MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO’S 16TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Members of the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) and other delegates to the MNO’s Annual General Assembly arrive via voyageur canoes on the shores of Richard lake in Sudbury, Ontario on August 22nd, 2009.

Complete AGA coverage on pages 13-19 and 28.

CONSERVE THE LIGHT
MÉTIS & FIRST NATION ELDER'S GATHER ON TOP OF MOUNT MACKAY IN THUNDER BAY
PAGE 6

NOTES from a GAMBLER
A HARROWING PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF THE DarksIDE OF GAMBLING
PAGES 23

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA
THE MNO AND THE UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA SIGN AGREEMENT ON MÉTIS EDUCATION
PAGE 21

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION
NEWS AND UPDATES ON MÉTIS TRAINING AND EDUCATION
PAGE 22
Announcements

New Arrival

Lenny and Nicole Deschatelets of Steurgeon Falls, Ontario, are pleased to announce the graduation of their son, Zachari Deschatelets, from Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario, in June 2009. Zachari received financial assistance from the Métis Nation of Ontario to complete his Bachelor of Physical Education and Health in 2008, and his Bachelor of Education Degree in 2009. Zachari has accepted a teaching position in the “Conseil Scolaire du District Catholique Centre Sud,” starting in September, 2009. Proud grandparents are Donat and Pauline Séguin.

Congratulations Zachari!

Wired Métis

GBMC has a New Website
The Georgian Bay Métis Council has recently upgraded its website. It now includes upcoming meetings, events and downloadable diary to consult documents. Please take the time to have a look. The web site address is: www.georgianbaymetis.org

Workshop

Thunder Drum Workshop
The Métis community in Barcroft is making Thunder Drums. Book your spot to come and learn how to make these great instruments. Meet new friends and learn a new craft. Call Tracey Dale 613-352-2575.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Velor Johnson who was the successful candidate for the MNO’s newest position: Procurement Officer. As procurement officer reporting to the financial controller, Velor will ensure the best use of funding for the purchase of supplies, equipment and other capital items. She will also deal with purchase orders, and subsequent invoices and inventory.

Obituary

MNO expresses condolences to Senator Verna Porter of the Moon River Métis Council on the passing of Doug Porter, husband, father and friend.

Gary Liponski, President of the MNO expressed his condolences and those of all Métis citizens in Ontario to the family of Senator Verna Porter on the passing of her husband, Doug Porter, on September 16, 2009.

Doug was a huge supporter of the Métis community. He attended all of Moon River’s functions with Senator Porter and assisted in any way he could. He will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved him.

A memorial service was held on September 20th. Condolences may be sent to Senator Verna Porter by e-mail at humminbird50@live.ca or by mail to 386 Canal Rd, Huntsville, Ontario, P1H 1B2.

Volunteer Award

Louise Goulding of the Moon River Métis Council was named this year’s recipient of the Suzanne Rochon-Barnett Volunteer of the Year Award. Watch for more about Louise in the next issue of the Voyageur.

Happy 40th Anniversary

By Tina Ether-Nichol

Congratulations to Lillian and George Ethier who recently celebrated their 40th anniversary. They are the parents of former Youth Representative, Tina Ether-Nichol. Lillian is the President of the Temiskaming Métis Council.

Métis-at-Law

Bill and Christina Acton, Métis harvester and Temiskaming Métis Council Councillor, are pleased to announce that their son Austin Acton was called to the bar by the Law Society of Upper Canada on June 19, 2009. Austin’s great great great grandfather, James Shearer Hunter established and operated a Hudson’s Bay trading post at Hunter’s Lodge throughout the 1800s. Three generations later, Austin’s grandmother, Myrtle Adams, was born and raised in the same historic Métis community of Hunter’s Point.

Austin was raised in Kenogami, Ontario. He earned an Honours Bachelor of Science in Biological Chemistry from the University of Toronto in 2001. Austin worked as a Professor of Pharmaceutical Technology and Biotechnology at Seneca College for three years while doing post-graduate research at York University. Austin decided to change career paths in 2004 and study Aboriginal Law at the University of Toronto, where he earned the degree of Juris Doctor in 2008. Austin articulated with noted First Nation lawyer Tracey O’Donnell. After completing his articles, Austin opened his own law office on land he leases from the Nipissings First Nation. Austin is currently practicing Aboriginal, Corporate/Commercial, Employment, and Environmental Law. He is also involved in civil litigation, capacity development training, and self-government negotiations.

Austin currently serves as Chair of the North Bay Métis Council. Austin’s website is located at www.austinaction.com. Congratulations from your parents. Megwetch and marci for your work.

Looking for a new Job?

Be sure to check out www.metisnation.org for employment opportunities.
Métis Nation News

Métis Nation of Ontario signs historic Agreement with University of Ottawa

By CHRIS PACI

On August 10th, 2009 Gary Lipinski, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), and Allan Rock, President of the University of Ottawa (U of O) signed an historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will pave the way to enhanced educational outcomes for Métis students and improve Métis content in course offerings at the U of O.

“Historically Métis in Ontario learned through experience, by being on the land and through interaction with our elders,” said President Lipinski. “When the university was founded in 1866 by the Catholic Church it was not an inviting place for Métis. This agreement is part of the healing journey Aboriginal people and learning institutions have travelled in recent years and is one more step toward greater cooperation between Métis in Ontario and the university community.”

The two presidents were joined at the signing ceremony by MNO Executive Senator Reta Gordon, and Ottawa Métis Council President, Robert Pellerin, and the university community.

“This agreement is part of the healing journey Aboriginal people and learning institutions have travelled in recent years...”

— Gary Lipinski, MNO President

Ontario Métis receive funding from Ontario Government to build capacity for Crown Consultation

On August 19th, the Ontario Government announced it will provide $2.6 million to the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) this fiscal year to support the MNO’s consultation framework and to enable Métis communities to more effectively participate in consultation and accommodation processes with the Crown and industry in Ontario.

The funding announcement delivers on the McGuinty government’s commitment to create a “New Relationship Fund”, flowing from Justice Linden’s recommendations in the Ipperwash Inquiry Report. The Fund’s objective is to enable First Nations and Métis communities to build core capacity for effective participation in activities relating to consultation and accommodation processes with the Crown and industry throughout the province.

“This announcement is indeed welcome news for Ontario Métis,” MNO President Gary Lipinski said. “It delivers on one of the key recommendations of the Ipperwash Inquiry Report as well as the Ontario Government’s commitments in the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement, which was signed in November, 2008.”

President Lipinski added: “Equally important, the funding supports the MNO’s unique consultation framework, which was developed and designed by the Métis people themselves after extensive consultations. This framework respects the democratic governance structures created by Ontario Métis at the local, regional and provincial levels, while also ensuring Métis citizens are provided the opportunity to be engaged and consulted through a fair, inclusive and predictable process.”

The MNO’s unique consultation framework includes Regional Consultation Protocols supported by the MNO’s Land, Resources and Consultation Branch to ensure regional rights-bearing Métis communities have access to the necessary technical and environmental expertise required for meaningful consultation and accommodation.

President Lipinski concluded: “On behalf of the Métis Nation, I want to thank Minister Duguid and the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs for working in partnership with us to ensure the New Relationship Fund meets the Métis Nation’s distinct needs in this province. This announcement represents yet another positive outcome from the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement process and will benefit Métis children, families and communities in this province.”

For more information on the MNO and its unique consultation framework visit: www.metisnation.org/consultations

This agreement is part of the healing journey Aboriginal people and learning institutions have travelled in recent years

“...The funding announcement...”

— Chris Paci, Manager MNO Education and Training 613-798-1488 Ext. 118

NEW RELATIONSHIP FUND | MNO-ONTARIO FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

OCTOBER 2009 — MÉTIS-VOYAGEUR
GEORGIAN BAY MÉTIS COMMUNITY

Métis Rendezvous ‘09

By SCOTT CARPENTER

The southern Georgian Bay Métis community, in partnership with the Township of Tiny, hosted the 55th Annual Métis Rendezvous at the Lafontaine Parks and Recreation Centre on September 19th, 2009. The Métis Rendezvous is a community gathering held every year to celebrate the history and culture of the people who have resided in the area since the arrival of their ancestors around 1828. September 19th was also significant to people across the Métis Homeland because it is the anniversary of the Powley Decision, the Supreme Court of Canada ruling which, in 2003 recognized Métis harvesting rights in Ontario. A highlight of the day was a visit from the Honourable Brad Duguid, MPP and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, who brought greetings on behalf of the Government of Ontario.

The event included a unique perspective on life. Even as her positive outlook and infectious laugh was as much a fixture in the office as her positive outlook and infectious laugh as she was aware, Leafy is also a valuable asset to the community Centre. For those who are unaware, Leafy is also a valuable asset to the community. She has been with MNO as a Métis summer student in 1996, working out of the Housing satellite office. She stayed on for summers and in part-time positions until 2001. On June 24, 2002, Robynn accepted a permanent full-time position as Junior Analyst, Leafy ventured beyond the role of Junior Analyst, and in preparation for her long career with MNO, Leafy represented the MNO on a senior committee charged with holding community engagement sessions on housing needs in partnership with the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services in Thunder Bay.

Leafy has now accepted a position with the Ministry of Community Development Plan and in preparing numerous proposals.

Robynn has now accepted a position with the Ministry of Community Development Plan and in preparing numerous proposals.

A farewell to paper cuts

By ALEX TESAR

Chelsey Quirk joined the Métis Nation of Ontario as the Provincial Youth Coordinator in Ontario in 2005. Very quickly her infectious laugh was as much a fixture in the office as her positive outlook and unique perspectives on life. Even after she took on the role of Communications Officer, which involved a hefty workload and regular battles with a cantankerous, unforgiving envelope printer, she retained a cheerful disposition. If you crossed paths with her early on in the day, she would make sure you didn’t go without a “good morning” and if you needed a hand, she would ask how she could help.

Chelsey clearly, is the kind of person who inspires committed friendships. Although she is leaving her job with the MNO, Chelsey will not be leaving the Métis community. As a Métis citizen, and a proud member of the Métis family, Chelsey’s roots are firmly embedded in her people’s soil and she will continue to grow amongst us. Chelsey took up her role as a Strategic Media Analyst with the Federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The report attempts to ensure Métis people have equitable access to Aboriginal Housing Trust Funds for a variety of housing needs specific to individuals and communities through the First Nation, Inuit, Métis Urban & Rural Housing (FIMUR) program. Despite efforts to obtain funding to continue Leafy’s position, such funding is no longer available. Needless to say, Robynn and Leafy will be missed!

For more information about the MNO and its consultation related activities visit: www.metisnation.org/treaties.

Additional information can be obtained by contacting Hank Boalch-Ronkonk, MNO Manager, Community Relations at hboalch@metisnation.org.

On June 16th, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) received funding from the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency to facilitate Métis engagement in the ongoing Joint Review Panel assessment of an application from Bruce Power to begin site preparation for future construction of a nuclear reactor generating station in Kincardine, Ontario.

The funding will enable the MNO to work with its community of First Nations and the over 5,000 Métis citizens it represents in Bruce, Grey and Simcoe counties to become involved in the review of Bruce Power’s application for a ‘New Nuclear Build’,” said Gary Lipinksi, MNO President. Lipinski added: “The potential effects of this new nuclear build on Métis rights, interests and way of life in the region must be determined, considered and addressed. This funding will allow the regional rights-bearing Métis community that lives in and uses this territory to begin its important work to ensure appropriate consultation takes place.” This announcement builds on the Regional Consultation Protocol recently signed between the MNO President and MNO leaders in the region. The Protocol sets out a process for consultation with all regional rights-bearing community in the Georgian Bay traditional territory, an area that encompasses roughly the counties of Bruce, Grey and Simcoe. Métis community meetings on the new build project will be held over the next few months.

As well, mailouts on the “new build” project and the joint panel review process are being sent to Métis citizens.

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As well, mailouts on the “new build” project and the joint panel review process are being sent to Métis citizens.
Métis couple charged for fishing

A husband and wife team of Métis citizens were recently charged with exceeding fishing limits in Manitoba. The Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) believed that the Manitoba Government would be working with the Métis Government to negotiate an acceptable recognition of Métis harvesting rights in Manitoba. It is now unclear whether these charges are the actions of overzealous, local conservation officials, or a renewed crackdown province-wide. The MMF has said it is only uploading the law as has been determined by the Supreme Court of Canada in the Proulx case and by the courts of Manitoba, the latest Métis victory being the judgment in January in the Goodon case.

Métis post-secondary education boosted by $2 million

On September 1st, the largest student-awards fund in the history of the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) was announced, one that will see over $2 million go towards Métis youth education.

The new awards are meant to encourage more Métis youth to pursue education after high school. Any student interested in pursuing a post-secondary education at NAIT can apply for these awards immediately. They range from $1,500 to $5,000 and the Métis Nation— Alberta (MNA) and NAIT hope to distribute up to $5,000,000 in awards this year alone.

Sun, Wind and Water
Province offers support for First Nations and Métis communities in Green Energy Development

McGuire government initiatives will create Green Jobs and spur economic development

Ontario is launching two new programs for First Nations and Métis communities interested in developing and owning renewable energy facilities, such as wind, solar and hydroelectric. These initiatives will create jobs and stimulate economic development as well as offer a guaranteed and sustained long term revenue stream.

Under the $250 million Aboriginal Loan Guarantee Program, Aboriginal communities will be eligible for loan guarantees that will allow them to take on equity participation in renewable generation and transmission projects. The program will facilitate Abo- riginal ownership in energy proj- ects by providing loan guarantees for up to 75 per cent of an Abo- riginal corporation's equity in an eligible project.

Ontario is also launching an 'Aboriginal Energy Partnerships Program' to maximize participation in renewable energy pro- jects. This initiative will build capacity and participation by pro- viding funds for community energy plans, funds for feasibility studies, technical research and developing business cases, and create an 'Aboriginal Renewable Energy Network'.

Aboriginal communities will also be eligible, under certain conditions, for price incentives as part of the Feed-in Tariff program (A feed-in tariff is an incentive structure to encourage the adoption of renewable energy sources through government legislation. The program means free tire disposal for consumers, elimination of stockpiles and $23 million investment in the first year in the scrap tire recycling industry in Ontario.

TORONTO (September 2, 2009) A new tire recycling program rolling out in Ontario will bring new life to the millions of used tires that come off vehicles in the province every year by responsi- bly recycling them into useful products, creating investment and new green jobs, driving inno- vation. The Used Tires Program is being funded by the tire industry and managed by Ontario Tire Stewardship. Through a network of regis- tered collectors—which includes retailers, municipalities and other drop-off points across the province—the program will allow Ontarians to drop off up to four used tires per person, at no charge, to be collected and recy- cled. Tracking systems will help eliminate the illegal dumping of scrap tires and ensure that used tires are managed by service providers that have adopted best environmental practices.

“Ontario’s Used Tires Program marks the most ambitious used tire program in the country,” said Andrew Horsman, Executive Director of Ontario Tire Steward- ship. “The Program will remove tire stockpiles, recycle tires into household, commercial and auto- motive products, and create green jobs and economic benefits right here in our province.”

The Used Tires Program includes a three-year plan to eliminate the approximately 2.8 million stockpiled tires in dump- sites across Ontario, as well as ensure that the approximately 11 million plus scrap tires generated annually are diverted from burn- ing and land filling to other uses, such as rubber mats, playground products, hockey rinks and auto- motive parts, adding to the every- day life and economy of Ontario’s communities. Until now, approxi- mately 50 percent of Ontario’s used tires were trucked into the US to be burned.

Environment: The Used Tires Program will create jobs and ensure economic growth by injecting over $23 million into the Ontario tire recycling industry in the first year. The Used Tires Program will result in a reduced disposal of scrap tires, removing 2.8 million stockpiled tires from landfills per year, creating 900 jobs, and generating $140 million in annual economic activity. The program is the first of its kind in North America and it is expected to create more than 1,000 jobs in the tire recycling industry in the next few years.

Quick Facts

• Ontario has already allocated an additional $1.1 million for new renewable energy programs since September 2009.
• The $250 million Aboriginal Loan Guarantee Program is part of the 2009 Ontario budget.
• A number of Aboriginal part- nerships in renewable energy development are now in place or are in the planning stages.

By providing loan guarantees and facilitating viable partnerships for Green Energy projects, the province is promoting the kind of economic development within Métis communities that provides a solid foundation on which to build a self-reliant nation that personifies the values of conservation and respect for the land that are the hallmarks of Métis tradition and culture.

“By providing loan guarantees and facilitating viable partnerships for Green Energy projects, the province is promoting the kind of economic development within Métis communities that provides a solid foundation on which to build a self-reliant nation that personifies the values of conservation and respect for the land that are the hallmarks of Métis tradition and culture.” — Gary Lipinski, President, MNO

Ontario tire industry rolls out recycling program

How the Used Tires Program benefits Ontario residents:

• Environmental: Responsible management of used tires will eliminate the unauthorized disposal of scrap tires and promote reuse and recycling of scrap tires into green products.
• Economics: The Used Tires Program will create jobs and ensure economic growth by injecting over $23 million into the Ontario tire recycling industry in the first year.
• Health & Safety: Ontario Tire Stew- ardship will clear stockpiles protecting both Ontarians and the environment.
• Innovation: Funding for research and development of scrap tire management options will create new processes and markets for recycled rubber products within the province.

Ontario Tire Stewardship (www.onavtco.ca) is an industry funded organization implementing and operating the approved Used Tires Program, a province-wide scrap tire solution for on-road and off-road tires diverting them away from burning and land filling to reuse and recycling.

For more information, please visit www.onavtco.ca/greenenergy.
ENVIRONMENT

Conserve the Light

Aboriginal Elders’ Gathering brings recommendations on protecting Mother Earth through energy conservation to “Conserve the Light” conference in Thunder Bay

By September 1st the teepees, sweat lodges and teaching lodges were in place on Anikami wadjiw (Mount McKay, west of Thunder Bay). Each had been carefully erected in accordance with regional traditions, for the unprecedented gathering of over 80 First Nation and Métis Elders who would soon arrive to discuss how they could protect Mother Earth through energy conservation.

For two days, these Elders from across Ontario, representing a cross-section of experiences, backgrounds, and home communities, prepared for the Conserve the Light conference with deliberations and ceremonies. First Nation and Métis Elders who follow both Christian and traditional teachings shared music, ceremonies and traditions for the purpose of developing the opening message to the conference. The Elders then made recommendations to the leaders and delegates on what needs to be done to help preserve Mother Earth.

Charles Fox, who oversaw the Conserve the Light conference said, “Elders from across the province are here together, intent on protecting Mother Earth through conservation. Their thoughts and recommendation will directly influence the broader conference. It is an unprecedented gathering of Elders and community champions who possess tremendous insight into the communities. The Elders had indicated that there are many different approaches to a situation, that the communities should decide what is right for themselves, and, conservation tools have to be adaptable.”

The OPA indicated that it would look to the Elders and community champions to provide guidance on program design and cultural considerations, to provide guidance to the External Program Manager on acceptance of a program within various Aboriginal communities, and, to assist in working at the community level.

For its part, OPA had found that there was much interest at the community level, but some technical training was required for the average person to see the house as a “system.” It was also noted that more remote communities have to deal with the logistics of getting material, people, and information to their locations. These requires multiple layers of coordination because few companies can deliver products and services across all of Ontario.

In December of 2005, a meeting was held to examine the development and delivery of a pilot project on an energy conservation program for the Aboriginal community in Ontario. In February and March of 2006, focus groups were held in Toronto with both on-reserve and off-reserve housing groups to examine the needs of the Aboriginal community. In April of 2006, the EEMAC proposal was made to the OPA board of directors and subsequently approved by the board.

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The Dump is Dead

By DIANE LAMPI

On September 1st, 2009, Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS) announced the launch of the First Nations, Inuit, Métis Urban & Rural Housing Assistance Program (FURM) Assisted Homeownership Program.

The goal of the FURM Assisted Homeownership Program is to help fund the future housing needs of Aboriginal people in Ontario living off-reserve, designed and delivered through community engagement processes, to move from rental to homeownership.

This program will provide funding through forgivable loans for the purpose of purchasing primary residences for a limited number of eligible self-identifying Aboriginal individuals and families with low to moderate income. Eligible homes can be in off-reserve urban communities and rural locations across Ontario excluding the Greater Toronto Areas. The value of a home cannot exceed the average market value in the respective area.

Applicants will be evaluated on a first-come, first-served basis, against the mandatory criteria, priority will be given to those who are currently residing in social housing, and families escaping situations of violence.

This fall, the FURM Rental Component Program is expected to initiate its second stage funding to also help address housing needs for Aboriginal people in Ontario living off-reserve, to build or renovate existing housing, and to better address the needs of Elders and families.

The program will provide funding to Aboriginal organizations or a partnership between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations through forgivable loans, with sustainability for 20 years. Eligible housing stock and new housing units can be in off-reserve urban communities and rural locations across Ontario excluding the Greater Toronto Areas. Existing tenants cannot be displaced for the purpose of purchasing these properties of this program.

Applicants are required to submit ideas in writing within 30 days of the launch. It is expected that funds will be allocated by February 2010. This is an excellent opportunity for your organization to secure required housing.

For further information contact:
Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS)
(705) 256-1876, or toll-free at (866) 391-1061.

Métis Nation of Ontario -- Housing Branch
(807) 636-9300, or toll-free at (860) 991-5882.

Conserve the Light conference

from page 6

ference on energy conservation for the Aboriginal community;

Retrofit Programs: Plan for the development and execution of a retro- fit program kits to 25,000 housing units in First Nation communities; Plan, develop and distribute energy efficiency kits to 25,000 First Nation residential homes in Ontario.

Publications: Develop education curriculum on energy con- servation for the First Nation community; Roll out to the First Nation schools in Ontario.

In May 2007, the first conference titled “Macatiahkawatin (Washing up)”, was organized by “ConservetheLight”, was held with 120 participants from First Nations throughout Ontario. At that time presentations were made to the delegates in attend- ance on the Energy Conserva- tion Kits, the Energy Retrofit Pilot Program, the selection of five First Nation communities and Educa- tion Awareness/Curriculum Development. Of 52 communities who were asked to provide feedback of interest, 26 responded. The five who received audios and retrofits on electrically heated homes were: Sheshgahieving First Nation; Sheguandah First Nation; Slate Falls First Nation; Mitan- jikoming First Nation and Anishin- abek of Naongashing First Nation.

Then, 25,000 energy conserva- tion kits were sent to First Nation homes in Ontario, and a culturally appropriate education curriculum was developed for junior kindergarten to grade 12 on the subject of “Energy Effi- ciency in the Home”. The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Measures for Abro-iginal Communities program was developed by Charles Fox Consulting Inc. and funded by the Ontario Power Authority. The main goal of the program is to introduce and implement energy efficiency and conservation measures throughout all 134 First Nations’ communities in Ontario. This program consists of four main components: the Con- serve the Light Gathering confer- ence. Education and Awareness, Energy Conservation Kits, and the Energy Retrofit Pilot.

The Ontario Power Authority is working directly with First Nation communities on a range of initiatives, including long- term systems planning, and is committed to ensuring that First Nation communities have access to the tools to participate in Ontario’s growing culture of con- servation. It is a manner that com- implements First Nations values and heritage.

Canada Mortgage and Hous- ing Corporation (CMHC) has released the first national housing agency for over 60 years. CMHC is committed to helping Canadians access a wide choice of quality, affordable homes, and making vibrant and sustainable communities and cites a reality across the country. For more information, visit www.cmhc.ca or call 1-800-668-2642.
Métis gather in Muskoka

The Moon River Council, hosted by “The Rosseau” in Minett, celebrated a day of history awareness and culture on June 21st, National Aboriginal Day. — By LARRY DUVAL

The day began with the voyageur canoe making its way to shore to welcome the group of Métis and non-Métis visitors to the resort. The Métis flags fixed to the bow and stern of the canoe flew proudly as they neared the end of their short journey. Paddlers included, the Honourable Tony Clement, Minister of Industry and MP for Parry Sound-Muskoka; Susan Pryke, Mayor of Muskoka Lakes; MNO Senator, Ruth Wagner-Millington; from Moon River, Senator Verna Porter; Councillors, Dan Questelle, Eugene Boucher, Tammy Porter and President, Larry Duval. The canoe was expertly steered by Stephen Porter. Upon arrival, they were greeted by Chair, Louise Goulding, representing the resort and many welcomed guests.

On show, leading the group to the main tent were Eric Questelle and Jim Tolles carrying the Métis flags. Senator Ruth Wagner-Millington played the “Red River Jig” on her fiddle, accompanied by Senator Porter on the guitar. Sharon McBride, Vice Chair of the PCMNO, was on hand to greet visitors to the displays.

After the introductions and speeches, the visitors toured the various displays, crafts and information tables and were able to get a better understanding of who the Mètis are. Karen Muscat helped children make a leather beaded bracelet to take away with them, while explaining the meaning of the four colours. Visitors explored the beading exhibit with Cathy Pournier, learning about the traditional Métis method.

They discovered the vast fishing exhibit with Louise and Chris Goulding hearing about fishing and hunting in the early days. The taxidermy exhibit by Jim Tolles displayed some of the pelts prominent in the area. Impromptu music from Senator Wagner-Millington’s fiddle-makin display kept everyone entertained. Outside there was a voyageur canoe exhibit with Tammy Porter, outdoor survival with Eric Questelle and homemade chowder and bannock by Lisa McCroes.

We are grateful for support and assistance from The Rosseau as well as Gayle Dempsey and Gary Froude, both of the Muskoka Lakes Festival committee and we look forward to working with them in the future.

Moon River Council has been very busy with getting the information out to the general public. May 1st saw them represented at the Trillium Lakelands School Board information day for teachers and the public. On June 19th they spent the day at MacTier Public School educating the staff and students on Métis history and culture. On June 22nd they presented to the staff and students of Riverside School in Huntsville. They were involved with the two-day Oshawa Métis Celebration in Memorial Park. On July 18th they were once again set up on Prying Pan Island at Sans Souci presenting information to the Sans Souci Cottagers’ Association. Future plans include Discovery Harbour on August 8th, the AGA in Sudbury, August 22-25th and the Rendezvous in Lufthoflaine on September 19th. Spreading the word has become a Council priority.

In June, the Niagara Region Métis Council (NRMC) was asked by the Welland Heritage Council, if we would be interested in joining them to celebrate Canada Day July 1st. I accepted and contacted our council to see if anyone would be interested in volunteering to carry our flags in the grand entrance. Richard Paquette, NRMC President; Barbarranne Wright, NRMC Women’s Rep; and Valerie Boese, NRMC councillor agreed to carry our flags. When I saw the red and blue Métis flags following the Canadian flag, leading the flags of other Nations, it was a very proud moment.

We set up a table and with the help of Margaret, Valerie and Doug Boese, distributed Canadian flags, flag lapel pins and Frisbees to the kids and anyone else that asked. The Frisbees were donated by Alcon Allen MP. We also handed out many Métis Nation of Ontario calendars, application forms and the Métis Voyageur to those in attendance. There was a great deal of interest and numerous questions about the Métis and the Métis Nation of Ontario. A great time was had by all who were there. I would like to thank all the citizens who joined us in our first Canada Day celebrations with the Welland Heritage Council, we are looking forward to joining them in many more events.

The NRMC is on Facebook and anyone interested in becoming a member can contact Karen Muscat for an application form and the NRMC would like to thank all those who participated and give a very special thanks to our Elders, all of whom hold a key to the past and to Tammy who spear-headed this event.
It is with great enthusiasm that I say, “Yes, we are growing! Yes, we are a nation in motion!”

By TERRYLYNN LONGPRE

On the early, slightly chilly Saturday morning of July 18, 2009, the Niagara Region Métis Council, Long Term Care and AHWS programs partnered for a Nation in Motion Event: canoeing. The event took place on our very own Welland Canal. After many challenges and lots of teamwork, the day finally had arrived.

Originally prepared for ten participants, in the event’s final moments, 21 members departed the north shore to head up to Merrit Island.

We began with all safety regimens in place. Every woman, child and man donned proper life jackets. Children were strategically placed in the centre of the canoes; the inexperienced paired, with the experienced.

Richard Paquette, President of the Niagara Region Métis Council (NRMC), with three years experience in the Niagara Falls Fire Department Marine Unit, was participating and we were very happy to have his expertise. I myself, certified in first-aid CPR and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) was also there for added safety.

As I stood on shore, the scene before me was breathtaking, exhilarating, a captivating moment in time. Imagine, the cool morning, the still waters, the canoes gliding out in almost perfect harmony. I felt as any mother would feel watching her young about to embark on a new adventure—trepidation and apprehension, yet excited and in awe of what was taking place.

Soon, before we knew it, time was up and our members slowly embarked upon the very shore they had left. Everyone gathered together and shared an abundant feast of smoked bacon, sausage, eggs, fruit, cheese, vegetables, yogurt, muffins and strawberry punch—a feast that not only satisfied our hungry members, but signified the success of our voyage.

As we ate, we shared the euphoria of our experience and achievement. There was talk of our next adventure. The day ended with great thanks and the raffle of an Indian head dress donated by Kelly and Clayton Latham.

At this time I would like to extend a very special thank-you to Tammy Wiste, Coordinator of LTC, for being there every step of the way and preparing our abundant feast. I would also like to thank Richard, for without his diligence this event could not have taken place.

Terrylynn Longpre is the MNO Community Wellness Coordinator for the Niagara Region Métis Council.

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By BARBARANNE WRIGHT

June 21, 2009, Aboriginal Day, was the second annual event for the float. A heartfelt thank you to the Niagara Region Métis Council volunteers for all their hard work. You made this a wonderful day!

People clapped and enjoyed the toe-tapping fiddle music we provided. Our president, Rick Paquette sported a fiddle as a prop! He did a great job keeping the beat. Thanks Rick!

We had great fun as we anticipated participating in the Niagara Festival Parade on September 26th in St. Catharines.

Our Métis family in Niagara continues to grow! Many thanks to the volunteers who make us so proud of our heritage! Miigwech.

Check our web site at: www.niagararegionmetiscouncil.ca.

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By STEPHEN QUESNELLE

On June 27th, with thanks to Rebecca Vander Sanden, the Healthy Babies and Healthy Children Coordinator, as well as other staff members and the Niagara Region Métis Council, our family day picnic and BBQ was held at Memorial Park.

Again this year, the event was well attended and enjoyed by all. There was swimming and games for children and good food for all to enjoy. Everyone had a good time making their own talking stick while learning its meaning—to the amazement of some.

I would like to thank everyone who attended and helped out with this year’s picnic and BBQ. You made this event the success it was.

Stephen Quesnelle is the Senator for the Niagara Region Métis Council. He can be reached at quesnelle@cogeco.ca.

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By ST. CATHARINES METIS COUNCIL

On June 27, 2009, the Métis Council of the City of St. Catharines participated in the Welland Rose Parade.

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NIAGARA REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL: CANOE EVENT

Métis Nation in Motion

NIAGARA REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL:

Niagara’s family day picnic & BBQ

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

Niagara Region Métis Council participates in Welland Rose Parade

TOP: Kirby Lynn Wright, Harry Wright and Rick Paquette with the fiddle. Above, left to right: Valerie Boese, Andrea Paquette and Alex MacDonald

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Geographic Bay area Métis sign historic agreement on consultation

By PAULINE SAULNIER

On May 20th, 2009, the active chartered councils of Grey-Owen Sound, Georgian Bay and Moon River had the opportunity to review, discuss, and ensure that the signing of the Protocol in Region 7 did happen. Present to sign this legal document were the President of the Grey-Owen Sound Métis Council (GORMC), Malcolm Dixon; President of the Georgian Bay Métis Council (GBMC), Alden Barty; President of the Moon River Métis Council (MMRC), Larry Duval; President of the MNO, Gary Lipinski; Deputy Chief Captain of the Hunt, Louise Goulding and PCMNO Region 7 Councillor, Pauline Saulnier.

By signing this historic document Region 7 has demonstrated solidarity, unity and the collective right of Métis citizens in this area. It also shows that “the right” is not the right of the individual but rather the collective Métis right as per the Supreme Court of Canada in the Powley case decision. It was history in the making and another mile stone in the evolution of the MNO. After careful review of all the information contained in the protocol agreement, this signing was a proud and memorable moment for me as regional councillor.

With this accomplished there is a lot of work ahead for the regional councillor and the protocol committee. The topics being discussed relate to our “Métis Way of Life” and our attempts to maintain the simple good life that we have always enjoyed in our Homeland. Most Métis citizens at the grassroots level have requested that the environment (water, animals, nature’s playground, air quality, etc) be maintained. We as Métis people need to have more consultation rights from the “get go” as to what we think about the various projects that are being undertaken in our individual communities. The task of tracking projects is not an easy one.

As regional councillor, I have used the new relationship funding to attempt to open up more lines of communication with all my Region 7 community councils to begin the dialogue on what the various councils want, how they will achieve their goals, how they envision the future of the MNO, and how to show appreciation to hard working volunteers who are always willing to donate time and to promote our Métis Nation.

The signing of the Protocol signals the beginning of a lot of work and discussions ahead. I would like to thank those volunteers and staff members who have already worked hard and long hours to ensure that this process functions with ease. We have a great team that can only get stronger and better as it grows.

Pauline Saulnier is the Region 7 Councillor on the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO).

Métis Feedback Needed for an Aboriginal Initiative for Aboriginals Involved in Crime

On July 7th at the Indian Friendship Centre, North Bay held a community consultation to assess the need for Aboriginal Justice Initiatives in North Bay and surrounding areas.

This event was sponsored by representatives of the Aboriginal Justice Initiative Committee including: Amelia Rising Sexual Assault Centre of Nipissing Anishnabek Police Services Crown Attorney’s Office; Indian Friendship Centre; Métis Nation of Ontario; Nipissing First Nation; Ojibwe Family Resources Centre; People for Equal Partnership; Probation and Parole Services; Temagami First Nation, True Self and the Victim Witness Assistance Program.

The Aboriginal Justice Initiative Committee in North Bay and surrounding area strives to define and develop community based initiatives focusing on Aboriginal justice issues, based on the needs expressed by the community.

We need to hear from Métis people. Please send your responses to darleenm@metisnation.org or mail them to:

Aboriginal Justice Initiatives Feedback
Métis Nation of Ontario
235-101 Warrington St. East
North Bay, ON, P1B 1G5

1. Do you think your community needs to look at alternate ways to address some of the crime in your community?

2. Are you interested in participating in an alternative to court process?

3. How does the alternative way look for you?

4. Please provide your name and phone number if you are interested in participating or receiving more information.

Hunting season is here again!

It’s that time of year again! Saddle up your horse and practice your lassoing. If you’re not good at that, try bow and arrow. If that doesn’t work, try the rifle; failing that, call Captain Ken in Region 2 for further instructions.

Hello everyone. I hope you’re getting ready for the big harvest. Well it’s time now:

1. Start by exercising and walking long distances before you set out this year.

2. Make sure you are in good shape physically. This could prevent a heart attack or stroke; ask your doctor.

3. Beware of moose on the loose on all roads, slow down and stay safe; stay alert. A collision with a moose can be deadly.

Happy hunting to you all, and don’t forget where Captain Ken lives if you’re nearby. We supply wild meat and fish to our elders who can’t get out to hunt.

Good luck to all.

By KEN SIMARD

Captain’s Corner

BY KEN SIMARD
CAPTAIN OF THE HUNT, REG 2
Métis clan

gathers in Timmins

By RAYMOND TREMBLAY

During the weekend of July 3rd, 2009, approximately 125 descendants of Rose-Alda (L’Heureux) and Donat Tremblay gathered in Timmins, Ontario, to celebrate their Métis and Franco-Ontarian roots.

Members of the clan came from Winnipeg, Washington, Toronto, Sarnia, South River, Sudbury, Kingston, Ottawa, Kitchener, Caledonia and Timmins to honour their ancestors, to celebrate, to meet new members of the L’Heureux-Tremblay Clan and to renew old family ties. Many family members who couldn’t attend due to conflicting commitments sent their best wishes.

In the course of the evening of Friday, July 3rd, family members warmly greeted and reconnected with each other over an appetizer of Chinese buffet as they tapped danced, played the electric keyboard and the Jews harp. The younger children were singing a relaxing lunch and an after-school organ and the Jews harp. The younger children were singing.

On Saturday, July 4th, interested individuals went on a Timmins gold mine tour. Following the tour, the group held a ceremonial gathering in memory of Roger Tremblay, who, for many years, acted as a senior tour guide. In 1997, a plaque was mounted on a boulder in recognition of his dedication to developing this tour and for having built a number of the buildings on the grounds of the site, namely the “prospectors’ cabin” and the “blacksmith log structure.” Concurrently, another group of family members met at the Porcupine Mines Memorial Monument to honour Jeannette (Tremblay) Dubeau-Bélair’s husband, Lorenzo (Larry) Dubeau, who was killed in a mining accident in 1961.

Following these memorials, a family picnic was held at the Big Water Campground. Hamburgers, home baked beans, hot dogs and refreshments were served. Some played various lawn games including horse shoes while others walked along the sandy beaches. Throughout the afternoon, individuals reminisced about and caught up on their mutual life experiences. Smiles, joy and laughter permeated the entire afternoon. The family chose to celebrate and reaffirm its Métis roots immersed in Mother Nature’s soothing and inspiring surroundings. This was a particularly moving ceremony because some members of our clan had not previously been aware of their Métis heritage.

Following a roast beef dinner at Fern Tremblay’s home, the family gathered for a delicious spaghetti supper and succulent desserts at the church hall. Entertainment was provided by a well-known entertainer and close friend of the family, Gabe Bento.

This “last supper” was followed by a flurry of lively conversations and flashing cameras taking numerous pictures of groups of families joining hands and hearts together to further bond as proud members of the L’Heureux-Tremblay Clan. People quickly realized that this one-of-a-kind historical family reunion was coming to an end. Hugs, kisses and best wishes were warmly exchanged. A few tears were shed but all recognized that the spirit of kinship within the L’Heureux-Tremblay Clan would last forever under the piercing eye of the eagle, the divine grace of our Creator and the nurturing of our generous Mother Earth regardless of the obstacles we would encounter throughout our lives.

It was refreshing and stimulating to see and hear that everyone truly enjoyed themselves throughout the weekend. It is no wonder that they gave thanks to their Creator and their ancestors for having guided them to reach this major crossroad on their earthly path and for encouraging them to bravely and safely continue to travel on their journey.

Until we meet again, we remain proud of our Métis, Franco-Ontarian and Christian heritage. À la prochaine. Baa Maa Pu’i Megwetch.
I first became involved because I was curious about my own DNA ancestry and the swaps I purchased initially gave me a mere 32 markers (of a possible 67) that I could have purchased. In my ignorance, I did not understand that having just 32 STR results would also give including my birth mother’s actual mtDNA without any additional cost. In other words, my very first purchase gave my father’s AND my mother’s basic DNA Haplogroup results as “R” (father and me) and “U” (my mother).

After the additional genetic test I purchased eventually enabled me to obtain the two distinct Haplotypes which are now my male only R1b1b2a1b and my late mother’s U5a2. These results alone have enabled me—thanks to the above-mentioned search databases—to locate all kinds of common haplogroup and haplotype persons worldwide and to ascertain the genetic distance of each of them from my or my mother’s haplotype. There is of course genetic (time) distance to consider. A genetic distance of 0–25 years or fewer indicates an exact genetic common match, regardless of the surname of the individual. A genetic distance of 15 years or more means a time difference of possibly 25 to 40 years or approximately 325 years. “Time to Most Recent Common Ancestor” (TMRCA), indicates approximately how much time has elapsed from that particular ancestor to your own present time.

All that said, I went ahead and purchased the PGS for my wife and learned that her Haplogroup is “H”. When I purchased one kit for relating directly back to Mary (Daniel) Corrigal—a five generation female sequence, I was happy to learn that my “Métis Mary” ancestor had a Mor- ganshire, Wales, father, named Jenkins Daniel, who was employed with the Hud- son’s Bay Company. However, I have not yet determined Jenkins Daniel’s Native woman’s name nor her band or tribe. All we know at present is that Mary (Daniel) Cor- rigal is a Haplogroup “X” and now a Hap- lotype “A2”. However, there remain ques- tions that might or might not relate directly to Mary as an Haplogroup “X2a” or possibly a Haplogroup D4h3a depending on the relationship between her maternal ancestry was respectively of a “Beringian” crossing or a “Pacific Route” Amerindian. Apparently Mary’s “X” haplogtype was originally “certi- fied” to me by mail. But I discovered it was database posted as a Haplogroup “A2” and when I brought that difference to their attention they informed me that a cor- rected “certificate” was in the mail certify- ing the “A2”. In the meantime, I have already been in email contact with several males and females with whom I share the same “zero distance” Haplogtype. I have not looked at much more than a genetic distance of 2 or 5 (70 and 50 years back) for a MCM. That process will take place when I have completed the North Ameri- can information on Mary (Daniel) Corri- gal’s mtDNA female only roots. The progress thus far has been both fascinating and enlightening.

The Art & Science of Ancestry

By DONN FOWLER

The necessary research toward find- ing more information about the “life and time” of my GGG grand- mother, Mary (Daniel) Corrigal (1788- 1823), and her brief thirty-five years of life, have not only included purchasing four Full Spectrum Genetics (PGS) DNA kits, from the Geographic Project’s Family-Tree- DNA, but also necessitated accessing www.ancestry.com and www.YourDNA2. com computer databases associated with the DNA discovery system. These two search areas are respectively the female and male (mtDNA and yDNA) results of the present maximum possible number of Single Nucleotide polymorphisms (SNP)– 67 markers—unique to the specific Basic Short Tandem Repeats (STR)—12 Markers, with the modest costs being greater for the better PGS results. It all boils down to the total number of genetic mutations we want to find in our own individual chro- mosomes.

The Scottish Parliament wants the star against Jacobites lifted. Scots Canadians whose ances- tors may well be the descen- dants of Jacobites who were exiled after the rebellions. Many of them were settled in North America by Act of Parliament that denied them their property and disinherited their descendants. Those affected included national hero Rob Roy McGregor Donald, Bonnie Prince Charlie’s rescuer after the Battle of Culloden in 1746, who settled in New Canada. Scottish Conservative Jamie McGirgror has tabled a motion, with cross-party support, calling on the Scottish Parliament to back a petition that demands the Westminster Parliament over- turn the Acts of Attainder and clear the names of Jacobite fami- lies.

Not only could the stigma associated with “corruption of the blood” be overturned, but some Canadians may also find that they have legitimate claim on ancient titles that would be restored if the campaign is suc- cessful.

Peter Drummond-Murray, a retired British and heraldry expert who started the petition, said that a number of peerage titles could be affected, including the Earl of Kilmarnock and the Duke of Berwick.

Lots of ordinary people were transported to North America by the British at the Battle of Culloden in 1745. However, many families that supported the Stuarts are still supported by what one member of the Scot- tish Parliament called “historical discrimination.”

A Jacobite forces clash with the British at the Battle of Culloden in 1745. They who still have this star on them are “We’re petitioning for it to be removed,” he said. However, there is no rule out that there could be Canadians with claim to old titles, but said that there is no question of successful land claims being launched after nearly 300 years.

The list of those “attainted” included all ranks from peers and lairds to clerks and com- moners. As the Jacobite threat subsided in the 19th century, a number of peers were able to afford the procedure of a private bill in Parliament to reverse the attainder process. However, the Scottish Parliament wants the star against Jacobites lifted. Scots Canadians whose ances- tors may well be the descend- 

The following article was brought to the attention of the Voyageur by MNO Registrar, Karole Dunmont-Beckett, who noted that many MNO Canadians have a Scottish branch in their family tree.

A list of Scottish “Jacobites” who were attainted. Many of their descendants live in Canada now.
One Nation, One People
Ontario Métis gather in Sudbury for 16th Annual General Assembly

By LINDA LORD

The 16th Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the Métis Nation of Ontario was held this year in Sudbury, from August 22 to 25, 2009. As is customary, the flags of the Métis Nation and the Province of Ontario were paraded into the assembly room to the accompaniment of Roger Geroux on fiddle and Aline Geroux on guitar. Dignitaries made up the rest of the Grand Entry.

This year’s assembly was dedicated to Métis veterans and many were in attendance (see page 14). The entire gathering was moved by the opening prayer offered by Executive Senator, Reta Gordon. We ask you to pray for our men and women who are in war torn countries fighting to restore peace and democracy. May the Creator send down his angels under whose wings they shall safely travel. May he keep them in his love ‘til they return to the arms of their loved ones.

Let us not forget our veterans: veterans of World War Two, the Korean Conflict, Vietnam, those in peace-keeping missions and on the home front. Their steps may be slowing, their eyes dimming, but in our hearts they are still the mighty warriors of old. May the Creator grant them peace and dignity in the twilight of their years.

It is the veteran, not the campus organizer. Who has given us freedom of speech?
Who has given us freedom of the press?
Who has given us freedom of religion?
Who has given us freedom of the people?

It is the veteran, not the poet. Who has given us freedom of poetry?

It is the veteran, not the preacher. Who has given us freedom of the pulpit?

It is the veteran, not the reporter. Who has given us freedom of the press?

It is the veteran, not the lawyer. Who has given us freedom of counsel?

It is the veteran, not the campus organizer. Who has given us freedom to assemble?

It is the veteran, not the lawyer.

who has given us the right to a fair trial.
It is the veteran, not the politician. Who has given us the right to vote.

It is the veteran, who served honourably under the flag. It is the veteran who salutes the flag, and today, all of us, salute you.

MNO Chair, France Picotte, then took control of the meeting and welcomed everyone. Her greeting was followed by a few words of thanks from the new President of the MNO’s Veterans’ Council, Maurice Sarrazin.

Representing the Premier and the Government of Ontario, the Honourable Rick Bartolucci, Minister of Community Safety & Correctional Services, welcomed delegates to Sudbury. Minister Bartolucci served as Deputy-Minister and worked as an educator prior to his election as MPP for Sudbury. He congratulated the MNO on the number of Youth in attendance (see page 16), adding that Premier Dalton McGuinty regretted that he could not attend in person.

Next to speak to the assembly was Ontario Attorney-General Christopher Bentley. A familiar presence in MNO circles for the past five years, Mr Bentley brought greetings from the Honourable Brad Duguid, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, and from the Minister of Education Kathleen Wynne. Minister Bentley said that he felt that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the MNO and the Ministry of Education would help improve educational outcomes for Métis people in Ontario. Finally, Nickel Belt New Democratic Party MPP France Gélinas, welcomed delegates to Sudbury.

At this point, the MNO AGA delegates witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the MNO and the Ministry of Education by MNO President Léonard Lapinski, Chair France Picotte and the Honourable Rick Bartolucci. (See page 15)

Next to the microphone was Audrey Poitras, President of the Métis Nation of Alberta. She thanked the MNO for sharing the work that has been undertaken, especially in the area of the Duty to Consult.

The next honoured guest was the President of the Métis National Council, Clément Chartier. National President Chartier thanked Senator Gordon for her eloquent prayer and went on to address some of the issues relevant to Métis veterans. Chartier commented on the difficult struggle to obtain the recognition that Métis veterans deserve. He said that David Charlottard, President of the Manitoba Métis Federation who holds the Veterans Portfolio nationally has been working very hard on these issues. As a direct result of his efforts, the Juno Beach Museum Board agreed to fly the Métis flag with the flags of other nations this past year. As well, they will showcase the Métis as part of a rotation, and have agreed to add a Red River Cart to the site. In addition, a “Métis Nation” year will be declared from time to time.

The National President went on to say that the MNC was working with the government to have veterans attend the ceremonies planned for this fall to commemorate the 65th Anniversary of D-Day at Juno Beach in France. (See Senators’ Meeting page 18)

President Chartier then moved to the subject of residential school survivors by saying that while the Métis had suffered the same abuses as the First Nations their suffering had not been acknowledged.

Although he represented the Métis nationally at the reading of the government’s apology, he feels the agreement does not address the outstanding issues of the Métis people. He said that true reconciliation can only happen when there is acknowledgement that the Métis had suffered the same abuses as the First Nations. Their suffering had not been acknowledged. He said that David Charlottard, President of the Manitoba Métis Federation who holds the Veterans Portfolio nationally has been working very hard on these issues. As a direct result of his efforts, the Juno Beach Museum Board agreed to fly the Métis flag with the flags of other nations this past year. As well, they will showcase the Métis as part of a rotation, and have agreed to add a Red River Cart to the site. In addition, a “Métis Nation” year will be declared from time to time.

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Ski, one of the most significant identified.

The President then recapped which was later presented...continued page 15

MÉTIS VETS:

AGA dedicated to Métis Veterans

On Saturday, August 22nd, the MNO veterans met to elect a new council. This is the first time in a long time that the MNO has had a full Veterans' Council in place.

MNO VETERANS' COUNCIL:

President - Maurice Sarrazin
Vice President - Steven Callaghan
Secretary - Joseph Paquette
Treasurer - Renee Gravelle
Chair - Jean Carrandre
Senator - Eliner Ross

New president, Maurice Sarrazin, said: “For me, this is a huge success.” He reported that there were 18 veterans at the meeting of a possible 51 who are registered with the MNO. The list is growing every day. If you are a veteran who has not yet made yourself known, contact Maurice at maurice@metsnation.org, or call head office 1-800-265-8489.

A highlight of this year’s AGA was a lunch which the veterans shared with the youth. This was an opportunity for the vets to tell their stories and for the youth to record them. Maurice says that he is still receiving calls and emails from veterans who enjoyed this event. “We agreed that we must invite our youth to participate and interact with the veterans at every AGA,” he said.

“This was the best meeting the veterans have held to date. We got to meet new friends and old friends and shared old memories and stories. I must say that I am very proud to be part of such an elite group of men and women. My hat goes off to all you veterans for making this AGA a huge success.”

DELEGATES GET DOWN TO BUSINESS

Following President Lipinski’s comments, the business of the AGA began in earnest. Last year’s Minutes were dealt with and a Quorum was established.

Chief Operating Officer, Doug Wilson, then spoke to delegates about the link between making the MNO more professional and more accountable and access to additional government funding. He thanked MAA for its continuing support of the MNO and
On August 23rd, another significant step toward achieving the overall objectives of the 2008 MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement was realized by the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) with the signing of a ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ (MOU) between the MNO and the Ministry of Education. The signing was one of several highlights of the first day of the MNO’s Annual General Assembly which took place in Sudbury.

“The Memorandum with the Ministry of Education (MEDU) strengthens further the existing bilateral processes between the MNO and the province,” said MNO President Gary Lipinski. “It will help enhance the capacity of the MNO and all Métis in the province because it recognizes the distinct identity and culture of the Métis people. The relationship between the MNO and the province will be strengthened by this commitment as gaps in student achievement across the province are reduced.”

The Ministry of Education promotes a strong, vibrant, publicly funded education system by focusing on three core priorities: improving student achievement; reducing gaps in student achievement across the province; and increasing public confidence in our publicly funded schools.

Over the last few years, the Ministry of Education and the MNO have worked together to find ways of improving Métis educational outcomes consistent with the Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework. The work by the MNO in this area has been done in consultation with students, parents and community groups across the province.

“We are strengthening our relationship with the Métis Nation of Ontario through this historic agreement, and look forward to working with them to improve outcomes for Métis students in Ontario,” said Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Education.

“This signing enhances the Ottawa Government’s collabora- tive relationship with the Métis Nation of Ontario by further pro- moting the distinct identity and culture of the Métis people and the importance of these for education, learning and success,” said Brad Duguid, Minister of Aborigi- nal Affairs.

The implementation of the MOU will be guided by a mutually agreeable work plan which identifies opportunities and partnerships to address the unique educational needs of Métis people in Ontario, reduces the gaps in Métis student achievement and student success, and increases the confidence of Métis parents in the education system. That work plan will include regular meetings between the Minister of Education and MNO President, Gary Lipinski.

“The signing of this MOU is the latest in a series of longstanding partnerships in education that have been formalized by the MNO in recent months. It is also further evidence of the commitment by the Government of Ontario to live up to the promise it made with the signing of the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement in November, 2008,” added President Lipinski.

Many thanks to all the sponsors of the Métis Nation of Ontario’s 16th ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
acknowledged the representatives of the Office of the Federal Interclocator (OFI) who were present at the AGA. He added that without the help of OFI, who worked with the MNO on the Powley funding, the necessary work would not have been done. He also thanked them for the contribution that helped the MNO hold the AGA.

COO Wilson then introduced the directors and their reports with a PowerPoint presentation titled, “Métis Nation of Ontario – Organization Chart.” It provided an overview of the organizational structure within the MNO Secretariat.

The directors’ reports included presentations by Jean McIsaac, Director of Housing; Jennifer St. Germain, Director of Education and Training; Melanie Paradis, Director of Lands, Resources and Consultation; Janet Leader, Director of Registry; Joanne Meyer, Director of Intergovernmental Relations and Dorota Lyons, Director of Health Services. The session ended with Hillary Thatcher of the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure being called to the podium for a PowerPoint presentation titled, “Building a Green Economy for Ontario. The Green Energy Act.”

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

The assembly then adjourned for the day. However, there was barely time for delegates to catch their breath before dinner and the Gala Evening that followed. Lorna Rowlinson, Master of Ceremonies, called guitarist, André Geroux and noted musician and fiddler, Senator Ruth to the stage. In seconds, toes were tapping and hands were clapping. What was perhaps the highlight of the set was a sweet tune composed for Honourary Senator Olavine Bousquet Tedema on the occasion of her 80th birthday, titled “Olavine’s Waltz.”

The crowd was humming with anticipation prior to the announcement of the winner of this year’s Suzanne Rochon Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award. Every year since 2006, the MNO has chosen a special person to receive this award which, while honouring the recipient, also honours a great Métis woman who died in 2006. Suzanne Rochon Burnett, MNO Chair, France Picotte and President, Gary Lipitski came forward to make the presentation, and as Gary said: “It was a heck of a choice.” People outside of the MNO may not realize just how many people volunteer to ensure MNO remains a vital organization, nor can they conceive of the number of hours given freely to and by the Métis community currently. Finally, the much anticipated announcement: Louise Gouldling of the Moon River Métis Council was named this year’s recipient. Louise, however, was not in attendance as she was volunteering her moral support to Senator Sierra Porter and her family who were coping with the final illness of Senator Porter’s husband Doug, who passed away on September 16th. When contacted by phone, Louise expressed her surprise, her appreciation and her thanks for having been chosen the recipient of this year’s award. (“Watch for a profile on Louise in the next edition of the Voyageur.”)

Next on the stage were the ever popular Geroux Family—Roger, Aline, and son André—who brought out the jiggers in the crowd with tunes like Bonaparte Crossing the Rhine, and the standard for jiggers. The set was a sweet tune composed by the Red River Jig. The evening closed with everyone’s favourite, the Old Rose Waltz. A surprise, and much appreciated was a set performed by the Fiddler Sierra Noble with a contribution that helped the Métis Nation”, in honour of his service during World War Two. As Senator Scofield came forward, special guest, Sierra Noble, played a tune she had composed called, “Warrior’s Lament.” In her skilled hands the lone fiddle filled the room with a bagpipe like keening. There was not a dry eye in the house.

Sierra was joined by André Geroux for a set that included tunes from Sierra’s new CD, “Possibility” as well as traditional jigs. A surprise, and much appreciated guest was Jamie Koebel of Jig on the Fly, whose fancy foot work set the standard for jiggers. The set closed with everyone’s favourite, the Red River Jig. The evening concluded with more dancing and comedy.

DAY TWO DAWNS

On a foggy Monday morning, Chair, France Picotte, reconvened the assembly. First to take the floor was Secretary/Treasurer, Tim Pile, who reported to the delegates that the MNO had had a fairly good year but was still dealing with an old debt load. He talked about the new accounting guidelines and said that while many organizations will be changing their financial reporting processes, the MNO is already meeting or surpassing these guidelines. He said that efforts to ensure financial guidelines are met will include a commitment by the Executive to provide Council Presidents with financial training and this is possible because of funding received through the New Relations Fund.

COO Doug Wilson, then presented a PowerPoint presentation on the MNO’s recent financial activities. The 2008/2009 audited financial statements were presented by Randy Try of Collibers Barrow Chartered Accountants. Stephen Berry, Director of Finance, followed with the MNO Financial Report for the Fiscal Year ended March 31, 2009. Doug Wilson then provided an overview of the new Strategic Plan to the delegates. (The document is 36 pages long and cannot be reproduced here. However, the following introductory excerpt will give the reader an idea of its content.)

THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Looking toward the future, the MNO is marked by a widespread feeling of optimism. "This strategic plan channels the following introductory excerpt will give the reader an idea of its content:"

continued page 17
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Fort William. President Lipinski

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PCMNO Senators and 6 Hon-

there were 26 Council Senators, 5

PCMNO Senators and 6 Hon-

youth had to share a lunch and

youth who let their names stand for Youth Council Regional Representative and for PCMNO Youth Representative. Newly acclaimed to the Youth Council are: Janice Landry, Region 2; James Callaghan, Region 5 and Ryan McBride, Region 8. Newly elected as PCMNO Youth Representative is Nicholas Callaghan.

It is often said that youth are our future, but it can also be said that they are our present and therefore must be present. For a shining example of the influence and importance of Métis youth, one needs to look no further than Chelsey Quirk. (For more on Chelsey, see page 4.) Not only did she let her name stand for election, but a quick scan through the pages of the MNO web site will show some of Chelsey’s other involvements. It is hoped that all Métis youth will continue to speak out, will continue to run for office, will continue to be present, will continue to stand up and proudly proclaim their Métis heritage.

Next on the agenda was an update from President Lipinski on Métis rights litigation and issues from across the Homeland; the Captain of the Hunt Report; results of the MNO Harvesters Survey; and an update on the MNO/MNR Harvesting Agreement. President Lipinski pointed out that right now the MNO is in a better position with the province than any of the other MNC voting members. He reviewed the har-

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discussions with MNR and for the first time last year the MNO received funding to deal with the important issues relating to the traditional harvest.

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MEMETIS VOYAGEUR • OCTOBER 2009

Annual General Assembly

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING SIGNED BETWEEN THE METIS NATION OF ONTARIO AND COLLEGE BOREAL

A t Sudbury, on August 23rd, the Métis Nation of Ontario and College Boreal signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) aimed at responding more effectively to the specific needs of the Métis people in the province. This agreement’s main objective is to enhance the professional integration of the Métis, respecting their cultural specificity and improving their access to services, programs and employment services offered by College Boreal.

The strategies implemented within the framework of this memorandum included an evaluation and augmentation of the opportunities available to the Métis in an effort to increase their participation in postsecondary education initiatives. An equally important priority has representatives from the Métis Nation participate actively in all phases of consultation and the development of College Boreal’s policies and practices with regard to Aboriginal teaching.

College Boreal President, Denis Hubert, notes the importance of such a memorandum of understanding. “It is essential to improve conditions for the Métis people in order to improve the quality of life for all Ontarians. By enhancing the exposure of the Métis Nation to the various training opportunities available throughout the province, College Boreal hopes to include this important component of the cultural landscape and Ontario heritage on the threshold of the forecasted economic rebound.”

Gary Lipinski, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario, anticipates positive results from this memorandum in the near future: “Partnerships like this one with College Boreal hold promise on many levels. MNO is pleased to work in partnership with College Boreal.”

“Partnerships like this one with College Boreal hold promise on many levels.”

College Boreal is a francophone college of applied arts and technology with its principal campus in Sudbury. The college has satellite campuses in Hearst, Kapuskasing, Timmins, Temiskaming Shores, Toronto and West Nipissing, as well as a network of access centres throughout the province to promote the college and its programs.

The institution began operations in 1995, taking over the francophone programs of Sudbury’s Cambrian College. It is a French-language college where students receive hands-on training, tailored to the job market.

In 2002, College Boreal added a campus in Toronto, taking over the programs and services of the defunct College des Grands-Lacs. The Toronto facility is located at the Carlaw Avenue campus of Centennial College.

For seven consecutive years, College Boreal has had the highest graduation rate among the 24 colleges of applied arts and technology in the province. Its graduate satisfaction rate has also been the highest in the province for six of the last ten years according to the “Key Performance Indicators” published each year by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. College Boreal is the first education sector representative officially designated by the Ontario Government under the French Language Services Act.

MNO SENATORS:

LIKE A FAMILY REUNION...

On Friday evening, August 21st the Senators of the Métis Nation of Ontario came together for their annual "meet and greet." According to Executive Senator, Reta Gordon, “it’s like a family reunion” this year, the Senators added three new smiling faces to their number, Eugene Constantin of the Northern Lights Métis Council, Michelle Boisvert of the Chapleau Métis Council, and Janette Levis of the Timiskaming Métis Council. Among the Senators are several veterans, five of whom were honoured with eagle feathers and sashes in recognition of their military service. They are: Gerry Bedford, Alin Kennedy; Earl Scofield; Rene Gravelle; Jack Leroux and Veterans’ Senator, Elmer Ross.

Senator Reta Gordon has been busy trying to raise sufficient funds to send two Métis veterans to the Juno Beach memorial in November. There was a raffle; Sierra Noble donated a portion of CD sales, a BINGO was held; and, a hat was passed. Reta says that people were handing her money right up to the last minutes of the AGA. “One woman even gave me her expense cheque, and another gave me a hundred dollar bill. I was so touched by their generosity, but I should have known our citizens would dig deep in their pockets to help our revered veterans.” To date, Reta has received about $5,000. If you would like to do your part to help send a Métis vet back to Juno Beach, call her office at 1-800-265-4899 or email Reta at retag@metisnation.org.

Reta also wants to thank the citizens and staff for their kindness to the senators. She singled out the Youth Council Representative from Sault Sainte Marie, Mitch Case, for an extra special thank-you. Reta says Mitch devoted all of his time to looking after the Elders. “Young men like him are such an asset to the MNO. In the future I am sure you will be voting for Mitch to sit on the PCMO or even the Executive.”

Finally, Reta said: “I would be remiss if I did not include the Head Office Staff in our thank you. Unless the citizens of the MNO were in the office they cannot imagine the dedication and all the work the staff go to, to put together a gathering of this magnitude. As well, we give them thanks for their daily input and work for having brought the MNO these many miles. Thank you one and all.”

工作在一起建设一个强大的未来

Hydro One is proud to serve Métis citizens through both Hydro One Networks and Hydro One Remote Communities.

Working together to build a powerful future

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Métis health care providers to benefit from mental health care expertise of Providence Care and Queen’s University

On August 24th, 2009, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) renewed its landmark agreement with Queen’s University and leading health care provider Providence Care, which specializes in mental health. The agreement expands the MNO’s mental health resources, training and resource capacity across the province through a partnership with Kingston-based Providence Care and the Centre for Health Services and Research Policy at Queen’s.

“The health and well-being of our citizens is a priority,” said MNO President Gary Lipinski. “By working with Providence Care and Queen’s we are able to bring valuable and much-needed resources into our communities. As well, we are able to build capacity at the community level by training our own health care providers according to the most recent standards.”

Under the agreement, Providence Care will provide training and certification for all MNO health care workers, including annual certification in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills and Non-Violent Crisis Intervention training. The MNO will also receive additional access to clinical training and mental health expertise via video-conferencing.

This agreement builds on the initial two-year agreement between the MNO, Queen’s and Providence Care which was signed in 2007.

Under this agreement, MNO clients are also able to access tele-psychiatry services from Providence Care via video-conferencing. Providence Care Vice President of Mental Health, Heather Stuart, a professor in the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology at Queen’s, said: “Our relationship with the Métis, which began over three years ago, allows us to share our resources with the MNO and at the same time discover new ways of delivering care. We look forward to opportunities to expand our agreement as demand increases.”

Researchers at the Centre for Health Services and Policy Research at Queen’s University in Kingston will work with Providence Care and the MNO to conduct a survey of mental health conditions among the Métis population.

“We are looking forward to finalizing the study plan for the mental health survey and are grateful to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care for providing seed funding to assist us,” said Dr. Heather Stuart, a professor in the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology at Queen’s. The collection and analysis of the data will provide the necessary information to help plan, access and provide appropriate services to meet the needs identified by the Métis.

Providence Care is south eastern Ontario’s leading provider of specialized mental health care. Mental health services span the full continuum of care—inpatient, outpatient, and community. Providence Care is also a leading provider of specialized geriatric services, complex continuing care, physical medicine and rehabilitation, palliative and long-term care.

One of Canada’s leading universities, Queen’s is renowned for scholarship, research and a vibrant learning environment. With its strong tradition of public service, the university has been helping shape Canadian values and policies, educating many of the country’s most notable political and cultural figures for over 165 years.
at their young age can share with their classmates and teachers and extended family who they are. They are proud Métis children and they have a lifetime ahead of them to embrace and learn about their people and their history.

Through this process of learning, I had felt something calling to me or within me, but had not figured out just what it was. This past weekend I found this “something” and need to share it with you.

Several weeks ago I received an email that contained an invitation to a “Women’s Gathering 2009.” I was quite interested in the event but sent it to the “deleted” box once I saw that it would be held six hours away in Ottawa. A week or two passed and I went looking for this email, for some reason it was calling. And again, after reading it I put it in the deleted box. It was not until it called me the third time that I knew it was meant for me and I needed to attend this event. I put the plan in motion and by the end of the day, it was done; I was going, and within a few days my dearest friend was going with me.

When we arrived at the event on Friday evening I could feel the ‘electricity’ in the air during the opening ceremonies. The words the Grandmothers were sharing with us were quite powerful and moving. I was excited to be there and anxious to find out what had called me here. The event started that night right after the ceremonies and before I knew we were in our first of several workshops for the weekend: Tobacco Protocol and how to make a tobacco tie. In no time at all, the hour-and-a-half was up. I took so much away just from that first session of the weekend that I was eager to get to sleep so we could begin the schedule for the following day.

After breakfast we signed up for a sweat lodge with one of the Grandmothers. I had heard other women talk about the sweat lodge but I had never experienced one before as it is not known to me as being a Métis tradition or teaching. Still, I knew I wanted, or should say, needed to take advantage of this opportunity. There are few words that can help me share with you this profound experience. Like a sweat lodge feeling light headed, I found myself the rest of the day reflecting several times on what happened to me during my experience. I knew that this was something that would become a part of me from that day forward.

I need to share with you something that happened to me during this profound experience. At one point I was starting to become overwhelmed by a headache. I was beginning to disconnect with the sweat lodge experience and think about my headache and how I needed to get out to deal with it. I went into my own little world inside the world in the sweat lodge. Off in the distance I could hear a group of women drumming and singing. As I lis- tened to this it became louder and louder, almost as if I were sitting right beside them. I could feel my body starting to relax from this headache that was trying to over take me. I felt my heartbeat start to calm as I let myself fall into this place the drumming was taking me. I real- ized my heart had actu- ally started to beat to the beat of their drums. I am not sure how long I was in this other place, but when I came out and back to the present within the sweat lodge, the headache had subsided and the urgency to get out was gone, but the drum beat, even though I had finished, was still with me.

I enjoyed the afternoon sun on a medicine walk, learning about the plants and medicines that Mother Earth offers us at different times of the year. This touched very close to home for me because our youngest son is being helped by a naturopathic doctor after general medicine said there was nothing (physically wrong with him) I will leave it at that because his story will take us down a different path. However, over the past two years, while we have been healing our son, I have felt that this natural medicine was called to me. The medicine walk that I realized I had such a deep passion and need to learn about these medicines that Mother Earth has for us. I left this workshop with another part of me feeling fulfilled or on the path to being fulfilled.

During all the meals we met and talked with so many interesting women. After each conversa- tion of sharing and listening, I knew I would take something from that time home with me: It was no different at supper; as we sat outside in different groups enjoying yet another fine meal that was provided, I was over- come by the feeling that I did not want this weekend to end. As the supper turned into evening we took part in our last workshop: making a medicine bag. After the events of the day it was a relaxing way to end the evening. The group of women worked together while sharing lit- tle stories and comments as each one of us created our own piece to take home with us.

WHEN I LAY AWAKE THIS MORNING LISTENING TO THE DRUMMING AND SONGS IN MY HEAD IT ALL CAME TO ME: THIS CALLING I HAVE BEEN FEELING FROM MANY ASPECTS OF MY LIFE IS MY SPIRIT TRYING TO GET ME TO LISTEN.

It was dark as we walked to our tent. As we crossed the grounds we could hear a group of women drumming and singing, their voices carrying across to us—enchanted almost. It sounded like they were singing my name over and over. They were drumming. We needed to stop and listen. It was a beautiful little song called “Nesia”. We were invited into the circle and particip- ated in a couple of rounds of singing this song, an honour song to Grandmother Moon. It was absolutely beautiful and I could not help a for better way to end our first night.

The next morning I was up with the dawn. Before long, we were sitting around the sacred fire with a group of other early risers. The morning was greeted with tobacco offerings to the Creator and more drumming and singing. I knew from other events like the Canadian Aborigi- nal Festival that I was attracted to the drums and singing, but this weekend was my first experience hearing the drumming and singing being done by women. I recognized this as more than an attraction. There was something inside me calling me to the drum. It was a lovely morning and I could not have asked for a better way to start our day.

After breakfast we signed up for a sweat lodge with one of the Grandmothers. I had heard other women talk about the sweat lodge but I had never experienced one before as it is not known to me as being a Métis tradition or teaching. Still, I knew I wanted, or should say, needed to take advantage of this opportu- nity. There are few words that can help me share with you this profound experience. Like a sweat lodge feeling light headed, I found myself the rest of the day reflecting several times on what happened to me during my experience. I knew that this was something that would become a part of me from that day forward.

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continued page 24
NATURE WARRIOR

Tracy Boose is a young Métis citizen who has completed a two year course at Niagara College with the help of the bursary that she received from the MNO. Tracy is the daughter of one of the Niagara Region Métis Council’s councillors, Valeria Boose. We are very proud of Tracy’s accomplishments. It is a privilege for me as the Director of the Niagara Region Métis Council to see Métis youth, like Tracy, getting a chance to achieve their dreams. Our youth are our future and we must do everything that we can to help and encourage them to be all that they can be. I have attached a letter from Tracy, along with her graduation picture.

— Stephen Quesselle

MNO helps Métis welder upgrade after auto industry meltdown

By PATRICK LANNIGAN

I recently completed a two week training course sponsored by the Métis Nation of Ontario. I have a nine year old daughter, Cara, and worked for Euclid Hitatchi. I started there in 1994 as a welder and have held several positions with the company. Back in 2008, a position became available for a “supervisor of welds” and I successfully applied to the MNO for $500 to take a course to increase the skills I would require to compete for the position. At that time, my co-workers told me I would not get the position as the company had their hiring within the supervisor of welds. I passed the course and got the job.

Over the past two and a half years I have been upgrading my skill levels in the field and last year got a promotion to manage responsible for training the supervisors and other staff. My work at that time paid for any training relevant to the field that I took the opportunity to go to Mohawk College for several training courses from CINDE. These courses are generally filled with students at a higher level of education than I have, (grade 12) but my marks were all in the 90s. Last year, the bottom fell out of the auto industry in Canada and my bosses informed me that they could never cover the cost of my training. At the same time my wife was laid off from her job due to the recession in that industry. She worked for a company that makes brakes. I applied to Elaine Jeffery at the MNO and was able to use my vacation time to do the training. She worked for a company that makes brakes. I applied to Elaine Jeffery at the MNO and was able to use my vacation time to do the training. She worked for a company that makes brakes.

I want to thank the MNO and Elaine Jeffery for all their support, my wife and daughter who supported me emotionally, and my mother who has always told me I could do anything.

October 2009 — Métis Voyageur
Seeking a new labour market agreement for Métis

By CHRIS PACI

Last year, the Conservative Government of Canada announced an Economic Action Plan aimed at stimulating the Canadian economy. The package promised to put Canadians back to work by investing in infrastructure and jobs.

While the new plan is being rolled out, several older successful programs are ramping down. One such program that has proven its value is Human Resources and Skills Development Canada’s very successful Aboriginal Human Resource Development Strategy (AHRDS). The MNO, along with the other Métis governments successfully delivered the Métis Human Resource Development Agreements (MHRDAs) to create opportunities and good jobs throughout the Homeland.

According to a study by the independent Ottawa-based Centre for the Study of Living Standards, MHRDAs produced permanently higher incomes for Métis, brought income tax revenue to the provincial and federal governments, and lead to a decline in transfer and health care costs. The MHRDA holders, like MNO, have demonstrated that program devotion to Métis governments being benefits not only to Aboriginal communities, but to Canada as well.

While the AHRDS is sun setting, interim bridge funding is in place for 2009. In April, the government announced an interim measure, the $75M, two-year Aboriginal Skills and Training Investment Fund (ASTIF). HRSDC was overwhelmed with project submissions and was reviewing proposals as recently as early September. MNO had four proposals accepted for review. It is being reported that HRSDC’s Minister Diane Finley has Cabinet policy authority to replace the AHRDS with a new five-year Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) commencing April, 2010. The Minister is set to announce a new $2B program, which will include many of the principles and lessons learned from the ASTIF process. The new program will be demand driven with a focus on skills development, training and partnerships. ASETS will focus on enhanced accountability and results.

MNO and the other Métis governments and MHRDS agreement holders will lobby and work with our partners to ensure effective labour market agreements are in place that will benefit all Métis. Past labour market and training agreements have provided Métis with greater control and therefore enabled the MNO to make the programs more relevant to Métis in Ontario. Will new business planning with HRSDC, other federal government departments, and the provinces be as collaborative and successful or will we return to fighting for scarce resources that do not serve Métis interests?

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

Education improvements in Ontario for Métis

While Métis students were completing the remaining days of their summer jobs, soaking up the last home-cooked meals and registering for school in September, the MNO was set to sign an historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Education.

The ground-breaking agreement provides Métis with the basis for greater cooperation with the Government of Ontario on education issues. It is anticipated that there will be a lot of work ahead, including putting in place a work plan and the resources to implement the agreement.

A Métis Education Framework

In other news, MNO is working with a multi-party group of postsecondary representatives to draft a First Nations, Métis and Inuit Postsecondary Education Framework. The framework, once drafted, will be brought by the MNO to the Métis Homeland for input from concerned Métis citizens, students, parents, and educators.

The new framework will compliment the work started in 2005 and lead to the development of the Kindergarten to grade 12 Agreement.

Special Métis Health Careers Bursary Awards

Deadline to apply to the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation is NOVEMBER 2, 2009

• Program eligibility and criteria are available in the application package
• Eligible Métis students in recipient of a NAFF 2009-2010 Aboriginal Health Careers can apply
• Métis students recognized by the Métis National Council are eligible to apply

If you have questions, please contact the Education Department of NAFF
Telephone at 1.800.589.0710
Email: education@naaff.ca
naaff.ca

CIBC renews support of National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation

On June 18th, CIBC announced that it is continuing its support of the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation’s education program with a donation of $100,000. The program’s annual bursaries and scholarships are provided to more than 600 First Nations, Inuit and Métis students enrolled in full-time post-secondary studies in a broad range of fields. This donation brings CIBC’s total support of this program to $900,000.

Applicants for NAFF bursaries and scholarships are assessed by juries of First Nations, Inuit or Métis professionals using criteria such as financial need, academic performance, connection to the Aboriginal community, and commitment to field of study. NAFF scholarships are allocated to students of health sciences programs, such as medicine, nursing, dentistry, biology, chemistry, pharmacy, clinical psychology, laboratory research and technology, and any other health field in which a study of the hard sciences is a pre-requisite.

“We are very grateful to CIBC for their continuing support of our education program,” said Roberta Jamieson, NAFF’s President and Chief Executive Officer. “Every year the jury selects an extraordinary group of recipients who reveal such outstanding talent and dedicated service. I know that by honouring their achievement we will continue to inspire many others, just waiting to demonstrate their potential – that’s why the work of the Foundation in providing bursaries to First Nations, Inuit and Métis students is so essential.

The NAFF is a non-profit organization dedicated to raising funds to deliver programs that provide the tools necessary for First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, especially youth, to achieve their potential. For more information visit www.naaff.ca
By GLENN LIPINSKI

Notes from a Gambler
The Dark Side of Gambling

I am Métis. I used to be uneasy about stating that; now I find strength in it. The following is my story that I wanted to share with other Métis.

I first started gambling when I was in my late 50’s, still working, a wife and three grown children, had a decent income, responsible job, life was rolling along OK. I had been purchasing lottery tickets religiously for a number of years at a rate of 2 to 4 tickets per week—all in fun, everyone did it. I won several small prizes, but nothing substantial, just enough to keep me buying more tickets.

When the casinos became popular I decided to check them out and immediately was hooked by the dazzle, the glitter and lights, drawn like a moth to the flame. At first, I used to go with my wife and often another couple to make an evening or an outing of it. After about the first eight months of our “outings” once or twice each month, I began to feel I needed more. I had a bit of an emptiness inside that going to the casinos seemed to be able to fill. The casino has its own unique way of making you feel special, as though the glitz and pomp and pageantry were all just for you.

My first few solo visits to the casino were kept under control. I spent only the money I had brought in with me and left once it was gone. After all, I was an Aroginal person; I was Métis, strong and determined, (many called me stubborn). I did what I wanted, I wanted and controlled my own destiny.

On my third solo visit of that first solo month, I hit a nice jackpot on my favourite $1 slot machine, $2,500 just like that! It was so easy, I could finally see why so many people kept going back again and again and at the very least I could now play for awhile on the casino’s money!

I quickly increased the number of my “outings” per week. I was now at least “stopping by” nearly every day. It was great; stuff knew me (almost by name), they knew my favourite drink at the bar, and courteous special treatment surrounded me.

My life was changing, gone were the family outings, the evenings spent around a bonfire, the times we would go out berry picking or sneak off to that great fishing spot. There was not enough time anymore; the casino and my outings were more important.

Almost before I realized it I started doing some silly things, the classic no-no’s. I remember the awful shit I felt the first time I lied about being in the casino because I had missed going over to friends for dinner. The lying and evasiveness became easier, but the rapid and steady drain of cash was beginning to cause difficulties.

The more I gambled the more tense I began to feel. I was becoming very embarrassed about my actions, fearful someone would find out how much I had been losing. I began using cash advances from one credit card to pay another and managed to advance a “few dollars” to try once again for the “big win”.

The pressure of the mounting debt and subsequent interest payments on several maxed-out credit cards was starting to make me feel sick. I was getting increasing numbers of heart palpitations and my blood pressure was steadily going up and up. My health was definitely being affected by my gambling.

I had to start borrowing from my (adult) children just to make the monthly bills ($100 here or $100 there). I re-mortgaged the house carefully saving a little for that big win, paid down some bills and started again.

I was now feeling very trapped, desperate for a way out. At all costs no one could know how I had spent my money so foolishly. To this point I had managed to keep most of my over spending a secret from my wife. My deceit was becoming very difficult to hide. I was convinced that some of the do-gooders might even think I had a gambling problem and would put it out there for the whole world to know—make it public that I might need help.

After many months of juggling and struggling with bills and mortgage payments I began to think of a way out. My solution was to begin selling whatever I could: the boat; the four-wheeler; the riding lawn mower, and then on to the smaller items like the golf clubs, etc. All got sold with the proceeds going to pay charge cards and bills, with of course some going to the casino to pursue that goal of a big win.

By this point my wife and I were lying apart. My three adult children and I kept an uneasy distance from each other; almost as if we all knew something was terribly wrong but we still pretended it was just one of life’s rough patches.

I was drinking every night (just a few beers). Occasionally I would get totally drunk on hard stuff, until my stomach began to burn all the time and I was forced to cut back.

Four and a half years after I began going to the casinos (during a particularly challenging day) I finally sat down with a friend, told him everything and a week later spoke with someone (at a problem gambling facility) about gambling issues.

They treated me with dignity and respect, were non judgmental and provided much needed support, alternatives and solutions. It was an easy going relationship, one that I felt I could participate in and it kept me coming back for more support, referrals, and ultimately solutions that assisted me in getting going in the right direction.

That was one year ago. Today I still struggle with my bills but it gets better each passing month. I still occasionally have very strong urges to return to the casino, so far (with the help of someone to talk to) I am able to resist.

Notes

Responsible Gambling

I BEGAN USING CASH ADVANCES FROM ONE CREDIT CARD TO PAY ANOTHER AND MANAGED TO ADVANCE A ‘FEW DOLLARS’ TO TRY ONCE AGAIN FOR THE ‘BIG WIN’.

My wife and I are working on re-building our relationship and my children and I have resumed more normal interaction. It is still very tough and I continue to have to work at it to keep my “normal” life. I am getting better and growing stronger all the time; after all, I am Métis.

If you can relate to my story or know someone who seems to be following in my footsteps, please read and heed; talk to someone—anyone, and always remember, there are no problems only solutions.

For assistance or information on Responsible Gambling you can contact any one of your local MNO Health Branch Offices or the MNO Ottawa Office at 1-800-265-4989 and ask for Health Services.

Disclaimer

Responsible Gambling is not a cure for gambling problems. Gambling Addiction is a disease, only addiction treatment center can provide solutions for gambling addiction.

Note: This material is intended for educational purposes only and is not a substitute for professional advice or treatment. Please consult a professional if you have concerns about gambling addiction.
Nintendo Wii delivered to the Health Branch

Couch potatoes no more

By LYNNE SINCLAIR

Just in time for summer, each Health Branch site was told that we could expect a Nintendo Wii with accessories! We were all very excited as we awaited our new bundles of joy. While we waited, we prepared a space to house our new additions when they came home. Now, our WIs have arrived! Like good caretakers, the Health Branch has been researching how to make the most of our WIs. We knew that the WIs were significant to us because of the associated health benefits. The Nintendo Wii is a gaming system like no other.

What makes the Wii so different is its “exergame” quality. You are required to use different kinds of physical gestures to move the on-screen characters. This is done through a sensor in the controller that the console reads and your movements are then translated to the TV screen. You can even create your character to look very much like yourself, now referred to as a mii.

There are many games and different sports to play. A Wii “Fit” part was part of the package. You can learn yoga, aerobics, strength-training and balance games. There is a virtual trainer, who very much like the real thing, keeps you on your toes. Your progress is tracked with graphs and charts so you can see if improvements have been made in your fitness routine.

The Nintendo Wii has been the subject of a lot of research. There are many benefits and some of them quite surprising. The makers of the Wii stress that it is not meant to be a complete physical workout but to complement a healthy active lifestyle. Nevertheless, the Wii does offer physical benefits. The activities help to burn calories and subsequently can help you to lose weight. As for the surprising findings, it has been proven that the Wii can help to relieve stress because it teaches breathing techniques and has been shown to have a positive impact on heart rates. Balance is greatly improved and it helps to tone muscles and build stronger bones. The Wii is even used as a therapeutic tool. It is useful for rehabilitation because of the visual displays about weight and body function. There are many health gains to be had by playing the Wii.

The new additions can be seen at your local office. Watch for upcoming groups and sessions for your opportunity to come and dote on our WIs.

REFLECTIONS ON COMMUNITY HEALTH

Walking for health

By DESNEIGE TAYLOR

AANII. My name is Desneige Tay- lor and I am introducing myself as the new Community Wellness Coordinator for the Sudbury Métis Council.

I am looking forward to being a new team member in the Sudbury office. Everyone here has given me a very warm welcome.

Your health is important to us at the MNO; physical activity promotes healthy living and decreases stress. Walking is the best known exercise. Here are some pointers from the web site www.fitpunch.com.

1. Walking relieves depression, stress and anxiety because it releases endorphins, (the body’s natural tranquilizers.)

2. A good brisk walk can stimulate your thinking.

3. When people are less stressed and decrease symptoms of depression it can promote healthy choices which can affect the whole family in more positive ways.

Some of the services the MNO Community Wellness worker will be offering this fall are: a Diabetic lunch and learnt foot care clinic; poverty support/ shelter presentation followed by a pot luck dinner; a language circle and a harvest feast. I look forward to seeing new faces and meeting new people. Remember, to stay healthy this fall go for a walk, play chair basketball, or do some fishing and have fun.

Desneige Taylor can be reached at the MNO’s Sudbury office 705-671-5855.

MÉTIS CULTURAL OUTREACH:

Hands-on Métis cultural exhibit promotes community

By JOAN PANIZZA

The Thunder Bay Métis Council recently had the pleasure of hosting a Métis Roots presentation. The presenter, Scott Carpen- ter, of the MNO’s Education and Training office in Midland brought his enthusiasm and wealth of knowledge to a number of groups during this three day event. School boards, city employees, children, and the Métis community were enter- tained by his lively presentations. Everything and anything Métis seemed to be in this hands-on exhibition. Scott, like many Métis citizens discovered his her- itage as an adult. His curiosity about his roots has led Scott to become a collector of Métis arte- facts, collectables, and history.

The quest to learn about oneself and the road to self-discovery is an important part of wellness. This exhibition helps to bring the community together in a real and meaningful way.

We are lucky to have such a curious and insightful citizen among us.

Joan Panizza is the Commu- nity Wellness Coordinator for the Thunder Bay Métis Council.

Finding My Spirit cont’d

It was past dark when it was over and as much as we wanted to sit in one of the circles that were slowly forming around the sacred fire and at the individual camp sites and continue to share with all of these women, we lis- tened to our bodies and the call of our pillows and headed to our tents.

We woke to a still, misty morn-

ing with the sun just rising. I was eager to get dressed and make my tea. I had signed up for a two hour shift as the sacred fire keeper and it was almost that time. What a way to start my final morning. As I sat watching the fire, feeling the wet of the morn-

ing sun on my skin being warmed by the rising sun I knew I was where I supposed to be.

Over the next two hours some of the women and Grandmothers began to gather around the sacred fire sharing stories, teach-

ings and feelings. It was so pow- erful. It was around the fire that I shared with some of the women my attraction to the drum before this weekend and how it had changed during the weekend, especially my experience with the drum during the sweat lodge. It was after sharing this that one of the women helped me to under-

stand this calling.

“As my senses started to awaken as a young spirit in my mother’s womb, the drum I heard was a calming presence. It was there constantly as I developed from a young spirit into a baby that carried this spirit. This drum was comfort, warmth and security for me. This first drum that I heard was my mother’s heartbeat. I need to answer this call from the drum for my spirit.” I was speechless. The talk around the fire fell silent for a brief time. I thanked her for shar- ing this with me and helping me to understand this calling that I was feeling from the drum. Within a few minutes the little circle grew into many women carrying their drums and rattles. My time around the fire was concluded with drums beating and many voices singing to the beating of the drums as the sun made its journey above the trees.

As the closing ceremonies began I realized how “high” I was feeling, high as in “on top of the trees”. Again the Grandmothers shared powerful words with us. Knowing how each one of us was probably feeling, one of the Grandmothers suggested that we put some cedar in our shoes to help keep us grounded as we
Original people have been using drugs for hundreds if not thousands of years—drugs from Mother Nature that is—remedies from nature that help us when we are not feeling well. For instance, aspirin, (acetylsalicylic acid) originally came from the bark of the willow tree. An early original prescription likely went something like this: “cut one willow twig and chew on it, ‘til headache or pain is gone”.

Times have changed, but more than half of the world’s population still relies entirely on plants for medicines, and plants supply the active ingredients of most traditional medicinal products. Plants have also served as the starting point for countless drugs on the market today. Researchers generally agree that natural products from plants and other organisms have been the starting point for countless modern drugs. Today there are at least 120 distinct chemical substances derived from plants that are considered important drugs currently in use in one or more countries in the world. Several of the drugs sold now are simple synthetic modifications or copies of the naturally obtained substances.

So, with plants supplying a good portion of our natural medicines, two things come to mind: Why do we abuse some of our natural plants/medicines like tobacco? Why don’t we do more to preserve our knowledge of special plants?

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Drugs: Mother Nature’s gift

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Ontario Métis are a People and a forgotten Nation in Confederation

By CHRIS PACI, Ph.D. and ERIN STRACHAN

The main work of the Métis Nation of Ontario’s Education and Training Branch is ensuring the integrity of Métis education in Ontario. We take particular care to ensure the kindergarten to grade twelve system is responsive and reflective of Métis values and needs. In addition to education activities, our branch is responsible for delivering labour market programming.

One way we accomplish this work is in partnership with the Ministry of Education and other agencies. Our branch is actively researching to support our Nation. There are a lot of different kinds of research but almost always we start with a search of existing reports, books and articles. What is formally known as a “literature search”. Researching existing literature comes with benefits and limitations and is one method in our ever evolving tool box.

The Métis Nation of Ontario is working on a number of initiatives related to postsecondary education, for example, the establishment of a Métis Studies Research Chair at the University of Ottawa. Across Canada academic Métis research is growing and we have great expectations for Métis researchers across the disciplines here in Ontario.

In our work on Métis postsecondary education we hear a number of personal testimonials, some of which are from citizens who recently learned they are Métis. We are struck by the complexity of becoming Métis. One article that speaks about this is by Cathy Richardson (2006) titled “Métis Identity Creation and Tactical Responses to Oppression and Racism.” Richardson is a little known Métis scholar from Alberta who wrote this article while at the University of Victoria, British Columbia. In it she interviews “key Métis” who are engaged in what she calls “creating a sense of Métis self” through tactical responses. For Richardson, tactical responses differ from strategic ones as, “distinctions between oppressor and oppressed in colonial societies: Political strategies and strategic responses tend to be developed for long-term use by those in political positions of relative power, on secure ground whereas tactical responses tend to be developed on the move,” as short-term acts to attack political oppression.” We agree that tactical responses form a great deal of the work of MNO and other Aboriginal governments and will until such a time that Canada makes a serious effort to decolonize both their policies and departmental operations.

Richardson reaches a number of interesting findings. For example: she notes “experiencing wellness and creating a vibrant and evolving sense of Métis is dependent upon the enactment of prudent and tactical responses in a climate where reprisals and punishment are possible.” This certainly characterizes Ontario before the release of the Upperwash Inquiry. Unfortunately, while efforts are being made to improve the “climate” in Ontario there is still room for improvement.

Richardson talks about creating a “third space where Métisness, Métis community and Métis knowledge can be shared. In this Métis space, history can be retold from a Métis perspective; a Métis centered analysis can be refined.” This space gets us beyond being “a White person with some Indian blood or a Native person with some white ancestors.” What we like most about Richardson’s approach is the possibility that it will get Canadians remembering, that is to get beyond selective memory to a fuller understanding of the fabric of Ontario. Through this endeavour, we expect a more developed appreciation of the Métis as a unique Indigenous people. Canadians need to remember Métis contributions to Ontario and other provinces or risk the blind ignorance that leads to Métis as the “forgotten people” in Confederation.

Employment and Training Programs for MÉTIS

The Métis Nation of Ontario offers education, employment & training services and support to Métis across Ontario

ARTS

“Medicine for my people”

By LINDA LORD

MÉTIS

Métis Nation of Ontario
Tel: 1-800-263-4889
www.metisnation.org

Sculptures by Métis artist Ken Rollinson

Scultpures by Métis artist Ken Rollinson

Canada needs to remember Métis contributions to Ontario and other provinces or risk the blind ignorance that leads to Métis as the ‘forgotten people’ in Confederation.

By ERIN STRACHAN, M.Ed.

“Not only do I draw on my Native heritage for inspiration, but also my European ancestry. I am proud to be a direct descendant of many Acadian pioneers, who were expelled from their homes. This is commonly referred to as, ‘The Great Expulsion’ or ‘The Acadian Deportation,’ which occurred in the mid 1700’s when many of my ancestors were forcibly removed from their lands. My family tree includes the Acadian surnames LeJeune, Martin, LeBlanc, Dugas, Petitot, Pellerin, Bourg, Savoie, Boudrot, Landry and others. You can read more about the Acadians and the tragic events they endured through visiting the ‘aca- dian-ancestral-home’ online.’

Ken discovered that he is a direct descendant of Nicolas Perrot (1644-1717), a famous French explorer, diplomat, fur trader and translator. Nicolas Perrot, one of Canada’s famous French pioneers is his 8th Great Grandfather. Perrot first came to Canada with the Jesuit priests at which time he visited many of the Native tribes and learned their languages. Later he dropped out of the Jesuit order and became an explorer, fur trader and interpreter for the Native tribes and the French authorities of the time. He is said to have been France’s best representative among the Indians in the western territories of French North Amer- ica. He was able to learn languages and customs of Native tribes and earned their esteem and confidence. You may find out more about Nicolas Perrot, at the ‘Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online’.

To see a sampling of Ken’s work visit his web site: www.kenrollinson.viviti.com
by LAURETTE MARION

There is a northern valley called “Mattawa” Which means “where the waters meet.” The surrounding mountains reflect its beauty In the rivers at its feet. A rustic church in majesty Stands high above. Granting blessing on the inhabitants below, In accordance with God’s will The heart of Mattawa is justly reserved For the people that named it so Here the Ojibwa Indians live in the valley As they did so long ago.

White man and Brave stand tall and proud, Their friendship for all to see For the beauty encased in this tranquil valley Deserves that this be.

I listened in awe at the tale being told By one who was old and wise Happy memories of his long lost youth Were reflected in his eyes.

His weathered skin was etched with age, Though he held a healthy glow He had earned his bring off God’s land. The only way he did know.

The Trapper “Oscar Groulx” wore a name befitting When dubbed with the nickname “Skin” No past was easy in the legendary tribe Restored upon him by his kin.

He chose a hard and lonely life Braving bitter winds and snow Evenings found him alone in his cabin Being warmed by the fire’s glow.

His only companion was the teased violin He could identify to play The music he drew from with his bow Overshadowed me to this day.

He’d descend the mountain and return to the valley In springtime, when all was green Being lovingly greeted by his wife and family Became a heart-warming, annual scene.

In autumn when the mountain became a masterpiece Of crimson, orange and gold He’d return to his cabin again to endure Raging winds and bitter cold.

Many stories he’d tell to his trap line, Ignoring the loneliness he felt within For the chosen trade demanded more than strength From the trapper they called “Skin”.

One spring when he came down from the mountain, He knew he would return no more The endless wilderness once performed with ease Had become an impossible chore.

He handed down the life he gave to his son, Victor, Whom he lovingly called “P’tit ga” The son now climbs the mountain in autumn, Leaving the valley called Mattawa.

Like his father before him, his loneliness is eased By his friend, the violin. And the skill with which he draws it into music “Was inherited from “Skin”.

I return to the valley whenever I can, For it is my Sabbath. It finds me comfort and consolation In the valley where I was born.

The bond that ties me to Mattawa Comes from deep within. Like the love and admiration I feel Towards the Trapper I call “Uncle Skin”.

Métis Poets Corner

The Trapper They Called “Skin”
By JULIE MERAW

As a first time AGA attendee I had no idea what to expect. Everyone I talked to about their Annual General Assembly experiences had different things to say. The head office became a flurry of activity prior to the big event and tensions mounted as all plans were made and changed and explained. Suddenly, on Wednesday, there was an eerie silence as most head office employees were already gone. Those who did not leave Wednesday, left on Thursday. I was in an office that was almost deserted as my colleagues and superiors made haste to attend this monumental event, and their aim—perfection.

As I entered Sudbury I could tell there was something different about it. I found myself looking around at people everywhere with the same dark hair that I was born with. I am usually surrounded by bleached blonds and instead I was seeing men with long dark braids, women with dark hair and dark skin. I actually felt the difference and finally understood what living in a Métis community must be like. The people that we met were not only friendly but seemed to relish welcoming all of us to their hometown. Those staff members who work in Sudbury did a great deal to prepare for our arrival and then enjoyed us while we were there. What better hosts could you have?

My daughter joined the daycare and had tons of fun with the other children. On Sunday, Bobbi was raved about for her story reading talents as she read the children a story complete with various voices for her different characters. She was exciting and expressive and the children had a great time. The weekend was definitely a time for family and I was encouraged to see so many smiling faces. People were browsing through the merchandise displays and trying on shirts or tasting a healthy kind of chocolate. Watching a woman making her sashes with the help of another person was fascinating. A strong Métis flavour was given to the entire experience as one gentleman periodically sang impromptu while being accompanied by the drum fashioned by his own hands.

I especially liked the relay games at the campground on Monday. I was recruited by Laurie to help a little and watched in wonder as teams formed with complete strangers pulling together to complete their challenges. I collected beautiful pictures as each team brought to us their painted health branch flower. Teams made and ate bannock after starting their own fire to cook it on, had their skills tested at archery and had physical abilities judged at jigging.

I think the highlight of all was the talent that we enjoyed and that will be remembered for a long time. Who does not like the music of Creedence Clearwater Revival? No one I know. So to find out that there was a group covering their well known songs was exciting news. Not all of us were aware that Loma Rowlinson was packed with such talent but when she joined the band to sing “Run through the Jungle”, I think she brought the house down. Everyone that I talked to enjoyed the comedic talent a great deal. Stunningly, all of this was packed into four days.

This entire event was one that this newcomer to the Métis Nation community won’t forget for a long time and one that had to be experienced to really be understood and appreciated.

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