NEW LEADERSHIP, NEW ENERGY, NEW DIRECTION:

AN HISTORIC DAY

from left to right: MNO President Gary Lipinski; Ontario Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, the Honourable Brad Duguid and PCMNO Chair France Picotte. Back row, left to right: Métis youth Janine Landry, Senator Elmer Ross and Senator Brenda Powley. On November 18th an historic agreement was signed recognizing the unique history and ways of life of Métis communities in Ontario. This framework agreement sets the course for a new, collaborative relationship between the Ontario Government and the Métis Nation of Ontario. More about the signing and the Special Presidents’ Assembly/AGA on pages 3 to 10.
Edith McLeod went where there was no path and left a trail for others to follow

It is with great sadness that the Métis Nation of Ontario says goodbye to one of its founding PCMNO Senators. Senator Edith McLeod passed away November 25th, 2008, at the age of 94. She was loved and respected in the Métis community and will be deeply missed by all.

President Gary Lipinskie expressed his sentiments by saying that, “Senator McLeod, and all Senators, are the backbone of the Métis Nation. They provide support and guidance when needed the most. Senator McLeod will be greatly missed.”

Edith Francis McLeod, was born in Pontiac, Saskatchewan and re-located to Ontario settling in Macdiarmid, north of Thunder Bay in 1939. There she met and married Kenny in 1942 and raised two children, Alma and Larry. Those who knew Edith will miss her wit, straightforwardness, unencumbered comments and the “no beat around the bush” tell it like it is woman. Edith was a remarkable person with many accolades, honours, and firsts, including, the Governor General’s Persons Award, The Order of Canada, Native Woman of the Year-Canada, Native Woman of the Year-Ontario, first Native woman appointed to the National Parole Board, William Pin; and the Silver Medal presented by Governor General Léger.

Edith will be sadly missed by her daughter Alma Adams (Jerry) and her daughter-in-law Ann Desmeules; seven grandchildren, Larry Desmeules (Debbie); Cindy Bertolin (John); Charles Desmeules; Gayle Desmeules (Wayne); Melissa Jones (Jason); Eli Adams and thirteen great grandchildren. She was predeceased by husband Kenny and son Larry Desmeules.

Edith McLeod went where there was no path and left a trail for others to follow.

CONGRATS!

Verna and Doug Porter would like to present to the Métis Nation of Ontario, their second grandchild, Owen Douglas Porter. Owen was born on September 6th, 2008 to Stephen and Amanda. Owen weighed in at 9 lbs. 2 ozs. He was born in the true Métis fashion, water birth at home.

NEW ARRIVAL

We would like to congratulate Jodi and Peter Rivers (PCMNO Councillor, Region 9 and Captain of the Hunt) on their recent wedding, November 8, 2008. Jodi’s parents are Miriam and Don Adams and thirteen great grandchildren. She was predeceased by husband Kenny and son Larry Desmeules.

Lest We Forget

by Senator Jacques Leroux

PFC 1st Battalion

Remembering the guys who didn’t come back from Korea—the ones I trained with. LEST WE FORGET. We will remember them.

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The business of the Annual General Assembly (AGA) began in earnest when the flags of the Métis Nation, the Province of Ontario, and of Canada were marched in and posted to the accompaniment of fiddler Roger Giroux and guitarist Aline Geroux who led the Grand Entry of dignitaries.

Chair, France Picotte called the 15th AGA of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) to order and Senator Reta Gordon offered the opening prayer.

In her welcoming remarks, Chair Picotte recognised the long trip some people had made to be part of the growth of the nation. She appreciated the positive attitude that delegates brought with them to the AGA and looked forward to the successful completion of business.

Vice-chair, Sharon McBride, reflected on the emotions stirred by the Grand Entry. She congratulated and welcomed the newly elected and re-elected Senators: Gerry Bedford, Reta Gordon, Joseph Poitras, and Ruth Wagner-Millington. Sharon then announced the results of the Women’s Secretariat elections and introduced the women to the assembly: Bonnie Beaulieu, Northern Representative; Shirley Lynn Pantuso, Eastern Representative; Pearl Gabona, Southern Representative; and Alvina Cimon, Western Representative.

(Continued on page 4)
happy and productive assembly.

Métis National Council President, Clément Chartier, Q.C. next took the floor and spoke about the progress that had been made by both the MNC and the MNO in regard to the Métis Nation Protocol which was signed September 5, 2008, with the Government of Canada. This protocol sets out a process of engagement on a wide variety of Métis issues. President Chartier said that such devices as the MNO Development Framework and the Métis Nation Protocol meant that the Métis could move forward as a distinct people.

Chartier went on to say that the leaders of the Assembly of First Nations (APN) and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) agreed with him that they must all move forward on a government-to-government basis. He reminded the assembly that Minister Straith had recognised and affirmed the right of the Métis to use the name “Métis Nation”, and noted that progress had been made in moving away from the Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association (OMAA) to a Métis-only body.

The MNC President said that he was impressed by the MNO leadership who assisted in making a place for the Métis Nation and in achieving government-to-government meetings. Aboriginal governments and each of the five provincial premiers have acknowledged that the Métis are independent and that it is in the best interest of all to commit to separate Métis tables.

Chartier announced that the Métis Nation Protocol would be complimentary to governing nations. He also said that the concerns of Métis veterans are high on the MNC agenda and that he looked forward to President Lipinski assuming a prominent role within the MNC. Métis Nation—British Columbia President, Bruce Dumont, brought greetings from the MNBC as he honoured Elders and dignitaries. He mentioned the moving events of Louis Riel Day and stressed the importance of Riel’s heroism as exemplified by the swearing-in of the Provisional Council of the MNC.

(PCMNO). President Dumont acknowledged the valuable contributions made by President Lipinski, not only to the MNO but also to the nation as a whole as he wished the AGA success in its deliberations.

Greetings from the Members of Parliament were brought by Derek Lee, MP for Scarborough—Rouge River and representative of the federal Liberal party. He talked about personal family stories and his connection to the Métis Nation. He then reminded delegates that the Liberal party upheld the principles of the Kelowna Accord, and that all Members of Parliament were dealing with the challenge of bringing First Nations, Inuit and Métis into the 21st century.

John Tory, representing the Ontario Conservative party congratulated President Lipinski and others including the Government of Canada upon taking a step forward by signing the Protocol. The real challenge he noted was the achievement of measurable improvements attached to the Protocol and the Framework Agreement, which included areas of parliamentary representation, recognition of language, economic development, education and training, health care, housing, and consultation. He encouraged the MNC to press the government for measurable, actionable and achievable goals.

HISTORIC FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT SIGNED

MNO President, Gary Lipinski, expressed delight that so many dignitaries were present to witness the events of the day. He commented on the unique relationship between the Chiefs of Ontario and the MNO through their Protocol Agreement, in which then Grand Chief Charles Fox and former MNO President Tony Belcourt recognised each other’s peoples as distinct nations and committed to mutual areas of collaboration as well as separate tables. It was a relationship that was nurtured and a promise for the future of working towards better understanding between nations, respecting each other’s issues and working together on areas of mutual interest.

The Louis Riel ceremony marked a turning point for President Lipinski as Métis people were recognised for their contribution to the growth of Canada. Métis history in Ontario has been one of denial, with Métis people being invisible to most and without rights until the Supreme Court of Canada declared the rights of the Métis as stipulated in the Constitution. Through court cases supported by the MNO, Métis were recognised where they were once invisible and President Lipinski applauded the Province of Ontario for not appealing the Lemieux case and for incrementally working forward to allow Métis their inherent rights by appointing a stand-alone department to address Métis issues.

President Lipinski recognised the support of government members such as the Honourable Michael J. Bryant, Minister of Economic Development, who had expedited issues and set the stage for future discussions. The Honourable Brad Duguid has taken over the reins as the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and was acknowledged for having connected within days of his selection when he assured his commitment to continue the relationship, thereby giving official recognition of the Métis as a people.

The President shared that after centuries the wall of denial would be broken and would fade as the Métis move forward to a new era and diminish gaps in housing conditions, education, health and economic development to make real improvements in the lives of the Métis. President Lipinski looked forward to the next days to do the work that would create the future for the MNO citizens.

Taking the floor next was the Honourable Brad Duguid, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, for the Province of Ontario who after acknowledging Grand Chief Ranald Phillips and Ontario Regional Chief Angus Tishkab said that it was his privilege to facilitate the signing of the Framework Agreement, a moment in history that candidate was given three minutes to address the meeting through an election speech. There were no spoiled ballots. Following the election, a motion to destroy the ballots was moved and passed.
would make a difference in the lives of many. It was the first time that the Province of Ontario had signed an agreement recognizing the Métis, who, the Minister said should not have had to wait for so many generations or to fight so hard in order to see fruition.

Mr Duguid admitted that it had been the expectation many generations ago that the Métis would be assimilated and their traditions would disappear. However, he congratulated the AGA and the people represented by the delegates for persisting and assured them that they and their predecessors would no longer be denied the benefits due to the Métis and Métis communities across Canada.

The Minister made reference to the new book, A Fair Country, by John Ralston Saul (see page 31) in which Canada had been denied the benefits due to the predecessors would no longer be denied the benefits due to the Métis and Métis communities across Canada.

The Minister Duguid said that he framed the on the AGA to make this a day of celebration and stated that it was an honour for him to be the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and to sign the Framework Agreement recognizing the MNO. The Framework Agreement was then signed by Ontario Aboriginal Affairs Minister, Brad Duguid and Métis Nation of Ontario President, Gary Lipinski. Brenda Powley, Senator Elmer Ross, and Thunder Bay Youth Representative Janine Landry witnessed the signing. The Agreement aims to improve the quality of life for Métis in Ontario by recognizing the unique history and ways of life of Métis communities in Ontario. This framework agreement, sets the course for a new, collaborative relationship between the Ontario Government and the Métis Nation of Ontario.

The Ontario Government and the Métis Nation of Ontario will work together to improve the well-being of Métis children, families, and communities while striving to protect and promote the distinct culture, identity, and heritage of Métis people.

Through this framework agreement, the Ontario government and the Métis Nation of Ontario will also encourage economic partnership opportunities that recognize and respect Métis traditions.

After the signing of the Framework Agreement the assembly was recovered by Chair, Franca Picotte. Delegates were instructed to display their voting cards at all times in order to participate in the voting process.

When the Agenda for the 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario had been approved by consensus, President Lipinski delivered his State of the Nation address.

President Lipinski remarked on the inclusivity of taking part in the Riel Day ceremonies, and in the signing of the Framework Agreement. To address MNO challenges and opportunities, President Lipinski referenced the past that had brought the Métis people to the present, noting that the Framework Agreement represented years of struggle.

President Lipinski shared the significance of the witnesses to the signing of the Framework Agreement, advising that they represented veterans, a family who had dedicated their lives to the struggle, and Métis youth, without whom all struggles would be worthless.

The pride of the people reflects the strength of the nation, and throughout history the Métis have brought cultures together and have served as emissaries to relations between First Nations. Far fewer lives were lost in the forming of this nation because of the Métis and this information alone would warrant research papers.

The pride is in this room, it is in the youth of the nation, in the speech we heard from the grade 10 student to the large audience at the celebration of Louis Riel Day, the Métis hold new careers as lawyers, in health care, education and chief justices.

The MNO would never forget the significance of Métis history
in Ontario and there was a need to share and publish information about the Metis. President Lipinski recalled the announcement of the MNO endowment—a major step and enabler to move forward (more on page 15).

In some cases, the President noted that the Metis presence had been made and advances in steam transportation from Manitoba to the Great Lakes. Metis were seen as having a need for good things to happen, and was optimistic that a Protocol recently signed at the national level would open more opportunities through the MNC. The AGA applauded MNC President, client Charles and MNC Vice-President David Chartrand for championing issues close to the hearts of MNO citizens: veterans, education, housing, health care and economic development. The AGA would hear more and more about economic opportunities for real advance- ment to create wealth for com- munity and nation. The new Min- ister for Economic Development in Ontario was an old friend — the Honourable Michael Bryant — and already had an ear for Metis-spe- cific affairs.

Collectively, the MNO has to look at getting into business opportunities. The attention of the PCMNO will be focussed on reporting on our businesses and how they are contributing to the MNO as a whole. They will pro- vide the ability to spend our Metis money on enhancements that are important to the Metis. President Lipinski invited the AGA to participate in the strategic planning session, where dele- gates could identify achievements for the future by ascertaining objectives for the MNO. Working together (as when we did the Metis Land and the Powley fam- ily) and fully supported the case through every level of court from start to finish, we stand with the full support of the province and nation to move forward into a new era of opportunities with the Framewor Agreement in place and the province and industry ready to work with the MNO. The courts have ruled that the Metis are due the “duty to consult” and if development is going to hap- pen, and was optimistic that a Protocol recently signed at the national level would open more opportunities through the MNC. The AGA applauded MNC President, client Charles and MNC Vice-President David Chartrand for championing issues close to the hearts of MNO citizens: veterans, education, housing, health care and economic development. The AGA would hear more and more about economic opportunities for real advance- ment to create wealth for com- munity and nation. The new Min- ister for Economic Development in Ontario was an old friend — the Honourable Michael Bryant — and already had an ear for Metis-spe- cific affairs.

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In a meeting with Minister Bryant, the MNO President asked if the Minister would work as a partner in the debt reduction process and was relieved when the Minister answered, “I get you, we’re there, and we want to move forward with you on this. Don’t worry we’ll get you through this.” With the commitment of the Minister and the Government of Ontario, the MNO has requested the support of the Office of the Federal Interlocutor (OFI) and the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. Meanwhile, the MNO has tightened its financial belt and will meet the debt reduction challenge head on with a well thought out business plan to take the MNO to the next level.

Deficiencies in monitoring and tracking have been identified and are being rectified. The MNO registry has been under-funded for years. There is in place a province-wide agreement regarding harvesting cards with benefit to the province and federal governments that has not been monetarily supported. The MNO has undertaken legal costs in the case of the MNO-Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) Agreement and needs to be reimbursed. The government is starting to recognize that the Métis have accepted more than their share of responsibility, and is now committing to share the burden.

The MNO has a solid commitment from the government to move forward on reducing the MNO’s debt. It has the resolve to move forward on Powley, and the president guaranteed that the MNO would have the best, most transparent and accountable financial reporting across the Nation.

President Lipinski concluded with note that the PCMO was here for the Métis communities, the families, and their children. With a financially sound MNO providing the services and programs necessary to its citizens, President Lipinski would be happy to “pass the torch” and go fishing.

NOVEMBER 18th
Morning session

On November 18th, Chair, France Picotte, reconvened the 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario and Senator Olavine Tiedema offered the opening prayer. The Thunder Bay Métis Council presented a memento of the unveiling of a mural (see page 17) in their community to President Lipinski. President Lipinski thanked the organizers of the AGA before proceeding to discussion on developing a strategic plan for the MNO. Gary then noted that one goal would be the creation of a flag for the MNO. He called for submissions as outlined in the agenda package, noting that the winner would be announced at the 2009 AGA. Another goal was to develop a document that would become a checklist or reference guide to ensure that the
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Vets’ set path for future

by Chelsey Quirk

The Métis Nation of Ontario veterans gathered during this year’s Special Presidents’ Assembly/AGA to make plans for next year’s AGA, including discussions on forming a distinct “veterans council” before next year.

The vets are now busy preparing short individual autobiographies to be featured at the 2009 AGA, which they would like to host. Hearing from Métis vets, and soldiers who are serving our country, is invaluable, as is recording their stories for future generations. This is a project that needs to be ongoing so that their experiences are not lost. The veterans also discussed ideas on items that could be sent overseas to the Métis soldiers who are serving now.

Looking ahead to next year, our Métis veterans are preparing a proposal for funding so that more veterans are able to participate in the 2009 Annual General Assembly. The vets would also like to invite personnel from Veterans Affairs Canada to participate and to explain the requirements to current vets.

At the 2007 AGA the veterans hosted a fish-fry and draw for a drum that netted $1865.00. The drum was not claimed; so, on behalf of the veterans, the drum was donated to a gala, and was auctioned off for the children. With a financially sound MNO, the communities, the families, and their children, are better served.
Mr. Kaufman stressed that opportunity, such as the Crown’s duty to consult, should be seized. In talking to the MNO leadership, Mr. Kaufman had noted that this would not be a quick fix but a process to develop a sustained financial base. He saw that business leadership and entrepreneurship were core characteristics of Métis and felt that there was a need to capitalize on that, as well as to develop a skills bank to ensure that Métis achieved improved self-reliance.

Referring to an overhead presentation titled “Métis Nation of Ontario Economic Development, November 18, 2008,” Mr. Kaufman indicated that the AGA would be looking at developing a strategy for an economic model and discussing goals. KTA would use a tripartite approach (working with Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, OPF and INAC, provincial government ministries and the MNO) to develop a knowledge base of information relating to the “invisible” Métis, and to ensure that capacity was built with the creation of a reference group that could support the projects.

In summary, Mr. Kaufman said that one of the critical success factors would be the leadership group. He said there was an opportunity to learn from the models of the MNC’s other governing members, and there might even be opportunities to work together in partnership on long-term economic development projects.

Another key factor was to complete an inventory of government programs and engage those departments to start networking and obtain support. It would be important to determine the opportunities and to define deliverables and potential wins in the business arena. In terms of outcome the process should be a consensus approach leading to a developed strategy to form a plan that works for the MNO.

Extensive discussion and questions followed.

The afternoon session was an open discussion on future Annual General Assembly (AGA) events.

Chair Picotte introduced the session to look at other ways of doing things at the MNO AGAs within the MNO monetary abilities.

President Lipinski indicated that he was the first part of the consultation to make the AGA responsive and accessible to the needs of the citizens. This year the AGA was postponed to enable citizens to be involved in the historic signing of the Framework Agreement and to set in place the strategic planning process. Historically the AGA has not been a financial success yet this time with transparency and accountability in mind every penny was accounted for prior to the meeting. This was the first MNO AGA held indoors and the first to be a three-day event.

Delegates were asked to consider future AGAs and what events should be held in conjunction with the MNO AGAs. Responses received included:

• The AGA functions should be dry events and include cultural training and entertainment by Métis citizens.
• People with small children cannot afford a hotel and would opt for using the MNO tent, and the park at Sudbury might be free. A summer event would be preferable.
• Children are missing at this AGA and they are missing exposure to culture. Also we need to organize 18 months in advance to have a facilitated discussion.
• Children are the trade people, tour operators and other attendees has the recipes for moose, muskrat. We’re bush people, let us feel the wind on our faces, hear the morning songs of the birds, and involve the youth. There is no need to have teams with adult umpires, play with the youth a voyageur game – where they go from fort to fort and they speak a different language, with adventures on the way (foss, cargo and trade goods, etc.).

• It saddens me to see the way the AGA is going. I remember River Days as the 1993. We spent three hours discussing how we wanted the AGA and I remember the objections to the children in the tent at the business meetings, but also discussion regarding the importance of them to remain where decisions are made.
• Here there was no sunrise ceremony, we miss the tridaces, and this event is a back-ward step. I see citizens bring what they needed to AGAs. We brought our own children with us and it was far more meaningful. Install values of Métis in our children, prepare accommodation and care for children and elders, outdoors near water with campgrounds.
• This is my first AGA, and my first Louis Riel day. My spouse left because he had nothing to do. I came here for my own and I want to be a part, but wasn’t sure where I fit in. How do people who only reach the Voyageur feel connected? There has to be something that is inclusive and as far as the concrete jungle I’m OK with this. If I had it in the summer I do not think we would have had the Framework Agreement or the negotiations in attendance. This venue has served a positive purpose and was a valid forum for Métis people. The timing for the AGA and Riel event was good overall.
• I was born in a house and do not ever want to sleep in a tent. I prefer a good bed with a roof over my head. I did fish but have never hunted! I am a Métis who was brought up in a city and cannot really sympathize with those who would camp out, I am an urbanite.
• We have an opportunity to use all these ideas, and need to have a facilitated discussion. Without structure things would fall apart, we have to learn to use everything Canada has to offer and if we don’t get our letters in before the end of January requesting corporate assistance, any opportunities for money will be lost.
• We have a partnership in Sudbury with the MNO tent available and other nice facilities and a huge lake, very good for children, no charge for camping, and many good motels in the vicinity. We may not get the dignitaries to an outdoor meeting but I am in full support for team-work.
• Thanks were offered to the MNO for organizing the AGA and the very moving ceremonies on Louis Riel Day.
• The first AGA was in 1993 at a venue on Church Street in Toronto. The assistance to Seniors, the Métis leaders to an outdoor meeting and other attendees has been very good at this AGA.
• Great having here and it...
President Lipinski and Suzanne-Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award winner, Richard Sarrazin.

President Lipinski concluded by thanking everyone for their thoughts and comments. The PCMNO will meet in January, 2009, to share more ideas from local communities, to expect that communities communicate their ideas to regional councils to enable a better decision. The AGAs have been a way to explore and enjoy all the areas of Ontario. After passage of the final resolution (see below), NMO President, Gary Lipinski, focused on the AGAs as one of firsts, starting with the celebration of Louis Riel Day in Toronto, the inauguration of the Chief Operating Officer, and the signing of the Framework Agreement with the Government of Ontario.

The AGA paid tribute in a standing ovation to Doug Wilson, the Chief Operating Officer and to staff for their support in bringing the administration to a level where the MNO could take advantage of opportunities. President Lipinski observed that there was also a debt of gratitude due to the families and those who supported the delegates and leaders who were present at the AGA.

The 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario concluded with the offering of a prayer by Senator Gerry Bedford.
The Métis Nation of Ontario has been provided with $13,000 by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency to allow it to participate in the environmental review of plans to boost the generating capacity of Ontario Power Generation’s dams on the Mattagami River, known as the “Lower Mattagami Hydroelectric Complex Redevelopment Project”. Ontario Power Generation is proposing to redevelop the Lower Mattagami Hydroelectric Complex, located approximately 70 km north-east of Kapuskasing. The Little Long, Harmon and Kipling generating stations will be expanded with the addition of a turbine-generator and the Smokey Falls site will be redeveloped to accommodate a new generating station. The funding will allow the Métis Nation to participate in this comprehensive study and in the review of the study being produced by Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

New book on Métis-Crown Relations
By Jason Madden

I n September, 2008, in conjunction with the Métis National Council’s 25th anniversary, Irwin Law released a new book on Métis rights. The publication, titled, Métis-Crown Relations: Rights, Identity, Jurisdiction, and Governance examines the evolving relationship between the Crown (i.e. federal and provincial governments) and Cana-dia’s Métis people. It is comprised of papers presented to a national symposium jointly sponsored by the former Law Commission of Canada and the Métis National Council in Winnipeg in February, 2006. Contributors include leading academics, lawyers, government officials and Métis leaders, including papers by the Métis Nation of Ontario’s law professor and Jason Madden. Specifically, the book analyses the impact of 53% of the Constitution Act of 1982 which recognizes the Métis as an aboriginal people and their aboriginal rights which are guaranteed by the Constitution. Further, it examines the recent jurisprudence, particularly R. v. Poulsbo, which has helped to clarify both the meaning and substance of Métis aboriginal rights, and the limits of federal and provincial jurisdiction. Finally, the book looks at models of self-government for Métis communities. Copies can be ordered through Irwin Law’s website at www.irwinlaw.com.

A New Ontario Minister of Aboriginal Affairs

by MNO President GARY LIPINSKI

S eptember 23, 2008

A s many of you may have heard, Premier McGuinty shuffled his Cabinet this week. Of particular interest to the Métis Nation, the Honourable Michael Bryant is no longer the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. He has been appointed the Minister for Economic Development. Minister Bryant’s knowledge, commitment and passion for our issues as Ontario’s first stand-alone Minister for Aboriginal Affairs will be missed, but he will continue to be a friend and ally to the Métis Nation in his new and important role in Cabinet.

The Honourable Brad Duguid has been appointed the new Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. Minister Duguid was previously the Minister of Labour. I have already spoken to the new Minister and he indicated that he is very aware of the “good work that has been going on” between the Ministry and the MNO and that he is committed to continuing to work together. We will likely meet face to face in the next few weeks in order to provide the Minister an overview on the Métis Nation and discuss the many initiatives we have been working on, including, the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement, the Crown’s duty to consult and accommodate, etc. I look forward to working with Minister Duguid to build on the positive relationship we have established with Minister Bryant.

Last week, I also spoke with the Honourable George Smitherman, Ontario’s Deputy Premier and Minister for Energy and Infrastructure. Minister Smitherman recently announced the Ontario Government’s desire to increase the amount of renewable energy the province (as a part of the 20-year Integrated Power Supply Plan that the Ontario Power Authority (OPA) is mandated to develop for the entire province). Of particular interest to the Métis Nation, Minister Smitherman directed the OPA to “undertake enhanced consultations with First Nations and Métis communities” in light of the Crown’s duty to consult and accommodate Aboriginal rights.

As well, he directed OPA to identify opportunities where First Nations and Métis communities could be partners in energy generation and transmission projects throughout the province. This new directive provides an exciting economic development opportunity for our communities to engage with government and industry on energy projects.

In addition, last week, 1, along with other MNO leaders and MNO national committee representatives, attended the Métis National Council’s 25th Anniversary Gala as well as a series of national meetings held in Ottawa. The Métis National Council Gala provided an opportunity to meet and engage current and former politicians and dignitaries who have worked with the Métis Nation over the years, including, the Honourable Chuck Strahl, the current Minister of Indian Affairs and Federal Intercultural for the Métis; the Right Honourable Paul Martin, former Prime Minister of Canada; the Honourable Bob Rae, current Liberal M.P and former Ontario Premier, and the Honourable John Ricard, the Chief Justice of the Federal Court of Appeal. In the upcoming weeks there will also be much activity within the MNO:

• we will continue to work with MNO Community Councils on putting in place processes to ensure the Crown’s duty to consult and accommodate our communities is being fulfilled.

• we will be bringing PCMNO Councillors and representatives from MNO Community Councils together to discuss the Ontario Government’s recent announcement to modernize the Mining Act to address the Crown’s duty to consult our communities that are potentially affected by mining development.

• we will be making a significant announcement about the Chair of Métis Studies in partnership with the university that has been selected to host the Chair position. (see page 13)

• we will continue to work with MNO Community Councils on putting in place processes to ensure the Crown’s duty to consult and accommodate our communities is being fulfilled. (see page 13)

As you can see there is much happening within the MNO. Like always, I want to thank our community leaders, staff and volunteers who make this work possible. I look forward to continuing to keep you updated on the progress we are making together.

www.métisradio.FM
Listen to great Aboriginal music artists
Traditional and contemporary Métis music on-line 24/7 on Métis Radio.
YES, WE CAN ACHIEVE OUR GOALS

The Crown’s Duty to Consult | Fort Frances

Protocol signing gives Métis a say on land development in northwest

The signing of the “historic protocol,” in Fort Frances this past November outlined the duty of industry, through the Crown, to consult and accommodate Métis rights.

Métis Nation of Ontario President, Gary Lipinski, along with Joel Heesel, president of the Kenora Métis Community Council, Alvinna Cimon, President of the North-West Métis Nation of Ontario (Dryden), and Clint Calder, President of the local Sunset Country Métis, were on hand to sign the agreement.

The signing means industries interested in using the traditional land the Métis now have “duty to consult” first. The industry must fully educate the Métis on the greatness of the land and the potential effects on the land and, consequently, the Métis lifestyle. This ruling began with the Pooley case in 2003, when the Supreme Court of Canada recognized that Métis communities hold constitutionally-protected Aboriginal rights that must be respected by and protected in the province.

Lipinski noted that the sailing of the Kitzenamuykoosh Iroin- uwag (R) chief and five councilors early in 2008, when they opposed diamond drilling near their land, was a result of government input and deeply being influenced by the continued support of our Senators and look forward to this upcoming term of office as your Executive Senator. Your support, and our collective knowledge serve as a beacon for our people. Let us renew our commitment to our standing “yes we can” approach to our responsibilities and obligations to our councils, our Métis Nation and to Canada. The recent AGA was yet another positive process where the affairs of the nation were tackled, discussed and acted upon. As always, the staff of the MNO did a commendable job, not just in setting up and assisting in the logistics of the assembly, but in their hard work to ensure that the Senators and Elders were comfortable and not lacking in anything. Thanks to everyone for their efforts and I wish you to know how very much your kindness is appreciated.

I ask the Creator to look after each of you and your families. I ask the Great Spirit to comfort us in these uncertain economic times and to guide us to a bright and prosperous New Year. May His abiding love fill your heart with peace and joy always.

Reta Gordon
Executive Senator
208-2019 Carling Ave.
Ottawa, ON K2A 4A2
Tel 613-722-7078
reta@metisnation.org

SPECIAL EVENTS

180 years since the Drummond Island migration

In September, the Penetanguishene Centennial Museum hosted the fourth annual Settlers Day. The day-long event celebrated the 180th anniversary of the migration from France and included re-enactments paying homage to the British military, French and Métis voyageurs and included storytelling and a barbeque.

Because this year marks the 180th anniversary of the Drummond Island migration, we decided rather than picking one family (to celebrate) we decided instead to include those families who were brought across the area today.

Yes We Can! A slogan made famous in the recent election held in the United States, was a position taken by the leadership of the Métis Nation of Ontario at its very inception. The founding citizens said, “yes we can,” and our leaders are still enacting change for the betterment of the Métis people, not just across the MNO, but across the Métis Homeland.

Yes, we can make a difference, and yes we can achieve our goals. The backbone of this “can do” attitude is our collective confidence in our dynamic and dedicated cadre of caring Métis citizens, this ever so important aspect of our nation’s fabric. All together, we support the Métis National Council’s (MNC) First Nation Migration Committee’s 180th anniversary to celebrate the 180 years since the Drummond Island migration.

In 1828, after a land survey on Drummond Island deemed it to be American soil, inhabitants chose to come to the military establishment in Penetanguishene in order to remain part of a British colony. It was then, Jackson noted, that this area was populated, laying the foundation and cultural heritage of the region.

Many families who settled here, who we now call names still common in the area today.

“Let us renew our commitment to our Standing ‘yes we can’ approach to our responsibilities and obligations to our councils, our Métis Nation and to Canada. The recent AGA was yet another positive process where the affairs of the nation were tackled, discussed and acted upon. As always, the staff of the MNO did a commendable job, not just in setting up and assisting the logistics of the assembly, but in their hard work to ensure that the Senators and Elders were comfortable and not lacking in anything. Thanks to everyone for their efforts and I wish you to know how very much your kindness is appreciated.”

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Ottawa, ON K2A 4A2
Tel 613-722-7078
reta@metisnation.org

Métis National Council marks 25th anniversary

On September 17, 2008, the MNC from across the homeland came to rem- inisce and celebrate the Métis National Council’s (MNC) first quarter century with a gala din- ner in Ottawa.

The MNC, formed on March 8, 1983, at a meeting of the prairie Métis associations, was called in Regina, and has since grown to include Ontario and BC affili- ates. It now stands as the dem- ocratically elected national and international representative of the Métis Nation in Canada.

Guest speakers at the gala dinner included the Hon- ored Senator of the Assembly of First Nations National Chief, Phil Fontaine; former MNO President, the Honourable Chief Justice, John Richard; the Honourable Chief Justice of the Northwest Territories, Right Honourable Paul Martin.

The Métis National Council also marked its 25th anni- versary with a symposium on Métis Rights, and meetings of national committees mapping out the MNC’s next 25 years.

New Members of the MNO Team:

Janet Leader: New Director of Communications by Doug Wilson

It is a pleasure to announce that Janet Leader has joined the MNO team as Director of Communications.

Ms Leader is an award-winning communicator and broadcast professional with over 20 years of experience as a producer/reporter with CBC Television and APTN National News. Janet also has experience in a communications role with the Government of the Northwest Territo- ries.

Through her education and experience, Ms Leader has acquired skills in strategic thinking and planning, writing, editing and research, organizational and resource management, cons- cious building, problem solving and relation- ship management.

Now that he has skills and skills are key as the MNO moves forward to the next level. She will be working closely with the MNO leadership to develop, implement and oversee effective communications programs that advance the MNO Statement of Prime Purpose. This will include the Métis Voyager, www.metis- nation.org, written documents and other infor- mation, strategic use of media, and strategic communications collaborations with external organisations.

The Director of Communications works with all branch teams to ensure resources are documented and distributed appropriately throughout MNO’s networks and to external audiences.

Please join me in welcoming Janet Leader to our MNO team.

Joanne Meyer: New Director of Intergovernmental Affairs

It is a pleasure to introduce Joanne Meyer as the Director Intergovernmental Affairs. Joanne has taken a Leave of Absence from her position as Senior Policy Advisor, Ipperwash Response Team, Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, to join the MNO team.

Prior to her position with the Government of Ontario, Joanne had significant experience with both the federal and provincial governments, namely: Team Lead, Policy and Research for the Aboriginal Healing and Well- being (AHW) Assembly; Executive Assistant to the Secretary of State for Western Economic Diversification Canada and Indian Affairs and Northern Development: Special Assistant to the Minister of Health, Director of the Joint AFN/MSB Task Force Secretariat, Health Canada; Manager, Program Management and Regional Liaison, Health Canada, Assistant Regional Director of Administration, Northwest Territories, Health Canada; and, Zone Director, Health Canada.

Throughout her career in the public service, Joanne has used her leadership, organi- sational and negotiation skills as she developed, facilitated or participated in many intergovern- mental processes. Joanne also brings her vast expertise and experience in the implementa- tion of programs and services, administration and financial management.

Ms. Meyer has long been a strong support- er of Aboriginal issues and has extensive knowledge of the issues facing Aboriginal organisations. By joining the Métis Nation of Ontario, her breadth of experience will help ensure that the MNO continues to move ahead into a new era of change and growth.

I hope that you will join me in welcoming Joanne into this important position and in facil- itating her integration into the MNO family.

Janet Leader: Director of Communications
500-2019 Carling Ave.
Ottawa, ON K2A 4A2
Tel: 613-719-0188 or 800-263-4889
Fax: 613-719-0190
joanne.meyer@metisnation.org

Joanne Meyer: Director Intergovernmental Affairs
222-75 Sherbourne Street
Toronto, Ontario M5A 2P9
Tel: 416-977-9861 or 800-486-6684
joannemeyer@metisnation.org
The University of Ottawa has been awarded the Chair in Métis Studies after being selected by an arm’s-length selection panel who chose the winning proposal from among those submitted by eight Ontario universities.

“Important academic and research work about the Métis people and their culture in Ontario and across Canada will be supported and enhanced by this investment”, said Dr. Paul Genest, President of the Council of Ontario Universities.

The First Research Chair in Métis Studies was announced September 30th, 2008. Gary Lipinski, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and Métis leadership from across Ontario joined the Honourable Brad Duguid, Ontario Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Honourable John Milloy, Minister of Colleges Training and Universities and Paul Genest from the Council of Ontario Universities to formally announce the Ontario university selected to host the Research Chair of Métis Studies.

The First of its kind in Ontario, the Chair’s goal is to increase research and create a greater common understanding of the Métis people in Ontario, past and present, while enhancing the quality of post-secondary education for Métis students.

The announcement was the realisation of several years of collaborative efforts and work by the Métis Nation of Ontario with the Ontario Government and the Council of Ontario Universities.

In 2007, the McGuinty government committed $2 million to support the creation of a Chair. In 2008, this commitment was enhanced by $1 million. The successful Ontario university has also committed an additional $1 million to support the Chair position, bringing the total endowment for the Chair to $4 million.

“For the Métis Nation, this announcement represents a new and exciting chapter in our history as a distinct Aboriginal people,” said President Lipinski.

The University of Ottawa has begun its search for a distinguished candidate and will submit the nomination to the selection panel for approval; it is expected that the Chair will be installed early in the 2009-10 academic year. The university is committed to providing additional direct resources to further support the work of the Chair.

In Métis Studies

Métis Education | Chair of Métis Studies

University of Ottawa selected to host first Ontario Research Chair in Métis Studies

Duty to Consult and Accommodate | Energy Industry

MNO and Hydro One sign engagement protocol on Bruce-Milton Line

On September 30th, Gary Lipinski, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), and Laura Formusa, President and Chief Executive Officer of Hydro One Networks Inc. (Hydro One), joined Métis leadership from across the province in Toronto to sign an “Engagement Protocol” concerning Hydro One’s Bruce-Milton Transmission Line.

The protocol is the first of its kind between the Métis Nation and an energy industry partner in Ontario. It will enable the MNO to inform and engage Métis citizens living in the region about the project, while also enabling the MNO to participate in the Bruce-Milton Line’s upcoming environmental assessment. The protocol also creates a joint MNO-Hydro One committee to support this collaborative work.

“This protocol represents a significant milestone in the MNO’s ongoing efforts to ensure the Crown’s duty to consult and accommodate Métis communities in the province is being ful-

Through this Protocol, the MNO will work with its community councils in the potentially affected region to ensure all Métis citizens are informed about and engaged in relation to the Bruce-Milton Line,” said President Lipinski.

Gary Lipinski, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario, (right) and Laura Formusa, President and Chief Executive Officer of Hydro One Networks Inc., (left) sign an Engagement Protocol on Hydro One’s Bruce-Milton Transmission Line.

MNO President, Gary Lipinski (left) with the President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ottawa, Allan Rock.

MNO and Ministry of Education team up to improve results for Métis students!

The MNO Training and Initiatives Branch is looking for wide ranging input on the Métis Education Action Plan. Over the next two months, through a series of community consultations, video conferences and through collection of survey responses via website, telephone, fax and mail the branch will ask Métis parents, students and teachers for their ideas about how to enhance the learning experience of Métis youth in Ontario public schools.

The goal of the consultation is to assess the impact of the Ontario Ministry of Education’s First Nation, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Education Policy Framework and to review and provide input into the development of a new Métis Education Action Plan by the Métis Education Working Group. The discussion will focus on topics like community satisfaction and self-identification and will be guided by the survey that has been developed.

Five face to face consultation sessions, which will begin the end of January and wrap up a month later in Ottawa.

A total of five face to face consultation sessions, which will begin the end of January and wrap up a month later in Ottawa, are being planned. As well, anyone interested in attending a session in person is encouraged to take part in one of a series of video conferences which will be hosted by branch personnel. Please look for information about these sessions, as well as the survey under the Education tab at www.metisnation.org.

If you are a Métis educator, parent or student or a Métis citizen with a special interest in education issues you are encouraged to participate. If you want to be part of the consultation process or have an interest in volunteering for the Working Group, please contact Guylaine Morin-Cleroux by phone at 1-800-263-4889 or by e-mail at guylaine@metisnation.org.

Additional information about the community consultations is available from Provincial Education Initiatives Coordinator, Bonny Cann. Bonny can be reached by phone at 1-416-570-3052. Her e-mail address is bonnyc@metisnation.org.
Each fall harvesters donate traditional game to the community. This game is for those who are in need and for those who are used to eating a traditional diet but can no longer hunt for themselves. With the fish, venison, and other game we have been provided, we have been able to feed hundreds of our community members. We are also able to provide an important cultural experience for those who are able to have such foods for the first time at our many community events and meals. From all of us I would like to thank our harvesters and our Captain of the Hunt for making this possible.

For those of you who have yet to incorporate venison into your diet, you are missing out. Traditional foods such as venison do have great health benefits. Venison is lower in calories, cholesterol and fat than most cuts of beef, pork, or lamb. Venison is a very good source of protein, while, unlike most meats, it tends to be fairly low in fat, especially saturated fat.

Four ounces of venison supplies 68.5% of the daily value for protein for only 179 calories and 1.4 grams of saturated fat. Venison is a good source of iron, providing 28.2% of the daily value for iron in that same four-ounce serving.

This recipe is a wonderfully healthy meal for a winter day. Venison, whole grains, and vegetables, what could be better? Give it a try.

**BARLEY & VENISON SOUP**

1 tbsp. oil
1 carrot, chopped
1 celery stock, chopped
1 chopped onion
1/2 lb. deer meat, cubed
6 cups stock
1/2 cup barley
1 bay leaf
1 pinch thyme
Salt and pepper to taste

1. In a pot, heat the oil and sauté the vegetables.
2. Add the meat and sear it.
3. Moisten with the stock and bring to a boil.
4. Add the barley, bay leaf and thyme. Cook until the barley is tender.
5. Season to taste and serve soup piping hot.

For more information contact Tracy Bald, Community Wellness Worker, GBMC, at 526-6335 or tracyb@metisnation.org

Let’s put our *Hearts* into it!

Lower your risk of heart disease and stroke

Aboriginal People are more likely to have high blood pressure and diabetes, and as a result, are at greater risk of heart disease and stroke than the general population.

You can lower your risk by:

- Eating a healthy diet
- Being physically active
- Achieving a healthy weight
- Knowing and managing your blood pressure
- Knowing and managing your diabetes
- Quitting smoking

Talk to your healthcare provider to see how you can lower your risk of heart disease and stroke.

Or contact the Heart and Stroke Foundation at:

1-888-HSF-INFO
(1-888-473-4636)

www.heartandstroke.ca/Aboriginal

Our first Canadian Aboriginal Festival

Kelly and I also enjoyed the traditional foods that were available to us during the festival. The CANAB Festival was helpful to the Aboriginal community to promote their ideas, business, and culture. Everyone is given an opportunity to be recognised. It gave us as Métis Nation of Ontario staff the opportunity to promote the programs we have to offer.

On Education Day, we were given the opportunity to give students a positive Aboriginal experience and to instil in them a desire to learn more about Canada’s Métis. In addition, Kelly informed the teacher of her upcoming Homework Clubs and reading circles.

Lianne Dumais is the Long Term Care Coordinator and Kelly Honsberger is the Literacy Coordinator at MNO’s Toronto office.
SUZANNE ROCHON-BURNETT VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD:

VOLUNTEER POWER

This year’s recipient of the Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award was RICHARD SARRAZIN. Not only does this man volunteer countless hours as the Sudbury Métis Community Council President, but also as the Region 5 Captain of the Hunt.

By Chelsey Quirk

Richard assists with the MNO’s Long Term Care program by driving clients to appointments and running errands. He also gives his time and energy to help with renovations to the Sudbury office space. It seems that no matter what the task Richard is there to lend a hand.

“Community Council President” is not just a title for Richard. He spends three to four days a week at the council office doing everything that he can to help strengthen the Métis nation and his Sudbury community where he is well thought of and respected. His generosity and kindness can always be counted upon. His humour around the office is uplifting; you can count on him for a joke or a kind word to brighten your day.

When focussing on his Captain of the Hunt duties, Richard goes non-stop preparing for the fall hunting season, meeting with local harvesters, answering questions, assisting with harvesting card applications, or just being available for support.

Richard’s colleagues and community members will unanimously believe in what he does and have nothing but great things to say about him.

“It does not matter where or when someone needs assistance with anything, you can be sure that Richard will do what it takes to make himself available…”

“Never expecting anything in return, Richard Sarrazin unselfishly gives his time for the betterment of the citizens of the MNO…”

“He is always there when some-one needs help…”

“Richard Sarrazin’s efforts to make his community and our nation stronger are amazing…”

“Richard is a great role model for all Métis people…”

“Richard’s selfless dedication to his community and to the Métis Nation of Ontario is outstanding…”

“The Métis people are blessed to have someone like Richard working for them, in their best interests…”

An emotional Richard reflected this award means a lot to me; to recognize the contributions that volunteers make to the MNO by honouring one exemplary volunteer of the Year. Last year’s recipient was PCMNO Executive Director, Reta Gordon.

Dr. Suzanne Rochon-Burnett was a founding member of the Métis Nation of Ontario, the first First Vice-Chair of the MNO, and a board member of the Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission. She was named to the Order of Canada and the Board of Directors of TV Ontario. She was a recipient of the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation’s Life-time Achievement Award and was the first woman inducted into the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame. She spent her lifetime promoting Aboriginal people and was a fierce proud Metis woman. Sadly, Suzanne passed away on April 2, 2006. The Métis Nation of Ontario is proud to name her as the first recipient of the Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award in recognition of her outstanding service to the Métis nation.

Criteria for Candidates for the Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award:

• Any MNO citizen may nominate a candidate by filling out a nomination form by the deadline, June 23, 2009. (Nomination forms can be found at: www.metonation.org)

• Each candidate must consent to have his or her name submitted. Candidates should exemplify the volunteer contributions made to the Métis Nation and to their community in a way similar to the standards set by Dr. Suzanne Rochon-Burnett.

• The candidates will have given generously of their time and effort. They will have been strong advocates of the Métis Nation and will have established an outstanding record of unselfish commitment to the cause of their efforts. They will be seen as caring and giving indi-viduals and someone to look up to. The candidates will have pro-vided an extended period of serv-ice as a volunteer.

Send nominations to:
Monique Richard
500 Ch. St. Patrick St, Unit 3
Ottawa, ON K1N 9G4
Tel: 613-798-1488 ext 132
Fax: 613-722-4225
moniquerichard@metisnation.org

MNO staff member sponsors a child with help of Okala Foundation:

Make a difference in the world:

By Laurie Fonjong

I thought I would share with you some wonderful news. I have recently become a spon-sor to a young boy named Boris Banyangue in honour of my late and beloved mother-in-law, Grace Fonjong.

I had been thinking about all of the blessings I have in my life, my amazing husband, my won-derful family, my great friends, a good job. Then I started thinking about how I could make a differ-ence in the world. I know it sounds funny coming from me, but I have been feeling like some-thing has been missing from my life for a long time now.

So I started to do some research online and found a foun-dation that was doing amazing things for less fortunate children in remote villages in Cameroon. As some of you may know, Sunny is from Cameroon (Africa), so it hit home for me. I had to know more and after all of my research I knew I wanted to be a part of the Okala Foundation.

Sunny and I don’t have chil-dren, so was this what I felt was missing in my life? We both help out our families whenever we can but it isn’t enough for me. I need more. So I decided to do some soul searching and I learned that I needed to do something that was good for someone else too. I wanted to give someone a fighting chance at life.

There are many ways to help the Okala Foundation. For a one time fee of $85 you can sponsor a child for one full school year. This ensures that your sponsored child receives hot lunch (every day), school supplies needed for the school year plus more to help reduce the spread of diseases like Malaria. If you are not able to sponsor a child, you can help by providing supplies. Below is a ‘wish list’ of items that the Foundation needs for the two schools, the medical centre and the orphan-age they provide to students:

• Used prescription glasses
• Ophthalmoscopes, stetho-scopes, otoscopes
• Binocular compound micro-scopes, centrifuges and blood testing equipment accessories
• Thermometers, crutches, ten-sor bandages
• Adult night lights
• Adult night stands
• Stools, tongue depressors, anti-septic ointments, cotton balls
• Blood pressure cuffs, first aid kits, and supplies
• Dental floss

To date, all of the children have been sponsored for the 2008-2009 school year. However, they are in desperate need of supplies; perhaps you would be able to help by gathering some of the items listed above; perhaps the company you work for would be able to help out as well.

You can help make a differ-ence in a child’s life too. Every lit-tle bit counts! Please visit the Okala Foundation’s web site at www.okalafoundation.org to view the list of children who have been sponsored this year and for more information on this wonderful grassroots organization.

Please feel free to email me at help@dikalana@gmail.com if you have questions or would like to make arrangements to donate items.

By Boris Banyangue

MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

January 2009

MÉTIS VOYAGEUR
Niagara Region Métis Council: Métis to take part in 2010 Olympic torch relay

By Linda Lord

There’s more than a flacker of excitement in the Niagara Region Métis Council these days. In fact, you might say there is a flame—the Olympic flame.

On November 21st Mayor Goulbourne made the official announcement that the City of Welland has been chosen as one of the 200 communities across Canada to host the 2010 Olympic Torch Relay. The announcement was made during a media conference at civic square, where Empire Elementary School students helped Goulbourne raise the Olympic Torch Relay flag.

“This is a significant honour for the city,” he said. “As a host city, we will receive national and international exposure as the Olympic torch makes its way across the country en route to Vancouver, British Columbia…”

The 106-day pan-Canadian journey will culminate on February 12, 2010, when it arrives in Vancouver for the Opening Ceremony before a global viewing audience of billions. Along the way a total of 12,000 torchbearers will carry the Olympic flame for approximately 500 metres.

Accompanied by representatives of the Niagara Region Métis Council, the Mayor also announced the creation of a task force, to be chaired by Mike Seguin, 2009 President of Club Seguin, 2009 President of Club Seguin, to plan the torch relay event. Other members from the community will be invited to join M. Seguin in this endeavour.

“It is a great honour for the Niagara Region Métis Council and its citizens to be asked by His Honour Mayor Damian Goulbourne, to be part of this great event. The council has accepted, and feels privileged to be part of this monumental event. We are looking forward to working with the City of Welland on this endeavour and to bring the Métis culture and heritage, with the help of the MNO, to the people of Ontario,” said Senator Stephen Quesnelle.

The Olympic Flame is on its way to Welland.

Volunteers for medical transportation

Volunteer drivers who have their own transportation are needed. We pay 40 cents per kilometre. This is a part-time position, a few days a week, but flexible. We contact you in advance as needed. Please submit resume to:

Lianne Dumais / Long Term Care Coordinator
75 Sherbourne St, Suite 222
Toronto, ON M5A 2P9
or call 416-977-9881 x105
Fax: 416-977-9911

Credit River Métis Council We Need You!

As a council, we can provide much to MNO citizens who live within our council territory of Peel Region and surroundings. Such as: cultural events, teachings, workshops, fellowships, support and much more. We know there are quite a few of you—about 1500! Awesome! Where are you? These services can only be offered if a viable, functioning council is in place. At present, we are having difficulty establishing a council due to lack of a proper quorum. This is vital in order to provide services to you.

Contact:
Clayton Cadeau
Tel: 905-792-1556
creditriversmetiscouncil@hotmail.com
www.creditrivermetiscouncil.com
Métis Council makes their mark on Thunder Bay with new voyageur mural

By Deborah Dalseg

Greetings Métis citizens of Ontario! As of October 26, 2008, Thunder Bay has a new council (see page 8). We encourage anyone interested in participating on council to contact us. We have two positions still open, Secretary and Male Youth Representative.

Thunder Bay Métis Council is here to assist you, whether you require help in applying for Métis citizenship, getting information on many programs and services offered by the MNO, renting the Louis Riel Hall, or you wish to have your comments or concerns heard.

On October 22, 2008, the City of Thunder Bay hosted a traditional Algonquin Fall Feast at the MNO building located on May Street to celebrate the unveiling of the mural painted on it. The 10' x 2' mural, "Métis Voyageurs," was designed by artists Chris Ranta and Brian Crook and depicts Fort William on the Kaministiquia River. The MNO is one of five recipients of the Mural Grant Program.

Our first fundraiser has begun! We are selling t-shirts ($5.50), with a picture of the mural on the back and the MNO logo on the front. Please contact us to order yours!

On November 12, 2008, Senator Bob McKay and Treasurer Debbie Dalseg participated in the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) consultations taking place with Métis, First Nations and Inuit communities across the province. The final report of these consultations will be considered by the council of the OCT when it formulates future policies on curriculum development and teacher qualifications.

Attending the Special Presidents' Assembly and Annual General Assembly held in Toronto November 16-19, 2008, representing Thunder Bay were President Wendy Landry; Youth Representative, Janine Landry; Treasurer, Deborah Dalseg; PCMNO Region 2 Councillor, Cameron Burgess; and, PCMNO Secretary/Treasurer Tim Pile.

Second Annual Métis Heritage Celebration | Oshawa

Bringing Métis to the masses

By Cecile Waglar

Councilor, Oshawa Métis Council

On June 28 and 29, 2008, the Oshawa Métis Council (OMC) welcomed Métis and non-Métis visitors to Memorial Park in Oshawa.

The event opened on Saturday with a reenactment of the public. We gathered on the lawn to honour the World Drum with songs sung by the Shwa Singers. Then Senator Olive Tiedema presented the World Drum with our gift: Our Olivine Bousquet Métis Dancers, with their Red River Jig, invited everyone to gather for the opening ceremonies. Senator Ruth Wagner-Millington, with her fiddle, led us in the singing of our national anthem. Senator Joseph Poitras led us in the prayer and Senator Olive Tiedema smudged the dignitaries. OMC President, Robert Pilon; Oshawa Mayor, John Gray; MP and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, on behalf of the Honourable Tony Clement, Minister of Industry, Colin Carrie; and OMC President, Gary Lipinjeksi each brought greetings.

Then, through rain and shine, we entertained our visitors with the Fiddling and Jigging Poitras Family from Alberta, the Métis Fiddler Quartet (Delbeare-Sawchuck Family) from Toronto, fiddler Senator Ruth Wagner-Millington, singer Charlie Pile, the Shwa Singers, and a few impromptu singers including Lorna Rowlins and New Brunswick Métis, Guilmont Targeon, and our own Olivine Bousquet Métis Dancers. There were also special ceremonies with the World Drum to promote peace and protection of our Mother Earth.

We sold buffalo burgers and bannock and held a silent auction. There were a Children’s Tent for stories and crafts, Métis Information Tent, Charlie Pile’s Family History and Métis artefacts display; Elder Joe Paquette’s display, Roland and Jane St.Germain’s Sacred Tobacco and Medicine display, Ruth Wagner-Millington’s fiddle-making display, and Métis vendors. We also displayed posters submitted by area grade school children who had participated in our Métis Heritage Celebration Logo Contest.

The atmosphere was set by: a traditional drumming Song to honour the Drum and the World Drum with our gift. Our Olivine Bousquet Métis Dancers presented the World Drum with our gift. Our Olivine Bousquet Métis Dancers.

The Bancroft MNO Office is offering foot care clinics at the Bancroft MNO office of the Métis Nation of Ontario for first timers, constant supporters, and Indigenous people.

The Bancroft MNO office will continue to offer foot care clinics with our foot care nurse, Betsey Lundrigan R.P.N. in January.

Appointments are scheduled every six weeks. Please call the Bancroft MNO Community Wellness Worker Tracey Dale at 613-332-2575 x.21 for more details or to book an appointment.

Métis Voyageur mural unveiled at Thunder Bay 2008

The City of Thunder Bay unveiled this mural in October, 2008.
In many ways November 16th is the saddest day of the year for the Métis nation. It is the day on which, in 1885, Louis Riel was hanged for treason. But by marking this day every year for the past 123 years, and remembering Riel and his fight, Métis people have, perhaps, turned a tragic injustice into inspiration and hope.

by Marc St. Germain

For the past 16 years the Métis Nation of Ontario has organised gatherings on the lawn of the Provincial Legislature at Queen’s Park in Toronto to honour and remember Louis Riel. The gatherings take place at a monument to the soldiers from Ontario who went west in 1885 to fight against Riel and the Métis, in what was called “the Northwest Rebellion”. As MNO President, Gary Lipinski, would mention in his speech at the foot of that monument, “there is some irony within that.”

Riel Day is a day of commemoration and therefore always a serious and often solemn event, but it is also a celebration of Riel’s life and his efforts for Métis rights. This year’s Riel Day definitely leaned more in the direction of celebration. Much of that feeling could be attributed to recent breakthroughs in government relations, MNO President Gary Lipinski would explain in his address:

“This year is a year of firsts,” said President Lipinski to the large crowd. He went on to list some of the firsts. This was the first time ever the entire Provincial Council was able to be present at a Riel Day ceremony in Toronto. It was also the first time senators and presidents from all the community councils across the province were able to attend the ceremony. It was the first time a president from the Métis Nation–British Columbia (MN-BC President, Bruce Dumont) was able to join the MNO as it remembered Riel. But most significantly:

“Toujours, en l’honneur de Riel”

France Picotte, the Chair of the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO), acting as master of ceremonies reminded those gathered that:

Je vous invite aujourd’hui comme tous les 16 novembre de venir penser a ce que vous avez fait l’année dernière, mais aussi ce que vous allez faire cette année. Toujours, en l’honneur de

Senator Earl Scofield offers an opening prayer at Riel Day ceremonies last November.

Senator Earl Scofield, Senator Alis Plante and Senator Elmer Ross carry the colours as they lead a procession from the steps of the Queen’s Park Legislature to the Northwest Monument.

Métis Nation of Ontario Chair France Picotte.

Métis Nation - British Columbia President Bruce Dumont.

The Honourable Brad Duguid, Ontario Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.
Riel Day Banquet • November 16th, 2008

A FEAST FOR RIEL

After a busy and eventful Riel Day that included raising the Métis flag at Toronto City Hall and at Queen’s Park, and marching to the Northwest Rebellion Monument where speeches were delivered and wreathes were placed, attendees returned to the Day’s Inn.

During the afternoon, the Senators, veterans and Women’s Secretariat held meetings (see pages 4-8).

Around 6:00 PM, a feast that featured venison stew was served to at least 120 people. Asked for her comments, master of ceremonies Monique Raymond-Lefebvre responded: “What can I say about the night of the feast? I was the fortunate one to have been asked to be the emcee.”

NEW PCMNO MEMBERS SWORN IN BY MÉTIS JUSTICE

The evening began when Monique introduced the Honourable Mr Justice Todd Ducharme who, in 2004, was the first Métis to be appointed to the Ontario Superior Court of Justice. Mr Ducharme then welcomed everyone and spoke about his appointment and the importance of the role to be played by the new PCMNO who were then introduced. Justice Ducharme assisted with the official swearing-in ceremony.

First to be introduced was Region 1 Councillor, Theresa Stenlund, from Kenora. She is a young mother who has returned to school, but remains very active with the youth in her community where she works with Children and Youth Services.

Next, came Region 2 Councillor, Cameron Burgess, who grew up in Longlac. Cam has been councillor for the past six years and actively represents the MNO on various boards and committees, including Confederation College; Divinity of Thunder Bay, Grey Wolf Teaching Lodge; Youth Justice Group; Place of Safety, and the Fort William Historical Park.

Marcel Lafrance, Region 3 Councillor, comes from the town of Matachewan, about 55 kilometres west of Kirkland Lake. In the spring of 2007 Marcel became a proud college graduate.

Region 5 Councillor, Maurice Sarrazin, was introduced next. Maurice was born in Mattawa, a small town 45 kilometres east of North Bay. Maurice retired from the armed forces in 1977 and moved to Sudbury, where he lived since 1980.

His goal is to create a provincial veterans’ council that is funded, organised, and self-sufficient. He would also like to create a data base of past and present veterans.

Presently working on a Métis cemetery that has been lost or forgotten, Maurice’s goal is to preserve, protect and document this site. This is his second term as councillor.

Jo-Ann Wass, Region 6 Councillor, was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba but has been in Ontario since 1991 when she moved to Trenton. In 1996 she moved to Ottawa and became Secretary/Treasurer of the Ottawa Council in 1998. In May of 2008 Jo-Ann became a regional councillor.

She has been a natural health practitioner since 1995, and thanks to SMNOTI became a certified nutrition counsellor and sales representative for a homeopathic company.

Jo-Ann was followed by Region 7 Councillor, Pauline Saulnier of Midland. Pauline has worked for the Ontario Government since 1987 and is currently the Bilingual Client Service Representative in the Ontario Disability Support Program in Orillia.

Pauline joined the MNO in 1990, and immediately began volunteering as a steering committee member for Métis Child and Family Services. In 1998, she became the Secretary of the Georgian Bay Métis Council (GBMC) and was the President of the GBMC from 1999 to 2003. In addition, Pauline sits on the Rendezvous committee, and holds the portfolio for Art and Culture, Sports and Recreation. She is also Associate Provincial Secretary for Child and Family Services and was the Chair for Culture of the Annual Assembly committee for 2008. Pauline has been Region 7 Councillor for the past three years.

The Councillor for Region 8, Charlie Fife, was born in the foothills of Alberta and spent a good deal of his life living in Banff National Park, before moving to Ontario in early 1998.

Charlie has been a professional performer on and off since childhood. He was President of PACT National Performers Union from 1998 to 2002. During this time he was vice-president of the Canadian Media Guild, from 1999 to 2002 (union representing CBC employees), also, from 1998 until 2002 he worked in Canada’s film and television industry as a union official. In addition, Charlie is a carpenter and co-owner of Westernly Contracting in Toronto. He has been involved with the Oshawa Métis Council for about a year.

The final regional councillor is Peter Rivers from Region 9. Peter was born in Sault Saint Marie but moved to Windsor in 1994 where he has been a professional firefighter and part of the urban search and rescue team for the last 15 years. He has a degree in fire science.

He is also Captain of the Hunt for the area.

Next to be introduced was the Post Secondary Representative, Anita Tucker who was born in Fort Frances. Anita moved to southern Ontario to attend the University of Guelph where she obtained her BSc. Honours in wildlife biology, followed by her MSc in wildlife nutrition and by spring 2009 she will have her PhD in animal behaviour and physiology.

When her education is complete, Anita plans to get back to her cultural roots and work on issues that are relevant to the MNO.

Following Anita was Executive Senator, Reta Gordon who was born and raised in Ottawa. Reta has been involved with the Métis Nation of Ontario since 1993, and became a council Senator in 1999, then, a PCMNO Senator in 2002, and has been Executive Senator since 2003.

Reta represents the Métis Nation at numerous government functions and meetings, where she is proud to meet and educate
people about the Métis Nation, and to explain that the Métis Nation is one of Canada’s three Aboriginal peoples. Berta still finds time to volunteer with the Registry Branch.

Next, was Senator Joseph Poitras from the Oshawa Council. Originally from Manitou, he has been in Ontario since 1974, where he has worked as a union representative for DP and a mediator for the Ministry of Labour.

Senator Ruth Wagner-Millington was next to be sworn in. Born in Toronto, she is a luthier (a maker of stringed musical instruments) who spent her summers on St Joseph Island. She now lives in the Muskokas and is an active member of the Moonriver Council.

The final Senator to be introduced was Senator Gerry Redford who was born in Gogama and raised in Sault, just outside of Sudbury. This is his second term.

The executive council was last to be sworn in, beginning with MNO President, Gary Lipinski. Gary is from Port Frances and was first elected as an MNO Councilor for the Sault Area in 1994. Subsequently, he became Region 5 Councilor on the PCMO and then Chair, a post he held for the next nine years. In May of 2008, Gary was acclaimed as President of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

Chair, France Picotte, followed Gary France is from Timmins and has previously served as the President of the Timmins Métis Community Council and the Co-Chair of the MNO. France also holds the Health Portfolio.

Next, Vice-chair, Sharon McBride was called upon. Sharon was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, but has lived in Germany, Nova Scotia and Ontario. She can trace her Métis ancestry to the historical Ontario Métis community of Penetanguishene.

Sharon became aware of her Métis background in 1999 and since that time has been actively involved within the Métis community. As a volunteer for the Métis Nation, Sharon was the founding president of the Credit River Métis Council in Brampton, and served as Councilor for Region 8.

She is also the spokesperson for the Women’s Secretariat of the Métis Nation of Ontario and serves on many different boards and committees in order to ensure that the voice of the Métis Nation is heard. In recognition of her work with Mississauga Heritage and the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, Sharon was awarded the Ontario Heritage Trust Award. She has received one of the highest honours from her community and has earned two eagle feathers.

Last to be sworn in was Secretary/Treasurer, Tim Pile. Tim was born in Geraldton, but traces his Aboriginal roots to Peace River, Alberta.

Since 2001, Tim has been the Secretary/Treasurer of the Métis Nation of Ontario and holds portfolios for Housing, Non-Nuclear Power Development, and most recently, Community Development. In addition, Tim chairs the MNO Finance Committee, and represents the MNO as a member of the Aboriginal Reference Group for the Northern Ontario School of Medicine at Lakehead University.

He has developed an appreciation and respect for our environment, and prioritizes this value when developing business initiatives.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY MICHAEL IGNAIFF

After the swearing-in ceremonies, President Lipinski gave his opening remarks, and then introduced the special guest speaker, Michael Ignatieff. Mr. Ignatieff was elected as a Member of Parliament for Etobicoke Lakeshore in 2006, re-elected in 2008, and currently serves as Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada. He is one of Canada’s leading voices on the world stage in the field of human rights, democracy and international affairs.

A noted speaker, Mr. Ignatieff has written 16 books, including two of his best known works, The Rights Revolution, where he passionately explores Canada’s contribution to the progress of individual rights and freedoms around the world, and Blood and Belonging, which was inspired by his CBC film of the same name.

He is the recipient of eleven honourary degrees, a Gemini Award from the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television, the Governor-General Award for non-fiction, and was recognized as the Parliamentarian of the Year in 2007.

On the evening of October 16th he shared a blend of family history and respectful views of the Métis for which he received a standing ovation.

Cecile Wagar and the Ooline Bouquet Métis Dancers from the Oshawa Métis Council were then introduced and set toes to tapping with an energetic jigging display.

France Picotte then took the floor to introduce Thomas Heenan from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and Paul McDonald from Environment Canada’s Canadian Wildlife Services who did a presentation on the Federal Species at Risk Act.

Next came the presentation of the Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award which was presented to Richard Sarrazin. Not only does this man volunteer countless hours as the Sudbury Métis Community Council President, but also as the Region 5 Captain of the Hunt.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

The Métis Nation of Ontario is proud to have named Richard Sarrazin the 2008 Volunteer of the Year! (see more on page 15).

The evening was then turned over to Lisa Pigeau, the new Manager of Primary Care, who was the master of ceremonies for the evening’s musical entertainment—all of it volunteer—by several Métis entertainers including Ruth Wagner-Millington, Charlie Austin, Lema Rowlinson, Nicolas Delehaire-Sawchuk, Roger and Aline Giroux, and Ray Girard, Leora Giroux, Roger and Aline Giroux, and Ray Girard, Leora Wilson, Elmer Ross and of course, Lisa Pigeau.

To the delight of delegates and audience alike, the evening ended by bringing the campfire indoors (albeit without the fire) and found our performers in a large circle in the middle of the ballroom providing a wonderful improvisational jam session with all of our Métis artists present.

“To say the least, this was a great day of celebration. I remember growing up where everyone gathered, told stories, shared a few tears, and jammed with family and friends. This is where I am thankful for my parents, family and friends, as well as my extended Métis family and how the AGA touches my heart year after year,” said Monique Raymond-Lefebvre.
The Métis influence in this area was made evident to the members of the school board...

Vest Workshop
Jigging Class?

Are you able to help with the 2009 Summer Picnic?

General meeting

niagara region métis council to hold first general meeting

The Niagara Region Métis Council will hold its first general meeting of the year on Saturday, April 25, 2009, from 7:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. The council encourages all Métis citizens living in the Niagara region to attend this very important gathering being held at Rice Road Community Church located right across from Niagara College at 305 Rice Road in Welland.

The meeting will be an opportunity for Métis citizens to meet the newly elected council, provide input, and discuss events planned for the year. Your input in planning the future direction of the council is critical to the development of a local organization that will meet the needs of Métis citizens in the Niagara region.

Refreshments will be served. In order to ensure there are ample refreshments for all, please call the office at 905-714-9756 and let us know if you are planning to attend.

Leora Wilson
20 Division Street
PH: 905-714-9756

niagararegionmetis@gmail.com

For the mussel lover, here’s a recipe we picked up in Newfound-land while visiting.

Steamed Mussels in Garlic Cream Sauce

3 lbs mussels, cleaned
2 garlic cloves
1/4 cup chopped parsley
1/4 cup chopped red onion
1 tsp chopped garlic
1 cup (35%) whipping cream

In a saucepan, combine the butter, lemon juice and par- sley. Melt and set aside.
In a large stockpot, place beer and salt. Cover and boil.
Add chopped red onion, chopped parsley and garlic. Steam until mussels open.

The Grey-owen Sound Métis Council News:
Council brings Métis culture to community

By Senator Leora Wilson

In September 26, 2008, the Bluewater District Board of Education partnered with Abo- dimentos, the Cultural Commission of the area to promote cultural awareness with a focus on respect for the Métis and the sharing of the 2,000 employees of the school board. Speaker for the day was Dr. Pamela Rose Toulouse from Laurentian University in Sudbury, whose article on reporting Aboriginal Student Success: Self Esteem and Identity is highly respect- ed in the education system.

Chief Randall Kahpee and Chief Ralph Akwenzie from the Saugewi and Cape Croker First Nations’ Coun- cil, and Senator Roland St. Germain representing the Métis community welcomed the employee body.

The Harry Lumley Bayshore Com- munity Centre was the venue chosen for the Métis community to illustrate their cultural values and provide an entrance in Métis style.

On behalf of the Métis Nation of Ontario, PC/MNO Senator Roland St. Germain welcomed the 2,080 employees of the Bluewater District Board of Education to the events of the day.

The Senator and his wife, Jane St. Germain provided a condensed cultural display, with backdrops showing the time line of the Métis movement. The St. Germins also set up an extensive book display and resource list that specifically targets Métis his- tory and customs.

Rudy Couture joined in the proceedings and along with myself, entertained the group with Métis fiddling and turf cutting (spoon playing).

During the afternoon agenda, the Honourable, President of the Sajingwe Métis Council spoke with much passion on the history of the Métis people in the Georgian Bay region. Cecile Wagay, manager of the Olivine Bosques Métis Dancers, in co-operation with the Oshawa Roots Museum in Owen Sound, brought several members of this wonderfully talented group of young Métis jiggers to show their skills.

The Métis influence in this area was made very evident to the members of the school board, and we hope that they will comprehend that as an Aboriginal culture we are charac- teristically different from the First Nations.

Our, grandmothers, or great grandmothers, were born First Nations women, and married the European traders and voyageurs. Both brought their unique lifestyle, and the combination of the two cul- tures made existence in the untamed country of that era possible. The children of this union became mixed blood (Métis), and the distinctive Métis culture was created.

We wish to thank the Bluewater District School Board for their organisation and inclusion of the Métis Nation in this “Bluewater Character Develop- ment” Day.

Plans are under way for the 2009 picnic and volunteers are being sought. If you have any ideas for making the picnic an even greater success, particularly any events and/or activities encouraging the interest and involvement of youth, please don’t hesitate to get in touch with us.

Are you planning a year of studies behind me, and only one more to go, what better way to express myself than in writing?

Nearly two years ago I realised how passionate I was about the art of writing, and wanted to study journalism. I perused dif- ferent colleges and universities and was beyond satisfied when I decided on Sheridan College’s Print Journalism program. I was ecstatic when I found out I was accepted and couldn’t wait to start learning all aspects of writ- ing and creating media.

The first few months were a struggle, as I was faced with a workload much beyond anything I had experienced in high school. I was in a school that occupied more than a city block, with thousands of people I didn’t know. I combated my fears by immersing myself fully in my studies and it certainly paid off.

In addition to academic wor- k, I started to become aware of finances. How would I pay my rent? Would I have enough money on student loans? But I didn’t allow these worries to interfere with my dedication to school. I gave up my part time job, answering phones at a dance stu- dio, and spent many nights awake until 3:00 or 4:00 A.M. fin- ishing homework assignments and studying for tests. My grades were threatened when I realised how absolutely exhausted I was, and needed a solution.

At exactly the right moment, I received a phone call notifying me of my acceptance for funding by the MNOT. I was so grateful, I was speechless.

I consider the gifts that I have been given, to contribute to my prepar- ing for my future career.

Funding from the MNOT has greatly enhanced my college experience, and made me appre- ciate the gifts that I have been given. I am fin- ished my time here at Sheridan, I will be a great representative of the talents that Métis and Abor- nal youth have to offer.
The Niagara Regional Métis Council celebrated its fifth anniversary as a council at its meeting held in September 2008. The evening began with an opening prayer offered by Senator Audrey Valley. Council members, their families and friends, as well as Region 7 Councilor Paul Grenier, Oshawa Métis Council members and others came together for a potluck supper where everyone had an opportunity to sample traditional foods as well as some family favourites, such as venison stew, roast turkey, roast pork, Hungarian stew, various potato and sweet potato dishes, and salads—cultural delights one and all—and we also received a generous supply of lasagne contributed by Welland’s Mayor, Damien Goulbourne on behalf of the city. There were numerous other dishes too many to list here. We, here in the Niagara Region, as in many other Métis communities, have some of the best cooks in our country.

The dinner was attended by the newly elected member of parliament for Welland, the Hon. Malcolm Allen of the NDP and his wife, as well as, Deputy Mayor, Paul Grenier, a Métis, who supplied all of the ‘new green’ compostable plates, cups, knives, spoons and forks. We were also joined by PCMNO Region 9 Councilor, Peter Rivers and his wife, Jody (see page 2) and PCMNO Region 8 Councilor, Caroline Pate and his wife Maggie—Councillor Sandy O’Dell of Welland, and Glen Lipriko, Addictions Wellness Co-ordinator, had a table with information on Responsible Gambling.

As Senator of the Niagara Region Métis Council, I would like to give a great big thank you to everyone who attended our dinner, to all the families who brought food, and to everyone who helped to organise this year’s meal, and to everyone who donated supplies and their time. Without all your help, the dinner would not have been such a great success. There are many more to thank, and to those I have forgotten to mention please forgive me. To those citizens who were unable to attend this year’s celebration of our harvest dinner, we look forward to seeing you at next year’s celebrations.

By Stephen Quesnelle

A Proud Métis Dad

It was a proud day in October for Northumberland Métis Council President Wayne Trudeau when both his sons, William and Joshua, were presented with their citizenship cards. Both of Wayne’s sons hold positions within the council and are kept busy attending various meetings and events. Congratulations to Wayne and his sons.

By Linda Lord

On November 1st, a new council joined the MNO family of community councils. With the capable guidance of Hank Rowlinson (Manager Community Relations), Region 6 citizens gathered in Northbrook to form the Seven Rivers Métis Council.

Hank spoke to those in attendance—perhaps 40 people, some of whom had driven more than an hour—about what a council means. He included information about the Harvester’s Card and the Powley case, pointing out that harvesting rights are not an “individual right” but a “community right.” He also talked about the other benefits available to MNO citizens through their local councils such as training, upgrading, self-employment and summer jobs. The MNO’s scholarship and bursary program helps MNO students at 32 colleges and universities. In addition there is an ever-growing number of health programs.

GREAT BLESSINGS TO MY RELATIVES FOR THE BLESSING AND THANKED THE CREATORS FOR THE MOOSE

In mid-November came our last day to hunt for the year, and his blessings were honoured as my son and I have been successful in hunting our wild game for the winter.

I gave two thumbs up to Dad and my relatives for the blessing and thanked the Creator for the moose. Tobacco was offered, two Métis sashes were hung in a balsam tree, (as well as dad’s harvesting card) in front of the moose to remind us as we worked that he was still present.

It was a great day to be Métis, Marci.
Poetry that comes from a “Métis Heart”

By Nina Henley

T he Kenora Métis Council would like to introduce you to one of our very talented local citizens. Calvin Harasemchuk is a Métis from northern Ontario. He was born in Winnipeg and moved to Kenora at a young age. He started writing poetry very young. Sketching and song writing are among his talents. Growing up in the country, all he had were his books. His dad had a construction company so Calvin learned at an early age to run heavy equipment.

In 1960, Calvin began his police career, living in Pickle Lake, then moving back to Kenora. There he met the love of his life, Frances. Calvin—the romantic—proposed after just two weeks of dating Calvin, Frances, and son, Christopher soon moved back to Pickle Lake, and a new addition arrived, William. Calvin also served on the fire department in Pickle Lake. In 1987, Calvin and family moved to Red Rock. He was involved with local events and clubs, serving the local school board as vice-chair, president of non-profit housing, Lions Club, playing hockey as a goalie, and he was also a member of the baseball league. “Calvin the cop”, as he was known locally, decided in 1993 to join Emergency Measures Ontario, until 1994, when he joined the Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service, as a staff sergeant. Calvin moved his family to the far north on the coast of James Bay, Katchewchan, then to Porquis Junction. In 1995 they moved back to Kenora where they still reside.

Calvin, somewhat retired, has worked for the Ministry of Transportation as an equipment operator and a foreman, as a security manager for the Goldcrest Eagle Casino, a security chief for Minaki Lodge, and as a guard operator for a local construction company. Somewhere along the way, he managed to get his BSc and MSc.

Both of his sons have graduated from the University of Waterloo. Chris married in 2006 to Jenn, and they recently welcomed a twin grandchild, Andrew, born August 1st. Will is still looking. All of the children live in Vancouver.

Looking at Calvin, one wouldn’t think he would be the type to write poetry, he is 6’5”, a big bear of a man. He is, though, a big soft, cuddly teddy bear! He has gathered a collection of his poems in a wonderful book called, Love, Lost and Heartache: Poems of the Northern Lights, published by Authorhouse: G23-2008. Books may be purchased from chapters.ca, under rare books.

Calvin has written a poem titled, Métis Heart. He has allowed us to share this poem with the Métis citizens in Kenora and now here for all of the MNO to read...

Métis Heart

Deep inside me, there beats a Métis heart
Two world’s a part, yet united.
We stand between two shores,
A love for each we adore,
This Métis heart marches to a drum beat,
Sounds of a fiddle to me, sound so sweet,
The Métis sash I wear with pride,
For the Métis flag, many have died.
Born of mixed breeds, from the fields of gold,
Wishing for our own land, so the story goes,
Many a Métis suffered in pain,
Waiting for that special day.

Fighting for our rights in our war,
First with bullets, then with words,
We shall never give up we swore,
The pen is mightier than the sword,
Over the years little glimmers of hope,
Many a tear cried,
Recognition of our Nation at the most,
Our Métis hearts have come a long way,
Many a journey we have made,
Our Nation still survives,
Governments will grant our rights one day,
The Métis heart will never bleed,
Then all people will live together in peace and harmony...

By Calvin Harasemchuk ©2008

Kenora seniors visit our Métis brothers and sisters in Manitoba.

Kenora seniors get some Métis culture in the ‘Peg

By Nina Henley

I t took me a couple of weeks of phone calls and making arrangements for the Kenora Métis Council to be able to take a group of seniors on an educational tour to Winnipeg.

On October 3rd, 2008, a chartered Ecolodge Lines bus picked up the group of seniors at 6:30 A.M. We then continued on to Keewatin to The Maples to make a second pick-up. There were 35 of us in total, including the bus driver.

I waited until we were on the Trans-Canada Highway and I welcomed everyone on the tour. I introduced the council members and staff present and spelled out what they were to expect during the day, and explained the rules of etiquette while on the bus.

After my little speech we handed out donuts, muffins and bottled water.

Calvin Laidrière spoke to the seniors about the Warmth and Wellness group (see page 85). She explained that the group meets every Tuesday and knits hats, scarves, mitts, sweaters, blankets, etc. for the less fortunate and speaks on what they have accomplished to date. She then passed out a newsletter about their program, with information and phone numbers if others would like to come out and join the group or if they would like to do some volunteer knitting from the comforts of their own homes.

Our first stop was a scheduled tour of the St. Boniface Museum. The Director, Philippe Mailot, split the group into three smaller groups, and had each group go with their tour guide. The tour was quite fascinating, especially the area concentrating on Louis Riel, his sash, his coffin, and all his other artefacts.

We then walked over to the St. Boniface Cathedral and cemetery. This is a very beautiful church. As prayer was going on inside the church, we were only allowed to go into the foyer. We could still view the church through the large windows. The Director spoke about the old cathedral that had burned down, and the building of the new church. The new church is circled by the walls of the old cathedral. The cemetery was very impressive. It holds the tombstones of Louis Riel and his parents, Jean-Baptiste Lagimodiere and Marie-Anne Gaboury, among others.

We then boarded the bus for a ten minute ride over to the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF). We were served lunch in the cafeteria by Al Dejarlais and his staff. We had stew, barbeque, dessert, coffee, tea, or juice. After everyone finished lunch, the Co-ordinator of Métis Heritage and History Research, Lawrence Barkwell, and his assistant, Sasha Marshall, gave us a mini-tour of the building. We got to see President Chartrand’s office and also Pamunicka Publications. Many people purchased a book titled Métis Legacy II, which was co-written by Mr. Barkwell. He was kind enough to autograph the books. After the tour, we all gathered outside the MMF building for a group photo.

From there we headed to the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature. We were a bit early for the tour, so everyone had a chance to visit the museum gift shop. We then split up into three groups and each group was lead by a tour guide. We were only scheduled to tour two of the eight galleries; The Hudson’s Bay Company Gallery and the Grassland Gallery. To our surprise, we were given the entire eight gallery tour. A couple of the seniors were a little tired and only took in part of the tour, waiting in the lobby for the rest of us to complete the tour.

We then boarded the bus for the trip home. Everyone seemed to have a terrific time, and many asked to be considered if we ever do this again.

A reminder to Harvester Certificate holders

M ake sure you carry your Harvester Certificate at all times and are ready to show your Métis identification to the MNF enforcement officer.

Clearly identify yourself as Métis and state that you are exercising your Métis right to harvest food. This is very important. If you do not identify as Métis, then a different law and, or regulations may be applied to your harvesting activities. Claiming a Métis right after you did not identify as Métis or identified as something else, may be problematic for administrative and legal purposes.

Be calm and courteous throughout the encounter. Being confrontational with the MNF officer will not be helpful. Make it known to the enforcement officer that you were harvesting for food, social or ceremonial purposes—whichever applies.

You do not need to provide any additional information about Métis rights or the Powley Case. Ask for the enforcement officer’s name and identification number. Then, report any encounter, seizure, or charges to your respective Métis Nation of Ontario Council or the Captain of the Hunt in your region immediately.
By Neil Trudel

On September 19, 2008, Powley Day Celebrations were well attended at the John Wesley United Church. The Historic Sault Ste Marie Métis Council provided funding for a free community meal (pasta, meatballs, bread, salad, dessert, and refreshments) for all Region 4 MNO citizens.

Representatives from both the North Shore Métis Council and the Historic Sault Ste Marie Council attended the celebration and gave short speeches about what the Powley decision had achieved. During the meal those in attendance enjoyed a slide show of northern lights from the Northwest Territories taken by Interim President Art Bennett of the North Shore Métis Council.

Next, was a short presentation by the Commissioners and Senator Emily. We continued with photos from the day and shared stories of the day. We were well attended and everyone enjoyed the day. We hope to continue the celebration in the future.

THE KENORA MÉTIS WARMTH AND WELLNESS GROUP:

Kenora group knits for a good cause

By Cyndy Laliberte

We thought we should provide you with an update on our project which started on July 22nd at the suggestion of our Senator, Emily Quark. With the assistance of funding through the New Horizons of Ontario Program (NHSP) and the many donations of wool and knitted or crocheted items we continue on our journey.

We have a very dedicated group of women who arrive consistently every week with smiles on their faces and crafts in hand. They are proud of their accomplishments and hope people know that “WE CARE”.

The group meets to continue to meet at the Métis hall despite the fact that funding ended at the end of October 2008. We purchased lots of wool and other supplies so we will be able to continue for a long time.

We have donated a total of seventy-two packages (to date) of hats, scarves and mitts. We have developed a good relationship with our Ontario Works Program and two of the schools in the area. We receive a call every Tuesday and are told what items are required. We have received numerous positive comments from the community. People like the fact that these items given to those in need.

Our members of the group were asked “Why do you come here every week?” Their replies were: “I joined the WW because it gives me the opportunity to take something I love to do and use it to make a difference in someone’s life.” “I feel great leaving and knowing that I’ll be keeping someone warm. It warms your heart knowing you’re helping someone.” I’ve met such good friends here.” “It’s a joy to see the look on ones face however young to have finished an arti- cle.” Those were just a few of the comments but you can see that everyone is dedicated to our mission “to ensure that warm hats, mitts and scarves are available to those in need.”

The ladies are quite proud of their work. They have tapped the ingenuity. No day’s complete without crocheting or knitting. If anyone crafts paddles, or yarn to tease a weary head. We wish all of you “Happy knitting”

Days End

No day’s complete without crocheting or knitting. There’s nothing like a hook and thread or yarn to tease a weary head. The work flows through happy hands. As pleasure meets its own demands.”

By Wendy Langois

CELEBRATING POWLEY DAY

By Cyndy Laliberte

THE KENORA MÉTIS WARMTH AND WELLNESS GROUP:

Kenora Warmth and Wellness Group members: Autumn, Pat, Marie, Tanya, Jo Jo, Margaret, Wendy, Roberta, Cyndy, Vera and Senator Emily.

Grand River Métis Community Council

NIIMKI is up a creek without a paddle

By Barbara Gingras

As many of you are aware, in my previous article the Grand River Community Métis Council was anxiously awaiting the arrival of Niimki, our special canoe. It is with great pleasure that I announce that Niimki has arrived! This amazing piece of artwork, hand crafted by Marcel Labelle, is resting peacefully until her journey to the raffle and her historic launch in the spring.

Niimki is up a creek without a paddle. It is my hope that we can find someone who can make paddles. Please have them contact the Grand River Métis council at: mtisofgrandriver@hotmail.com

Grand River MC’s hand-crafted canoe, Niimki, needs paddles.

Days End

No day’s complete without crocheting or knitting. There’s nothing like a hook and thread or yarn to tease a weary head.

By Wendy Langois

THE KENORA MÉTIS WARMTH AND WELLNESS GROUP:

Kenora group knits for a good cause

By Cyndy Laliberte

THE KENORA MÉTIS WARMTH AND WELLNESS GROUP:

Kenora Warmth and Wellness Group members: Autumn, Pat, Marie, Tanya, Jo Jo, Margaret, Wendy, Roberta, Cyndy, Vera and Senator Emily.

required. We have received numerous positive comments from the community. People like the fact that these items given to them require no personal infor- mation and they remain anonym- ous.

Our members of the group were asked “Why do you come here every week?” Their replies were: “I joined the WW because it gives me the opportunity to take something I love to do and use it to make a difference in some- one’s life.” “I feel great leaving and knowing that I’ll be keeping someone warm. It warms your heart knowing you’re helping someone.” I’ve met such good friends here.” “It’s a joy to see the look on ones face however young to have finished an arti- cle.” Those were just a few of the comments but you can see that everyone is dedicated to our mission “to ensure that warm hats, mitts and scarves are available to those in need.”

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By Wendy Langois
Métis completing Queens U’s Aboriginal Teachers program

By Alison Powell

I started at Queen's University this past fall in the Faculty of Education. I am in a program called “Aboriginal Teachers Education Program” (ATEP). I will be graduating from Queen’s in the spring of 2009 and I will be a qualified teacher, with my focus on Aboriginal studies. I wouldn’t have been able to achieve this without support from the Northwest Métis Nation of Ontario where I was lucky enough to be a summer student receptionist in the Dryden office. Special thanks to Alvin Cimon, who was always kind to me and who was an excellent boss, and to Dana O'Donnell, who found funding so I could have this wonderful opportunity.

The ATEP is a strong and supportive department within the faculty. The goal of this program is to educate students in situations that surround Aboriginal students. In classes, we revisit Aboriginal history, consider the challenges and celebrate the achievements that Aboriginal people have made in the education system while recognising the struggles that still need to be overcome. The classes, which take place in an open atmosphere of learning and sharing, are supportive and safe. I have grown as an individual, as a teacher and as Métis women.

I was thrilled to volunteer at a powwow that was held on Queen’s main campus at the end of September. The morning started with a sunrise ceremony followed by a pipe ceremony provided by a member of the Turtle Clan. Next, the fire keeper honoured the spirits by offering tobacco to the fire. As well, I had the opportunity to speak with a Bear Clan chef and other Elders and at the event and I know my experiences here will last me a lifetime.

Heroes come in all sizes

Carol-lyn Contois, a seven year old participant in the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness program at the Georgian Bay Métis Council, has donated 20 inches of her hair to make wigs for children with cancer. Her hair was cut on July 4th to honour Council, has donated 20 inches of her hair to make wigs for children with cancer. Her hair was cut on July 4th to honour Beau Clan chief and other Elders and her family. She was pleased to see a dinner, which was provided by the Four Directions Aboriginal community at Queen’s. I took some beautiful pictures of this event and I know my experiences here will last me a lifetime.

LETTERS TO THE VOYAGEUR:

Letters that appear in this section are neither the thoughts of the MNO nor the Métis Voyageur but rather, of the individuals writing them.

Thoughts on traditional adoption

By Shaun Redmond

Let me start with saying these are my views, I know others agree with me, they tell me so. I know others don’t agree. Oh well. So who are these people coming up with what I perceive to be these strange rules?

In September, I was asked to attend the Pow-Wow at Queen’s University. I was pleased to see a contingent of Aboriginal candidates from across Canada, involved with the Canadian Forces program to attract Aboriginal members. After speaking to a number of them I once again saw how far the concept of self-identification has crept into Canadian society. Individuals, there, calling themselves Métis would never meet the “Powley Test” nor the MNC definition of Métis. It was also evident that you did not have to be from a First Nation to call yourself an Indian. This type of belief is dangerous and will eventually erode our history, position and consequently be of great harm to our position within Canada as Aboriginal peoples.

The real kicker came when I was approached by an individual claiming herself to be Métis, based on adoption. We are not talking of adoption by Métis, but rather a “traditional adoption” by a Cree couple. The Cree couple had of course passed over, so no attesta-

tion by them could be provided. I had to ask how adoption by Indi-

ans could make one a Métis. Are we not a distinct Aboriginal people with rights protected by the Crown of Canada? Several years ago an officer in the Canadian Forces advised me that a grand- mother “so and so” had instructed her in the ways of the ancestors. However, since she was not First Nations she was now Métis. Others have recently told me of individuals being “traditional-

ly adopted” by some Métis individual(s) so that those “tradition-

ally adopted” could enjoy historic Métis rights (economic gain).

Now wait a minute! What the heck is going on here? What is in this people’s minds? Is my sta-

tus as a Métis so cheap that you can treat it like a commodity? I think Not! Please, someone, anyone, shows me the historical docu-

ments where the Métis “tradition-

ally adopted” people into their Nation (communities). Where is the indisputable proof of this? If First Nation traditional adoptions were historically recorded then I’m play the “doubting Thomas” and say show me the proof that the Métis did this.

CAPTIVE CHILDREN

I descend, as do a number within my community from cap-

tive children. I and others here in my community tie back into the historic Deerfield Raid (Deer- field Mass., USA-1704), when over 100 captives were brought north. My children descend from no fewer than five captive children. Some of these children, after spending time with the Indi-
A Voyageur and his Dog

by Linda Lord

A s a people, we Métis fondly embrace our culture and its icons, such as the infinity symbol and the sash. We are proud to trace our ancestry back to handy voyageurs; we learn to jig and to play the fiddle. Some of us cultivate hand skills, like beading, making snowshoes, building canoes or carving. Throughout our history we have had a close relationship with animals, not just as a source of food or hides, but as help mates and valued companions. The Métis used dogs, horses and oxen to pull a variety of carts, wagons, toboggans and sleighs. In the winter, dogs pulled toboggans made from willow frames and covered with a wet rawhide that was shaped over the frame and left to freeze. In the spring that was shaped over the frame and covered with a wet rawhide that was shaped over the frame and left to freeze. In the spring when the rawhide thawed, it was cut up for mending snowshoes, or other uses.

Dog sleds were a tool that neither the fur trade nor the Métis could survive without. The dog sled was a vital form of winter transportation for the fur traders of both the Hudson’s Bay Company and the North West Company. The dog sleds used seem to have had two basic designs—the open ‘sledge’, and the enclosed ‘caribou’. Sledges were used routinely in the fur trade as early as 1797, and possibly earlier. Some drawings from after 1821 show sledges shaped very much like a toboggan, but with a higher front curl. These sledges were pulled by one to four dogs harnessed in a line. Canoels seem to have been less common used than sledges, but better documented.

The Métis also fashioned blankets and jackets for dogs pulling sleds or carrying goods on their backs. These outfits were not just simple pieces of cloth or leather cut to fit the animal but were highly decorated with beadwork, bells, feathers, quill-work or embroidery; and were well-made. The sash. We are proud to view our heritage just the same. I possess many of my wife’s family when we presented our proofs as citizens of the Métis Nation.

However, my Children (both MNO citizens) descend (documented) from the following captive children: Deborah Marie Madeleine Cole, Marie-Madeleine Hélène Sarah Allen; Marie Anne Madeleine Cole; Marie Madeleine Marsee. I know a number of local Métis citizens (cousins included) who also descend from: Abigail Nims and Ignace Rainier.

These were also captives from the Deerfield raid or Massachussets area. They are rather famous and their descendants are still found in great numbers amongst our Mohawk brothers and sisters. The couple were married and stayed with their First Nation, as did some children, other married out of the Indian Nation.

Now if the descendants of these captive children are not recognized what makes others think that they can claim to be Métis based on some so-called traditional adoption. Their claim, in my view is without merit. I find it an insult to me and my Nation.
Remembrance Day • November 11th, 2008

A Time to Remember

By SHAUN REDMOND

E ach November I am involved in numerous Remembrance events, events to honour those who “stood up” to protect our people, our nation, our freedom and our ways of life. I remember the sacrifices of those who died, those who served and returned, and the families of those brave people, who were also touched by the terrors of war. I also reflect on all those who lost their lives in the world’s conflicts without consideration for the colour of their uniforms, the flags they fought under, or whether they were combatants, civilians, friends, allies or foes.

On November 11th I was honoured to place a wreath at Canada’s National War Monument and on behalf of the community, paying our respects to Canada’s fallen heroes. This is a heavy responsibility, knowing that by next year’s ceremony there is a possibility, that due to the ongoing world conflict, no more names will be added to the National War Memorial.

I also reflect on all those brave people, who were returned; and the families of those who lost their lives in the world’s wars. I also reflect on all those who served and returned, and the families of those brave people, who were also touched by the terrors of war. I also reflect on all those who lost their lives in the world’s conflicts without consideration for the colour of their uniforms, the flags they fought under, or whether they were combatants, civilians, friends, allies or foes.

On November 11th, my day started early, at a ceremony outdoors in Ottawa. The band played, I was able to view the impressive ceremonies, and brief discussions were the order of the day. Thanks to my caring caregiver, Mrs. Wendy Kennedy of Brockville, I was able to attend the emotional ceremony in the Senate Chamber in Ottawa.

We were fortunate to be included in the proceedings. We were fortunate to be included in the proceedings. We were provided with seats and were able to participate in the ceremony.

For more about Capt. (Ret’d) Fowler’s family and military history, please see sidebar “A Métis Vet’s Family History of Service”.

Aboriginal Vets Honoured

Métis veteran Donn Fowler takes part in Remembrance Ceremonies held in the Senate Chamber in Ottawa

By DONN FOWLER

I was asked to attend a Remembrance Ceremony in the Senate Chamber in Ottawa as a representative of the Canadian Aboriginal Veterans Association (CAVA). I met some military and political dignitaries as well as our own Aboriginal First Nations leaders, who performed the native spiritual activities.

We left Brockville at 05:45 hours and drove to Ottawa in a thick fog. I was accompanied by a Métis lady who, thankfully, acted as my ‘caregiver’—as was specifically required by the organizing host, Veterans Affairs Canada.

We were fortunate to be included in the proceedings. We were provided with seats and were able to participate in the ceremony.

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Riel poems and other artefacts returned to Manitoba

In the days leading up to his execution 123 years ago, Louis Riel wrote four poems in English. He wrote them in a folio that had been given to him by one of his jailers. The poems came to light after being held by descendants of North West Mounted Police Const. Robert Hobbs, who gave the Métis leader the writing pad in his jail cell shortly before Riel’s execution for treason. In return, Riel gave the poems to Hobbs as a gift.

The hand-written poems were bought at auction by Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) President, David Chartrand for $27,000. No doubt Riel would have been amused by financial support from the Province of Manitoba, the National Bank of Canada, a local foundation and a Métis businessman, Chartrand also successfully bid on one of two rare portraits, a photograph showing Riel in his 50s.

The poems, along with a rare portrait of Riel, will join other artefacts—including Riel’s eyeglasses, his Métis sash and even his moustache (cut off by a jailer)—in the St. Boniface Historical Museum. Chartrand said, “I believe they belong to Manitobans.”

One day, the MMF hopes to make the poems the centrepiece in a Métis museum in Winnipeg.

The man who was hugging as a traitor has always been a hero to the Métis, and today, most Canadians recognize him as an heroic patriot, founder of Manitoba and a Father of Confederation.

Métis Dance Club jigs to the fiddle of Sierra Noble

Sierra Noble a talented world renowned Métis fiddle artist and an Aboriginal Music Award recipient performed brilliantly with her fiddle artist and an Aboriginal Music Awards recipient, Sierra Noble a talented world renowned Métis fiddle artist and an Aboriginal Music Awards recipient, Sierra Noble a talented world renowned Métis fiddle artist and an Aboriginal Music Awards recipient, Sierra Noble a talented world renowned Métis fiddle artist and an Aboriginal Music Awards recipient, Sierra Noble a talented world renowned Métis fiddle artist and an Aboriginal Music Awards recipient, Sierra Noble a talented world renowned Métis fiddle artist and an Aboriginal Music Awards recipient, Sierra Noble a talented world renowned Métis fiddle artist and an Aboriginal Music Awards recipient, Sierra Noble a talented world renowned Métis fiddle artist and an Aboriginal Music Awards recipient, Sierra Noble a talented world renowned Métis fiddle artist and an Aboriginal Music Awards recipient, Sierra 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On November 27, the MÉTIS VOYAGEUR was bestowed upon the Métis Artists’ Collective by Mayor David Miller of the City of Toronto in front of a crowd of several hundred people in the Toronto City Hall Council Chambers. Merrella Fernandez of CityTV hosted the presentation ceremony marking Human Rights Day and the 60th Anniversary of the UN Declaration of Human Rights. These awards honour individuals or groups for their ongoing efforts to make Toronto a city where everyone can participate fully in social, cultural, economic, recreational and political life. Several individual community leaders and groups received awards under categories for Race Relations, Diversity, Status of Women, and Pride.

The Aboriginal Affairs Award honours the volunteer contributions of those persons or organizations—whose efforts have made a significant or ongoing contribution towards improving the quality of life for the Aboriginal community in Toronto. These contributions include services or advocacy work on issues such as health, shelter work, street work, governance and self-determination, human rights or cultural activities. The Métis Artists’ Collective (MAC) was recognised for its efforts to nurture talent, and for promoting and embracing the bilingual and bicultural heritage of the Métis community and its contribution to Aboriginal arts.

“This was one of the proudest moments I have ever experienced,” said Bernard Leroux, President of MAC. “It was my profound honour to stand with my Métis brothers and sisters, as the applause of the audience raised up and engulfed our hearts. The fact that we have been recognised by the city amongst a group of several other distinguished community members makes this award an especially important one, one which we ALL can share and be proud of in raising the awareness of Métis culture in the City of Toronto and throughout the province.”

The Aboriginal Affairs Award, was also presented to Algonguan playwright Yvette Nolan for her outstanding efforts to eliminate hatred, racism and homophobia through theatre productions, as well as her ongoing support and encouragement for young Aboriginal artists.

ABOUT THE MÉTIS ARTISTS’ COLLECTIVE:

The Métis Artists’ Collective (MAC) is a non-profit group of 59 Aboriginal musicians, writers, filmmakers, dancers, and visual media artists who stage events in Toronto that have raised awareness of their culture and nurtured emerging talent along the way.

For over five years, MAC has presented the annual Métis Arts Festival, a celebration of Métis artistic talent and Aboriginal culture. The festival showcases traditional and contemporary Aboriginal art forms and initiatives, such as Métis fiddling and jigging, First Nation drumming, Inuit threat singing, genealogical and historical presentations, visual arts, new digital media, multimedia, film, television, and performance arts. It even offers youth an opportunity to learn about Aboriginal culture with a wide variety of kid-friendly games and activities held on Kids’ Day. MAC has spearheaded a number of initiatives:

- “Defining Aboriginal” - a contemporary arts exhibit exploring issues of Aboriginal identity, held at Toronto City Hall in celebration of National Aboriginal Day June 21, 2008.
- “Fiddle Stories” - a project that brought together renowned Aboriginal elder fiddlers from across Canada with talented young Aboriginal fiddlers, to pass on the traditional style of fiddling to the younger generation.
- “Memories Muse” - a group exhibit of multi-media work by members of the MAC which was presented at locations throughout Toronto in 2007/08.
- The Abstract Louis Riel - a 20-panel travelling cultural monument that depicts the flash points in the life of Louis Riel.

Driven entirely by the efforts of volunteers, the Métis Artists’ Collective has been working tirelessly to increase knowledge and awareness of Métis heritage and traditions. At the founding meeting in 2003, it was agreed that the inspiration for the Collective’s vision would be drawn from Louis Riel’s stirring prophecy: “My people will sleep for one hundred years. When they awaken, it will be the artists who give them back their spirit.”

A VOYAGEUR READER GIVES CANADA’S FIRST PRIME MINISTER A POSTHUMOUS EARFUL:

Dear John,

This letter, ostensibly addressed to Sir John A, was written in response to a survey conducted by the Dominion Institute indicating that two people in five did not know that Sir John A, Macdonald was the first prime minister of Canada.

Sir John, en grève

In case you don’t know it now, you were responsible for the murder of a man who was merely trying to protect his and others’ Aboriginal rights. Those rights were granted by Queen Victoria and mandated in her extant 1763 Royal Proclamation, of which all of you and your ilk chose to ignore. That good man’s life was in peril simply because he chose to defend this Aboriginal Northwest Territory (now Manitoba) from your encroachment and your need for a railway to satisfy what was to become British Columbia. The very least you could have done would have been to make a fair agreement—financially, socially and economically. The provisional government of the Métis leader could have been a helpful partner. But you were long dead before an apology could be made—as it eventually was made—by a better meaning and less “MEAN” Conservative government than that which you and a host of others like you chose to pay homage to. On Macdonald’s “Dominion” Day, July 1st 1867—a façade of railway magnates called, “The Fathers of... what was it? Oh, yes! “Con- federation”—not “Coalition”.

If you dig him up in Kingston’s Cataraqui Cemetery, you can take him home, costume and all, as a souvenir, otherwise, do hug his bronze effigy in Macdonald Park, Kingston, Ontario. That too will be quite a stone-cold item, just as he was, in his own misguided, greedy, power-hungry and ineptitudes. He helped to steal a continent, and of course he was never alone in doing so. He had help from the Spanish, the French, the English, and the other Europeans who came later.

A VOYAGEUR READER GIVES CANADA’S FIRST PRIME MINISTER A POSTHUMOUS EARFUL:
MÉTIS ARTIST/ENTREPRENEURS:

left to right: Andrew Edgerton; Susan Lecompte and Don Dupuis Jr.

Brother/sister team up to create kids’ books

By Susan Lecompte

Métis citizens, Susan Lecompte and Don Dupuis Jr. grew up in Hanmer, Ontario, in the Sudbury region, as sister and brother. Their parents, Don Sr. and Gertrude Dupuis still reside in Hanmer. Susan and Don are promoting the publication of their first child’s book, titled: “Donny’s 8-Day trip Around the World.” They have just completed sold-out venues in Ottawa, Kingston, Newmarket, and Sudbury.

Susan Lecompte currently resides in Hanmer. Susan and Don explain: “Our story revolves around our main character, eight-year old Donny, who encounters many cultures in his new surroundings after moving from the only home he has ever known. Our book teaches life lessons on how to cope with change, and the importance of the family dynamics to help this happen. The introduction of multicultural environments teaches acceptance and respect for the beliefs and lifestyles of people in our own neighbourhoods. Furthermore, this novel provides a means to sensitise children and parents alike to the diversity of cultures and awareness of cultural practices, traditions and languages that paint the fabric of our own social and political communities. We have dedicated our first book to the ‘Little Kid in All of Us!’ In the busy society of today, we forget three basic needs: Living, Loving and Laughing. Susan and Don have teamed up with illustrator Andrew Edgerton. Andrew was born and raised in Ottawa, Ontario. With a Masters in mechanical engineering, he started a small design and manufacturing company which he still runs. He multi-tasks work and illustrating with 19th and extreme sports.

In the second book of the series, Donny’s First Hat Trick, set to be released in December, 2008, the main character, Donny Jackman, is ready for the new hockey season. His new adventures introduce him to goal setting, hard work, teamwork, sportsmanship and achievement. His friends Santiago, Litsa (only girl on the hockey team) and Marie-Claire (figure skater) join him in this new novel where their escapades lead them to believing in themselves and never giving up.

These books are published with Bookwars Publishing, South Carolina, USA. You can order through amazon.com, alibris.com, abebooks.com, or by calling Trina Craine, publishing consultant toll free at 1-866-308-6345 ext 5142.

You can visit the authors on Facebook at the following sites: Groups - Donny’s 8-Day Trip Around the World, Donny’s First Hat Trick: Fan Page - Susan Lecompte and Don Dupuis Jr.

“IT WAS REALLY IMPRESSED WITH YOUR BOOK. IT IS BRIGHT AND INFORMATIVE, AND I THINK ALL CHILDREN WILL ENJOY READING AND LEARNING FROM IT.”

— Rita Butt, Author/Columnist, York Regional Newspaper

Donny’s 8-Day Trip Around the World

Donny’s First Hat Trick

IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA

In 1986 the National Gallery made its first purchase of a contemporary artwork from a First Nations’ artist—Carl Beam’s The North American Iceberg. This was the precursor for a new relationship with Indigenous Art, forged and fortified with an active program of exhibiting and collecting that extends to the tremendous importance of Indigenous art in Canada.

ABOUT THE CURATOR: Greg Hill is a Mohawk of the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory and is an avid hockey fan. Greg’s educational experience spans 12 years and he has worked both as an independent curator as well as with the Canadian Museum of Civilization. He joined the NGC in 2000. In collaboration with the gallery’s Deputy Director and Chief Curator, he is also responsible for the complete care of the collection of Indigenous Art. This includes First Nations, Métis and Inuit Art emphasizing contemporary art from the 1980s to the present day.

NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA

“Any Canadian reading the book, or learning about its content, will think of Canada differently.” – Haroon Sudduqa, Toronto Star

Saul calls Canada a “Métis civilization”

A FAIR COUNTRY. TELLING TRUTHS ABOUT CANADA by John Ralston Saul

www.penguincan.ca

In this startlingly original vision of Canada, John Ralston Saul unsettles three founding myths. Saul argues that the famous “peace, order and good government” that supposedly defines Canada is a distortion of the country’s true nature. Every single document before the BNA Act, he points out, used the phrase “peace, welfare, and good government,” demonstrating that the wellbeing of its citizens was just as important. He also argues that Canada is a Métis nation, heavily influenced and shaped by the assimilation of Metis egalitarianism, a proper balance between individual and group, and a penchant for negotiation over violence are all aboriginal values that Canada absorbed. Another obstacle to progress, Saul argues, is that Canada has an increasingly ineffective elite, a colonial non-intellectual business elite that doesn’t believe in Canada. It is critical that we recognise these aspects of the country in order to rethink its future. (www.johnralstona Saul.com)

A FAIR COUNTRY. TELLING TRUTHS ABOUT CANADA

The National Gallery of Canada is open Tuesday to Sunday 10 AM to 5PM. Thursdays until 8PM. Admission fees apply. Free admission to the NGC collection on Thursdays after 8PM, free admission for children under 12 and NGC Members.

HIGH-DEF INUIT STORYTELLING UNTIL SPRING 2009

These galleries present a selection of videos produced by Isuim ("thinking") productions and Arnait ("women’s") video productions. Based in Iqaluit, Nunavut, Isuim and the women’s collective, Arnait, are the first-ever independent Inuit video production companies.

INDIGENOUS ART COLLECTION ONGOING

The Indigenous art collection comprises works by Indigenous artists from Canada and around the world. Many works demonstrate ongoing links to ancestral visual traditions, as they engage in the social/political discourses that inform much of the art produced today.

BACK TO THE BEGINNING: Rethinking Abstraction from an Indigenous Perspective 23 OCT 2008 - 2 FEB 2009

Although Aboriginal symbolism in the work of non-Aboriginal modernist artists is well documented, the history of Aboriginal artists working in abstraction is less well known.

NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA

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Donna Lyons has previously held the position of Métis Health Human Resources Coordinator at the MNO. From there, she moved to serve as Executive Director at Odawa Native Friendship Centre. Donna is currently working on her Masters in Public Health degree and a diploma in Health Policy and Research from Lakehead University, and holds a degree in Business Administration (Major in Human Resources). She has been a Director on the Board of Directors of the National Aboriginal Health Organization, served six years as Director of the Aboriginal Recruitment Coordination Office, and worked as a Sustainable Economic Development Officer with Mississauga of the New Credit First Nation, and as an External Delivery Officer/Field Officer with Nishnawbe Aski Development Corporation. Since then, our department has held a number of events and workshops, including two propagation workshops; a problem gambling workshop; diabetes lunch and learn workshop; a harvest meal gathering; mental health focus circles; and a service provider gathering. I especially want to tell you about the “harvest meal gathering,” which was held at the Native Urban’s Apartment Complex. The menu consisted of moose meat, wild rice, corn soup and vegetables. The ten attendees who tried the gathering and certainly appreciated the moose meat, which was carefully prepared in onion and gravy. I thought a menu which included moose meat would be special to this group because many of them have not had a traditional meal for quite some time. This meal was certainly the topic of conversation around the dinner table, which led to a wonderful time of reminiscing. Sharing stories over dinner helped some people remember the days when they had family dinners with loved ones. It was when times seemed simpler and family made time to gather at supertime to share good conversation and laughter. This occasion was a perfect time to promote social interaction which is one of my goals as a Community Wellness Coordinator. With every event planned, the MNO Executive to help encourage one to enjoy the gathering. As one who promotes health and wellness, it is my passion to promote an active and healthy lifestyle. It is this balanced way that might help encourage one to have a zest for life. I especially want to impart strength and encouragement to our elders who have impacted all of us in some way, and have encouraged us to run with purpose and the vision of respect and self-care.

Sandra Morgan is the Community Wellness Coordinator in the MNO’s office in Hamilton, ON.

FOND FAREWELL:

Outgoing MNO Director of Health Bobbie Burns.

BOBBIE BURNS: “Energy, love of life and inspiration” will be missed

by Doug Wilson

It is with mixed emotions that the following announcement is present- ed. Effective December 8, 2008, Bobbie Burns has left the MNO. Since December 1, 2005, Bobbie Burns has been an integral member of our Health Branch team. From her first day as Primary Health Care Manager, Bobbie showed her commitment to the Branch and to the Nation. New initiatives were sought and implemented. The value of the Telehealth has been appreciated and its usefulness to all branches continues to grow. Bobbie has done a great job mentoring her staff, and has been a fine example of standards, ethics and dedi- cation. In May, 2008, when asked to assume the position of Director of Health, Bobbie willingly took on the task and her services have been of great value.

Bobbie has forged ahead for her services have been of great value.

Bobbie has forged ahead with her usual grace and vision of respect and self-care. Sandra Morgan is the Community Wellness Coordinator in the MNO’s office in Hamilton, ON.

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ABORIGINAL RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING | STRAIGHT FACTS

Meet the Notorious “One-armed Bandit”

By Glen Lipinski

One of our more popular forms of gambling these days is casino gambling, and one of the more popular choices of games to play while in the casino is the slot machine.

I am certain that a good number of Métis people like to play “the slots”, so I thought a few words on slot machines, what they are, where they came from and how they work would be appropriate.

A slot machine is a casino gambling machine with three or more reels which spin when a button is pushed. Slots are also known as “one-armed bandits” because slot machines were originally operated by a lever on the side of the machine (the ‘one arm’) instead of a button on the front panel, and because of their ability to allow the gambler pennies. Many modern machines still have a legacy lever in addition to the button.

Slot machines include a currency detector that validates the coin or money inserted to play. The machine pays off based on patterns of symbols visible on the front of the machine when it stops. Modern computer technology has resulted in many variations on the slot machine concept. Slot machines are the most popular gambling method in casinos and constitute about 70% of the average casino’s income. Unfortunately 30% of these profits come from problem gamblers.

In 1891 Sittman and Pitt of Brooklyn New York developed a gambling machine which was a precursor to the modern slot machine. The early machine contained five drums holding a total of 50 card faces and was based on poker. The machine provided extremely popular and soon many bars in the city had one or more of the machines. Players would insert a nickel and pull a lever, which would spin the drums and the card they held, the player would then hope for a good poker hand.

There was a direct gambling mechanism, so a pair of kings, for example, might get the player a free beer; whereas a royal flush could pay for cigars and drinks. To make the odds better for the house two cards were typically removed from the deck. The drums could also be re-arranged to further reduce a player’s chance of winning.

The machine that was termed “the first one-armed bandit” was invented in 1887 by Charles Fey of San Francisco, California. Fey’s design was a much simpler automatic mechanism than the poker machine designed by Sittman and Pitt. Fey’s machine had three spinning wheels containing a total of five symbols – horses, cherries, hearts and a liberty bell, which also gave the machine its name.

Another early machine gave out winnings in the form of fruit flavoured chewing gum with pictures of the flavours as symbols on the reels. The popular cherry and melon symbols were derived from this machine. The home famous “Money Honey” symbol was derived from an early logo of the Bell-Fruit Gum Company.

In 1964 Bally developed the first fully electromechanical slot machine called “Money Honey”. The new electromechanical approach allowed the Money Honey to be the first slot machine with a bottomless hopper and automatic pay-out, up to 500 coins could be paid out without the help of an attendant.

A person playing a slot machine places the right to play by inserting coins, cash, or in newer machines tickets or bar coded paper tickets. The machine then is activated by means of a lever or button or touch screen on its face. The game does not normally involve skill, it is strictly a game of chance.

The object of the game, when playing “slots” is to win money from the machine. The game usually involves matching symbols, either on mechanical reels that spin and stop to reveal one or several symbols, or on a video screen. The symbols are usually brightly coloured and easily recognizable, such as images of fruits, and simple shapes such as bells, diamonds, or hearts.

Most games have a variety of winning combinations of symbols, often posted on the face of the machine. If a player matches a combination according to the rules of the game, the slot machine pays the player cash or some other sort of value, such as extra games. Becoming more popular these days are the multi-line slots. These slots have more than one pay line. Reel slots commonly have three or five pay lines, while video slots have 5, 15, 25, or even 100 different pay lines. Video slots are themed slots, with graphics and music based on popular entertainers or TV programs like the “Addams Family”, “I Dream of Jeannie” or “The Munsters”. Most accept variable amounts of credit to play with one to five credits per line being typical. The higher the amount bet, the higher the pay-out will be.

One of the main differences between video slots and reel slots is in the way pay-outs are calculated. With reel slots, the only way to win the maximum jackpot is to play the maximum number of coins (usually three, sometimes four, or even five coins per spin). With video slots, the fixed pay-out values are multiplied by the number of coins per line that is being bet. In other words on a reel slot, it is to the player’s advantage to play with the maximum number of coins available.

Larger casinos offer slot machines with denominations from $0.01 (penny slots) all the way up to $100 or more per credit. Larger denomination slot machines are usually cordoned off from the rest of the casino into a “High Limit” area.

Remember, all slot machines are designed to make money for the house. The wheels on the slot machine spin randomly. The longer you play, the more likely it you will lose!

As always, gambling in any form can be fun and entertaining if done responsibly. Please remember the following points the next time you are at the casino playing slots.

• Only gamble with money you can afford to lose.
• Set a time limit.
• Don’t gamble if you are upset or depressed.
• Don’t gamble with borrowed money (including credit cards).

For assistance or more information on Responsible Gambling you can contact any one of your local MNO Health Branch Offices, the Addictions Wellness Coordinator in Welland or the MNO Ottawa Office at 1-800-265-4889 and ask for Health Services.

Glen Lipinski
Addictions Wellness Coordinator
20 Division St., Welland, ON
Tel: 905-714-9664
glenl@metisnation.org

MNO HEALTH BRANCH NEWS | TIMMINS

After a great year MNO-Timmmins looks forward to ‘09

By Timmins Health Staff

Hello to our Métis brothers and sisters! We have had a great year participating in both indoor and outdoor activities with our local citizens. All events were related to healthy choices and obviously enjoyed by all age groups who participated in good numbers.

Our walking program was the envy of other agencies as the number of steps achieved was well over 800,000 by the fall. (The winter mall walks have just begun in keeping up the momentum.)

The health team also enjoyed seeing all the happy faces at the Twin Lake Family Park where, of course, the water slides were the highlight of the day.

We ended the summer with a year end celebration with a Hawaiian theme.

At the time of this article a Christmas dinner has been planned for the Timmins family that includes games, arts and crafts and a dinner to celebrate our blessings during the past year.

We hope you all had a happy and safe holiday.

In the new year the Timmins Health Team has booked a hall on a weekly basis where programs and family events can be enjoyed by young and old.

For details to please call the Timmins office at 705-264-3939.

Timmins Health Branch Workers
Louise Cloutier, LTC
Jean McAllister, AHHC
Jackie Noble-Chom, AHWS
Richard Aubin, AHHC

ALOHA! Timmins Health workers and friends enjoyed a great luau this past summer.
Let me begin by apologising in advance to any like-minded people reading this. I am about to infect your mind with a terribly repeti- tive song. I’ve been listening to the radio today instead of my iPod (mistake number one) and this morning that song “The Look” by Roxette came on. I didn’t shut the radio off (mistake number two). Far be it from me to pass judgement on anyone’s musical talents; I don’t think it is necessarily a bad song, just an evilest repetitive one. It is now well past 2:00 PM and my head is still spinning with “…na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na… she’s got the look…”

In the first place, it is quite wrong that I should know this song so well, since never having voluntarily listened to it in my life. Second, why can’t I get it out of my head? Why? I went for a walk at lunch, scrolled through the Pod for a few minutes, but all I’ve got still is “The Look.” This gave me pause to wonder about how very vulnerable we human beings are to marketing and conditioning. If all of those na-na-na-na-na’s have been hid- ing dormant in my head waiting to be freed, I am curious about what else could be in there—and that’s a scary reckoning! OK, I’ll tell you what else is in there—Two All-Beef Patties, Special Sauce, Lettuce, Cheese, Pickles, Onions on a Sesame Seed Bun. And don’t for- get about those magically delici- ous Frosted Lucky Charms. Hav- ing spent most of my formative years watching cartoons, I am more than well acquainted with pretty much every single fast and food mascot out there. The worst part is that the songs and leprechauns honestly make me feel good about the products. I get a rush from being affiliated with those beloved memories. I like having a Big Mac for lunch. I like it so much that it’s not unheard of for me to have two or three per day. Can I claim the healthy choice that is, but come on—two-all-beef pat- ties, special sauce and such. Any time a rea- sonable thought tries to make an appearance all I need to tell myself is that “I Deserve A Fight” right now. After that the hamburgers are as good as eaten in the car before I get home. Would you be shocked to learn that my body mass index puts me on the unhealthy side of the scale? Nope. Me neither. No mat- ter what we may wish, there is no escaping the cause-effect relationships in life.

This, of course, got me thinking about the unavoidable impact of non-corporate marketing. For brevity’s sake perhaps we could agree that the essence of marketing usually involves messages that promote something. Whether or not other people’s intentions, behaviours and attitudes are entirely deliberate or are decidedly more sub- tle in their presentation, what they say and do have an undeniable influence upon our own decision making. Regardless of motive, we are subjected to a barrage of messages that promote something or other on a daily basis. I find this true in regards to my physical health, obviously, but it also resonates very strongly for me on a spiritual level. The essence of human spirit, as I have been taught, has much to do with our sense of purpose and identity, and of our level of connectedness with everything around us—whether it be to a higher power, the land, or other people. For many Métis people, the foundation of our spiritual selves is the feel- ing of being a part of our culture and our peo- ple, of being part of something special and distinct that has survived and grown through- out the years. Common history, beliefs and practices have facilitated a strong bond among Métis people. We are a part of each other’s heritage and future. Sadly, not every- one shares our pride of culture. Have you ever talked to someone about Métis heritage, only to have them throw a request for justification back at you? I have. It happens often. “You’re Métis? How? You don’t look Native.” “We require further docu- mentation to process your application for Aboriginal funding.” “Don’t you mean you’re just non-status?” “So you’re just an Indian wannabe?” “You’re only half-Métis at best.” Do any of these rings a bell for you? I do all comes down to the same key message, mar- keted to us repeatedly—“PROVE IT! Prove your culture is real and important. I don’t believe you.” I have come to believe that a recurrent and unique cultural challenge for us is the constant demand from others to prove that we are Métis, and to justify our right to assert our Aboriginal heritage. This is truly a spiritually devastating work of marketing that confronts our people. The behaviours we are subjected to are more or may not be intentional, but cer- tainly they are repetitive enough that the “prove it” attitude stays with us.

So what can we do? We need to seek out balance in all quadrants of our- selves. I think it comes back to making informed deci- sions based on our own val- ues. I think it comes down to modelling positive behaviours that will lead us and our fami- lies to where we want to be in our lives. Confidence in asserting our beliefs and asking questions is a necessity in all facets of life, most particularly when core beliefs may be challenged or threatened. Also, it never hurts to be aware of your limitations. As the old adage tells us: forewarned is forearmed. I’m not confident that I’ll never eat unhealthy food again, but I do feel that because I have given the matter of marketing and behavour some serious thought, I will more be able to make, and be proud of, healthier eating choices.

Actually, I plan to use a fight-fire-with-fire method. Tonight I’m going to download “The Look” onto my iPod to drown out the ham- burgers’ siren song. It may just be enough to tip the balance in favour of a salad when I’m feeling that reluctant need for Two All-Beef Patties. Maybe “na-na-na-na-na” will become my new anthem for healthy eating. I hope not, but who knows!

Jason Jamieson is the MNO’s Lead AHWS Coordinator. He works out of North Bay.

Truth is truth
Truth is truth

FROM PAGE 34

dren in the 60s experienced many abuses) that were all part of the assimilation process that was in existence. After I was placed into a foster home at the age of nine I became a Crown ward of the Province of Ontario through the CAS during the 60s. 
I was not literally "scooped" as the term may imply. I was a child in need of care as our parents were unable to care for us at that time due to many circumstances in our home.
When I initially arrived in the city and was placed in the first foster home, the social worker came the following day picked me up and took me shopping for new clothes. 
In the first few years I was literally wearing the clothes two times after that. The CAS gave me $15.00 a month to buy my clothes and necessities. The social worker brought me to the doctor to update immunization records that were required in the city, the dentist and then to the hairdresser. My hair was long enough to sit on when we walked into the salon, upon leaving my hair was cut to my ears. This was the beginning of my assimilation.
Assimilation is a brutal system. It began with the cutting of my hair, but it incorpo-
rated such things as religious conversion, sexual physical and emotional abuse, little to no contact with siblings and parents. At times I was registered in school under my foster parents names and could not even use my middle name. This was done because the foster parents and social workers believed this would keep me in long term home where I would grow up. How-
ever, I was moved again and my name would change. After I was moved from a foster home generally a new child moved in and they experienced the same treatment as I did--just like the child who was placed there before me received. In this way the foster care system and the res-
edential school system are similar. Adult children experienced the same things even though we were not confined to one place.

MY HAIR WAS LONG ENOUGH TO SIT ON WHEN WE WALKED INTO THE SALON, UPON LEAVING MY HAIR WAS CUT TO MY EARS. THIS WAS THE BEGINNING OF MY ASSIMILATION.

Although at the time I was not aware of it after seven and a half years I experienced a total identity loss.
I was a grandmother in 1994 when I began learning that my identity was stolen when I was a child. I heard about the Free-
dom of Information Act which allowed me to apply for my CAS records. At the time I had no idea who was doing it. I believed I could trust the CAS to give me my records. I had hoped could be answered in my records. Since I have very few photo-
graphs taken while I was growing up, I call my CAS records my photo album. When I received my records I totally forgot what I had hoped could be answered in my records. Since I have very few photo-
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edential school system are similar. Adult children experienced the same things even though we were not confined to one place.

As a result of my assimilation, I live to this day with the brutal system that I lived it understand it fully. When my jour-
ney back to my roots began, the MNO provided me $15.00 a month to help me with my genealogy so that I could reclaim my identity and verify my claims. To today I am very proud to be a Métis.

Many Métis children today in the CAS are living in similar circumstances to those that I lived. I concern me that this system continues to be a private institution. The federal and provincial governments both fund the CAS and yet our Ontario Ombudsman, André Marin’s, hands are tied and he cannot respond to the cries of help he receives from foster children who are in care today because private institu-
tions policies prevent him from collecting facts that could protect foster children. This discourages me. I hope someday our Ontario government recognizes that children should not be confined by private institu-
tions policies. This in our future will lead to another long awaited apology such as was given to our residential school survivors.

Ruth Robbins is a Métis citizen of the Grand River Community Métis Council.

The University of Ottawa, at the heart of Canada’s capital, is one of our country’s leading research universities. We are a cosmopolitan community of over 40,000 students, faculty and staff who live, work and study in both English and French. We are proud to be Canada’s research university.

Research Chair in Métis Studies

Selected by the Canadian Council of University Institutions to establish an endowed Chair in Métis Studies, the University of Ottawa is seeking a leading scholar who will position the Chair as a catalyst for the conduct and dissemination of innovative research on issues of particular relevance to the Métis people in Ontario. The position will select and support a candidate identified by the University of Ottawa, build upon the ongoing relationship with the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and enhance opportunities for dating.

The Chair holder will expand Métis Studies through teaching, research and graduate student supervision.

The successful candidate is expected to reach out to Métis community and to Canadians generally to incorporate a better understanding of Métis history, language and culture (oral and written) through fostering new research and development with a focus on the Métis people of Ontario.

Qualifications:

Applicants should possess a PhD, or equivalent, in any field and be recognized as outstanding scholars with involvement in Métis studies. Preferred candidates will be able to work collaboratively with Métis communities. It is an asset.

All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply. Letters of support from Métis and Canadian scholars will be given priority.

Applications are due by 23 March 2009 and should be in the form of a curriculum vitae, along with a three-page statement of interest to Professor Mori in absolvent@uottawa.ca.

Deadline: 23 March 2009

Our University is proud of its 100+ year tradition of bilingualism. Through its two language institutes, the University provides teaching to staff members and to their students in the second official language. At any time of day, professors and researchers come together to foster a bilingual, dynamic, current and professional methane which is integral to both official languages to the entire campus.

www.uottawa.ca

L’université d’Ottawa a fait des mouvements vers le francophone dès les premières années de son existence et de nombreux universités ont suivi. L’université d’Ottawa est une école d’enseignement supérieur francophone et anglophone. Elle a un rôle majeur dans l’enseignement supérieur francophone dans une société bilingue. L’université a évolué progressivement et de nombreux professeurs et chercheurs contribuent des perspectives bilingues dans leurs recherches linguistiques.
The PCMNO is SEEKING INPUT PRIOR TO MAKING A FINAL DECISION ABOUT THE TIMING, FORMAT AND LOCATION OF THE 2009 AGA

The Provisional Council of the Metis Nation of Ontario is still looking for input prior to making a final decision about the timing, format and location of the 2009 AGA. All ideas and suggestions are welcome, but you are asked to keep the following in mind:

• The event should take place after August 1, 2009, because that is the earliest that a signed audit will be available for review and approval by delegates;
• The event should last a minimum of four days including travel, and ideally will include a weekend (Saturday and Sunday);
• The venue should include indoor facilities suitable for the business portion of the gathering; indoor space for workshops and the tradeshow (so we are not at the mercy of the weather or noise from external sources), as well as an area large enough to accommodate the MNO tent for the cultural events, besides hotel rooms for those who do not wish to camp, the venue should be able to accommodate tents and RV’s.

While no final decision has been made, the input we have received so far suggests a four day event around the weekend of August 23 & 24, 2009. This will allow for a summer AGA (nice weather) after black fly season. The criteria set out above will allow the MNO to live up to its principles of demonstrating pride in a shared Metis identity while maintaining accountability to citizens and stakeholders by hosting a cost-effective event that reflects Metis traditional values. With both the caveats and practical considerations in mind, please forward your ideas and suggestions to Chelsey Quirk in Ottawa at 613-798-1409 ext. 104 or by e-mail to chelseyq@metis.org.

The PCMNO will make a final decision about the location, venue and agenda as soon as possible after considering all the input it receives.