NEW LEADERSHIP, NEW ENERGY, NEW DIRECTION:

PRESIDENT LIPIŃSKI

“...Stronger citizens, families and communities”, this one statement sums up President Lipinski’s focus for his term.
Welcome, Baby Brooke!

Katelin and Alex Peltier welcomed a beautiful baby girl into the world on June 12th, 2008 at 7:16am. Brooke weighed in at 7 lbs 15 oz.

A New Arrival

Cole Eldovic Goulding was born on February 6th, 2008. Cole weighed in at 6 lbs 12 oz. Cole’s proud parents are Shawn Goulding and Cathy LeBlanc, grandparents are Louis Goulding and Deborah LeBlanc and big brother is Aaron.

OBITUARIES

Brian J. Donahue

It is with great sadness that the family of Brian J. Donahue, shares the news of his passing on April 10, 2008, in Philadelphia, Pa. at the age of 52. He was the loving son of Jerry and Claudette Donahue of Nepean; dear brother of Brian J. Donahue (André), Jocelyne Birtch (Ron), Maxine and Myrtle Bressette of Port Severn.

Funeral services were held on November 29, 2007, in Fort Frances, ON at the age of 57. Jerry was the beloved husband of Doreen Belleire (née Stevens) and loved father of Jennifer Valley (Cliff), Jenny Conner (Jim) and Buck Belleire. He was to be lovingly remembered by his four grandchildren, Jonah and Sabrina Valley and Jack and Maddison Conner. He was dear brother of Réjean Pauvé (André), Jocelyne Birch (Ron), Pauline Daley (Reiné), Aurel, Paul (Pauline) and Réjean (Roméo), Richard (Chris), Ron (Christine), Don (Denise), Ernest (Dawn), Albert (Elouan) and Hector (anne-doréed), predeceased by his parents, Blanche (née Boyer) and Ernest Belleire. He will be remembered by his hunting buddies, Bill, Steve and Mario. Jerry was a plant service technician (Mons) for the Ministry of Natural Resources. He was an avid hunter, fisherman and outdoorsman that included prospecting in the Ministry of Natural Resources.

There was a four day sacred fire at Jerry’s home from March 29th with interment at the Dryden Cemetery. Donations were directed to the CT Scan and Cancer Care Manitoba and as requested below.

Mona “Mons” Kudryk

Mona “Mons” Beatrice Irene Kudryk, née Bressette, in her 87th year, recently passed away. Born in Washawshene, Ontario, she was the aunt of Harvey Horlock and the daughter of the late Maxine and Styrelle Bressette of Port Severn.

Funeral services were held on March 29th with interment at the Dryden Cemetery. Donations were directed to the CT Scan and Cancer Care Manitoba through the Moffat Funeral Home, P.O. Box 412, Dryden, ON.

Well done!

Karen Drake, a Métis Nation of Ontario citizen from Thunder Bay, recently completed her articles at a Toronto law firm and has accepted a clerkship at the Ontario Court of Appeal. Karen will soon become one of the Métis Nation’s next generation of lawyers. Congratulations!

Future youth leader of the Windsor/Essex Métis Council

By Marie Carew

Lynne Rhody and Dennis Knapp are proud to announce the birth of their son, fourth generation Métis, Andrew William Knapp. Andrew was born November 5, 2007, at Metropolitan Hospital, weighing in at 8lbs 2oz and 21” in length. He is welcomed into the family by proud great-grandparents, Bill and Charlene Rhody and aunt Wendy. Marie Carew is a Councillor on the Windsor/EssenK Métis Council.

Raymond Tucker

Sunset Country Métis is sad to announce the passing of Raymond Tucker on November 25th, 2007 in Thunder Bay, Ont. Raymond was born November 21st, 1935. He was an active Métis citizen and a well known commercial fisherman, logger and trapper in the Fort Frances area.

He leaves behind his beloved wife of 50 years, Carol, and his sons Blaine (Janice), Tim (Cathy) Ray Jr., and daughter Julie (Bick). He also leaves behind numerous grandchildren and great-grand-children and two sisters, Elise Taylor, and Loretta (Karl) Lipinski.

Funeral services were held on Nov. 29, 2007, in Fort Frances with Reverend Georgina Connor officiating. The pallbearers were Raymond’s children, grandchil- dren and friends Leonard Noon- nan and Don Easton.

Jerry Belleire


Belleire, Jerry (Gerald) passed away, suddenly at home, Thurs- day, March 20, 2008, at the age of 57. Jerry was the beloved hus- band of Doreen Belleire (née Stevens) and loved father of Jen- nifer Valley (Cliff), Jenny Conner (Jim) and Buck Belleire. He was to be lovingly remembered by his four grandchildren, Jonah and Sabrina Valley and Jack and Maddison Conner. He was dear brother of Réjean Pauvé (André), Jocelyne Birch (Ron), Pauline Daley (Reiné), Aurel, Paul (Pauline) and Réjean (Roméo), Richard (Chris), Ron (Christine), Don (Denise), Ernest (Dawn), Albert (Elouan) and Hector (anne-doréed), predeceased by his parents, Blanche (née Boyer) and Ernest Belleire. He will be remembered by his hunting buddies, Bill, Steve and Mario. Jerry was a plant service technician (Mons) for the Ministry of Natural Resources. He was an avid hunter, fisherman and outdoorsman that included prospecting in the Ministry of Natural Resources.

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Funeral services were held on March 29th with interment at the Dryden Cemetery. Donations were directed to the CT Scan and Cancer Care Manitoba through the Moffat Funeral Home, P.O. Box 412, Dryden, ON. Donations may be e-mailed to sympathyocard@shaw.ca (sub- ject, Ted).

CORRECTION

Please note that in the last issue on page 2, “Welcome Board”, an error occurred and is corrected below.

The MNO and the Métis Kudryk join the new North Shore Métis Council in welcoming their Secretary/Treasurer, Blair Sterling.
New Leadership, New Energy, New Direction:

In a bold and difficult decision, the newly elected Provincial Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO), unanimously endorsed the postponement of the Métis Nation of Ontario Annual General Assembly (MNO AGA) until the fall of 2008.

The decision, based on several important factors and developments, was made at the first meeting of the PCMNO, held via conference call. A leading factor in the decision was the desire of the new leadership of the MNO to increase the participation of the MNO’s Community Councils and all segments of the Métis Nation within the MNO’s overall governance structure and decision-making processes.

“My acceptance speech, I committed that the new leadership of the MNO was going to make it a priority to increase support to and empowerment of the MNO Chartered Community Councils. Based on this priority, since being elected, we have pursued discussions with governments to support bringing together our community councils, Senators, veterans, women’s council and youth to discuss important issues such as developing an MNO strategic plan, Ontario’s new Relationship Fund, and the Crown’s duty to consult and accommodate,” said Gary Lipinski, MNO President.

Lipinski added: “Our discussions with government have been successful. However, it is simply not possible to adequately prepare for such an important meeting and ensure funding is in place by July. It made logistical and fiscal sense to consolidate this meeting with the MNO AGA and hold them both in the fall of 2008.”

Franco Picotte, MNO Chair, stated: “Postponing the MNO AGA to the fall will also give the new leadership of the MNO the opportunity to begin to put into place its new agenda and better prepare for an effective and productive MNO AGA. The newly elected PCMNO will only be having its first face-to-face meeting at the end of May. We have a new senior management team in place. We are just starting to meet with ministers from both levels of government. Simply put, the MNO’s new team needs more than 60 days to prepare for the MNO AGA.”

Tim Pile, MNO Secretary-Treasurer added: “This decision is also fiscally prudent for the MNO. Historically, we have never received funding payments from government by July of each year, which creates severe cash flow challenges for the MNO in holding such a significant event in the summer, without first having received actual payments from funders.”

“Further, at all previous MNO AGAs, we have never been able to present audited financial statements to Métis citizens for the previous fiscal year because our annual audits cannot be completed by July because of the MNO’s excessive size of operations. With the MNO’s new leadership being committed to fiscal responsibility, transparency and accountability, we want to be in a position to present a clear picture of the MNO’s finances at the end of the 2007-08 fiscal year to our citizens at the next MNO AGA,” concluded Pile.

Gary Lipinski added: “I want MNO citizens to know, their new leadership did not make this decision lightly. We recognise that the MNO AGA in July is an important tradition and cultural event for MNO citizens, with many planning their summer vacations around this gathering. However, in considering the logistical, administrative and fiscal challenges holding the MNO AGA in July would create this year, we believe this new direction for this year is the right decision for the Métis nation. Further, as a part of the transparent, frank and two-way dialogue, I want to continue to reassure MNO citizens that we will consult with them over the next year on how they would like to proceed with respect to future MNO AGAs.”

Lipinski concluded: “The MNO’s new leadership is committed to a ‘new way of doing business’ in the MNO: increasing community participation, improved financial management and accountability, and fiscal prudence and responsibility are essential in building a stronger MNO.”

Outgoing Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President, Tony Belcourt, extends his sincere congratulations new Métis Nation of Ontario President Gary Lipinski.

Tony Belcourt congratulates new Métis Nation of Ontario President Gary Lipinski

MNO 2008 Provincial Elections:

Gary Lipinski, MNO Vice-Chair stated: “I fully endorse this decision and I am extremely encouraged that this decision will result in increasing the participation of Métis women, Métis youth, Senators, and veterans in the Métis nation’s governance structures. I believe we build a strong Métis nation by building an inclusive Métis nation.”

Métis flags fly at the MNO’s 2001 Annual General Assembly in Penetang, Ontario.
GOVERNMENT HAS “DUTY TO CONSULT” ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

By Chelsey Quirk

From the moment the doors opened, the registration table was busy as attendees arrived and settled in to take their seats for the first round of community consultations covering provincial issues. The meeting took place in the large auditorium at the Palladium in Sudbury. Many topics were discussed, including health, education, and community development. The meeting was open to the public and provided an opportunity for residents to have their voices heard on important issues.

When looking at consultation, Métis people do not want to halt industry and development, they just want to make sure that it moves forward in a way that is the least destructive to Métis people and their land. The meeting was well-attended, with people of all ages and backgrounds in attendance. The meeting was moderated by Senator Greenwood, who ensured that everyone had the chance to speak.

During the winter the North Bay Métis attended a powwow at Nipissing University where six drums were represented. Senator Marlene Green- wood, assisted by her nephew Rocky Ahes of the Credit River Métis, carried the flag for the Grand Entry. The flag was proudly displayed with the others for the rest of the day until that evening, when, after a final dance, the colours were trooped off. The event was well attended by the public.

The North Bay Métis Coun- cil has completed the work related to awarding bursaries and is pleased to report that there are seven student recipients at Canadore College and seven more in Sudbury.

Bancroft & Maynooth Offices Join Together

After all the plans were finalised, and weeks of prep work and packing, the Maynooth office has re-located to Bancroft.

Maynooth workers Judy Simpson (Long Term Care) and Robin Davy (Healthy Babies Healthy Children and Long Term Care) have joined the team in Bancroft consisting of Tammy Hoover (Healthy Babies Healthy Children), Amanda Cox (CAP-C) and Tracey Dale (Community Wellness Worker).

The Maynooth community can be assured that even though the staff has moved, you will still receive the same great service as always.

A big “thank-you” goes out to everyone who made this possible. We also wish to thank our volunteers who have supported this transition and wish you all the best in your new location.

CONTACT: 91 Chemaushgon Road Bancroft, ON
Tel: (613) 332-2575

NIAGARA REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL NEWS:

Council signs Charter

by A.T. Henry

The Niagara Region Métis Council ratified its new charter this spring. Special guest speaker, and now MNO President, Gary Lipinski said, “These meetings are extremely important because they bring the Métis community together and bring issues forward.”

During the two-hour meeting, Gary spoke with about 40 members of the former Welland Métis Council, which has become the “Niagara Regional Métis Council” in order to better recognise the 2,000 strong Métis community in the Niagara area.

The name change was made official by the signing of the new charter.

“Our meeting was excellent, couldn’t have been better,” said Stephen Quesnelle, a Welland resident and Senator for the new council Chair, Rick Paquette echoed the sentiment. “It is important to reconstruct and re-sign the charter recognizing the name change,” he said. In addition to the signing, the meeting focussed on the local Métis community’s relationship with the Ontario Government, which Paquette described as “strong”.

Senator Quesnelle stressed the fact that the newly chartered council was devoted to the entire Niagara region, not just one city. “We would like to keep you up to date with events happening with the council, and the Ménis Nation of Ontario. We can only do this if you have your current address and phone number or your e-mail address.”

If you would like to receive information on upcoming events, please call us at 905-714-9756 or e-mail us at niagarar- gionmetiscouncil@gmail.com and we will personally contact you. Remember, the council is here to help our citizens.”

Senator Stephen Quesnelle Niagara Region Métis Council 917 Chenaughon Rd. Welland On. L3B 3Z6 Tel: 905-714-9756 TF: 866-826-2116 quesnnles@sympatico.ca

Seeking Métis Arts/Crafts

This is an invitation to all craftsmen, craftswomen and artisans of all kinds, such as basket makers oross crafters, artists in any medium, such as photography, painting, and sculpting, as well as musicians, storytellers, and traditional hunters and gatherers. You are being called upon to include your name on a contact list for the Ottawa Regional Métis Council.

We want to give you the opportunity to have your works exhibited or sold, as well as the possibility of demonstrating and teaching your technique at local events.

If you are interested or you know of someone who fits the above list please contact:

Louise Vien
Traditional Arts Committee
Ottawa Regional Métis Council
Ph: 613-446-0148
medwheel@sympatico.ca
Once upon a time—no, this is no fairy tale, but rather a great truth I share with you today. I was introduced, first via email, to a man named Marcel Labelle, who wanted to meet our Interim Council members. When I emailed him back, little did I know, I would find a connection with a gentleman, who is himself on an amazing journey:

I knew I needed to meet with this man, it was actually rather compelling that I do so. After going back and forth, Mahigan (his Aboriginal name given to him by Elders, which means “wolf”) and I decided to get together.

We met at a Tim Hortons in Elmira, and there was an instant connection. When I told him that I was “different” from most people—meaning that I knew that there was so much more; I needed to learn about my heritage—Mahigan said, “you just gave me chills” Mahigan felt that he was “different” too. How do you explain to people the feelings you have that are compelling you to start your own journey? Well, talk to someone who has been in that same boat, and you will realise you have already begun.

Now, speaking of boats, I take you back in time to a conversation about canoes. Marcel was recently featured (January 5th) on Fox Out of Water on APTN. I had watched this show prior to meeting Marcel. The amount and type of work (600 hours!) that go into building one of Marcel’s birch bark canoes is incredible. Marcel has also been featured on Breakfast Television from the SkyDome. His canoes have been deemed “Aboriginal artwork.” It’s no wonder, a piece of Marcel goes into the building of each one of these amazing canoes. Oh, the journeys these canoes get to take! My mind wanders just thinking about it. Being one of approximately 20 people in Canada who crafts these traditional canoes is something to be tremendously proud of, and we are fortunate to have this artistic Métis in our area.

Marcel Labelle, a GRMC citizen comes from a long line of trappers in the Mattawa area. I shared the following conversation with him, which was so much more than just an experience.

Barbara: “Marcel, tell me more about your Aboriginal roots, and your canoes.”

Marcel: “My great grandfather was disenfranchised. In other words, he had to give up his Aboriginal rights in order to get an education. He and my great grandmother didn’t speak the Algonquin language, but that didn’t stop them from speaking the culture. It was this culture that became their new language. They continued to make canoes, and to trap. I too became a trapper, and followed in my family’s traditional language. When trapping was taken away from me due to the wearing [of] fur being unacceptable, I almost died, literally. It was my language, and it was taken from me.

“I became ill, and saw traditional doctors, who thought that perhaps there was something wrong with my heart. There was, but not in the medical sense; I was suffering from a broken heart. It was then that I set out on a journey, and received a spark to transfer my language skills when the right deer gave itself to me. That transfer of skills led me into the new language of traditional canoe building. It is how I continue in my cultural language.

“Over 400 years ago when my Aboriginal ancestors met with my European ancestors, the birch bark canoe was the means of transportation they shared. Neither of these two means of transportation have received this kind of attention in recent times. I am very proud of the attention that the birch bark canoe has received over recent years. This canoe is still being made, and serves as a wonderful means to transport our teachings.

“Today, we have more receptive people, who are interested in learning more about our Aboriginal roots. And the canoe remains to be one of the best means of cultural transportation. Going far beyond the traditional meaning of transportation, it is the way to transport our teachings.

“After 400 years of exchange, I figure that maybe the right time is right to start that voyage again.”

That brings me to the amazing offer we have received. In further sharing with Marcel about our GRMC, and how we are progressing in this area, I mentioned that I would soon need to commence our fund raising efforts in the area—the funds that are to be used in the commencement of bringing Métis programs to this area for our citizens.

His amazing offer was that Marcel is going to construct one of his birch bark canoes, and donate it to the GRMC to raffle off and raise funds for our area.

We are looking for a venue to construct this canoe; and we are looking for volunteers who would like to have a hand in the building of this canoe. It is sure to be an amazing learning experience for all. Please let us know if anyone has space available.

In closing, the GRMC wishes to thank Marcel Labelle for his incredible generosity. We are grateful to have such an esteemed Métis citizen in our area—-a citizen who is giving back to his community with his unique skills.

For more information about this generous offer, how you can be a part of this historic event contact the GRMC:

Tel: 519-648-5348
 e: ruthrobbins@metisnation.org

I have spent many hours working with him either at the council office or on the phone. Steve and I have also attended a Duty to Consult meeting in Midland and an Aboriginal health conference at Six Nations.

Steve was able to fit in nicely at both events and made many contacts. I also know that Steve has contributed his time and efforts to helping the Six staff in Welland. Steve has attended conferences and workshops with Glen Lipinski and Tammy Winkle. They have both told me many times when I have been in the office what a great help Steve has been.

Steve is the type of person who works hard, but is very modest and he will never blow his own horn. The area is very lucky to have someone like Steve. I’m quite sure that some of you have already figured this out from your dealings with him. I just wanted to confirm this as someone who works with him on a regular basis.

Steve Quesnelle is a very lucky to work hard, but it always feels like fun. I am proud to call Steve my friend.”

By Richard Paquette
Mary was born in Fort Frances, ON, which is located in north-western Ontario between Winnipeg and Thunder Bay, just south of Dryden and Kenora along the US border. She grew up 25 miles from town on Rainy Lake, on a commercial fishery. Mary was the daughter of a Métis fisherman and her family name is still associated with the fishery. As a young girl, Mary was taught about her Aboriginal family roots by her mother. Mary is the proud mother of two sons: Mitchell and Jordan, and the proud father of three grandchildren: Kristin 24, Kurtis 21, and Kaitlyn 20.

My hobbies include family genealogy, collecting, and French cultural events. In 2005, I was married to my husband, William. My children are Michael, William, and Shannon. My grandchildren are Connor, Jordan, and Kaitlyn. The goal of my life is to explore my Métis heritage and pass it on to future generations through the written word. I have always tried to keep the lines of communication open by providing the reports of events and discussions at PCMCNO meetings.
An Enthusiastic Team

Newly elected Provisional Council of the MNO holds inaugural meeting

On May 29th the newly elected Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) came together in Toronto for their inaugural meeting.

The meeting was a two-day orientation, training and team building session. Agenda items included: a presentation on the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), the Métis nation’s achievements over the last 15 years, and, a review of the MNO’s current operations. In addition, the meeting provided the PCMNO members with training on the Métis Nation Rules of Order, their roles and responsibilities, and, how to read and understand financial statements.

The session also provided the newly elected PCMNO an opportunity to meet with the MNO’s Directors, identify priorities for future MNO work, and network with fellow Métis leaders from across the province. Positive energy, plentiful discussion and fresh ideas surrounded the meeting and attendees.

“I am excited to have such an enthusiastic team who are ready to work together to move the Métis Nation’s agenda forward,” said Gary Lipinski, MNO President. “I believe this meeting was an important start to building a stronger, more focused, and more accountable MNO.”

The PCMNO also set the dates for the MNO’s Annual General Assembly (AGA) along with a special meeting of the presidents of the MNO’s Chartered Community Councils. The presidents’ meeting will be held on November 14th and 15th in Toronto. On November 16th, the MNO will hold its annual general meeting at Louis Riel at Queen’s Park. The AGA will be held November 17th and 18th in Toronto. (See page 5)

We leave this meeting united and committed to a ‘new way of doing business’ in the MNO.

—MNO President Gary Lipinski

effectively engaged and supported within our nation. We believe holding the special presidents’ meeting in advance of the AGA will allow more members from our councils to participate in the AGA,” said President Lipinski.

“France Picotte, MNO Chair, added: ‘We also look forward to holding what will likely be the largest Louis Riel memorial the MNO has ever held. It will truly be a historic event to have so many Métis citizens from throughout the province honour Riel in front of the Ontario Legislature.’”

The PCMNO also appointed new directors to both the Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission (MNOC) and the Métis Nation of Ontario Development Corporation (MNODC) in order to revitalise the cultural and economic development arms of the MNO. (See below)

“The MNOC, and MNODC, are two important governance institutions for the MNO. They are pivotal to the Métis nation’s aspirations of preserving and protecting Métis culture and history for generations to come, as well as building a strong economic base and self-sufficiency within the Métis nation. Appointing new boards to these bodies will revitalise the roles of the MNOC and the MNODC in the Métis nation,” said Tim Pile, MNO Secretary-Treasurer.

In his closing remarks, President Lipinski said, “It has been a great two days! The passion, commitment and call to all of the members of the PCMNO is truly impressive. By working together—hand in hand—with our citizens and community councils, I am confident that we will take the MNO to the next level, and that the next four years will be some of the most successful and productive years the Métis nation has ever had.

“We leave this meeting united and committed to a ‘new way of doing business’ in the MNO. Increasing the participation of our citizens and communities in the nation, strengthening our transparency, financial management, accountability and working together will be the key to our success,” concluded Lipinski.

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**The Motorola**

**The Motorola is a not-for-profit corporation that secured charity status in the fall of 2002.**

This nine-member Board of Directors manages the MNOC and is appointed to a two-year term by the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

**Mission:**

To preserve and promote Métis history, values, traditions and pride in Métis arts and culture.

**Board of Directors:**

- **President:** GARY LIPINSKI
- **Vice-President:** FRANCE PICOTTE
- **Secretary-Treasurer:** ROLAND ST. GERMAIN
- **Ex-Officio:** DOUG WILSON
- **Director:** BOB MCKAY
- **Director:** NATHALIE DURROCH
- **Director:** RICHARD SARRAZIN
- **Director:** CHARLIE FIFE
- **Director:** TIM PILE

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**The MNOC**

The MNOC is incorporated in the Province of Ontario as a “for profit” corporation. The Métis Nation of Ontario is the only shareholder in the MNODC.

The MNOC was created in order to pursue economic opportunities that will benefit all MNO citizens and is uniquely positioned to develop opportunities that reflect the MNO’s philosophy of environmentally sound projects.

The MNOC owns shares in Superior Thermowood, a private company that has built a prototype in Thunder Bay, for the non-chemical preservation of wood products.

**Board of Directors:**

- **President:** GARY LIPINSKI
- **Vice-President:** FRANCE PICOTTE
- **Secretary-Treasurer:** CAMERON BURGESS
- **Director:** GERRY BEDFORD

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**The MNODC**

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- **Director:** GERRY BEDFORD
perceptions
image consulting

Dress for Success on a Limited Budget

Sept. 24 & 25, (9am-5pm)
MNO Office, 355 Cranston Cres.
Midland, Ontario

Contact Scott Or Jo-Anne
507-1228

Learn how to dress for your next interview! Learn seasonal colour! Receive an interview outfit at no cost to you! Learn the importance of a first great impression!

SUMMER MENTORSHIPS

Program gives high schoolers a glimpse of world of post-secondary education

The Summer Mentorship Program (SMP) is geared towards senior high school students from underrepresented groups. Each applicant applies to a single area of interest. Students must be at least 16 years old and returning to high school next year. SMP is a small program, held in Toronto every summer. This year it will run for four weeks. It provides students with a chance to explore the University of Toronto and career options including medicine, law, social work, education, commerce, health professions, environmental studies, science technology, engineering and math.

Not only do students get to explore university and professional career options, they earn high school credit towards their OSSD, and they come into contact with mentors, and obtain hands-on experience through lectures and workshops.

There is NO TUTION cost for students to participate. However, there are costs associated with accommodations, meals and transportation for students who do not live in Toronto. First Nations House works to support all Aboriginal students interested in the program.

The official deadline has passed; late applications may still be considered. Visit: www.students.utoronto.ca/Summer_Mentorship_Program.htm or call Rochelle Allen at 416-946-3570 or toll free at 1-800-810-8069.

The Métis Nation of Ontario is pleased to announce that Leslie Kriger has accepted the position of Regional Employment and Training Coordinator at our office in Thunder Bay, commencing June 4, 2008. Leslie will be a definite asset to the Education and Training Branch. She has been working with the Métis Nation of Ontario in Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) in Thunder Bay and brings with her excellent communication and organizational skills.

Leslie shared with us: “As a coordinator for CAPC, my experiences working with families and children have exposed me to new and challenging situations. My work experiences have been very rewarding, and have offered a great deal of awareness about the development of children and the diversity of families. With all this experience, I have felt the need to utilize the knowledge and skills that I have acquired while working with families in various situations.”

Leslie has achieved her Early Childhood Education diploma from Confederation College, Bachelor of Education, Bachelor of Arts with focus on psychology, and is currently working on her Master’s of Education at Lakehead University.

CAMPAIN TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT SIGNS OF WOMEN ABUSE

Learning the signs

by Donna S. Jules

S

aid Ste. Marie was recently chosen as one of only 10 communities across the province to receive training in how to present this information to groups throughout the District of Algoma. This free training took place on June 17 & 18.

Kanawayhitowin, a Cree word meaning taking care of each other’s spirit, is an Aboriginal campaign designed to raise awareness about the signs of women abuse in our communities so that people who are close to at-risk women or abusive men can support provide. This campaign has been adapted from the Neighbours, Friends and Family approach to reflect a traditional and cultural approach to community healing and wellness.

Everyone in the community has a role to play in helping to prevent woman abuse. Kanawayhitowin uses the medicine wheel to help understand the issue of woman abuse and to support an holistic framework of healing to address the serious issue at a community level. You can LEARN THE SIGNS and TAKE THEM SERIOUSLY. Visit the Kanawayhitowin website at www.kanawayhit owin.ca to understand woman abuse from an historical per-
WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

SEPT. 26-27, 2008

CONNECTING & INSPIRING WOMEN

(Sault Ste. Marie) As women around the globe gathered to celebrate International Women’s Day on March 8th, Jody Rebek-DiCerbo invited last year’s participants to pre-register for the 2008 Women’s Leadership Conference: Elevate Success.

“Both the Women’s Leadership Conference (WLC) and International Women’s Day have similar goals—to connect women, and inspire them to achieve their full potential,” commented Rebek-DiCerbo about the synchronicity between the events. “It’s only fitting to announce the Women’s Leadership Conference.”

Managing Director, Rebek-DiCerbo, and the WLC conference organizing team, have already begun recruiting speakers, sponsors, and volunteers, who preview another “life-changing” innovative conference, this year at Searchmont Resort, on September 26-27, 2008.

The 2008 Women’s Leadership Conference will continue to focus on women’s leadership in the workforce, in homes, and in the community. Offering a similar format to previous events with integrated features: Rebek-DiCerbo is focusing an agenda with a “Blend of activities for the mind, body, and spirit—to get to know yourself better as a leader, learn new skills and connect with other powerful women.”

Registration officially begins May 7th and this year’s conference will be capped at 65 participants. For more information, registration, or sponsorship opportunities, contact Jody Rebek-DiCerbo by email at info@elevatesuccess.com.

Last year’s event web site is still available at www.elevatesuccess.com and will be updated shortly.

ATTENTION METIS BUSINESS OWNERS

If you are Metis and own a business in Ontario, we are looking for your assistance in creating a Metis business directory. Send your contact information and a brief description of products/services to:

Natasha Lefebvre
Economic Development
347 Spruce St. South, Timmins, ON
Tel. 705-264-3939 or 1-888-497-3339 (toll free)
E: natala@timminsregion.on.ca
Niagara Métis hold harvest celebration on an unconventional date

THE SPRING HARVEST?

by Stephen Quesnelle

As you are aware, the Harvesting Dinner is normally held in the fall, but this past fall the Niagara Region Métis Council was in the process of re-organising and forming the new council, so we held ours in the spring.

Tammy Wintle and Rebecca Vander Sanden of the council arranged the dinner and invited the new council to join in and help with the celebration. Glen Lipinski, the MPP, Deputy Mayor of Welland, had a table set up with books and brochures on gambling addictions to distribute to those interested, all of which were well received.

Our feast consisted of deer, moose and beef pies, roast moose, venison, goose stew, wild rice, turkey, bannock and many other dishes brought in by our Métis citizens. There were 50 plus in attendance along with Peter Kormos our MPP, Deputy Mayor of Welland, Mark Dragan and his lovely wife, and Welland Councilor Sandy O’Dee. Our very special guests were two sisters believed to be the oldest Métis citizens in the Niagara Region, Rachel, 93 years young and Marie, who turned 90 on April 5th.

We are looking forward to celebrating the Harvesting Dinner this fall with greater numbers of the Niagara Region Métis citizens in attendance.

Thanks Tammy and Becky and everyone who helped to make this a wonderful event.

BY LEORA WILSON

The Grey-Owen Sound Métis Council (GOSMC) has been asked by the Bluewater District Board of Education to send representatives to sit on the Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee. The mandate for this advisory committee is to expand the awareness of effective programs for the educational needs of Aboriginal students. President, Malcolm Dixon, and Senator Leora Wilson represented the GOSMC at the first meeting in December. There were also representatives from Saugeen Métis Council, Saugeen First Nation, Cape Croker First Nation, as well as M’Wiwedong Native Cultural Resource Centre and various principals, teachers and trustees from area schools and school boards. This 25 member committee hopes to include an Aboriginal student in its discussions. The first meeting was mainly introductory. The Métis representatives are actively lobbying for more local Métis history to be taught in the school system. We will keep you abreast of the progress of this newly formed committee.

YOUTH MURAL PROJECT by Rebekah Wilson

The Grey-Owen Sound Métis Council have been invited to participate in a project run by the United Way to involve youth in the creation of storytelling murals. The project, funded by an Ontario Arts Council grant, has offered up two storeys of wall space to be painted by youth during the summer months.

The six to eight week project will involve approximately eight youths who will be paid for their work. Beginning in June, participants will be instructed by poets, artists, musicians and dramatists to create a depiction of an inspirational story on the walls, and also to dramatise their ideas through songs and plays.

Should the project end earlier than expected, participants will complete a first aid training course and be offered a chance to participate in other projects such as Aboriginal Day, pow-wows, etc.

Any youths interested in participating in this creative project can contact Diane at the council office for more information.

CONTACTS:

Jeff Wilson
Ph: 519-925-9160
jeffw@bmts.com

Leora Wilson
Ph: 519-986-2746
leoraw@bmts.com

Diane Owen
Ph: 519-370-0435
diane@metisnation.org

GREY-OWEN SOUND MÉTIS COUNCIL UPDATE: PICNIC, MURAL PROJECT

Shortage of labour worsens in Ontario: Government needs to fix training rules says CFIB

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) is renewing its call for the Ontario government to overhaul its apprenticeship programs in light of new research showing record levels of concern over the shortage of qualified labour.

CFIB’s latest Help Wanted report showed that the national long-term vacancy rate rose by 4.4% in 2007 from 3.6% the previous year, meaning 309,000 jobs were unfilled.

Ontario’s rate jumped to 3.5% from 2.6%. Long-term vacancies (four months or more) increased in every sector in Ontario, with the greatest need being seen in construction, hospitality and primary industries.

The problem is greatest for smaller businesses. “The shortage of labour is a complex issue, but one part of the solution is getting people trained to meet the needs of the marketplace,” CFIB’s Ontario Director, Sadinder Chera, said. “Business owners and young people tell us the rigid journey-person/apprentice ratios fixed by the government limit or prevent companies from taking on apprentices.”

Ontario’s regulations require employers in certain trades to employ a number of journey-persons before they can qualify to train apprentices. The ratio can be as high as seven journey-persons to one apprentice. CFIB’s research shows close to a third of Ontario small businesses find these ratios a major obstacle to apprenticeship training, which makes it even harder to address shortage of labour challenges.

“Other provinces are moving ahead of Ontario in addressing the shortage of qualified labour,” Chera said. “It’s time for this province to step up to the plate and help young people get the training they need for the jobs that are going unfilled.”

Help Wanted is available online at www.cfib.ca

CONTACT: Judy Langford or Giselle Lamonde at 416-222-8022.

CFIB is Canada’s largest association of small and medium-sized businesses, including 42,000 in Ontario. It is the leading advocate for the development of good public policy at the federal, provincial and municipal levels. CFIB represents more than 105,000 business owners, who collectively employ 1.25 million Canadians and account for $75 billion in GDP.
Hydro One Networks Inc. (Hydro One) is proposing to construct a 180 kilometre double-circuit 500 kilovolt electricity transmission line adjacent to the existing transmission corridor, extending from the Bruce Power Facility in Kincardine to Hydro One’s Milton Switching Station in the Town of Milton. (See accompanying map.)

Currently, Hydro One is seeking approval from the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) for the project. In order to receive approval from the OEB, Hydro One must establish the need for the project. As well, an Environmental Assessment (EA) will be conducted on the project based on terms of reference that have been approved by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment.

An EA reviews the environmental effects of the project on health and socio-economic conditions, archaeology, wildlife, ecosystems, etc. As a part of the EA process, the impact of the project on Aboriginal land use, way of life and traditional knowledge, are also reviewed. Métis Nation of Ontario citizens who are interested in more information on the project, can visit www.hydroonenetworks.com/brucetomilton.

This web site contains information, updates and documents on both the OEB and EA processes. As part of both the OEB and EA processes, the Crown is obligated to ensure that appropriate consultation and accommodation occurs with the potentially affected Aboriginal peoples. As can be seen in the map, the proposed project passes through the Georgian Bay traditional Métis harvesting territory, which has been recognized and accommodated by the Ontario Government as a part of the MNO’s harvesting agreement with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

To ensure that Métis rights, interests and claims are being considered and respected, the MNO is also participating as an intervenor in the OEB’s review of Hydro One’s application and intends to participate in the EA process to ensure that these same interests are recognized and respected.

As new information about the project and the MNO’s work becomes available, the MNO will ensure affected MNO citizens and chartered community councils are made aware. In the meantime, if you would like additional information about the project or if you would like the MNO to be made aware of, or address specific issues or concerns related to the project, please contact:

Hank Rowlinson
Senior Policy Advisor
Community Development
Toll Free Ph: 1-800-263-4889
Fax: 613-725-4225
hankr@metisnation.org

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The Duty to Consult in Action

MNO consults citizens on proposed Bruce to Milton Reinforcement Corridor

Route of transmission corridor from Bruce Power Complex to Town of Milton
Throughout the week-end of April 17th-18th, our Creator spoke down on the Oshawa Métis Council’s newly formed Olivine Bousquet Dancers as they learned traditional Métis dances. Multi-jig contest winner and jig instructor Yvonne Chartrand of Vancouver guided the more than sixteen dancers aged 6 to 58 through the steps and patterns of the Red River Jig, the Seven Step, the Heel Toe Polka, the Reel of Four, the Reel of Eight, and many more. The event could not have run more smoothly. Our setting was the serene grounds of Boy Scouts of Canada’s Camp Samac of Oshawa. While the warm spring breeze drifted in from the open doors to the large high ceilinged room of the main log cabin, no one could stop smiling as Yvonne had us stepping ever higher and ever faster. Our breaks were energising as we were able to walk to a dam close by to watch the trout jump the little waterfall created by the dam’s spill water, then head upstream to spawn, or we could just lean over the railing of the balcony to watch the scene, or sit on the steps to talk and soak up the sun’s warmth. Some of us even eased away the pains in our feet and legs by walking in the warm mud and ice cold waters of the stream. It was nature’s reward for the efforts and concentration we all put into our immersion into the Métis culture.

The fiddle music and dancing was only the beginning of our absorption of our Métis heritage. Yvonne showed us her traditional costume including the beaded velvet cummerbund and leg sashings. Through a series of posters depicting Métis dress and bead work, as well as throughout her instructions and talks, Yvonne was able to convey to us, and even transfer to us, her pride in being Métis. We learned to respect our space and each other through our daily smudging, and opening and closing circles.

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It was an honour to have Yvonne’s mentor and friend, Maria Campbell, attend our first session. “Trapper Bob” Stevenson dropped in on several of our dance sessions then gave us his “Métis in the Schools” presentation complete with funs, hides, and birch bark moose call. Even the adults were impressed and happy to have learned more about their Métis heritage.

It was exciting, on our last day, to hold our first jigging contest and to present our dances to our friends, family, and the Oshawa Métis Council. Many thanks go to Robert Pilon, Oshawa Métis Council President, who envisioned bringing the culture back to the people and who has worked for several years in order to get a traditional Métis dance instructor of Yvonne Chartrand’s calibre to come to our community to teach our young people. We are now ready to carry on the tradition.

Our first public presentation was at the Oshawa Métis Council’s Second Annual Métis Heritage Celebration, June 28 and 29, 2008, at Memorial Park, Oshawa. Please check out our web site: www.oshawametiscouncil.pzin.com.

Read more about this initiative on page 14.
FUND RESPONDS TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF IPPERWASH INQUIRY REPORT:

Improving Relations Between Crown and Métis Nation

MNO President Lipinski Joins Minister of Aboriginal Affairs to Announce ‘New Relationship Fund’

On May 15th, 2008, Gary Lipinski, the newly elected President of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) joined the Honourable Michael Bryant, Ontario’s Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, and Ontario Regional Chief, Angus Toulouse, at Queen’s Park to announce the creation of a new “Relationship Fund.”

The announcement of the Fund responds to one of the key recommendations from the Ipperwash Inquiry Report, which stressed the need for the Ontario Government to strengthen its relationship with First Nations and the Métis people in the province. As well, the Fund will focus on strengthening the capacity of First Nation and Métis communities to fully participate and benefit from Ontario’s economy through meaningful consultation and participation in land, resources and development initiatives throughout the province.

MNO President Lipinski said: “The Métis Nation looks forward to this Fund being used to build and enhance the capacity of the Métis Nation of Ontario and our communities in order to more effectively engage and work with the Ontario Government and industry. By working together, we can create a stronger and more prosperous Ontario, which benefits the Métis people and all Ontarians.”

President Lipinski also highlighted the significance of the Fund for MNO Chartered Community Councils. “The MNO’s new leadership has made increasing support to and enhancing the capacity of the MNO’s Chartered Community Councils a priority. As a part of our ongoing discussions with the Ontario Government we have stressed the need for the Fund to have a Métis-specific allocation and to be community-based in order to ensure our communities can more effectively engage with government and industry on important land, resources and development initiatives that have the potential to affect Métis rights, interests and way of life.”

“I am pleased to see that today’s announcement reflects the MNO’s priorities. I am also pleased to see that the Fund’s consultation and accommodation focus will only be accessible to rights-bearing Aboriginal communities, namely, First Nations and Métis communities. This will ensure that the democratic and legitimate representatives of the Aboriginal peoples in Ontario will benefit from the Fund’s investment toward meaningful consultation.”

Over the next few months, the MNO and the Ontario Government will continue to meet at the political and technical levels to finalize the terms of the Fund. As well, the MNO will continue to consult Métis citizens on the terms of the Fund and will be holding a special meeting to discuss the Fund in the fall of 2008, which will bring together representatives from all of the MNO Chartered Community Councils as well as Senators, Métis Women, Veterans and Métis Youth. This special meeting will be held in conjunction with the MNO Annual General Assembly, which was recently postponed until the fall of 2008.

France Picotte, MNO Chair, added: “The second purpose of the Fund to enhance Aboriginal skills development and business partnerships will also benefit our citizens, Métis businesses and our communities. A priority for the MNO will be to increase the number of Métis students pursuing careers in the energy and mining sectors in Ontario as well as ensure Métis businesses and communities fully benefit from growing sectors in Ontario’s economy.”

President Lipinski concluded: “Today’s announcement only strengthens the extremely positive relationship that continues to grow between the MNO and the McGuinty government, through the hard work and efforts of Minister Bryant. The Fund builds on the MNO’s ongoing work on the Crown’s duty to consult and accommodate Métis rights as well as the recently announced negotiations between the MNO and Ontario Government on arriving at an Ontario-Métis Nation Framework. On behalf of the Métis Nation, I am proud to be a part of today’s announcement.”
The members of our council have always supported various cultural activities, and we've come a long way in the last couple years in terms of building a better understanding and pride in our history and heritage. One of the things missing—and something that I've always felt personally was very important—was teaching the traditional Métis dances to our young people. This is something you see with so many other ethnic groups, and with the fantastic dances that we have within our own culture it was long overdue that we put the wheels in motion to bring this to life.

To get to where we started I found an amazing Métis dance teacher, Yvonne Chartrand. The Oshawa Métis Council contracted to come out to the Durham region and spend four concentrated days teaching interested people Métis dances. We had seen her in action with a group of young people out west and the results were incredible! From jigging to the seven step to the Loyalist; the XY and Native trading companies; the Sioux Trading Company; the Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers.

The Métis people. The Métis are being used to pay for the teaching, travel expenses, the facilities, etc. It's a small price to pay to get a dance troupe going to represent our culture and the Oshawa council.

The thanks you will receive will be on the faces of the young people who are reconnected with their heritage and gain a sense of pride and accomplishment as they watch and learn the dance steps of their ancestors. Donors will also be recognised on the new Oshawa Métis Council website. I strongly encourage you to join in supporting this very exciting venture. It's an important way to continue to build a growing appreciation of our culture within our community, in particular with the younger generation. For a donation of $100 you can help to make a real difference. Simply send a cheque payable to the Oshawa Métis Council to the address below.

If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to email or call me. Thank you very much for your consideration.

CONTACT
Oshawa Métis Council
Ph: 905-725-1635
1288 Ritson Rd. North, Ste 138
Oshawa, ON L1G 8B2
http://www.oshawamétis.on.ca/photos.com

The Oshawa Métis Council would like to thank the following donors:

Janet & Roger Hutman
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Diane Vozra
Carole & Keith Ainsworth
Treena & Ron Harris
Linda & Joe Harrington
Sharon & Robert McDonald
Pat Morgan & Gregory Suria

The Métis People of Ontario have come a long way since the founding meeting, our growth is staggering and our sense of community and nationalism is well entrenched. It is my belief that the MNO would not be in such a position today if it had not been for Tony’s leadership. There is no question that Tony put us on the map of Canada and for this we owe him our heart felt thanks.

As an Aboriginal people, our people pre-date our sisters and brothers of the Red River. We are of a slightly different cloth, but we are all Métis. Tony has always maintained that our nation spans the area from Cornwall in the south-east to Kesora in the north-west. We are a mixture of those with ties to the Red River and those with ties to Fort Detroit (the Great Lakes) and through along the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers. Our citizens had ancestors with the Nipissing Trading Company; the North West Company; the XY Company; and the Hudson’s Bay Company, or amongst the free traders. We may be a mixture of First Nations and Europeans, but we are 100% Métis. Being 100% Métis does not mean we all see or think the same way, does not mean we all follow the same spiritual paths, does not mean that we all look or act the same. However, one vital part of who we are is that we all self-identify as Métis. We see ourselves as “a people”, a nation within Canada, proud of our heritage and our ancestors, who contribute so much to our communities and to Canada.

We have a history; a past, we are firmly established in the present, and we have a future—a great one. I know that our new leadership will ensure that future and I am so pleased that we have such able people as Gary, France, Tim and Sharon to lead our nation forward. I have already announced that I will be seeking another term as Executive Senator. This election will be held at the AGA. I want to take this opportunity to wish Tony Belcourt the best of luck in his future endeavours, the best of health, and joy in the knowledge that he contributed so much to our people, our nation and our future.

Barbaranne Wright and her horse Jazzbeau.

To know who we come from, is to know who we are
by Barbaranne Wright

Méthist YOUTH NEED YOUR HELP TO KEEP MÉTIS DANCE GROUP JIGGING:

The end of an era

Petition

You Think You Can Jig?

Tansi! I would like to tell you about a new project that the Oshawa Métis Council is undertaking and, at the same time, offer you the opportunity to participate in this very exciting initiative. — by Rob Pilon

The Oshawa Métis Council would like to thank the following donors:


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encountering alcohol or drug use with your teenager. The following stress or depression are some of the reasons why you may be any one of a variety of causes. Experimentation, peer pressure, or brain damage. Many illegal drugs are made in home labs, so they can vary greatly in strength. These drugs also may contain bacteria, dangerous chemicals, and other unsafe substances. What are the signs of substance abuse? • Red eyes and health complaints, such as being overly tired if your teen often uses over-the-counter eye drops, he or she may be trying to cover up red eyes caused by smoking marijuana.). • Less interest in school, a drop in grades, and skipping classes or school altogether. • Friends who have new friends with little interest in their families or school activities. • Chemical-soaked rags or papers can mean that your teen is inhaling vapours, called “huffing.” Another sign of using inhalants is paint or other stains on your teen’s clothing, hands, or face. A huffing technique at raves involves balloons and little silver canisters. Keep an eye out for these when doing the laundry. What should you do if you find out that your teen is abusing substances? If your teen is using alcohol, tobacco, or drugs, take it seriously. One of the most important things you can do is to talk openly with your teen about the problem. Encourage him or her to do the same. Try not to use harsh, judgmental words. Be supportive as you can during this time. In most cases, a heartfelt, angry face-to-face meeting pushes your teen away from the family and puts up walls that can be difficult to get through. The type of treatment your teen needs depends on the level of substance abuse. For example, if a teen has tried drugs or alcohol only a few times, talking openly may be all that you need to do to help your teen stop. However, if your teen is addicted to a drug or alcohol, he or she may need to have a structured treatment program, which could be either in-patient or out-patient. If the issue is really serious or you are uncertain of what to do, contact the MNO Health Branch and a worker can help connect you to the resources in your area and there are none they will look at what resources we can get via the Tele-medicine Program. If your teen is using a substance abuse called “reality,” it is common after treatment. It is not a failure on the part of your teen or the treatment program. Recovery from addiction.
Is a Big Fat Diet the key to diabetes?

PLEASE NOTE: The research in this study is still being evaluated.

Anytime taking medication for diabetes or high blood pressure should consult their doctor before starting a low-carb diet.

By Linda Lord

The Aboriginal diabetes epidemic is the biggest, most serious health issue that confronts Aboriginal communities across the whole country," says Dr. Jay Wortman.

Before 1945, diabetes was almost unknown among Canada’s native population. About that time people who had lived on a low-carbohydrate diet of caribou, seal, fish, shell fish and berries switched to refined carbohydrates. Obesity and type 2 diabetes are endemic among native people. Why do Aboriginal people have three to five times the rate of the general population? Are native children developing a disease that normally hits adults?

Wortman says: "In evolutionary terms, it’s a blink of an eye... and in that very small period of time, there’s no possible way their physiology could evolve to cope with such a big change in something like diet."

"I’m Métis from northern Alberta, and both my grandpa and grandma are diabetics. My mother has diabetes. Some of her siblings have diabetes, and about 14 months ago, I realised that I had diabetes," he says.

"Because I have a knowledge of diabetes...I basically right away eliminated carbohydrates from my diet...In four weeks, I lost 18 pounds. My blood sugars normalised, my blood pressure became normal, and I felt much better," Wortman says. "I don’t know if you’re ever not diabetic, but I think for me, I’ve been able to appreciate the effects of diabetes through diet."

Wortman says nutritionists don’t like his advocacy of what is very close to the Atkins Diet, so he and some colleagues are designing a study. They want to put a First Nations community on a traditional diet and check the results. Personally, he has no doubts. Aboriginal people are designed to eat the way their ancestors did.

The study diet is based on a traditional diet of such foods as wild salmon and oolichan grease, but also includes modern market foods—even bacon and eggs—and foods that have protein and fat but no starch or sugar. Pasta, rice, potatoes, bread and sugar are not permitted. For more information visit: www.drljaywortman.com

Dr. Jay Wortman is a Métis physician from northern Alberta. After working in construction for ten years he returned to school to obtain a BSc in Biology and Chemistry at the University of Alberta, an MD from the University of Calgary and Family Medicine training at the University of British Columbia. After working in general practice he shifted to public health where he became the Assistant Director of Sexually Transmitted Disease at the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control.

MÉTIS VOYAGEUR
An understanding of labour market

Although requests are made throughout the

DIABETES AND DIET, SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND THE TEENAGER

Reading the Signs of Substance Abuse

By Ernest Matton

Addiction Behavioural Specialist

How many times have you heard stories about youth and substance use or abuse, maladaptive behaviour, and trouble with parents? How many times have you heard friends, family or neighbours say, “not my kids”? Let me give you a scenario.

As parents, you are paralysed by the thought of your kids? Let me give you a scenario. You remember when your 16 year old finally arrives, you recognise the red-rimmed eyes and the odor of alcohol and marijuana. You have been increasingly suspicious of sales once use, but when you confront your teen you are greeted with anger and defensiveness.

As parents, you begin to reflect on the changes that you see in your child. You remember a time when your teen was an “A” student who was actively involved in sports and extracurricular activities. Now you are getting frequent calls from school indicating that she is skipping classes, and there has been a drop in grades. The school complains of disrespect and defiance towards teachers and expectations. There have been frequent suspensions and expulsions. You realise that your child has begun to associate with different people and shows little interest in the family. This has gotten to the point where you keep your valuables locked-up at all times, and you are concerned that trouble with the law may be next.

You have found drugs and drug paraphernalia, but she has blamed others or gotten very defensive. You have seen changes in eating and sleeping patterns which can go from one extreme to the other.

You desperately search for answers to help you explain where things went wrong, but confrontations often result in arguments. As parents you begin to blame one another. In the end, you feel more frustrated and helpless. Your family life has become an emotional roller coaster. The atmosphere seems to be over your child’s head and there is one crisis after another.

You recognise that your other children are suffering because all of the emotional energy is focussed on the problem child. It seems you are always have a knot of fear in your stomach. You have become frightened of how your child will react, as she becomes increasingly irritable. Everybody walks around on eggshells.

As parents, you have tried everything from grounding to keeping him/her from friends, but the situation seems to be out of control. If the above scenario is familiar, take heart, you are truly not alone.

In up-coming articles I will talk about how to build and maintain healthy relationships; anger release; signs of addictions, as well as specific workshops that I will be conducting in the near future.

For more information, or to book an appointment please call (705) 533-5797.

Ernest Matton, ICADC, EAP, is an Addictions Behavioural Specialist and an EFT Practitioner.
PCMNO PROFILES: TIM PILE, SECRETARY-TREASURER
Continued from page 6

Continued from page 6

TIM PILE, PCMNO PROFILES: SECRETARY-TREASURER

2005 election lead to research at the archives in Ottawa. The necessity to complete the verifica-
tions of the library allowed me to connect his family to the historic Métis community of Peace River. While at the archives in Ottawa researching information to con-
firm his application for Métis citi-
zenship with the new require-
tions, Tim became fascinated with the lives of his ancestors. Such fascination turned to the idea of a “River Remembers” and the diary of Ida Cameron enthralled him.

In 2005 Tim and his two daughters travelled to Peace River where there were many homoratims to Ida. She was an example to strive to live up to. Knowing the hardships that his ancestors overcame with willpower and persever-
ance has strongly influenced Tim to stewardship of the Métis culture and traditions. Tim Pile graduated with a BA in Television and Cinematography from Ryerson University in 2000. He has been a member of the Métis Nation of Ontario and the Provisional Council Métis Nation of Northern Ontario. His many responsibilities as Secretary Treasurer are to ensure the smooth running of administra-
tion and operations with an annual budget exceeding $14 million. Tim holds the portfolios for Housing and Non Nuclear Power Development for the Métis Nation of Ontario. Tim is also involved in a local Thunder Bay company (Superior Ther-
mowood) that promotes envi-
ronmentally responsible value wood products for North America. Prior to this work, Tim was a marketing representative for a Fortune 500 company in Thunder Bay and surrounding communities, he worked direct-
ly with decision-makers in small businesses and large corpora-
tions. Tim is also a professional and hobby photographer as any attendee of our AGAs will attest to. Tim uses all his life experi-
ences to advance the agenda of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

In addition to this work, Tim represents the Métis Nation of Ontario chairing the MNO Finance Committee and Lake-
head University Aboriginal Man-
agement Council. Tim rep-
resents the Métis Nation of Ontario as a member of the Aboriginal Reference Group for the Northern Ontario School of Medicine at Lakehead University West Campus. Tim has served as a Lakehead University Board of Governor member for four years actively participating on a number of committees. He has been an active volunteer within his community at the Lakeview Presbyterian Church and Thun-
der Bay Shelter House. The in-
fluence of the MNO has been a positive for Tim. He has spoken on the Accountability of government, educating the population about Métis issues, seeking to advance Métis culture, building a strong nation through community councils with access to health, education and housing are what will be his strivings towards.

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MNO HEALTH SITE NEWS: RENFREW

Balancing on our toes

Talking Aboriginal Health

HAMILTON AND WELLAND MÉTIS ATTEND HEALTH CONFERENCE AT SIX NATIONS

by Linda Thibodeau

Community Wellness Worker

It looks like the sun has
decided to shine upon us.
What a welcoming sight after
a long, long, long winter! (Don’t
forget to say LONGG)!! LOU!

I had a Foot Care Clinic
booked for March 5th with the
wonderful girls from the South-
er Ontario Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative. We have a
table hands of reflexologist,
Denise Joly-MacLean and chi-
ropodist, Kim Gout. Well, that
day arrived like the roar of an
angry lion, the snow was flying
every which way in the howling
winds and the visibility was next
to nil. The weather man’s out-
look for the rest of the day was
doomed. How would we put
this clinic on. What would we
look for the rest of the day was
put this clinic on. What would we
do? Surely no one would come
due to the weather! Is this what they
don’t want this clinic? How
could we get to a clinic I think it’s a pretty
balky hands of reflexologist,
Denise Joly-MacLean and chi-
ropodist, Kim Gout. Well, that
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angry lion, the snow was flying
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do? Surely no one would come
due to the weather! Is this what they
don’t want this clinic? How
could we get to a clinic I think it’s a pretty
more events were being can-
celled as the minutes went by.

But our eternal optimist con-
tinued to prepare for the clinic.
The clock kept ticking and I
kept helping and wondering if all
this was in vain. My mind was
grooving crazy thinking about all
the what if’s then, oh my goodness,
I remembered, I had called the
diary to do a story for a pro-
montinous purposes. When
someone was cancelled, and more
and more events were being can-
celled as the minutes went by.

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What Are Your Health Priorities

by Chelsey Quirk

A myotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), sometimes called "Lou Gehrig’s Disease", is a devastating and fatal disease described by the degeneration of a select group of nerve cells and pathways in the brain and spinal cord. ALS is normally noticed in the legs, arms, throat, or the upper chest area. Those affected may begin to trip and fall. Some may notice muscle loss in their hands and arms and some find it hard to swallow and may begin to slur their speech.

The effects of ALS usually strike before a positive diagnosis can be made, debilitating patients before they have a chance to understand the severity of the disease. It is difficult to diagnose because there is no specific test to positively confirm or deny ALS. It is usually done through a ‘diagnosis of exclusions’. A number of neurological tests are done to rule out diseases with similar symptoms. As the symptoms worsen, ALS is often the reason.

There is no cure for ALS, but there is a way to help.

The ALS Society of Ontario is excited to announce this year’s WALK for ALS to be held in 25 communities across Ontario including: Alliston, Almonte, Barrie, Belleville, Brampton, Cobourg, Cornwall, Durham, Hamilton, Kingston, Kitchener/Waterloo, London, Newmarket, Niagara Falls, Mississauga, Ottawa, Parry Sound, Smiths Falls, Stratford, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Timmins, Toronto and Winnipeg.

The WALK for ALS is designed to increase awareness of ALS and raise money for equipment and support services for people living with ALS, as well as research to find a cure.

#1 ALS MAY ALSO BE CALLED:
• Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis;
• Sclerose latrale amyotrophique (SLA);
• Lou Gehrig’s Disease;
• Motor Neuron Disease (MND);
• Maligne de Charcot.

#2 ALS IS A PROGRESSIVE NEUROMUSCULAR DISEASE:
• Nerve cells continue to die;
• Voluntary muscles become paralyzed;
• The senses are unimpaired and the intellect may remain unaffected.

#3 ALS CAN STRIKE ANYONE:
• Male or female;
• Any ethnic origin;
• At any age;
• Some have been diagnosed as teens;
• Some have been diagnosed in their 70s;
• In the early 70s.

#4 90% DIE WITHIN THREE TO FIVE YEARS OF DIAGNOSIS:
• Some will die within a few short months;
• Some will live longer than five years.

#5 SOME CASES ARE HEREDITARY:
• Less than 10% are familial ALS;
• ALS is not contagious.

#6 APPROXIMATELY 3,000 CANADIANs CURRENTLY LIVE WITH ALS

#7 EVERY DAY TWO OR THREE CANADArians DIE OF ALS

#8 ALS AFFECTS THE WHOLE FAMILY.
• 90% of care is shouldered by family caregivers;
• ALS is a costly disease—emotionally, physically and financially.

#9 TEN PROVINCIAL ALS SOCIETIES PROVIDE QUALITY CARE TO THOSE DIAGNOSED WITH ALS:
• Information and referrals;
• Support for persons with ALS and their family;
• Equipment;
• Advocacy.

#10 THE ALS SOCIETY OF CANADA
• FUNDS research for a cure;
• SUPPORTS Provincial Societies to serve immediate needs;
• PROVIDES information to build awareness;
• www.als.ca

For more information, please visit www.alsont.ca

from first column ...

What is important to us, for that matter, is health? To reach our own heritage and sense of priorities that could be agreed upon by the masses: clean air, clean water, access to food and shelter, hospitals, police, etc. But beyond the basics, how do we continue to expand our understanding of health? Is education more important than religion? Should a strong economy be valued above the environment? How much physical exercise is enough? Do we need different laws to protect our children? Should we spend our money on crisis workers or on mental health workers? Is a mainstream service effective enough to address the needs presented by culture and heritage? The only thing clear to me is that finding a balance is a difficult undertaking with no guarantee of consensus. Having acknowledged the need, however, there are a few principles that each of us can observe towards empowering ourselves to health.

1. Seek balance in your life. If you are focussed on only one of the variables your health, the others will suffer. If one area suffers, eventually the others will suffer as well. On the positive side, if you make improvements in one area, it will be easier to make improvements in the others.

2. Be aware of your values. Explore the things that are important to you, and be honest with yourself about these things. Honesty is an important part of learning about who you are.

3. Make informed decisions. You owe it to yourself to ask questions, gather information and think about something before you make a decision. You are the only person living your life, so it is up to you to ensure that the choices you make are in line with your needs, values, best interest and your resources and/or limitations.

What is important to us, for that matter, is health? To reach our potential we need to give serious thought to the matter.

It is my hope that you will reflect on who you are as a Métis person, what your healing and wellness priorities might be, and how you can act to affect the changes that are important to you. Finally, I would encourage anyone who feels that they may need help with something in their life to seek it out. There are many qualified and caring MNO staff in place with an important understanding of Métis needs and history. We are in place to help you with whatever you need, as best we can, and without making any judgements.

For further information about available MNO health services, call toll free: 1-800-263-4889.

MNO HEALTH BRANCH IS HERE TO HELP

Three letters that change your life

by Jason Jamieson

The current climate of uncertainty regarding the renewal of the Aboriginal Health and Wellness Strategy (AHWS) and its MNO programming across the province has prompted reflection upon many important questions for Métis people. The questions that come to mind for each of us are important ones, conceived as diverse in nature as our Nation is in citizenship. I have spoken with many people in the Métis nation over the years and have come to understand that “health” is not a static term for us, but rather an important aspect of self and as such, it becomes easier for those around us to understand the relationship between quadrants of existence has been continual--each part of our existence--emotional or spiritual--continually impacts the other elements of our being. Our own life and health as a model for health is an effective theory in that it helps us begin to understand that our wellness cannot exist in isolation neither from ourselves nor from others. What this means in simple terms is that each part of our existence—whether it is physical, mental, emotional or spiritual—continually impacts the other elements of our being. The bind between our quadrants of existence has been presented to our Health Branch workers in very simple ways such as the tendency to numb the body with drugs or alcohol to reduce the emotional pain related to family sexual abuse, or in a noted reduction in depression once spiritual activities have been reintroduced to a family. Whatever the relationship between quadrants looks like, health and wellness matters affect the entire spectrum of our being. Further, our interactions with others on personal, community or national levels also produce effects. If we model positive behaviours in our community, it becomes easier for those around us to adopt similar values. If we choose to support one another, it becomes easier for our culture to thrive within mainstream society. If we lobby to promote values, services and initiatives that are important to us, it becomes easier to access support and opportunities that will be relevant to our own heritage and sense of identity. This line of thought brings me once again to a question that has haunted me for a decade. What is important to us? For that matter, what is health? To reach our potential we need to give serious thought to the matter. You could ask these questions to 10 different people and receive 10 answers that may be similar, but...
The Healthy Living Food Program began in November, 2006, as a result of the Coalition for Kids group identifying a need for accessibility to healthy and economical fruits and vegetables in our area. A committee with partners from Métis Nation of Ontario, Healthy Babies, Healthy Children and Aboriginal Health and Wellness program workers, Gizhe- wadziwin Health Access Centre, Northwestern Health Unit, and Valley Diabetes was established. Each agency has specific duties related to the program with much in-kind work happening. Administrative costs are minimal but include such things as bags for the produce, and are covered by the Coalition for Kids box cost. There has never been corporate sponsor- ship involved.

We started with 40 boxes in November of 2006, and by March 2007, the number had risen to 98 boxes.

The Healthy Food Box is available to anyone regardless of age or income. A few changes have been made since our program began. The $20.00 and the order form are now brought to the Northwestern Health Unit at 590 Scott Street or on before the first Wednesday of the month.

The third Wednesday of the month is busy with volunteers fill- ing the boxes at the Sunset Coun- try Métis Hall at 714 Armit Avenue. Food Box pickup hap- pens between noon and 5:00 p.m.

The food is ordered through local distributors, and we also try to fill the boxes with local farm produce when it is available. We work very hard to make sure that fresh produce goes into our boxes. Each box contains in-sea- son fruits and vegetables with basic items such as potatoes, car- rots, onions, lettuce, apples, bananas and oranges as our sta- ples. Our boxes have at least 15 items and usually more. A newsletter with nutrition tips and recipes based on the contents of the box has been included with the food box.

We receive many comments about how the Healthy Living Food Program has changed the way people eat and is promoting healthy lifestyle choices for young and old.

The Healthy Living Food Pro- gram would not be where it is without the hard work of its com- mittee members, and of course our volunteers. Volunteers help set up the hall, prepare the boxes, and help during the pick up time.

We also have high school stu- dents earning their volunteer hours with our program. Our Métis community should be proud of our direct involvement in this program.

If you would like to help with any part of the program, or need any information, please contact Anne-Marie Armstrong at the Sunset Country Métis office.

METIS HEALTH

Kenora Métis take in great music by Martin Camire

The Kenora Catholic District School Board hosted a cultural event at Thomas Aquinas School that included awesome music from Sierra Noble, her guitarist and Tom Jack- son on April 22nd.

The Kenora Métis Council sponsored 20 Métis Elders and citizens to attend this event through a New Horizons Senior’s grant.

This is the third time I wit- nessed Sierra’s performances and I never heard her sing until this time. Her voice is as amazing if not better than, her fiddle playing. Sierra’s gift is sharing herself from the heart and I am proud to be somehow related to this young star. Tom Jackson had everyone in stitches with his young star. T om Jackson had everyone in stitches with his

MÉTIS HEALTH

Métis Nation of Ontario Health Branch Staffing News: by Doug Wilson

The first quarter of the new fiscal year will see the release of a new awareness DVD called Abo- riginal Gambling, Métis Elders Speak Out, this video produced in the last quarter of the ‘07/08 fiscal year delivers some very dra- matic, emotional and factual sto- ries and opinions surrounding Aboriginal gambling in our com- munities. Through interviews with several Métis people a story is told of the hazards and realities of gambling.

Gambling as we all know is “taking a chance. You are betting on an outcome decided by chance”. Gambling surrounds us in all of our communities, whether it be in the form of lot- teries, scratch tickets, scratch cards, pull tab tickets, bingo, card games, race track betting, sports betting, internet gambling or casino games, gambling is nearly every- where. We need to become as well educated as we can about the dangers, the facts and realities of gambling in our Métis communi- ties. The Aboriginal gambling video may help explain some of the myths, misunderstandings and issues related to gambling. If you get a chance make sure you have a look at the video!

Elders speak out about gambling by Glen Lipinski

The new fiscal year brings with it some new and excit- ing gambling awareness announcements!

The new fiscal year brings with it some new and excit- ing gambling awareness announcements!

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The new fiscal year brings with it some new and excit- ing gambling awareness announcements!
Healing Journey

By Wendy Kabel

As an AHWS Co-ordinator at Fort Frances, ON, I was granted the opportunity to work temporarily with the Sudbury Métis Nation of Ontario, an Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy (AHWS) Worker in Fort Frances until June. I researched the position and found that I had already been working toward a life of traditional healing and wellness without even knowing it, and now I wanted to know more about facilitating this journey for myself, our clients and the overall Métis community.

At the time of writing, I have been in the position for approximately two months and I would like to share my findings about a holistic process to overall wellness and healing as it has presented itself to me, through Aboriginal and mainstream practices across the north and beyond.

The following are a few technical definitions of a holistic healing process: “the process of curing the mind or body,” refers to invoking spiritual states of order, alignment, integration and balance within our entire system—creating synchronous relationships within the whole-being”. Healing is the process whereby the cells in the body regenerate and repair to reduce the size of a damage.” Restoration to health or wholeness, to perfect balance, harmony and equilibrium—physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually; movement from a lesser to a higher rate of vibration and state of consciousness”. All very well said I believe, and I hope to continue the learning, rather as a hands-on, evolution of a unique holistic journey based on cultural and historic practices, combined with relevant current research and knowledge.

After reading all of the technical definitions I asked myself: “What really is healing and wellness all about?” I researched everything I could and thought in order for me to facilitate and to help others heal I had to know more. I decided to start with the following quote: “The cure of the part should not be attempted without treatment of the whole. No attempt should be made to cure the body without the soul. Let no one persuade you to cure the head until he has first given you his soul to be healed, for this is the great error of our day, that physicians first separate the soul from the body.” PLATO, a Classical Greek philosopher, who together with his teacher, Socrates, and his student, Aristotle, helped to lay the philosophical foundations of western culture.

By using the “Wellness Wheel”, the knowledge of our elders, health professionals and traditional medicines, we can journey toward the best we can be, by equally treating and equally maintaining the spiritual, physical, emotional and mental wholeness of ourselves, our families and our communities.

Holistic Healing and Wellness is essentially each person’s journey, including: spiritual, physical, emotional, mental and social aspects of the self; being in balance, and also in tune with our soul, our Creator, our consciousness or a greater power. Healing and wellness should be a natural part of everyday living, in which imbalances and also symptoms can be recognized, healed and/or alleviated.

Sometimes, our own natural ability to heal ourselves can be misplaced or hidden. Therefore, AHWS workers, among countless other health professionals, are out there to help you find your path. Thus, my journey as an AHWS worker began and continues as I learn how important it is to understand the holistic healing and wellness process in order to facilitate and empower clients to help themselves begin their healing and wellness journey.

The practice of finding or repossessing one’s overall personal balance begins with the clients’ view of their life situations or the consequences of negative behaviours. The clients must then accept the nature of their life challenges and seek to consistently make choices to live a more balanced lifestyle. One should practice, acknowledging and expecting healing, stimulating a working-wellness-plan, and then establish a presence (always of the now-the-present moment) of positive choices and continual healing and wellness.

Healing and wellness is certainly a gift that can be used by everyone, but it is also a central part of ancient, traditional, medical treatments. Physical illnesses can also be symptoms of a greater imbalance that may or may not have a root cause in the physical. Holistic healing is not an alternative or a replacement to conventional medical care and many conditions require professional medical treatment. Holistic healing and wellness is an ongoing journey of discovery; a search for more challenges and ultimately the transformation and renewal of consciousness.

Acceptance of self as part of the spiritual “whole” or creator is a goal all of us should take a look into to find out more. So, in closing I would like to thank the Métis Nation of Ontario, the staff, clients and community members for sharing part of their journey with me and I am grateful to have had the experience to add to my life journey. Aide-va, jouer la sécurité, et la poursuite du Bonheur pour tout le monde.

By Wendy Kabel

The video, “In Our Own Words: The Cancer Journey” was Showcased in Sudbury as part of the Sudbury Métis Council partners with Shkagamik-Kwe Centre on cancer video.

The video “In Our Own Words: The Cancer Journey” premiers April 3rd in Sudbury.

The video features 10 clients of the Shkagamik-Kwe Centre and Chair of Cambrian College’s Walombo Institute. Storytelling and visual arts, which provide the basis of this video, are a natural component of our traditional ways of teaching and learning.”

The collaborative involves participation from Shkagamik-Kwe Health Centre, N’Swakamok Native Friendship Centre, the Aboriginal Cancer Care Unit of Cancer Care Ontario, the Regional Cancer Program of the Hospital regional de Sudbury Regional Hospital, Wabunak Health Ahtsiskawan, Nanaamadewin Health Services Inc., Canadian Cancer Society, the Sudbury Métis Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario, and Cambrian College.

The organisations gratefully acknowledge the significant financial support from Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Government of Ontario.

The video was signed in 2007 with a $50,000 grant. In December of 2007 a second agreement was signed increasing the amount to $100,000, which makes $10,000 per year available annually over 10 years.

This is a great opportunity for Aboriginal women in a city environment to receive much needed support while they attend training or post-secondary studies or training and development programs. We are delighted to partner in this first of its kind, busary, I congratulate onc for the vital work they do in support of Aboriginal peoples in urban centres. We all know how tough it can be.”

The applications can be filled in (or email) to: OFIFC Bursary Awards Program. This year’s deadline was March 10th, but it’s never too early to plan for next year.

The video was created in collaboration with the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation (NAAF) in partnership with the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres (OFIFC) Bursary Awards Program.

The video was made possible by a collaboration of the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres (OFIFC) and the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation (NAAF) in partnership with the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres (OFIFC) Bursary Awards Program.

The organization gratefully acknowledges the significant financial support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Government of Ontario.
Michelle Goodeve of Fearless Widget. Production is pleased to announce the release of *Flying The Finch*, the first in a series of books on Tom Dietrich’s, world-famous “Tiger Boys” Antique Aeroplane Collection, located on the grounds of southern Ontario’s Guelph Airport. Métis host and Executive Producer Michelle Goodeve of “Tiger Boys” pilot herself learns all about the group’s immaculately restored, 1940 Fleet Finch 10B Trainer from this episode’s featured pilot, Bruce “Rotten” Paylor (an “airport kid” who’s been flying antique aircraft since Michelle and her friends introduced him to aviation when he was 12 years old).

*Flying The Finch*, shot in high definition, tells Rotten’s story; hears Tom Dietrich’s tale of the acquisition and restoration of this classic WWII trainer, then takes you along on a flight, set to the original music of Lindsay Thomas Mor- gan.

DVD extras include: a complete pre-flight inspection, Tom Dietrich’s full interview; the original 1940 pilot’s notes supplied by the Commonwealth Air Training Plan; and a 90-minute slideshow imaged by Goodeve. Half of the proceeds from *Flying The Finch* (and all future Tiger Boys titles) go to the restoration and upkeep of The Tiger Boys’ Antique Aeroplane Collection.

For more, visit Michelle’s website: www.learnwidge.com. To see a clip of Michelle landing her old 1937 Thruston Jackaroo biplane, go to YouTube and search: “Alien Landing.”

**About Fearless Widget:** Partners, Michelle Goodeve and Glenn Norman, chose *Flying The Finch* as their first project because it incorporates many of the goals they hope to achieve in their own productions. The couple, who have known each other since they were children, both learned to fly in their teens and have spent most of their adult lives working in television. Michelle started off as a dancer at the tender age of three, then segued into acting. She got her start in the movie “Riki,” which holds particular significance for Michelle as she is Métis. After that auspicious start, she appeared in numerous TV shows—Dummer Street, Legal, Ready or Not, White Fang and Vacuum EFTEs, to name a few—but she is probably best remembered for her four-year stint as teacher “Ms. Avery,” the only Native-Canadian on Degrassi Jr. High and its sequel, Degrassi High (the most successful franchise in Canadian television history).

Glenn began his TV career as a film editor for Robert Lawrence Productions and worked on one of the first Muppet TV specials. He then moved to CTV where he spent three years as a film editor for the CTV news magazine *The Eye*. The couple’s love of flying led them to a friendship with author Richard “Jonathan Livingston Seagull” Bach. After several barnstorming tours and trans-continental air dashes in antique aircraft, Glenn made the career change to aviation writer.

When Michelle began to act, Glenn’s desire to work with her morphed him into a playwright, then a television screenwriter. He wrote for shows such as *The Campbells*, Danger Bay (guest starring Michelle), *Night Heat*, Adderly, as well as the couple’s own Vavauan 6-9s (which starred Michelle.)

In the early nineties, Michelle began writing screenplays of her own and won a Harold Green- burg grant for her first-Nations-themed screenplay, “Birdwoman.” As they were now both screenwriters, the couple decided to pool their talents and become a story editing team. They flew to New Zealand to work as head writers on CTV’s *White Fang* series (in which Michelle was also the recurring character.) Then helmed the writing chores on Global TV’s “Mysterious Island.”

After one of Michelle’s French friends asked the couple to pen episodes for a new animated project, Glenn and Michelle wrote for a string of animated series including *Redwall*, *Mattimeo*, *Martin The Warrior*, *Moby Rogers* & *The Space Traders*, and the cult—her own aeroplane, a 1929-style, open-cockpit “Pietenpol” aircraft. She and her friends have been rebuilding it for the past four years.

One of Michelle’s goals in making the cross-continent trip, is to offer the lands walked by her Métis ancestors. Michelle spent several years researching her family tree and managed to identify more than 400 ancestors going back as far as 1588! She knows her antecedents came from the type of unhealthy relationships that we see all too often in the media, community and everyday life.

Our documentary launched at Sault College on March 6, 2008, to an enthusiastic audience of 50 youths, proud parents and project partners. We were warmly welcomed at the airport by our Métis Senators, Reta Gordon and Lois McCallum as well as Deb Chansonneau from Minwaxx Lodge. As we sat in our nation’s capital once again creating even more new peer education and prevention tools, we reflected on all the hard work that we and the other youths have completed, and realized that we are truly the next leaders of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

**Michelle Good eve**

by Linda Lord

Michelle Goodeve is a Métis actor, screen-writer, pilot and television producer. Whew.

**MÉTIS SENATORS, RETA GORDON (RIGHT) AND LOIS MCCALLUM (LEFT) WELCOME MÉTIS DOCUMENTARY MAKERS AT THE OTTAWA AIRPORT.**

**MÉTIS YOUTH CHANGE THE WORLD ONE WAY AT A TIME**

by Joni Labbé

Twenty-five creative youths from the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council in partnership with Minwaxx Lodge and the Métis Nation of Ontario have been working together to promote healthy, equal relationships within our culture.

Over the last year these youths have taken leadership roles in spreading the word about domestic violence and the work that can and needs to be done in order for it to stop and not continue into future generations of the Métis nation.

The project, which was funded by the Ontario Women’s Directorate, began during March Break, 2007, when I and four other youths (Anthony Powley, Hunter Leffleur, Sarah Aiken, and Arla Birion) were brought to Ottawa for Leadership Training. We were lucky enough to be participating with four Inuit youths and four First Nation youths who were all between the ages of 12 and 16. In this training we learned about our different Aboriginal cultures and how we are different and yet so much alike. We also created action plans for youth-led activities in our own communities that would help us bring the message of how Métis culture promotes healthy relationships.

As part of our action plan, the Métis youths created a documentary that completely surpassed any of our expectations. The documentary is approximately 20 minutes long and features youth engaged in a range of healthy cultural activities including creating expeditions, T-shirt making, jigging, camping and spending time with our elders. The youths did an incredible job fusing issues of domestic violence with activities aimed at diverting youth away from the type of unhealthy relationships that we see too often in the media, community and everyday life.

Our documentary launched at Sault College on March 6, 2008, to an enthusiastic audience of 50 youths, proud parents and project partners. We were covered by CTV News of the North. Our Métis youth project was also featured at a provincial conference, “Communities Working Together to Prevent Violence Against Women” in Waterloo, where I presented as part of a panel titled “Engaging Youth in Stopping Violence.”

As well as the documentary, we produced a newsletter, a Métis Fact Sheet, a blog site and many, many memories. This March Break when we returned to Ottawa once again for training in Media Arts we were warmly welcomed by the airport by our Métis Senators, Reta Gordon and Lois McCallum as well as Deb Chansonneau from Minwaxx Lodge. As we sat in our nation’s capital once again creating even more new peer education and prevention tools, we reflected on all the hard work that we and the other youths have completed, and realized that we are truly the next leaders of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

Joni Labbé is Project Coordinator of “Métis Youth as Leaders” and Region 4 Youth Representative of the seniors.

**MÉTIS AIRCRAFT ENTHUSIASTS MAKE DOCUMENTARY**

The Barnstorming Birdwoman takes flight

by Joni Labbé

MÉTIS ACHIEVERS

**OTTAWA**
Improving Aboriginal education in near north
by Anne Trudel

The Aboriginal Education Committee located in Region 4, would like to hear from parents and seniors with an interest in improving Aboriginal student education. Starting Fall 2008, the committee will include parents and senator representatives for the First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples. Since the three Aboriginal peoples are all distinct, our citizens must provide the Métis perspective. Representatives for the Métis Nation of Ontario, Brent McHale and Anne Trudel have been meeting with the Algoma District School Board (ADSB) and the Huron Superior Catholic School Board (HSCSB) which encompasses the Region 4 and Chapleau area. Each of the school boards has hired Aboriginal co-ordinators. Mona Jones of HSCSB and Carol Trudeau of ADSB have a vested interest in Aboriginal students. Both Carol and Mona are qualified teachers and First Nation women.

The Ontario Government, specifically through the Ministry of Education have two primary challenges for the educational system to increase our Aboriginal students’ level of achievement and the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students (Ontario, First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework, 2007). Our children’s education is vitally important for their future as individuals and for the future of the Métis nation. Through the Aboriginal Education Committee, you have the opportunity to promote strategies that will enhance our Métis students’ learning outcome.

If you have questions and are not from Region 4, please feel free to contact Anne Trudel (mno-culture@shaw.ca) or the local Provincial Councilor in your region.

ABORIGINAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

A len Muir Urban Aboriginal High School played host for the day to approximately 100 Aboriginal and non-aboriginal youth and young adults for the 2008 Sault Ste. Marie Aboriginal Youth conference. The Métis Nation of Ontario Health Services Branch and the Algoma Council on Domestic Violence organized the youth conference. The conference was attended by students from various local high schools including the Urban Aboriginal Alternative High School. “The speakers touched on many issues affecting aboriginal youth growing up in the world today with a special emphasis on choosing to live a good violence free life,” summarised one youth.

Students sat down to the morning session after enjoying a wonderful, nutritious breakfast. The session was opened with a special song by the women’s hand drum group, Waabshkizi Nimkii Kwook (White Thunder Women), followed by a welcoming address by Michele Dale of the Métis Nation of Ontario Health Services Branch. Jayna Aning, the first presenter, was a young woman from London, Ontario of the Speers Society. “Donna Speers created it after her daughter Monica was murdered by an abusive ex-boyfriend. She wanted to save girls from following in her daughter’s footsteps” stated Aning. Jayna spoke of how to recognize a healthy relationship and more importantly the warning signs of an abusive relationship/partner. She explained the necessities of a healthy relationship, which include communication, respect, caring, trust and loyalty. Jayna spoke about the seven grandfathers teachings, fresh fruit, desserts and a variety of beverages.

On the evening of May 24, 2008, at the University of Toronto’s Hart House music room, John Arcand and James Cheechoo, two legends of the Métis fiddle, came together to perform with 11 youths, in a fundraising concert supporting Fiddle Stories – From Me to You, a project presented by the Métis Artists Collective (MAC) and Anne Lederman, renowned Métis musicologist. The halls of Hart House were filled with rousing reels and jigs all evening in a lively event that had audience members jiggin’ in the aisles by night’s end.

James Cheechoo, accompanied by his wife Daisy on the wooden spoons and son Lawrence on guitar, joined the youths taking part in the Fiddle Stories mentorship project that culminates in the group participating at the North Atlantic Fiddle Convention this summer in St. John’s Newfoundland August 2-8. John Arcand, recent recipient of the Order of Canada, (see page 26) joined the group on the day of the concert and finished out the week with the Chechechoo, conducting workshops for the project.

This was a chance of a lifetime for both youth and audience to enjoy two recognised treasures of traditional Métis fiddle styles. The Fiddle Stories project led by Anne Lederman gives Aboriginal youth fiddlers from across the country this unique opportunity to learn, perform and compete with the world’s best.

The concert drew a wide range of audience members and media to the gothic music room of Hart House, which was filled to the brim. Group and solo performances were presented by John Arcand, James Cheechoo and family, the Métis Fiddler Quartet with Scott Kemp on bass, Ryan D’Aoust, Matthew Corrigan, Ruby John from Michigan, Alyssa and Nicholas, Delbaere-Sawchuk, Nora Pellerin and Alicia Bloore of Toronto with Conlin Delbaere-Sawchuk accompanying on guitar. Anne Lederman enlightened the audience throughout the evening with the background history of the music and anecdotes about the project. MAC representative and a key organiser of Fiddle Stories, Diane Verzina, addressed the audience to thank the project supporters, participants and organisers on behalf of MAC.

The evening was a great success for the Fiddle Stories - From Me to You project and will help ensure that the legacy of traditional Métis fiddling styles endures.

We were thrilled to see elders and youth alike, as well as many members of the MNO community from around Ontario in attendance. If you missed this historic performance, you have another opportunity to see this project in action at the Métis Arts Festival at Black Creek Pioneer Village in Toronto July 11, 12 and 13th. We hope to see you there.

For more information about MAC, the Métis Arts Festival or the Fiddle Stories Project, visit www.metisartsfestival.com.
Fiddler John Arcand receives Order of Canada

In April, well known Métis fiddler, John Arcand, was presented with the Order of Canada by Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada. Created in 1967, the Order of Canada is regarded as the country’s highest civilian award. It was created to recognise a lifetime of achievement, dedication to community and service to the nation.

John Arcand is a master of traditional Métis fiddling and a musical ambassador for his culture. He has also been a driving force behind the preservation of unrecorded Métis tunes. He has applied his skills as a performer and educator to promoting and popularising this unique musical heritage. Through endeavours such as the John Arcand Fiddle Fest, and as a representative of western Canada at the Fiddles of the World Conference, he has inspired other fiddlers to embrace this art form and has helped to bring it to light for both Canada and the world. “I guess I’m being blessed.”

John Arcand grew up in the Big River area of Saskatchewan where he started playing fiddle at the age of six, coached by his father and grandfather. He has composed some 300 original tunes and recorded 14 albums. Arcand has also being teaching fiddle for more than 20 years to students of all ages—children to seniors—he currently has about 15 students. John Arcand is an expert on the fiddle as a collector, luthier and appraiser. His handmade instruments are highly valued. Arcand returned from the investiture to join other veteran fiddlers and the next generation at a fund raiser for the John Arcand Fiddle Fest Raise the Roof Campaign. Organisers want to raise $300,000 to build a permanent roof structure at the site of the annual festival.

Another fundraiser is the Big Bear Fiddle Raffle. Interest in the hand-crafted instrument is so great that tickets are being purchased from all over North America, and a site in Arizona has expressed an interest in buying the “Big Bear”.

Tickets are $20. The draw will be made on August 10th. Call Vicki at (306) 582-0111 for tickets.

Leather and Wood

TRACY TURK IS ANOTHER TALENTED MÉTIS ARTISAN WHO HAS CHOSEN TO TELL US ABOUT HER CREATIONS

by Tracy Turk

I thought I would share with you some of the things that I enjoy making. The bird statues and ornaments are made from river rocks and various pieces of our metal. They can be left outside all year and make an interesting addition to a patio or pond area. My birds can be found in many backyards in this region. The moccasins are made from deer leather. The very first ones I made were moose. I just finished making a men’s size 10 1/2 for one of my clients. However, making hand drums is my passion and fortunately I know some hunters who are kind enough to bring me back deer hides and hides. (I use the brains for tanning) I have been making hand drums since the fall of 2006 and each drum has its own voice; no two are the same.

Through the labour intensive process it takes to prepare a deer hide for drums, moccasins, garments etc. I have gained a deep sense of appreciation of how our ancestors worked with their hands to make the things they needed in their daily lives. Our society doesn’t make things the way earlier societies did, we just go to the store and buy what we need—ready made.

When I got my very first deer hide I went to work on it right away—scrapping the flesh and fat tissue and soaking and scraping some more. Then, the de-furring process was even more of a challenge; wow, all that thick, coarse winter fur the deer had. What a job it was removing all that fur!

After soaking the hide in the mixture, I put it in the oven to dry. While the hide is drying, I make a dough out of flour and water, and add a little bit of brown sugar to it. I then mix this up into a batter, and add it to the oven. After an hour of standing outside in the cold and damp with just a little bit of smoke, I decided to cut a drum head and lace out of the hide and make a hand drum. This first hide made a beautiful 15” hand drum, and since then I have been making hand drums from all the deer hides given to me. Last fall I was given four big buck hides which I kept in the freezer till I was ready to work on one. I have now upgraded from using my jack-knife and kitchen knives for scraping, to a very sharp skinning knife and scraping tools which make the job easier. I have made 15” and 12” drums and am currently preparing three more hides to make more drums. I have discovered a natural method of keeping the drum heads from absorbing too much humidity and going out of tune. They stay nice and tight. Unfortunately, its a trade secret, so I can’t share it with you. Not too many women make drums, but I really enjoy it and hope one day I’ll have a web site to display them on. So those are my hobbies, keeps me out of trouble.

Want to show off your skill? Send story and pictures to: Bords@kingston.net

Tracy Turk is a Métis Nation of Ontario citizen from Hamilton

Skate Star

Hollie McHale placed third in northern Ontario at the Skate Canada Competition, Festival of Stars, held in Sault Ste. Marie on February 16th, 2008. This event qualified her to compete at the provincial competition, Trillium Star Skate, held in Waterloo on March 8th. There she placed ninth in Ontario at the preliminary level.

Wiki singer sets sights on stardom

Another Anishnabeg performer seems to be on her way to stardom. Bypassing the Canadian music scene, Crystal Shamundra, from Wik-Wemikong on Manitoulin Island, moved to Nashville alone at the age of 17. This young, dynamic singer/songwriter has become the first Native artist to be signed by a major record label (Sony BMG in Canada and RCA in Nashville) in the United States.

Crystal was recently featured on a six episode series on CMT titled, Crystal: Living the Dream. The series chronicled Crystal’s dream of becoming a country music star. Part documentary and part “reality series”, it followed Crystal’s life over eight months, from signing her record deal to dropping her first single and playing the Grand Ole Opry.

Crystal’s debut single, You Can Let Go has already been released to radio. For more info visit: www.cmt.ca, YouTube.Myspace, Facebook. You Can Let Go is available on iTunes.
I Choose a Good Life

from page 22

Start while Willard waited outside in the car. She stared for five hours and then returned empty handed, as there were no bargains. Willard said he could have gotten angry but he realised instead that she had given him a great opportunity. He had a chance to listen to his entire CD collection.

After a short break, students enjoyed Kiibhaay Anishinaabe Niiwm (I am a kind man) presentation which has been shown to over 2000 people in Ontario. Ken McLean, a Métis man with Ojibwa connections to Kenteussibi Anishinabai (Garden River First Nation) and Urban Aboriginal Homelessness Co-ordinator for the Sault Ste. Marie Indian Friendship Centre, delivered the presentation. He spoke about love and explained, “most abuse stems from a lack of self esteem. You must respect and love yourself before you can love someone else.”

The day, full of lessons on choosing a good life, was closed with songs from Waashkizhi Nimkii Kweok (White Thunder Women) hand drum group and an offering of tobacco to Mother Earth and the Creator. Everyone enjoyed them selves while learning and sharing.

Mitchell is looking forward to taking part in similar events in the future. He is a strong Métis youth advocate in our community and is a very proud Métis person who says you will always find attending events and activities such as this and always with his smile.

We always welcome Mitchell’s help and participation at the Sault Ste Marie site. It is with great pride we have the opportunity to watch as Mitchell grows and learns about Métis youth and the community.

BBQ SEASON IS HERE AGAIN!

More than just a good cook, Gall LeBlanc has been busy with lots of things and brings us not only a recipe but an up-date.

We have been cooking and having many good times while cooking. We were down in Florida over the winter. Plus, I recently got back from visiting Washington with my girl friend. Now that summer is here, Ken and I will be taking off again in our Roadtrek. It is sooo nice to be retired.

I still do Aboriginal presentations to schools and now I also go to retirement homes. The seniors are really glad and appreciate that someone is bringing the information to them. I just gave a talk to a group of engineers. They presented me with a $500.00 donation for the Aboriginal children’s program. I was so excited and grateful!

Ken has been after me to send you this recipe to share with your readers. It is a favourite he loves to make, not only in the summer on the BBQ, but has been doing it during the winter months in our oven. I am not a very big pork eater but this one is so good that I appreciate it when he plans to prepare it. Guests rave about it too.

Here goes: Yipee - summer has finally arrived and it’s time to take out our BBQ. Here is a fabulous pork loin recipe my hubby likes to prepare for family and friends.

KOBE RANCH PORK LOIN

INGREDIENTS:  
4 to 5 lb. (2 to 2.5 kg) pork loin  
2 tbsp. black pepper powder  
2 cups ranch dressing (any brand you like)  
3/4 cup President’s Choice Memories of Kobe (the 2 minute miracle marinade)

Place pork loin in a heavy plastic bag. Add the ranch dressing, crushed peppercorns and Memories of Kobe marinade. Seal well, turn a few times to coat the meat. Refrigerate for 6 to 8 hours or overnight.

Place pork loin on lightly greased grill over high heat and cook for 2 to 3 minutes per side to sear the meat. Reduce heat to medium and cook with lid down for 40 to 50 minutes until internal temperature reaches 150°F (65°C) on meat thermometer. Turn meat 2 to 3 times while cooking.

Let stand 10 to 15 minutes before serving. Enjoy.
Heaven’s Duvet
by Senator Earl Scofield

MOON RIVER MÉTIS:
SENATOR CONSIDERS
RUN FOR
PCMNO
by Ruth Wagner-Millington

Senator, Moon River Métis Council

First let me introduce myself. Moon River has been a “council” with the MNO for four years. I have been Sen- ator, with great responsibility. I have accomplished a great deal during the four years. I have struggled with the idea of running for PCMNO Senator because I like working with Moon River Council and would miss that. Still, I feel that I have a lot to offer to the PCMNO.

I grew up knowing that I was Métis. Dad would often talk about the fact that if he had put the word Métis on his first job application as a teacher in 1926, he would probably not have been considered for the job even though he had a teaching certificate, as a teacher, he had every summer off. Everyday he prepared lessons for the coming school year, and then take me and my sister out. We summereed on St. Joseph Island near Sault Ste. Marie where my Mother’s (not a Métis) was born.

Dad would take us walking through the bush, showing us how to go silently, not stepping on any twigs or dry leaves, and how to move so we covered our shadows. We would come right up to animals this way and other creatures. We would listen to survive in the bush if stranded there; how to catch a fish without a line and hook, how to make a snare; how to use real snare, how to clean and prepare our catch; how to gather black walnuts and birch gum in the walnut tea we would brew, and set the traps with tongs so our human scent wasn’t on them. Dad also taught us never to take from nature without giving back, and thanking the Creator. We were shown to leave a gift such as tobacco or cedar as thanks.

Dad would also show us endlessly how to watch the sun and the stars, the angle the trees grew, the way moss grew, the direction of any stream or creek, to find our location in the bush. Then, one rainy day while we were way out in the bush, after we had been walking up and down and back and forth and were tired and wet and wanting to go home, to our HORROR Dad disap- peared! After the initial panic, my sis- ter and I decided we would have to get out on our own. We both were quite concerned, and at one point my sister was crying and said the thought that Dad was trying to kill us! Hours later we made it out to the road, and there was Dad sitting 100 yards or so farther along with a smile on his face. When we dragged ourselves up to him, he said he had wondered how long it would take us to get out. The next time Dad was ready to go adven- turing my sister refused to go, and Mother said that it was all useful infor- mation and that we must go and learn. To this day, I think it would be hard to get me lost in the bush.

Dad would whistle tunes all the time when he was working. Now I know them to be Métis tunes, and can fiddle them, but often I don’t know the names of the tunes because I heard them whistled. He would tell us stories after dinner and years later he would tell these same stories to my children. Dad taught us Métis games for outside and Métis string games and finger shadow drama stories inside. Sometimes he would whistle and jig to his whistling at the same time.

Every fall we would stand on a piece of paper and Dad would trace our feet, and send it to his Mother. Then for Christmas we would receive a beautifully beaded pair of new moc- casines from Grandma.

From my contact with many citi- zens of the MNO, I have become aware that many citizens only recent- ly found out that they were Métis, per- haps while researching their family tree.

I commend them for pursuing their roots.

It is from the strength of my having been born brought up as a Métis that I feel I have wisdom accumulated from my upbringing which I could bring to the position of PCMNO Senator. I would like to see all sides of Métis culture be taught and pursued at meetings and AGAs. We have such a rich her- itage. We are so much more than illeg- ital hunters and fishermen, and sadly that seems to be the only part of Métis heritage which hits the media these days. I feel it is important to teach our youth all the sides of our heritage, and make the public aware of events and happenings which show our culture to its advantage.

When I phoned Senator Reta Gor- don, and told her that I was consider- ing running for PCMNO Senator, she asked me to write something out about what I have done in the past year.

First, I think I should tell you that I am by trade a luther. That is, I make and repair stringed instruments such as fiddles, violins, guitars etc. I was fortunate enough to have parents who gave me years of music lessons and I have diplomas in piano, big church organ and violin. Many years ago I played professionally in sym- phonies orchestras, and as pipe organ- ist in several large churches, and cur- rently I play with a classical music trio. Three days a month I play fiddle tunes for dancers who entertain at the three different nursing homes in Brace- bridge. I also teach violin and piano and fiddle. I studied at Buczynski Vio- lin Making Institute and at Ontario College of Art to become a Violinmak- er. Later, I was married to Stig Wagner- er, a Belgian, who was a wonderful violonmaker and fiddleman. He changed the way I make new instru- ments, and taught me how to restore old and damaged instruments. Sadly, he died of cancer. Later on, I married again, a very nice gentleman named Rod Millington. I just added his name to mine since I am still “Wagner’s Vio- lin Workshop” thus, the hyphenated name. I have four adult children, and many grandchildren. I have been blessed with a wonderful life.

continued in our next issue...
Aboriginal Education Strategy

There is a growing demand for classroom and the curriculum. School boards in incorporating operating significant interest from prompted a number of new nation policy framework has "Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework". This new educational includes initiatives designed for schools and school boards. It also contains initiatives to encourage and sustain Aboriginal student success, such as:

- Establishing an Aboriginal Education Office to support the learning and achievement of Aboriginal students;
- Improving literacy and numeracy skills;
- Increasing the number of Aboriginal staff working in school boards;
- Encouraging parents to get more involved in their children's education;
- Integrating information about Aboriginal history, cultures and perspectives among all students.

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The establishment of a self-identifica- tion policy framework has prompted a number of new initiatives and is generating significant interest from school boards in incorporating a Métis perspective into the classroom and the curriculum. There is a growing demand for presentations on Métis history and culture and a substantial number of sessions have already been delivered at various schools and conferences.

School boards have also been actively seeking Métis participation in the development and design of the First Nation, Métis and Inuit student identification policies that school boards are currently developing or implementing. For example, the MNO was invited to participate in the Ministry of Education’s Urban Aboriginal Education Pilot Project. This new $5 million investment is intended to support the needs of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students residing within urban settings. The pilot project will encompass the development of three urban Aboriginal education models through the Toronto District School Board, Simcoe County District School Board and Lakehead District School Board. These models will be adapted to meet the needs of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students living in urban areas and focus on building family and community engagement to support Aboriginal student success.

A provincial steering committee has been developed with representatives from various school boards, government, the ministry’s Aboriginal education office and representatives from Aboriginal organisations. The MNO is represented on this provincial steering committee and will play an active role in providing overall guidance and direction for the project and in overseeing the development and implementation of the education models. There will also be three sub-committees developed to be responsible for the implementation and evaluation of the pilot projects and the development of each urban education model. These sub-committees will also include representatives from the Métis nation. We will continue to share more information and seek input and participation as this project progresses, because we will need to be vigilant to ensure that the Métis voice, issues and concerns are adequately addressed at each level. While all these initiatives mark a positive step forward in ensuring that the Métis voice is heard in education policies and into the classroom, there remains much more to be done.

The MNO is in the process of developing a “Métis Education Action Plan” that will detail vision, goals and strategies. We will be advertising and holding community meetings as well as holding some video-confer- ence sessions. I encourage all citizens to come out and participate.

If you have questions or comments, please feel free to contact Jennifer St. Germain, Director of Education and Training, at 1-800-263-4809 or via email at jennifer@metisnation.org. I can be reached at (807) 274-1516 or via email at gary@metisnation.org.

Gary Lipinski is the President of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

THE EDUCATION AGENDA: Developing a Métis Education Action Plan

The Métis Nation has always placed a high priority on the educational needs of its citizens and in ensuring that the voice of the Métis is clearly reflected in the education system. The MNO’s Statement of Prime Purpose identifies it as a main objective: “To encourage academic skills development and to enable citizens of the Métis Nation to attain their educational aspirations.” As a result, the MNO has been actively engaged with the federal and provincial governments, school boards and other education stakeholders to move the agenda forward.

In 2006, the MNO embarked on a number of focus groups with Métis citizens to review and provide recommendations to the Ministry of Education’s, “Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework.” This new Aboriginal Education Policy Framework has prompted a number of new initiatives and is generating significant interest from school boards in incorporating a Métis perspective into the classroom and the curriculum. There is a growing demand for presentations on Métis history and culture and a substantial number of sessions have already been delivered at various schools and conferences.

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The MNO is represented on this provincial steering committee and will play an active role in providing overall guidance and direction for the project and in overseeing the development and implementation of the education models. There will also be three sub-committees developed to be responsible for the implementation and evaluation of the pilot projects and the development of each urban education model. These sub-committees will also include representatives from the Métis nation. We will continue to share more information and seek input and participation as this project progresses, because we will need to be vigilant to ensure that the Métis voice, issues and concerns are adequately addressed at each level. While all these initiatives mark a positive step forward in ensuring that the Métis voice is heard in education policies and into the classroom, there remains much more to be done.

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Community councils are being encouraged to participate in Ontario’s new Aboriginal Education Policy, if contacted. President Lipinski stated that self-identification was a high priority for the MNO, and that separate self-identifying boxes were needed on forms for First Nations, Métis and Inuit, not just one for Aboriginal. Some of the benefits of such a policy are detailed below. A self-identification policy was first introduced to the Northern Ontario Education Leaders and Northern Aboriginal Education Circle (NOBEL/NAEC) Joint Aboriginal Steering Committee in 2003. Such a policy is also used in British Columbia as a mechanism to gather data, flow funding ($10,000 for every self-identified student) and negotiate agreements between Aboriginals and school boards. The resulting self-identification policy facilitates obtaining resources from the Ministry of Education in order to develop and implement programs that respond to the particular needs of Aboriginal students. It makes it possible to direct resources to Aboriginal educational projects that:

- Provide high-quality learning opportunities that directly address the needs of Aboriginal students experiencing gaps in their education;
- Improve Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) test scores for Aboriginal students;
- Improve the retention rate of Aboriginal students in schools;
- Increase graduation rates for Aboriginal students and help ensure entrance into post-secondary studies and the world of work.

The self-identification process would provide data that could lead to increased funding for Aboriginal education. This money could be used to bring specific programs to schools to increase the success of Aboriginal students. The self-identification process would allow information to be securely stored to respect privacy and used only as a means to enhance Aboriginal education programs. This data would be used in the same manner as Ontario Student Records and protected and governed by the Freedom of Information Act. Information collected would not be communicated. The information gathered would be used in the aggregate only.
Currently, the Métis Nation of Ontario has a Scholarship and Bursary Trust worth over $2.5 million established at 32 colleges and universities across Ontario.

Each year, the interest from this Trust is provided to Métis students across Ontario in the form of scholarships and bursaries.

Since 2001, the Trust has provided over $750,000 in scholarships and bursaries to over 850 Ontario Métis students pursuing their post-secondary education aspirations.

Through this Trust, the Métis Nation of Ontario is making post-secondary education a real option for Métis students, not just a dream.

With your help, we can grow this Trust and help more students achieve their dreams, while building a stronger Métis nation!

By making a donation to the Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission, you can enhance the Trust as well as support the important work of the Commission in preserving and promoting Métis culture in Ontario. All individuals, businesses or groups that make a financial contribution to the Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission will receive a charitable tax receipt for their 2008 taxes.

This year, as a part of your annual tax planning or charitable giving, please think about making a contribution to the Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission. Whether it’s a contribution of $20.00 or $1,000.00, you will be strengthening the Métis Nation and making a Métis student’s dream come true. As well, monthly contributions can be arranged.

In order to make a contribution, please forward cheques or money orders (no cash) payable to the Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission to the address below. For more information or to arrange monthly payments, contact Doug Wilson at 1-800-263-4669.

Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission
500 Old St. Patrick Road, Unit D
Ottawa, ON K1N 9G4

Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission
Together, we can build a stronger Métis Nation!