Tenders Welcome from Métis Businesses**

Hydro ONE has requested a list of Métis businesses. If you know of any businesses in the Owen Sound Area please send them to Ray Racicot (knowledge@distributed.com) or call Alden Barby, Consultation Assessment Coordinator, Lands, Resources and Consultation, MNO Phone: 705-526-6555.

**GREY-BRUCE PENINSULA MÉTIS COUNCIL**

The Grey Bruce Peninsula Métis community is expanding by amalgamating with the Saugeen community. We welcome all new members and pray that we can fill your needs with expanded services in the present office structure.

— by Senator Leaora Wilson

**Elder bake and craft days at the offices of the North Bay Métis Council in November 2009.**

September, December 9th was their annual holiday season open house featuring meat pies (all those onion tears).

The new 2009 council supported a project put forward by the previous council and accepted by Ontario Trillium Foundation. A volunteer committee was formed for the project, with Mel Jameson as its chair. It is the committee’s intention to collect local Métis history; assess the Métis identity in the North Bay area; and, to explore governance. During meetings to be held in 2010, “Memory Harvest” will be looking for stories from Métis citizens in North Bay, Mattawa, Sturgeon Falls and one more location. Afterwards a webpage will be put up to the North Bay Métis Council citizens to access, which will also include contact with the Health and Training branches at the Métis Nation of Ontario Centre: Get on our email information list: cockburn@live.com.

**Councillor Doris Evans.**

**Community Council News**

**A ROUND BLUE SKY**

by BRIAN COCKBURN

On November 26th and 27th, 2009, Métis aged 55 plus hosted their 27th, 2009, Métis aged 55 plus hosted their 27th, 2009, “Memory Harvest” will be an annual holiday season open house featuring meat pies (all those onion tears).

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**CONTINUED ON PAGE 12**
Peel Region hosts annual Aboriginal Celebration

This past June 6th, the Credit River Métis Council (CRMC) had a booth at the Region of Peel’s “A Gathering – Peel’s Aboriginal Celebration.” Over 3,000 people attended the family event and the Credit River Métis Council made a huge contribution to its success.

Chief Bryan Lalonde of the Mississaugas of the New Credit welcomed everyone to Chinguacousy Park, on the traditional lands of the Mississaugas, and MNO Chair, France Picotte, brought greetings from the Métis Nation of Ontario. Councillor, Joe Paquette, was in attendance as the Métis Elders: Vice-President, Clayton Cadeau, was a fire-keeper; Youth Rep., Kevin Alves, was stage manager; Senator Alis Kennedy did moccasin and bead-making demonstrations; Secretary/Treasurer, Judy Moreau, looked over the seniors’ tent; and, MNO Vice-Chair, Sharon McBride and Debbie Alves did medicine pouch and sash weaving workshops. Our two newest members, Councillor David Babcock and Councillor Donna Greer, helped out at our booth and answered questions about the Métis. Special thanks go to Helen Lewis-Fitzgerald from the Region of Peel for including CRMC on the planning committee.

Friends with venison

“Abundance” is the only word to describe Harvest Dinner

by TERRYLYN LONGPRE

Friday, November 13, 2009

The Welland Health and Wellness Centre, Niagara Regional Métis Council (NRMC) and citizens, held their annual “Harvest Dinner.”

I can only think of one word that would describe this event in its entirety and that is “abundance.” The number of participants registered was 100. The number of attendees was 133. This surpassed all expectations.

As the guests registered they were greeted by the sounds of fiddlers and guitarists, courtesy of the Welland Seniors Centre who looked after the seniors’ tent; Senator Joe Poitras from Oshawa Métis Council; MNO Vice-chair, Sharon McBride; Shannon Babcock beside MP Dr. Ruby Dhalla; Region 8 Councillor, Charlie File; and Credit River Métis Councillor, David Babcock, with daughter Emily.

Georgian Bay Métis Council Election Results

November 29, 2009

President: Allen Vallely (elected)
Chair: Ken Fraser (acclaimed)
Secretary: Dave Dusome (acclaimed)
Treasurer: Helen Bradley (elected)
Women’s Rep: Patricia Taylor (appointed)
Councilor: John Paradis (acclaimed)
Councilor: Brenda Laurin (acclaimed)
Councilor: Roxanne Shank (acclaimed)

Georgian Bay Métis Council
Ontario Power Generation
New Nuclear at Darlington Project

Ontario Power Generation (OPG) is an Ontario-based electricity generation company whose principal business is the generation and sale of electricity in Ontario. Our focus is on the efficient production and sale of electricity from our generation facilities, while operating in a safe, open and environmentally responsible manner. OPG’s 12,000 employees are from nearly every trade, profession and skill set. We encourage a culture of respect and we value each person’s diversity, unique background, experience, perspective and talents. One example of our commitment is the $4,000 John Wesley Beaver Memorial Scholarship, which is granted each year by OPG to post-secondary students of Native ancestry (Métis, Status, Non-Status, or Inuit). Please visit the community section of our website (www.opg.com) for more information on OPG’s scholarship programs.

In 2006, OPG was directed by the province to begin the federal approvals process for new nuclear generation at an existing site, including an environmental assessment (EA). The proposed Darlington New Nuclear Project would involve the construction and operation of up to four reactors at OPG’s existing Darlington Nuclear site in Bowmanville, ON. To ensure that a Métis perspective was included in this EA, OPG established an Aboriginal Engagement Program which encouraged knowledge sharing with communities and facilitated their involvement throughout the EA study process. The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), and the Oshawa and Northumberland Métis Councils have met with OPG staff on several occasions in the past year and have helped build a meaningful dialogue for this project. These meetings have helped OPG, the MNO and the councils achieve greater understanding of the project and how it may relate to Métis interests. The MNO and participating councils have recently identified “Traditional Ecological Knowledge” as an important area of work. OPG and the MNO have established a working relationship to document traditional Métis uses of plants found on the new build site.

On September 30, 2009, OPG submitted the New Nuclear at Darlington Environmental Impact Statement and Licence to Prepare Site Application to a federally appointed Joint Review Panel. These documents will be subject to a six-month public and technical review by federal and provincial authorities, technical experts, the public and the Joint Review Panel, which is currently scheduled to be complete in May 2010. OPG will continue to work with the Métis community during this time.

For more information about the OPG New Nuclear at Darlington Project, please visit www.opg.com/newbuild or call our toll-free number at 1-866-487-6006.
Riel Day

Métis across the Homeland Commemorate Louis Riel Day, Monday November 16, 2009

By JANET LEADER

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) joined other provincial Métis governments from across the Métis Homeland in commemorating Louis Riel. The Métis leader was executed by the Canadian Government on November 16, 1885, for leading the Northwest Rebellion.

In response, Louis Riel led an uprising, the rebellion that Canada established a new province, Manitoba. Riel was executed for his role in the rebellion.

Today is a solemn day of commemoration for a man who paid the ultimate price in attempting to secure justice for Métis people and protect their way of life," said Gary Lipinski, MNO President. "While Riel’s fight for justice on the battlefield is perhaps most remembered, it is also important to recognize the political gains he made through the establishment of a Provincial Government in Manitoba.

Three flags for Riel

By BARBARANNE WRIGHT

The Niagara Region Métis Council has been busy promoting Louis Riel Day within the Region for 2009. On November 13th, the Métis flag was raised in Welland for the third year in a row. That evening we toppled off the day with our Niagara Region Métis Harvest Dinner. Alicia Blore offered her talents on the fiddle with a backup group organized by the Health Care Team. Friends were made and a good time was had by all.

Thanks go out to our MNO staff and volunteers for helping to make this event a great success. We had a record turnout (nearly 100 people) and found we will need a larger hall for next year.

On November 16th, 2009, at 11:00 A.M. we had a ceremony in St. Catharines for the second year in a row. That afternoon a number of dedicated citizens and volunteers who stayed involved and try to attend events as they happen.

The Métis Nation of Ontario along with his family. We are growing in this area and are so proud to say: “We are Métis”.

In Welland Nov. 13/09
Maison demands for new Canadians.

Riel makes overdue appearance in guide for new Canadians

By LINDA LORD

Like so many Métis, Louis Riel did not exist—at least not in the study guide which was given to new Canadians. However, that has changed. Riel is now included in Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship.

“Riel was executed for leading the Northwest Rebellion. The rebellion was a fight for justice for Métis people and protect their way of life,” said Gary Lipinski, MNO President. "While Riel’s fight for justice on the battlefield is perhaps most remembered, it is also important to recognize the political gains he made through the establishment of a Provincial Government in Manitoba.

The Métis Nation of Ontario along with his family. We are growing in this area and are so proud to say: “We are Métis”. 

Barbaranne Wright, U.E. I is the Niagara Region Métis Council’s Women's Rep and Genealogist.
Riel’s fate debated in the House again

On Riel Day, 2009, Pat Martin, Member of Parliament for Winnipeg Centre, used the following statement to appeal to parliament:

“Mr. Speaker, today I call upon Parliament to set the history books straight and reverse the conviction of Louis Riel for high treason and instead recognize his role as the founder of the province of Manitoba, a Father of Confederation and the champion of the rights of the Métis people.

Louis Riel was elected president of the territory that he represented in 1873 and negotiated its entry into Confederation as Canada’s fifth province on the condition that he be formally recognized, commemorated and celebrated, I hope, in the building of Canada. The conviction of Louis Riel be reversed and that this historic role in the building of Canada be formally recognized, commemorated and celebrated.

It is consistent with history, justice and respect for the rights of the Métis people that the conviction of Louis Riel be reversed and that his historic role in the building of Canada be formally recognized, commemorated and celebrated.

Mr. Martin’s appeal, in turn, provoked the Dominion Institute to comment.

The Dominion Institute, Winnipeg MP Pat Martin says Métis leader Louis Riel was wrongfully convicted for treason 124 years ago in Regina, where he was hanged by the neck until dead. Mr. Martin is thus demanding that Riel’s case be treated like all wrongful convictions.

He wants his record cleared and his good name restored.

The validity of Riel’s trial for the events known as the Northwest Rebellion was challenged at the time by the Métis and French-Canadians, who regarded his execution as unjust. At the time passed, other arguments were advanced to show the trial was unfair, including the view that Riel was insane, or that the inexperienced government in Ottawa had failed to protect the Métis against the violence by ignoring the real grievances of the Métis, who were being flooded from defending themselves. The government should have known, for example, that cornered animals (and men) fight viciously when survival is at stake.

By DESNEIGE TAYLOR

The snow is here glowing brightly and winter activities have begun again. It’s time to test and ready skidoos, get the sleds out and sharpen the skates.

This season the Community Wellness programs will be focusing on family violence, poverty, gambling and of course skating. It is important to remember that many of our clients cannot get out in the cold because they are afraid of falling and hurting themselves. If you can’t exercise outside, remember to go outside at least once a day (even if you just stand by your front door) and breathe in the fresh crisp air.

The Sudbury Métis Council members were in attendance at Tom David Square, when John Rodriguez, the Mayor of Sudbury, declared that November 16, 2009, should be recognized as a day for fair Métis people in Sudbury, in memory of Louis Riel who fought bravely for our Métis rights.

In order to honour Riel we gathered to raise the Métis flag after the declaration was read.

It is important to remember who we are and to be proud of all our cultural backgrounds. It is important to remember we come from a diverse country that offers freedom and nature’s glory. It is important to remember to give thanks for the crisp air this comes only once a year and not at all in some countries.

Desneige Taylor is the Community Wellness Coordinator for the Sudbury Métis Council.

Sudbury Métis Council members at Tom David Square, with John Rodriguez, Mayor of Sudbury

Métis flag raised in Sudbury

You can’t tell a book by its cover

Over the last decade I have been honoured and privileged to represent our Nation at many assemblies, gatherings, government conferences, meetings, impromptu get-togethers, and parties. I have been welcomed in all corners of our Homeland and have been blessed with meeting hundreds of our citizens.

When it comes to the citizens, I have met tall ones, short ones large and small ones. I have met citizens who have little education and others who hold doctorates. I have met doctors and politicians, teachers and labourers, retired people and those not yet started on the journey of a working person. I have seen those newly brought into the world and honoured those who have left it. I know many who are “straight”, others that are “two spirited”, some who are spiritual and others with no spiritual beliefs. I have met some with physical disabilities and some who excelled in all types of physical pursuits. I have met some citizens who have struggled with addictions, be they problems with drugs, gambling, alcohol or other vices.

All of these people I have met and others I may not have mentioned—have one thing in common, they are all proud citizens of the Métis Nation of Ontario. They are citizens proud of their heritage, citizens who rejoice in the collective rights of their nationhood.

Desneige Taylor is the PGMNO Executive Senator. She can be reached at retag@matinisation.org.

The physical attributes of our citizens may vary; some of us look or acts the same as any other, but the one constant is that we are all Métis. We must look deeper than mere surface appearance to recognize our extended Métis family members. It matters not that one has dark hair or dark skin... What matters is that we are Métis.
T he Community Wellness office in Thunder Bay was an active place this past autumn. There were crafting workshops where we made relish and pickles; a bead-making group has been meeting since October; and many programs have been run with our weekly breakfast program. The EIS (Electro Interstitial Scan) and Diabetes Awareness Days were well attended successful events. As well, we have been able to offer free foot care once a month, right to our clients. If you are diabetic or have ongoing foot problems and need to use the services of a chiropodist contact Community Wellness to access this service.

Phase 1 for the next few months include a number of topics. We are lucky to have received a donation of pickles for a feast. We plan on addressing such topics as addictions, family violence awareness, and problem gambling.

On the lighter side, quilting out loud in the nursing home within the near future. Come and enjoy, our beautiful winter in a fun, healthy environment. The bead- ing group will continue to meet if this is something you already enjoy and would like some company. This is something you would like to learn how to do, contact the Wellness Coordinator, Gloria McLean.

If you would like more information about the programs offered by the Health Branch over the winter months, contact me at ext. 807- 624-5222. I would be glad to dis- cuss what’s been planned.

ABORIGINAL DIABETES EDUCATION PROGRAM | HEALTH RESEARCH PROJECT

New Diabetes project

The Métis Nation of Ontario Health Branch is happy to announce that it has recently completed Phase 1 of its ADEP project reaching out to Metis communities across Ontario. The ADEP is a provincially funded endeavour delivering diabetes prevention information to Ontario’s at risk Aboriginal population.

Shelley Gonneville, Aboriginal Diabetes Education Program, who is also responsible for provincial diabetes projects, devised this year’s initiative to provide health status information to the province’s Métis in October and November, 2009. (Phase 1) and January (Phase 2) at 14 sites: Bancroft, Chapleau, Cochrane, Dryden, Fort Frances, Kenora, Midland, North Bay, Ottawa, Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Timmins, and Wolland. During these visits, participants received education material on diabetes prevention and lowering risks for complic- ations as well as a two-part physical evaluation (the latter includes a basic health assessment along with an EIS Scan (see sidebar), a Health Canada approved Class 2 physical examination.) Participants are also given health improvement recommendations.

This project offers the ANM Health Branch Chronic Disease Surveillance Project a fantastic opportunity to monitor many health status and healthcare data on Ontario Métis while pro- moting the importance of research initiatives to the Métis at large. In brief, Mario R. Gravelle, Chronic Disease Surveillance Project Coordinator, will use the collected aggregate data from the ADEP Research Project to exam- ine the health status of the Métis, including lifestyle and socioeco- nomic factors that determine a person’s health. This information will be divided by region, sex, and age group to see if significant diff- erences exist. The plan will further be developed following the two visits that will include recommenda- tions for closing the health gap between the Métis and the province’s non-Aboriginal popula- tion. The Ministry of Health and Long-term Care will receive the final report at the end of March, 2010, and a link to this material from the MNO web site will be provided to the Vojaguy in the spring.

In winters and the Elderly

by GLEN LIPINSKI

T he above headline does not seem to fit, does it? But, substance abuse among seniors has become a silent epidemic. There is an emerging interest and awareness around the problem of prescrip- tion drug abuse.

About 10% of seniors either abuse or misuse medications, another 10% abuse alcohol, and some mix both. Some seniors have started to self medicate by changing their prescribed med- ical levels, for example, they may be prescribed one tablet twice a day but cut their tablets in half and take one a day. They then sell the other one. This could dramatically affect the health and well being of that sen- nor.

The problem is expected to get worse as the population ages, with the addictions foundation predicting that the number of seniors who need addiction treat- ment will triple by 2020. A growing number of senior citizens are being charged with a crime that authorities say is escalating. Elderly people are reselling their painkillers and other medications to addicts.

One group of people are on a fixed income, perhaps drawing only a few hundred dollars per month—enough to buy medicine, pay bills for H1N1 vaccines, etc. They will often sell half of them for themselves and sell the other half to help pay their utility bills or buy groceries. Many people 60 years of age or older are selling prescription medications to supplement their income.

Elderly offenders used to be seen as weak. Now, many local jails face increased costs because they need to care for old and often sickly inmates. Older inmates require more care and attention and thereby put a strain on the system.

Elderly people may be looking for a way to bring in a little extra money; we know college stu- dents and young people already do this. It’s not so much of a stretch to think that seniors could do it too.

One physician spoke of one of her patients, a reformed drug addict, who bought all his drugs from a local pharmacy contractor, but from elderly people.

Some physicians have turned to random drug screenings to make sure their patients are tak- ing their prescription drugs instead of selling them. In addi- tion, staffs routinely call patients and ask them to bring their prescription bottles in so that the pills can be counted.

Senior citizens may not always understand the seriousness of selling prescription drugs. They justify it because they’re having a hard time financially. With today’s depressed econ- omy we are seeing an increased opportunity (in the selling of pre- scription medications) for people to make extra money. If you’re seeing a disproportionate num- ber of seniors selling drugs, it’s because they are the people who are being prescribed most of the drugs.

Our seniors and our elders are important members of our communi- ties. We need to continually take steps to ensure that the safety and proper care of seniors and elders is at the top of everyone’s list. We must all be vigilant and watch for any signs of abuse of prescription drugs. We listen to and pay tribute to our seniors, recognize their contributions and treat them with respect and care that they have earned.

For assistance or information on substance abuse contact your local NMO Health Branch Office.

Community wellness initiatives

by LESLEY HAGAR

T his being my first article; I will introduce myself. My name is Lesley Hagar, and I am the Community Wellness Coordinator in Ottawa, and have been since March. I’ve always felt that being Métis meant that something was being shared with me, something was mine that pulses through my veins, and includes years of history. Growing up in my home was rather “normal”. Being Métis as well as First Nation wasn’t something that we dis- cussed often, but we were aware of it. I have thought, though, in the fiddle started singing, and the guitars played along, they were soon joined by the sounds of spoons and tapping feet. The sound of the family laughing and singing are some of the happiest moments I can remember. Something deeper than that moments—the years of history, the stories shared, tales told and remembered, always to be passed down to the next generation.

That being said, I am honored to be able to join the Health Branch again, this time as the Community Wellness Coordinator. Since I have started here I have had the opportunity to work along- side the Ottawa Metis Council, several other Aboriginal agencies, local police and even CAS. Each has shared little pieces of knowledge that I try so hard to hold and have the opportunity to experience each client, watch them walk towards com- munity and see where they choose to share in their journey; and to lis- ten and learn from what their life paths have taught them. This position has been eye opening, and character forming. I have to say I thoroughly enjoy what I am doing. I wear many hats.

Over the past few months I have been able to help with the Ottawa Metis Council’s, first Annual Traditional Feast, Christmas exchange program, diabetes workshops with Southern Ontario Aboriginal Diabetes Initia- tive (SOADD), I have been launched, as diabetes/ health symposiums with Ottawa Public Health, Canadian Diabetes Aso- ciation, Odawa Native Friendship Centre, Wabano Centre, the Inuit Centre, and Mowwashin Lodge; as well as helping spread infor- mation for H1N1 awareness and
I s there anyone in the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) who hasn’t at least heard of Louise Goulding? Probably not, and most of us recognize her at once. Louise has been around from the beginning. She was one of the founding delegates in 1994 when the MNO was born.

Long before that, she and her ancestors lived traditional Métis lives in the Georgian Bay area, a place where human history has been woven into bays and islands. Take a look at some of the names. Some describe possibilities: Hope Island; White Cloud Island; and, Partridge Island. Some are descriptive: Sandy Island; Green Island; and, Flowerpot Island. On the mainland one can find a Snug Harbour, a Honey Harbour and a Sawlog Bay. South of Parry Sound are Wreck Island, Frying Pan Island, and Sans Souci Island. Who wouldn’t want to live on an island called “Without Care”? This is the home of one of the best known and respected families in the Métis Nation of Ontario—the LePage family of which Louise Goulding is a proud daughter. Her father, Louis, who passed away in November of 2002, Henri LePage, made a good part of his living as a commercial fisherman. In 1978 he bought some property on Frying Pan Island and opened Henry’s Fish Restaurant. Henri wanted to be able to sell his fish without having to deal with a “middle man”. I am happy to say that I was among those lucky enough to have had a meal at Henry’s place. Fish caught by experts, cleaned by experts, cooked by experts and served by experts. You just can’t beat that!

There are endless stories of Henry’s life on the “Watchers”, an island on which he built a dock and house. Louise recalls that, “...my father was also a fisherman”. My family used to have giantess Louise Goulding (Louise’s grandfa- ther) was married to Angélique Patruyanishin, an Ojibwa from Drummond Island.

It is Louise’s dedication to her extended Métis family—the MNO—that has brought her some of the recognition she deserves, in the form of the Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award.

Louise has been President of the River Valley Métis Council since 2004. In addition to the work required of a council president, she catches, cleans and cooks fish for community events; she encourages others to make donations; and, she supports Métis people obtain their citizenship cards.

Her involvement in genealogical research encouraged the Moon River Council to fund a research project of the area which led to the production of a 150 page book entitled, “The Strats of Mackinac to Georgian Bay: 300 Years of Métis History.”

Another extremely successful activity was the 2006 Métis (Abso- riginal) Day festivities at Muskoka Heritage Place in Huntsville. The event saw a couple hundred school children receive a firsthand account of Métis history and culture. This flourishing partnership has resulted in the Muskoka Heritage Place adding a Métis exhibit to their museum.

Since 2005, Louise has been the Co-Chair of the annual Métis Ren- dezvous, an event that brings together more than 600 people a year to celebrate Métis culture. Throughout the planning stages she arranges meetings, sets the agenda and does a lot of the follow-up. During the event she can be seen running all over the place, making sure that everything is going smoothly. The Métis Ren- dezvous has become financially self-sufficient. The proceeds from the fish supper and various raffles cover the costs of not only the event, but also the cost of butchering the game harvested for the community; Métis Elders and others in need. Louise has been Cap- tain of the Hunt for Region 7, since 1997.

Between 1999 and 2002, Louise was the Region 7 Councillor on the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO), and is presently a member of the board of directors of the MNO Development Corporation, but equally important are all of the hours willingly given to the community—hours that are unofficial and can’t be easily categorized. Someone said, “If I had to describe Louise LePage Goulding in a few words, I would need to say that she is a strong Métis woman who lives and breathes her culture, who takes pride in following Métis traditions, who continues to mentor not only her growing family, but other Métis citizens, a woman who is always available to roll up her sleeves and assist others in any task for the good of the Métis Nation.”

Another supporter commented that, “...anyone who knows Louise understands that she can’t just be a little involved in something. When she decides to be involved it’s full speed ahead and don’t stand in her way.”

Louise is a great role model and her love of the Métis culture and lifestyle is evident in the way she lives her life. As with her ancestors before her, much of her daily food comes from the waters of Georgian Bay and the lands that surround it. Like many Métis she is prepared to defend her way of life, as she said in a passionate speech about her family and the struggles endured yearly with the MNR by Métis harvesters. This speech delivered at the Law Society of Upper Canada’s Riel Day Panel brought the audience to tears.

Throughout the Métis population we find strong families and a great sense of pride in family history. Working hard for the community, respecting others, giving more than you take; Louise Goulding-LePage/Trudeau exemplifies these old-fashioned values, and in so doing she brings honour to her ancestors who lived amongst the Thirty Thousand Islands on the eastern shores of Georgian Bay, and by extension to all Métis.

Congratulations Louise! We honour you.
An Important Return
Métis veterans journey to Normandy, France to revisit Juno Beach

The number of Canada’s known Aboriginal war veterans generally includes only “Indians” and “Inuit” who actually signed up during the First, or Second World Wars, or during the Korean War. However, there appears to be no complete record of the actual number of Métis men and women who—over the years—volunteered for service in Canada’s wartime or peacetime armed forces. | BY DONN FOWLER

Accounting for all the aboriginals who served in the wartime Royal Canadian Navy (RCN), and Canadians organised as an overseas fighting force: (One in which my Métis grandfather—despite avoiding the incursion of the Fenians from the United States. At the time, great grandfather lived in Ontario.

My own father had already enlisted in September 1939 and was overseas by December, but because of serious injury he was returned to Canada in 1943 on the hospital ship, “Lady Nelson”, while I remained an overseas infantryman from 1940 to just before 1944 as a playing member of the Pipes and Drums of the 1st Battalion Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders, Canadian Army Active Force (CAAF).

I believe it necessary to relate this background so as to understand that, in Canada alone, there must be millions of our present total Canadian population who have not yet taken the trouble—personally or another—to become identified and officially registered as citizens of the Métis Nation.

Accordingly, when my telephone rang a few months ago, I found myself conversing with Executive Senator Reza Gordon of the PCMNO. That had been a kind of “get-to-know-you” call. At a later date, another phone call came from Maurice Sarrazin, President of the MNO Veterans’ Council, who asked me if I was “... healthy and still mobile...” to which I replied affirmatively. “I’m still on my feet at 84...” Maurice told me who he was and that I had been one of the few Métis selected to go back to Juno Beach in Normandy, for a unique Métis ceremony, during the week of November 8th to the 14th, 2009. He went on to tell me that all the arrangements were made and the information was in the process of being mailed to my Brockville home.

Once overseas, Maurice handed me a gift of a striking but darker sash with “Métis Nation Veteran” embroidered on one of the sash’s end pieces. Maurice also gave me a beautiful Louis Riel medal (#003) attached to a blue and white ribbon. I had been stunned by Maurice’s first contact. I had all that completed by Thursday the 6th of November—the day before my 84th birthday. I was now able to organise for the great adventure of returning to Normandy. Without going into the minute detail, here’s how that proceeded.

First, having the very generous particulars at hand from Ottawa, including a new Métis Sash—thanks to Monique Richard’s quick action at MNQ—and having set a timeline schedule for myself, I used some of my VIA-Rail points to travel to Ottawa on day one (November 8th). I departed the

Métis veterans outside the Juno Centre last November in Normandy, France.
An Important Return

By DONN FOWLER

I n 1937 began military service as a 12-year-old boy bandman "bugler" with the Princess of Wales' Royal Regiment, MG in Kingston, Ontario. I was trained in the use of firearms during the summer months at Connaught Ranges in Ottawa, by 24th June of 1940 I had left Kingston College and Vocational Institute and enlisted #1 (later #7) "K" Company at the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders of the Canadian Army (Armed Forces) (CAFM). The 1st Battalion of the "Glens" was mobilised in May, 1945, and convened as a complete battalion at the Kingston Fair Grounds. Members came from Cornwall, Brockville, Kingston, Peterborough, where I was born in the former, Chambly Township, Peterborough County, on the 7th of November, 1925. The "Glens" spent the winter housed in Lansdowne Park, Ottawa, and at the beginning of spring of 1941 for training and embarkation for D-Day. The 1st Battalion of the Canadian (Highland) Brigade (of the 3rd Canadian (Assault) Division.)

Our volunteer 3rd Canadian Division-like the two previous volunteer divisions before - finally set sail from Hamilton, Nova Scotia, on the 18th of July 1944 in a large convoy, and arrived in England about the 15th of July 1944 and embarked again for the beaches, in Aldershott, England. During the next three years 1941, 1942, and 1943 we trained individually and combat formations in a series of code-named mock battles "exercises" such as "Tiger", "Napoleon", and many others through England and Scotland, but we trained solely as fighting infantry units such as the 9th (Highland) Brigade of Highland Light Infantry of Canada (HLIC), North Nova Scotia Highlanders (PNSH) and the SGO. Usually we referred to ourselves as "Glengarians" and later as "The Glens" or our battle flag became "The Glens".

On July 6th, 1944, we were the last major combat unit to arrive in Normandy, but were not directly involved in the battle. But eventually we were assigned to the QM and the famous 3rd Canadian Division "Glens" occupied the Cassino area of the Italian front. The 13th of June 1944 was the beginning of the invasion of Italy. The German forces were pushed back by our infantry and our troops were free to continue the attack on the German positions. By the end of the war, the 13th Canadian Division had become one of the most decorated units in the Canadian army, with many medals and citations for their service.

The climax of the ceremony was a parade through downtown Kingston to mark the end of World War II. The parade included the entire division, with units from the 3rd Canadian Division leading the way. The parade was a huge success, and it marked the end of the war.

The soldiers were met with cheering crowds and a massive outpouring of emotion. Many families reunited, and the soldiers were welcomed back with open arms. The war had been a harsh and difficult time, but the return of the soldiers brought a sense of relief and hope to the nation.

The Glens have continued to play an important role in Canada's military history, and they remain a proudly Canadian institution to this day.
Honouring Aboriginal veterans for their extraordinary service

The Hon. Brad Duguid
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs

This time last year, not long after I became Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, I was meeting with Serpent River First Nation. I was honoured to have been invited by their Chief to attend their community’s Remembrance Day ceremonies in Elliot Lake.

In the year since, I’ve learned a great deal about the contributions that Aboriginal people have made to Canadian society.

First Nation, Métis and Inuit people aided the early economy through agriculture, and were key to forming the economy through the fur trade. But one of the most significant contributions has been their extraordinary military service as far back as the War of 1812 and before.

I’ve been reminded of this sacrifice every time I’ve attended a powwow. I’m always moved by the respect and recognition that is paid to First Nations veterans. Their recognition isn’t limited to one day a year.

To commemorate the contributions of Métis veterans, a monument has been erected on Juno Beach in France. The monument will be dedicated on Remembrance Day this year. I’ve learned in the past year that Aboriginal military service was inspired, in large part, by the friendship treaties and by loyalty to the Crown. And so when Canada entered into global conflicts during the first and second World Wars and in Korea, Aboriginal people volunteered en masse to support Canadian’s shared principles.

During this time, Six Nations of the Grand River provided more soldiers to the Canadian Armed Forces than any other First Nation. In one eastern Ontario First Nation, the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan, nearly every single able-bodied man volunteered to serve in the armed forces. The key word is volunteered. Aboriginal people were exempt from conscription and not required to serve.

That they volunteered in such numbers is all the more notable because they knew what they were giving up upon returning home. Through a process called disfranchisement, they would immediately lose their Indian Status when they joined the armed forces. Then, upon completion of their service, Aboriginal veterans would not be eligible for military pensions, subsidies, and land grants provided to their non-Aboriginal comrades. They would not even be eligible to vote until 1960. Thankfully, disfranchisement is a thing of the past.

But many veterans of 20th century conflicts lived their remaining days in outright poverty. Canada’s most decorated Aboriginal soldier, Sgt. Tommy Prince, was forced to sell his medals to support himself. He died penniless in Winnipeg in 1977. Aboriginal veterans deserved better.

On November 11 at 11 a.m., we should take time to honour Canadian veterans of all backgrounds. Many will reflect on the service of their family members. Others will be thankful for those who lost. At that time, I will be sure to remember and honour those many brave Aboriginal veterans who paid many sacrifices in service, in life and in death. You will not be forgotten.

Poignant moment

A Note from MNO Chief Operating Officer, Doug Wilson, written on November 11th, 2009

by DOUG WILSON

Today I could not get to the Cenotaph in Ontario for the Remembrance Day services as I usually do, but I was able to watch the ceremony on CBC. This Remembrance Day is particularly special knowing that MNO veterans and youth have joined close to 100 Métis veterans and their families from across the Homeland at Juno Beach, where long overdue recognition of the contribution of Métis veterans took place.

Imagine my surprise and pleasure as the wreath laying ceremony began on the coast of Ontario to see a distinguished looking lady in a camel hair coat and black hat accompanied by a broad should- ered gentleman in a beautiful buckskin jacket step forward to lay their wreaths and when they stepped back the television cameras focused in for several seconds on the key word the Métis Nation of Ontario and the Métis National Council.

We were welcomed by Senator Rita Gor- don and Métis Veteran Shaun Redmond! This poignant moment made this solemn occasion all the more meaningful for all Métis.

IN MEMORIAM

Senator Jacques Léger, who passed away last year, served in the Royal Canadian Air Force and was posthumously awarded the Order of Military Merit. His life, passion, and sacrifice will be remembered.

A Métis Father Remembered

Man Wounded in Nazi Blitz is in Malone

Oliver Leroux served with Canadians in Battle of Britain

MALONE, Dec 26—Wounded by machine gun fire from a strafing Nazi plane during the Battle of Britain, Signalman Oliver Leroux of the Royal Canadian Signal Corps, is passing the holidays in Malone with relatives.

Signalman Leroux, who at one time operated a barber shop at Malone Junction, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Leroux and a brother of Nap and Emile Leroux, Malone.

He enlisted in the Canadian Army the day following the declaration of war by Great Britain on Germany, in Sep- tember, 1939. He went overseas in August 1940, with the Second Canadian Division, part of a large convoy.

Late in 1940 and 1941 he was stationed near London and went through those dark days when Britain was bombed day and night by the Luftwaffe.

He recalled that early in 1941 while his outfit was on a route march a Stuka dived on the column he was one of three men caught in the machine gun fire.

After being hospitalized for two months, Signalman Leroux was sent to the south coast, but there the military installations and encampments were targets for more Nazi bombings.

He had only praise for the army, however, and said he felt that every young man should “get into it. In the army you have plenty to eat and you see a lot of new places,” he said. He told of visits to Ireland and Scotland while on leaves and said he is anxious to get back.

During commando training he suffered an injury and will return to Montreal Jan. 4 for further treatment.

(Leroux is 58 kms south of Cornwall, ON, in New York State.)

Métis youth lay wreath on Nov. 11th in Guelph

= KATHLEEN LANNIGAN

On November 11th, 2009, Métis children laid a wreath in honour of Métis veterans at the cenotaph in Guelph. On the left is Spencer Hearnge grandson of Sandy O’Brien who is a member of the Grand River Métis Coun- cil. This has been an annual activity for many years and it always fills me with pride to see the young people involved in this event.

The Hon. Brad Duguid
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs

MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

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MÉTIS VOYAGEUR
Return to Juno Beach
A Métis youth account

by NICK CALLAGHAN
PCMNO Youth Rep

Five months shy of his 19th birthday Private Donald Fowler landed on the beaches of Normandy, France a few days after D-Day. Sixty-five years later, on Remembrance Day, 2009, he stands on those same beaches, barely comprehending what happened here in 1944.

Métis Nation of Ontario Veterans’ Council President, Maurice Sarrazin, and I joined World War 2 veterans Joseph Gagnon and Donn Fowler at the Juno Beach Centre for the unveiling of the Memorial to the Métis Veterans who served Canada and its allies, fighting for the liberation of France/Europe and to ensure the freedom we enjoy today. (See www.junobeach.org for a collection of pictures of the day’s events.) As the ceremony begins dignitaries step up to the podium to make speeches and offer prayers. Flags are carried and lowered and the wreaths and poppies laid—all of this reminiscent of all the Remembrance Day ceremonies I have taken part in at school each year. Today I am in another country and some of my older Métis brothers are being honoured. This ceremony is compelling because now I am standing right where it happened and my roommate on this trip was here when it happened.

The ceremony has its somber moments and you can see the distant look on the veterans’ faces as they remember and eyes well-up with the emotion that is never far from these memories. This ceremony is also a celebration as the Métis Nation is recognized for its contribution to the war. Métis pride comes bursting out as the St. Ambroise Youth Steppers from Manitoba take to the stage.

Still outside, Donn and Joe join the other Métis war veterans for photos near the memorial statue. They must have felt like movie stars being bounded by paparazzi with all the cameras pointing at them. The camera flashes didn’t let up when we moved inside the Juno Beach Centre for the unveiling of the Métis Veterans Memorial. President Clément Chartier (MNC), and David Chartrand (MMF), joined the Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and non-Status Indians, for the ribbon cutting ceremony—then, still more photos of the superstars around the Métis memorial.

You might think that a 19 year old and someone 65 years their senior would not have a lot to talk about, but my roommate Donn was amazing. Donn told me how as a Private with the Stormont Dundas and Glengarry (SDG) Highlanders, 9th Brigade, 3rd Assault Division, of the Canadian Active Army Forces (CAAF), he landed just after the D-Day invasion at Normandy. He was there as reinforcement and replacement for the invasion troops. Donn told me how at Va Broeulie, the Queen’s Rifles were to the left and the Regina Rifles were to the right of his division.

While there, Donn was injured, hit three times, and he told me that a few months later, in March, he went to Vimy Ridge as a Canadian Piper. It seemed as though Donn had just lived these events last week as all the details were still fresh in his mind. But, as my roommate told me, it is easy to talk about details but a lot harder to talk about feelings. Our visit to the Canadian War Cemetery showed me just how tough it is for war veterans to talk about the loss of family, friends, and innocence.

I am so thankful to Donn for sharing a room and his memories with me. Seeing Joe and Donn and the other Métis veterans standing up front and receiving the accolades of the crowd made me even more proud of my Métis heritage. Before they knew us they took up arms to defend our freedom, my freedom. Thank you gentlemen, thank you to all the veterans. The honour is theirs; the proud tradition is their legacy to us.

Two generations of Métis Mounties

by LAURIE FONJONG

When you ask Senator Lois McCallum (Ottawa Métis Council) about her children and their accomplishments, she beams with pride. I recently spent some time with Senator McCallum and her husband Walter when I noticed a photo. I asked them, who was in the picture, and they told me it was their daughter Peggy Standt. You could see the mother’s love in her daughter and granddaughter, their daughter and her family.

Senator McCallum stated that many years ago she was told that, “If you are Métis, stand tall and proud. Don’t let anyone make you feel bad about who you are.” This goes without saying for the Standt women. As you can see by their photos, they are proud of who they are and of what they have become—strong Métis women who are honoured to serve our country.

In these uncertain times it can be difficult for the RCMP to recruit such stalwart individuals who are prepared to put their lives on the line every day. The McCallum Family is extremely proud of Peggy and Sonia’s accomplishments. Their drive and determination are exceptional.

So the next time you see a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, think of Peggy, Sonia, and all of the other brave Métis men and women who don this prestigious uniform.
n October 7, 2009, the Métis Fiddler Quartet performed at National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in Washington DC to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the legislation that gave this museum a place in the Mall beside the Atrium. The program honoured First Nations’ Senators, Daniel Isaac and Ron自有 CONA, the classically trained family and included the first ever presentation of the NMAI “Prism Award” to “someone doing special work within his or her community.” Performers joining the Métis Fiddler Quartet included the Red Singers from the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians; InKompakt, a group from the Pechanga Band of Indian reservists; and, the incomparable Buffy Sainte-Marie.

The Métis Fiddler Quartet began its musical journey when the classically trained family learned of Métis music from some for whom they were still playing the old fiddle tunes in the unique and distinct Métis tradition. The group travelled west to learn from the descendants and protégées of the locally revered Walter Flett. Alyssa, the eldest member of the group, released her debut CD, Oméigwessi Reel Métis: A Tribute to Walter Flett, in the winter of 2008. In November, she was thrilled to receive “Best Fiddle Album” and “Best Instrumental Album” at the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards. A few months later the family performed with a full step-dancing ensemble at the 16th annual National Aboriginal Achievement Awards held in their native Winnipeg and broadcast nationally in May, 2009.

Members of the Métis Fiddler Quartet include Alyssa Delbare-Sawchuk, 23, currently studying at the Conservatoire de Lau- sanne in Switzerland, Conlin, 21, studying classical singing at the University of Ottawa, Nicholas, 18, studying classical violin at the Conservatoire de la Musique in Paris, and Dustin, just 13 on cello. Dustin's main interest is his family and their music at: www.metisfiddlerquartet.com

A Legendary singer-songwriter Buffy Sainte-Marie with members of the Métis Fiddler Quartet

Musical family bringing Métis fiddle to the conservatory

BOOK REVIEW:
A Fair Country: Telling Truths about Canada by John Ralston Saul

Or the record, I actually went out and bought a copy of the book for $20, a cheap soft cover that was easily found in a large big box retail book seller in Ottawa — by way of the public library. The Touhy's readers will either love or hate “A Fair Country,” by John Ralston Saul. It is a book largely written for an international audience, more specifically, how the elite of this country are unable to serve indigenous interests.

"Telling truths" is offering a largely idealized view of mainstream Canadian business and political leadership, suggesting our values and national institutions are at their origins greatly influenced by "Aboriginal" cultures. He begins the book boldly by stating, “We are a Métis civilization”. Not to put too fine a point on it, but if this did in fact shape Canada, we would be a much different country. If the whole nation were a “Métis” civilization we would not constrain, this is putting it nicely, being “Métis.” In 359 pages Mr. Saul doesn’t ignore the injustices, but his arguments that “two founding nations” of France and England are subconsciously influenced by Aboriginal cultures is absurd.

The book has received national attention, and at last year’s November 16th Riel commemorative in Toronto, Ontario Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Baird (who is also available on the MNO web site) mentioned he was hoping to read it. We applaud Mr. Saul for suggesting that Canada is not so different from Aboriginal roots. Without a doubt the denial of Aboriginal and treaty rights continues to seriously undermine our nation and more importantly serves only a small group of elite. The problem I have with the loose usage of the term "Métis civilization" is that Saul is being honest and not at all ironic, but if Canada were a Métis Nation it would be a much better place. I can’t agree with all the interesting arguments in this book. Unfortunately, I have too many problems with the popular and pondering arguments he makes and some of his arguments about the past just don’t hold water. Nevertheless, the writing is much more engaging than his earlier book, "Voltaire’s Bastards" (1995). What a brick that one was! Clearly, Saul is looking to build myths, and Canada has a landscape and such diverse communities that one is often inspired to myth making. I write this on the train from Toronto to Ottawa, outside Coalition, where Lake Ontario stretches out like the ancient sea it is. This is an old place and the people who are here are a mix of new and old, this has been our reality since the 1640s. Long before 1885, when Canada assaulted the Métis leadership in the west and drove Métis underground in the rest of the country, Métis rights had been marginalized by Canadian governments. During the Robinson treaty negotiations, for example, the Métis were told that they would be included in treaties as “Indians” or not included at all. This narrow prescriptive view is Canada’s “Indian policy” as it is applied to Métis even today. The poor treatment of Métis was proven wrong by the Supreme Court in the Powley decision. However, we have yet to heal in Toronto from the dark years that preceded the decision, a time full of serious injustices to Métis.

Jean Chrétien’s 1967 White Paper did not offer a Métis vision of Canada and, besides the good intentions of a few bureaucrats and elected officials, there are far more Canadians out there like Widdowson and Howard (Dis- roling the Aboriginal Industry: The Decip- tion behind Indigenous Cultural Preservation), by Frances Widdowson and Albert Howard, McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2006). Ideologues who treat the public good the same as an average citizen from Canada in the dark years that preceded the decision, a time full of serious injustices to Métis.

The Weeping Mountain takes the audience on a journey through imagery, music, theatre and dance—all embracing an essential environmental theme. The Weeping Mountain is the story of a young girl’s courageous journey to answer Mother Nature’s plea. Lucy travels in search of the beautiful mountain she remembers as a child, only to find that it is now weeping. The Earth has become too hot and its ice caps are melting under the sun. The world is too busy to notice. Lucy must make the tears stop. Council for this show came from photographer Michael Nolan’s image of an ice- cap in which deer seemed to gush from a face carved into the ice by melting water. Play is directed by Terry Power, directed and choreographed by Sandra Laronde. www.redskyperformance.com

Is Canada a Métis civilization?

Raven Flies will be coming to some Toronto area schools in the new year. Make it, 30, 31, and April 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. Red Sky’s newest work for family audiences is targeted at K to Grade 6 and their families. The Weeping Mountain takes the audience on a journey through imagery, music, theatre and dance—all embracing an essential environmental theme.

National Aboriginal Achievement Award winners 2009

William Commanda, OC Lifetime Achievement Award
Skawenniños Barnes Special Achievement Award
Karenthra Postugook
Ellen Hlcksky Business & Commerce
Tom Crane Bear
Culture, Heritage & Spirituality
Dr. Raoul McKay Education
Danny Beaton Environment & Natural Resources
Madeleine Dion Stolt, 80, 81, 90 Health
Donald E. Worpee, QC, QC, Anishnaabe
Kenneth Ahenakanente Deer Inland First Nations Of The Cpt.
Eric William Robinson Politics
Edith Cloutier Public Service
Monica Pinette Sports

Chris Paci is Manager of Education & Training

Red Sky Performance creates, produces and tours original work for adult and family audiences on local, national and international stages.

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HAIR AND MAKE-UP EFFECTS ARTIST:

Movie-magic Métis

By LAURIE FONJONG

When you think about all of the talent our Métis brothers and sisters have to offer our Nation, what comes to mind? Jigging? Beading? Fiddling?

But have you ever thought about the artistry of wig making or theatrical make-up? Allow me to introduce a very talented Métis man named Kelly McCallum. Kelly is Senator Lois McCallum’s only son who resides in Toronto.

In 2001, Kelly left the Canadian Opera Company to obtain his hair stylist licence and began teaching theatrical make-up, facial hair making and hair styling at Completions International Academy Inc, which is a very well respected make-up school in Toronto.

Kelly has made a name for himself in the theatre community in Canada and in the United States. His love for the arts has proven to be an asset to the arts community. Kelly’s education comes from Sheridan College, the Ontario College of Art and Design and he has worked for many years with the Canadian Opera Company.

He has made wigs for several opera singers; some of the performers were from such productions as The Phantom of the Opera, Les Misérables, Beauty and the Beast, Tommy, Jane Eyre, The Lion King and Mamma Mia. His talents have not gone unnoticed by his peers; Kelly has received awards for his amazing make-up and wigs.

Did you watch the movie “JFK”? The body of the late President Kennedy was Kelly’s creation. In 1993 the movie, “ Alive”, was released. The bodies of the rugby team were also creations of our fellow Métis. Kelly has other movies under his belt, such as Hairspray, an Olson twin’s adventure movie and his latest movie starring Shirley MacLaine.

Kelly feels that he has a special connection to his Métis students: “It gives me such pride when I get to teach my craft to my people,” said Kelly.

Patience is a must in Kelly’s business. It can take up to a month to make a wig from scratch, especially if the wig style requires large bangs or long curls—not to mention the hours it takes to create such elaborate make-up on actors and performers.

So the next time you attend an opera or a play, please remember all of the effort that was put into creating the amazing “finishing touches” to the production, because it wouldn’t be the same without people like Kelly McCallum bringing each character to life through the art of make-up and wigs.

MÉTIS ARTISTS:

Métis writer and artist team produce English/Ojibwe book

Award-winning Métis author, David Bouchard, and Métis artist, Kristy Cameron, teamed up to create their recently released book: “The Seven Sacred Teachings.”

The book launch was held on September 21st at the Rainy River First Nations’ powwow grounds. In attendance were Aboriginal and school board representatives, as well as students and staff.

The book is written in English and Ojibwe, which was translated locally by Jason Jones and Elder Nancy Jones. Included with the book, is a DVD which features the flute music of Swanepoel and a beautiful telling of the story in seven languages: English, French, Ojibwe, Chipewyan, Bush Cree, and Slavey. The Rainy River District School Board presented copies of The Seven Sacred Teachings to each of their staff and students.

To learn more about David or Kristy, visit their websites: www.davidbouchard.com
www.kristycameron.ca

Aboriginal Canadian Fiddler Quartet

Recent Performance Highlights:

2009 National Aboriginal Achievement Awards
2009 Planet Indigenous Harvestfront, Toronto
20th Anniversary of the Smithsonian Institute’s National Museum of the American Indian

CD now available at arborrecords.com

Métis Fiddler Quartet

Up and Coming Performances:

February 15, 2010
2010 Olympic Aboriginal Pavilion
String Fiddler Concert
Vancouver, BC

March 2, 2010
2010 Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of Canada (AFOA)
10th Anniversary National Conference, Ottawa, ON

August 1, 2010
Niagara International Chamber Music Festival
Niagara on the Lake, ON

www.metisfiddlerquartet.com
metisfiddlerquartet@gmail.com

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Tire rubber compounds, however, get colder, reducing traction than all-seasons. Winter tires offer significant advantages, not just on surfaces as well. Winter tires offer tangible samples of moose, buffalo and beaver fur as well as a weight scale and height ruler to determine whether one would fit the weight and height requirements of a voyageur: a maximum height of 5’6” and maximum weight of 140 lbs. In conjunction with the special exhibition, several activities have taken place at the museum. The first, a demonstration about Aboriginal technology, was led by Daniel “Perico” Smith who made a toboggan, snowshoes and canoe using traditional tools and materials. The second, called “Music of the Voyageurs”, featured music and stories of the fur trade performed by Michel-André Vallières, a folk singer from Canada.

This isn't just a story - it's our history.

Since its September debut at the Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, QC, a special exhibit highlights the history of Canada's fur trade. The exhibit will feature detailed maps of the trade routes and waterways across Canada used by the fur traders. Stand-alone glass display cases hold trade log books, partners agreements, voyageur contracts and account books. A rare artefact on display is the first edition of Alexander Mackenzie's published journal which has been restored by the museum. Interactive features attractive to visitors include tangible samples of moose, buffalo and beaver fur as well as a weight scale and height ruler to determine whether one would fit the weight and height requirements of a voyageur: a maximum height of 5’6” and maximum weight of 140 lbs.

The North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company were two of the dominant forces in the fur trade, with their headquarters in Montreal and Halifax. The trade was characterized by the exchange of European goods for animal pelts, and the establishment of fur-trading posts across the continent. The traders would travel vast distances on foot, horseback, and eventually by canoe, to reach remote trading locations.

Snowshoeing expands the potential for exercise available in the wintertime. It has the added benefit of being gentle on the feet and on different surfaces. Snowshoeing can make it easier to traverse snow, and is particularly useful on trails in deep snow. Snowshoeing can help improve cardiovascular fitness, build muscle strength, and improve balance. It is also a low-impact exercise, which is beneficial for individuals with injuries or disabilities.

When shopping for winter tires, motorists should look for the “three peak mountain snowflake” on the sidewall. Only tires stamped with this distinctive symbol meet or exceed specific snow traction requirements established by the tire industry.

Another key to safe winter driving is proper tire inflation, which is more challenging to maintain in winter. Every five degrees Celsius decrease in temperature results in a loss of about one psi in air pressure. A temperature drop of 15 degrees Celsius, or a decrease of one psi in air pressure, can lead to a loss of control, particularly when cornering.

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Chair of Métis Studies appointed at uOttawa

The stage for a new era in research about and for Ontario Métis is set with the appointment of Dr. Brenda Macdougall Chair of Métis Studies at the University of Ottawa. Gary Lipinski, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), announced the appointment on behalf of the Council of Ontario Universities and the University of Ottawa on November 4th, 2009. “Today’s announcement marks the beginning of another exciting phase in the evolution of the Métis Nation in Ontario,” President Lipinski said. “The research resulting from Dr. Macdougall’s appointment will help all Canadians gain a greater understanding of the role played by Ontario Métis in the history of Canada. It will help raise awareness about the traditions and culture that conform the Métis as a distinct Aboriginal people. As a result, Métis issues within the province in areas such as treaty negotiations, harvesting and traditional land use will be better understood.”

For MNO Chair, France Picotte, the appointment of Dr. Macdougall is extremely gratifying. “It is great to see many years of hard work come to fruition. The dream of a Chair of Métis Studies was instigated by now Premier Dalton McGuinty while he was still in Opposition and we are living. “It is great to see many years of hard work come to fruition. The dream of a Chair of Métis Studies was instigated by now Premier Dalton McGuinty while he was still in Opposition and we are living.”

The nomination of Dr. Macdougall adds to the strong vision already evident in the University of Ottawa. The University of Ottawa was accepted by the Council of Ontario Universities (COU). The recommendation was made by a selection panel chaired by Dr. Bradford Morse with representatives from faculty and senior administrative staff of the university and the Métis Nation of Ontario.

“Dr. Macdougall brings to the position a background with the right combination of academic and administrative experience which, when combined with the strong vision already evident in the successful creation of the Chair at the university, promises a productive partnership,” added President Lipinski. The Research Chair will be more than a catalyst for innovative Ontario Métis-specific research. It will help to ensure that both the MNO and the University of Ottawa can fulfill a commitment made earlier this year with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). That MOU is aimed at fostering a positive relationship that promotes enhanced educational outcomes for Métis students and improvements to Métis content in course offerings at the university.

The University of Ottawa was one of several provincial learning institutions which submitted proposals to host the Chair. The university has added one million dollars in ongoing support for the position to the three million dollars already endowed by the McGuinty government. Macdougall began her work at the University of Ottawa on January 1, 2010.

Teaching the teachers

MNO Education staff participate in launch of initiative at York University to increase number of First Nations, Métis and Inuit candidates to teachers’ college

Dr. Brenda Macdougall, the new Chair of Métis Studies at the University of Ottawa and Gary Lipinski, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario at the MNO’s 2009 Annual General Assembly in Sudbury this past summer.

Another boost for Métis post-secondary education

The Métis Nation of Ontario is making important strides in post-secondary education partnerships. On Sept. 19th, 2009, MNO President Gary Lipinski, and President and CEO of Georgian College, Brian Tamblyn, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) recognizing the past and ongoing partnerships between the two organizations. The signing took place at the 2009 Métis Rendezvous in Lafontaine with hundreds of Métis citizens and supporters looking on. The MNO and Georgian College MOU is the third such document that the MNO has signed with a college and is the fourth one signed with a post-secondary institution to date.

The research resulting from Dr. Macdougall’s appointment will help all Canadians gain a greater understanding of the role played by Ontario Métis in the history of Canada.

The MNO will continue to work with universities and colleges across the province to ensure all programs have a much richer appreciation for Métis issues, history, Michif and culture in Ontario.

Métis Education

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JOBS TRAINING:

Aboriginal Apprenticeship Centre opens in Sault Ste. Marie

Centre focuses on providing skilled trades training to Aboriginal people in the near north

The Métis Nation of Ontario in partnership with Sault College is proud to introduce the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Centre based at the college’s Sault Ste. Marie campus.

Funded by Service Canada through the Aboriginal Skills and Training Strategic Investment Fund (ASTSIF), the program is aimed to provide skilled trades training to all interested Aboriginal people in the Algoma District and surrounding areas.

The program will also serve to engage employers interested in expanding their workplace with skilled Aboriginal people. This 18 month project is currently focused on training in construction-based trades. All interested participants will bring their skills back to the communities in which they reside. The program proposes to recruit 40 Aboriginal clients and develop a sustainability plan by the project’s end date of March 31, 2011.

Project Director Bob Kirkland says this program is a great interest from potential clients. He is also confident of support from the province and local institutions including the Native Education and Training Department as well as from the Algoma Aboriginal Community Staff at the centre will include an Executive Director, Project Coordinator and Job Developer, who will work in partnership with employers, industry stakeholders and Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHREDA) holders to make training to employment opportunities possible and accessible to all Aboriginal applicants. The program is open to all Aboriginal people. Participants are eligible for allowances during their training.

The centre is expected to open in January, 2010.

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Aboriginal Apprenticeship Centre
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Client intake: Brenda Macdougall
Free training available for all Aboriginal people.

Modern Aboriginal Corporation Short Course: $2500 + allowances.

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Ontario’s Draft Postsecondary Education Policy Framework for Aboriginal Learners:

**Education talk**

Community discussions focus on drafting a Postsecondary Education Policy Framework for Métis

**By LINDA LORD**

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), Education and Training Branch, held four regional discussions focused on Ontario’s “Draft Postsecondary Education Policy Framework for Aboriginal Learners”. (The framework is available at www.metisnation.org).

The purpose of the regional meetings was to gather Métis input and feedback regarding the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) draft postsecondary education policy framework. The discussions attempted to explore the existing and developing relationships between postsecondary institutions and private vocational training institutions and the Métis community. Community members were asked for their opinions on what has worked and what has not worked for Métis in Ontario.

In particular, senators, college and university students, parents, and educators of all types were encouraged to attend. Interested parties were provided with a “discussion guide” meant to cover key points in the framework. The Hamilton meeting was held November 23, at the Hamilton Regional Indian Centre and was conducted by Jennifer St. Germain, Director of Education and Training; Chris Paci, Manager of Education and Training; and, Gayline Morris-Cleaver, Administrative Assistant. Arrangements in Hamilton were made by Judy Trott. The meeting began at 5:00 PM with a prayer offered by Senator Doris Lawan. Then, while the delectable aromas of stew and bannock wafted through the kitchen to serve themselves, not hot vegetables, rice, salad, strawberry juice and cookies. During the meal people chatted and the feeling of a formal meeting became more relaxed. When Dr. Chris Paci addressed the group and the meeting proper began, he encouraged people to feel free to say whatever was on their minds. “This is the MNO”, he said. “You’re at home.” People seemed to take Chris at his word and discussion began. In the discussion guide, three “purposes” were cited for the “Policy Framework”:

1) Is the Purpose of this Policy Framework clear and concise?
2) Does this statement clearly articulate why the Ministry is developing a policy framework for Aboriginal postsecondary education and training?
3) Do you have any suggestions on how the Purpose statement might be improved?
4) Do you have any questions as to why the Ministry is developing a policy framework?

Attendees were then asked to respond to the questions below.

1. The next phase of discussion concerned with many important questions being asked and clarification being sought on everything from the accuracy of demographics to how barriers to higher education for Aboriginal people would be addressed.
   - High standards of quality and accountability of programs and services
   - Learner-centred approaches
   - Co-operation and Shared Responsibility
   - Inclusiveness
   - Respect for Constitutional and Treaty Rights and respect for Indigenous Knowledge

Discussion continued with important questions being asked and clarification being sought on everything from the accuracy of demographics to how barriers to higher education for Aboriginal people would be addressed.

Additional sessions were held November 27th, in Midland; December 1st, in Timmins; and, December 8th, 2009, in Fort Frances.

If you’re a visible minority woman or an Aboriginal woman who’s interested in joining the Ottawa Police Service, you might be eligible for the Thomas G. Flanagan S.C. Scholarship. The Ottawa Police Services Board and the Ottawa Police Service offer this scholarship in partnership with the Community Foundation of Ottawa to one student who meets the established criteria.

The Thomas G. Flanagan S.C. Scholarship Award was established in 1993 in honour of the late Thomas G. Flanagan who served as Chief of Police of the Ottawa Police Service between 1989 and 1993 and in recognition of Persons Day; the day in 1929 when the British Privy Council formally declared women “persons” under the law. The award is in the amount of $1,500 and is directed towards the recipient’s education at an accredited post secondary institution. Deadline for application to the 2010 process is February 26, 2010. The award will be presented to the selected recipient at a public ceremony during Police Week in May 2010. Applications are available online at ottawapolice.ca.
Energized & Awakened

My experience listening, learning and travelling with a Métis Senator

By MITCHELL CASE

I n early September 2009, I received a phone call from PCMNO Executive Senator Reta Gordon. She said she was attending a conference in Toronto in late November and that she was able to bring a helper and wanted to know if I wanted to go along and learn something from this conference. The conference was Circle of Light 2009: Energizing Our Partnerships in Education, focusing on the Ministry of Education’s Aboriginal Initiatives. As my goal is to become a teacher I immediately said, “yes.”

Fast forward to November 2009 and after a thankfully short and eventful flight to Toronto and shuttle ride to the Royal York Hotel, I was settling into my room when the Senator phoned. She informed me that she had flown in from Vancouver the night before and was very tired; she was going to bed early and she would call me in the morning. I decided to have a walk. Seeing the sights of Toronto at night is remarkably; the CN Tower is an amazing sight when it lit up and the colours are changing almost before you notice it.

Tuesday morning I met Senator Gordon and her husband Ron in the lobby. The Senator gifted me a beautiful plaid blanket. Later that evening we attended a feast in honour of the late Bill Messenger. Mr. Messenger worked tirelessly to help many different organizations, including the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres and the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy. Many people who knew and worked with Mr. Messenger spoke and shared stories about him. Being a part of a traditional feast to honour someone who had worked so hard for Aboriginal people was very heart warming. I never had the chance to meet Mr. Messenger but hearing the words of those attending and meeting his daughters I can tell he was a remarkable man.

Wednesday morning arrived and brought with it the beginning of two great days of learning. We began the day with a “meet and greet” breakfast, and morning keynote from Elder Gary Sault of the Mississaugas of the New Credit offered us a glimpse into Aboriginal culture. Following the morning keynote was a traditional hand drum song, Senator Gordon then offered a prayer on behalf of the Metis people.

The morning continued with speeches from the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, the Director of Education for Indian and Northern Affairs and Gary Lipinski, President of the MNO. The highlight of the morning was the student panel presentation. It was very good to hear students expressing their true opinions; speaking from the heart telling the teachers, superintendents, and ministry staff what is working and what is not working in the schools in Ontario.

The remainder of the day was spent attending workshops which included, “Using Teachings From The Land & Indigenous People to Shape Tomorrow’s Leaders”, presented by Dr. Nicole Bell MEd, PhD. Bear Clan Anishinabek Kwe. We also attended ‘Métis Nation – Who We Are’ presented by Jen St. Germain and Scott Carpenter. I want to commend both Jen and Scott for doing such a great job at answering some tough questions. We heard about many methods currently in place in the province to bring Aboriginal culture into all aspects of the education system, especially traditional worldviews and values.

David Bouchard, a Métis author from British Columbia, provided the keynote address for the afternoon. Bouchard is a tireless advocate of literacy; and puts too much pressure on students who are further ahead. Expecting all kids to read at the same level is not a great way to answer questions in the days leading up for a week. Senator Gordon and Elder Gary Sault closed the conference with prayers and words of wisdom.

Reta, Ron and I spent the evening enjoying sandwiches from Subway and telling stories. After saying “goodbye” to Reta and Ron on Friday morning I flew home to the South. All the way home I kept thinking about how thankful I was the Senator had invited me to attend this conference. Learned more than I could have imagined. I feel energized, awakened, and ready to go back and continue working to increase awareness of Métis culture in our local school boards.

I want to thank Senator Reta Gordon for the opportunity to attend the conference, and her husband Ron for his kindness and generosity. I also want to thank MNO staff, Chris Paci, Jen St. Germain and Scott Carpenter for their hard work preparing for the conference. I want to send a special “thank you” to Guilaine Morin-Clercour for being so patient with me and my many questions in the days leading up to the conference. I also want to thank my teachers at Algoma University for allowing me to take off for a week. I am so grateful that I was able to attend and learn so much from this conference. Thanks again to Senator Gordon for the invitation. I hope I can put this knowledge to good use here at home.

Mitchell Case is the Youth Representative for the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council.
MÉTIS EDUCATION UPDATE:

By CHRIS PACI

Education continues to be an important part of the MNO’s governance and service delivery framework. Since signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Education, MNO Education and Training branch has worked towards implementing the agreement with a multi-year work plan. Discussions are underway with the Aboriginal Education Office of the Ministry to finalize the plan at the annual meeting between President Lipinski and Minister Wynne anticipated early in 2010. This work continues as MNO develops a teacher’s support kit which includes the “Métis 101 deck”, Michel English-French Flash cards, and some key resources. Métis-specific classroom material, including books and DVDs, aimed at everything from kindergarten to university level, continues to be in need. MNO encourages and wants to work with all Métis in Ontario, including individuals, families and communities, to develop resources not only for their local schools and school boards, but for use across the province. MNO is working with Pearson Good Minds on new textbooks for grades 10 and 11 with the Ministry of Training and Student Success, curricular issues and concerns evolving around Métis, First Nations and Inuit peoples. We believe that we need to broaden the understanding of the students and the teachers in regard to social justice issues concerning Aboriginal policies and rights. As teachers need to understand and acknowledge diversity issues so that we can better serve and educate all students we teach. Growing up, I knew that I had a Métis background on my mother’s side but I was never given the history or family tree of the Métis link. My father was not involved and educate all students we teach. We as teachers need to understand and acknowledge diversity issues so that we can better serve and educate all students we teach.

Métis teacher in training knows the importance of cultural outreach

By NATASHA RODGERS

I think it is beneficial for the other teacher candidates to have a Métis representative in the program so they have a better insight into the societal and educational issues and concerns evolving around Métis, First Nations and Inuit peoples. I believe that we need to broaden the understanding of the students and the teachers in regard to social justice issues concerning Aboriginal policies and rights. We as teachers need to understand and acknowledge diversity issues so that we can better serve and educate all students we teach.

Growing up, I knew that I had a Métis background on my mother’s side but I was never given the history or family tree of the Métis link. My father was not involved and I am still learning about my family. I was touched tremendously by the history, knowledge and background with my own classroom/school one day. I feel as though I have a better understanding of where other Aboriginal children are coming from, and the difficulties that may be present in their home life and at school. This will make me a stronger person and a better teacher.

The Indigenous Infusion Day at York University (Barrie campus) this past summer was an eye opener for me and my colleagues. I was touched tremendously by the history, knowledge and backgrounds that were shared with us, and I know my classmates felt the same. It was an excellent way to broaden our perspectives and develop our understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit social justice issues within the education system and also society.

EDUCATION PROFILES:

Métis teacher in training knows the importance of cultural outreach

By NATASHA RODGERS

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Employment & Training Programs for Métis People Across Ontario

Métis Nation of Ontario Employment & Training offers education, employment and training services and support to Métis people across Ontario.

for more information please contact:
500 Old St. Patrick St., Ottawa, ON
Tel: 613-796-1488 or 1-800-263-4899
Fax: 613-722-4225
www.metisnation.org

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MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

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T
tawni. This is “hello” in Michif, the language of the Métis. Like most Abo-
riginal languages and cul-
tures, this language is almost forgotten.

My name is Jennifer Henry and I am a Grade 11 student at G.L. Roberts Collegiate and VodouStriped Inishna. I’m just giv-
ing you all a warning now that my speech could be a little long and fast because I am Metis and it is known that once my people begin talking, it’s a sure sign a hundred miles, an hour and it’s hard to stop us.

Students spend many years of their education learning about Canadian history. This history system, this is where children will be exposed to different cultures and learn to interact and respect each other. Sharing culture and values will make a better environment for all to live and learn. It is easier to live in communities where everyone is valued and respected. This is where educa-
tors play an important role.

As a student, I’d also like to take this opportunity to tell you about one of my experiences when hearing about our great Métis leader - Louis Riel. Throughout my school experi-
ence, the Ontario school system has always portrayed Louis Riel, the leader of the Métis people, as a traitor. The definition of a trait-
or is a person who betrays a trust or a duty. If a person had the opportu-
nity to be involved with. I have learned about traditions, beliefs, stories and multiple other things during these meetings and events associated. I believe children in schools should have the opportu-
nity to be able to experience these inspiring stories and teach-

ings. Teaching students about life lessons by using Aboriginal leg-
enacy and stories is fun, but an important way of teaching. We need to not use textbooks so much in class, and do more hands on and interactive activi-
ties to make the learning more exciting and memorable.

Throughout the last few years there has been a “Spirit Calling Camp” this past spring, was defi-
nitely a great learning experi-
ence. Having both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students showed me that other cultures are inter-
ested in learning about us also. That gave me a great feeling of hope for a future where we are accepted and proud. At this lead-
ership camp, I learned a lot about myself and about Métis, Inuit and First Nations culture. I would defi-
nitely recommend this camp becoming annual because it was a life changing experience I will never forget. I learned so much about different topics which I was very uninformated about, before attending this camp. Things like traditions, lots about the common sense issues, based around the Aborigi-
al lifestyle, we learn, but what about going into more detail?

We could have smaller, broken down units on the three different types of Aboriginals in Canada instead of one large unit based strongly around First Nations. This will open the minds of stu-
dents and give them a larger understanding. Canada’s past, I am now more educated and confident on understanding Abo-
riginal issues, beliefs and tradi-
tions from the Spirit Calling Cam.

When I was younger, I wish I had the opportunity to experi-
ence this because you can truly take a lot from these lessons and apply it to your everyday life. The Seven Grandfather Teachings is a great example of this. Learn-
ing at a younger age about love, honesty, wisdom, respect, brav-
yourself and always care for others, I believe we can share a brighter future for not only Abor-
riginals, but the world. As an Abo-

riginal person I feel that I need to help put a positive change in my peer’s attitudes about our peo-
ple. We need to focus on our present day heroes in order to move on successfully. Young peo-
ple need to start to appreciate the invaluable contributions that Métis, Inuit and First Nation Peo-
laces have made toward the devel-

opment of this country. The school system needs to include not only an accurate portrayal of the Métis, but also other more recent contributions of Aborigi-
nal peoples. The Aboriginal youth need our positive Aboriginal information throughout the cur-

riculum to inspire them. This will make them reach for things that they might not otherwise have thought as achievable. Having mentors there for support is also a great step in creating a thriving, knowledgeable community.

We have many mentors in our communities. Our elders share their knowledge which has been passed down from generations through story telling. They use their life journey to help to inspire the youth to make a posi-
tive change for future genera-
tions. Many recent day Aboriginal peoples who are leaders in their education, business, industry, politics, sports and entertainment encourage young people to take them as a role model to be successful.

Without mentors, we would have no one to learn from and we would begin to lose our cultures once again.

The Oshawa and Durham Region Métis Council is also a huge support system for me and

History can’t be changed, but the future is in our hands.
Home Alone with the Kids!

Mom needs, and greatly deserves, a pampering weekend away from home with just the girls for company by RICHARD AUBIN

“Dad, you’re keeping the kids this weekend!” Akkk! These are the dreaded words some fathers are not looking forward to hearing—especially if one of your children is still intrans- "It is important to consider these factors in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the underlying processes. It is also necessary to understand those factors that build resiliency and potentially protect youth from engaging in future violence and anti-social behaviour."

by LOUISE LOGUE

Numerous factors can influence the range of behav- iours that are defined as “youth violence” or “anti-social behaviour.” It is important to consider these factors in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the underlying processes. It is also necessary to understand those factors that build resiliency and potentially protect youth from engaging in future violence and anti-social behaviour. Current research indicates that the presence of a single risk factor in an individual does not, by itself, cause antisocial or vio- lent behaviour. Rather, it is now generally believed, that multiple factors combine to contribute to and shape behaviour over the course of adolescent development. Studies suggest it is the confluence of certain risk factors that contribute to violent or anti-social behaviour, and the existence of specific protective fac- tors, that create resiliency. The design of effective prevention, intervention, diversion and other criminal justice strategies should therefore take into consideration the dynamics and inter-relationships of both types of factors.

“Risk factors” are defined as scientifically established factors or circumstances for which there is strong evidence of a causal relationship to a problem. “Protective factors”, on the other hand, are those that potentially decrease the likelihood of engaging in risk taking behaviour. These factors influence the level of risk. A popular way to understand the dynamic between risk and protective factors is to view them within an ecological framework, which recognizes that each per- son functions within a complex network of individual, family, community and environmental contexts that impact their capac- ity to avoid risk. In other words, instead of focusing just on the individual who is at risk for, or who engages in, a particular behaviour such as violence, an ecological approach considers the individual’s relationships to him or her surroundings.

Youth Criminality

A number of factors have been identified in the research literature as contributing to youth criminality. These factors are used by a variety of youth serving agencies (such as proba- tion services, several police agen- cies across the country) when they do intake risk assessments. Among others, these key factors include (see chart):

- Poverty
- Media exposure to violence
- Disadvantaged youth
- Tolerance of gang activity
- Lack of economic opportunities
- Gang membership
- Access to drugs
- Substance abuse
- Early victimization
- Enforced structure and rules
- Substance abuse
- Early victimization
- Enforced structure and rules
- Mental health disorders
- Poor academic achievement
- Early aggressive behaviour
- Substance abuse
- Commitment to education
- Possession of positive role models
- Strong life skills
- Marketable job skills

The concept of risk and protective factors in the design of effective prevention, intervention, diversion and other criminal justice strategies should be emphasized. It is therefore important to consider the dynamic between risk and protective factors as well as the overall context in which they operate.

Recent theories of youth delinquency suggest that risk and protective factors are key for front line professionals during the response and intervention stage and in tailoring services to the level of risk posed by the youth- ful offender to him/herself and to the community, as well as the level of possible respon- siveness to downstream solutions. The determination of risk factors, the better the response, and the more effective a front line service provider can be.

Differential Risk of Youth

We must note that a large majority of youth do not come into conflict with the law, even for those who do, it is often a one-time occurrence. In these instances, it seems imprudent to treat one-time offenders the same as youth who commit repeated and/or serious criminal acts. A review of youth crime sta- tistics in recent years supports the com- criminogenic factors which contribute to anti-social and criminal behaviour, suggests that it is wise to group youth according to their level of relative risk. The following chart is based on data derived from crime data, it reflects the general opin- ion of those working in the youth criminal justice field.

Despite the fact that only 20% of youth are deemed “high risk” or “very high risk”, they certainly get the lion’s share of attention from the public and the media, as well as the majority of criminal justice system investments.

We need to keep this percent- age of youth in mind and not lose sight of the fact that most people are law abiding. More than that, however, we need to consider the need to focus on all youth from the criminal justice system ($1.4 billion a year and increas- ing) towards supporting preven- tion and intervention with “mod- erate risk” youth so that they may be steered towards the seg- ment of “low risk” youth, rather than possibly entering into the ranks of “high risk” youth where the majority of anti-social and criminal behaviour occurs.

In other words, we need to focus on the protection and safety of the non-offending majority.

Keeping at-risk youth out of the criminal justice system

by LOUISE LOGUE

The Youth’gueur is pleased to announce it will start publishing a new column addressing common issues and trends affect- ing children and youth; this column will respond to common questions concerning issues such as drug abuse, alcohol abuse, youth gangs and other current trends affecting our children, youth, parents, caregivers and educators alike.

Our newest columnist, Louise Logue RN, invites any concerned individuals to send their questions to her at louisejg@gmail@hotmail.com and all questions will be answered directly and confiden- tially via email. However, each Youth’gueur edition will highlight one common issue where no names will appear in the general response.

This edition’s feature focuses on the need to identify, at the earliest possible moment, risk factors which must be addressed if a caregiver or parent is to help prevent that child or youth from entering the criminal justice system.

Context

ENVIRONMENTAL
- Poverty
- Media exposure to violence
- Disadvantaged youth
- Tolerance of gang activity
- Lack of economic opportunities

PROTECTIVE FACTORS
- Crime prevention programs
- Presence of caring relationships
- Meaningful jobs

COMMUNITY
- Access to guns
- Strong community infrastructure
- Substance abuse
- Early victimization
- Enforced structure and rules

PROTECTIVE FACTORS
- Strong family relationships
- Sports and recreation programs
- Pro-social mentors
- Problem-oriented policing

FAMILY
- Lack of parental involvement
- Crime-involved siblings
- Single parent household
- Inadequate youth supervision
- Substance abuse
- Child abuse and neglect
- Poor academic achievement

INDIVIDUAL
- Mental health disorders
- Poor academic achievement
- Early aggressive behaviour
- Substance abuse

PROTECTIVE FACTORS
- Commitment to education
- Presence of positive role models
- Strong life skills
- Marketable job skills

Poetry

The Wanderer

By LAURETTE MARION GROULX

Sweat poured from his shrouded brow,
And the strain one could almost feel
As metal met with metal,
When he forged the mighty scowl.
His smile was quick and winning,
A first to extend his hand.

But his vivid memory of days gone by,
His hair is now silver gray.

Was how it had to be.
And the strain one could almost feel.
He lived his life to the fullest,
When differences having been settled,
And the strain one could almost feel.
Was the first to extend his hand.

On this rich, abundant land.
And gave many foolishly.
This was how it had to be.
He insisted his children obey the law,
As metal met with metal.

And in a righteous way.
Though seldom there to enforce his rule,

Yet he ran a scowl from no man,
If it’s not a girl’s weekend out.
He was as just as a smith.

So matter to him not the colour of one’s skin,
Or one’s religious stand.
He believed everyone is equal.

This was how it had to be.

He wanders no more for his step has slowed.

He lived his life as he chose to.

And in a righteous way.
Though seldom there to enforce his rule,
If it’s not a girl’s weekend out.

As metal met with metal.

So matter to him not the colour of one’s skin,
Or one’s religious stand.
He believed everyone is equal.

This was how it had to be.

He insisted his children obey the law,
As metal met with metal.

And in a righteous way.
Though seldom there to enforce his rule,

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Your Métis community has an energy about it. Its flowing water, blowing winds and shining sun could bring new opportunities. These clean sources of renewable power could put green dollars into your Métis Community.

Ontario’s new Green Energy Act (GEA) means there is a new approach to capturing Ontario’s renewable energy. The GEA’s sweeping changes simplify approvals and the Feed-in Tariff (FIT) Program could make it more profitable and easier for your community to share the economic and environmental benefits. FIT has two levels:

- Larger renewable projects over 10 kilowatts
- Smaller scale renewable projects, under 10 kilowatts or microFIT projects, such as a small solar array located as part of a community centre, Council office or school.

FIT allows First Nation and Métis communities, as generators of renewable power, to be paid higher prices for the electricity they produce. An Aboriginal Loan Guarantee Program is also available to assist First Nation and Métis communities to increase their equity ownership in renewable energy projects.

An Aboriginal Energy Partnerships Program managed by the Ontario Power Authority will be made public to maximize First Nation and Métis participation in renewable energy projects. This initiative will help build capacity and participation by providing funds for community energy plans and project development work.

For more information, visit

www.fit.powerauthority.on.ca

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