AT THE MÉTIS RENDEZVOUS

Cameron Connor McColl makes quite the Métis Voyageur atop his grandfather Vic Brunelle’s shoulders as the Georgian Bay Métis community hosts the third annual Métis Rendezvous at the Lafontaine Parks and Recreation Centre, on Saturday September 29th, 2007. Check out our next issue for more on this year’s Rendezvous.
ATTENTION MÉTIS HUNTERS!

Many Métis Citizen harvesters still have not reported their harvest for the year 2006. PRÉPARÉZ-VOUS NOTRE! This is very important for our records. Our negotiating team has spent a lot of time on our hunting rights. The least we can do is to comply with the annual harvest report. Send your report to the Captain of the Hunt in your region now. It is not too late. Thank you for your cooperation.

Gabrielle

Gabrielle Christine Guerin was born August 29, 2007, to Melissa Lemieux and Mathieu Guerin. Weighing in at 6 lbs. 10 oz, she is welcomed by proud grandparents Roger and Angèle Lemieux and great-grandparents Emile and Yvette (Prevost) Lemieux.

Hailey

Tammy Webb, the Regional Employment and Training Coordinator in Sudbury, is a very proud grandmother—aon. Her son and daughter-in-law have a brand new baby. Hailey Howeson, on May 18th. We would like to congratulate Tammy and her family on their wonderful new addition.

Sahayma

Parker and Isaac Omenye are proud to announce the arrival of their baby sister, Sahayma Orilla Sarah, born on July 13, 2007, weighing 8 lbs. 1 oz. Proud parents are Kelly and George Omenye of Timmins. Sahayma’s proud aunts Laurie Fonjong works in the Registry Branch at head office.

THE MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

editor Linda Lord

design & production Marc St. German

contributors
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Donnie Crow
Verna Porter
Karole Dumont-Beckett
Virginia Bater
Kim Sicker
Babbi Audin
Heather Pundor
Aaron M. Boyuk
Linda Krause
Dara O’Donnell
Jeff Willan
Giene Lipinski
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Helene LaRue
Michael McWhinnie
Jim Turner
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Métis to take to the rivers to support families affected by cancer

BY KIM SICKER

The Paddle of Hope 2007 was a 35.7 km paddle through the eastern portion of the Trent Severn Waterway. Ten Métis and First Nations people came together to support their loved ones with cancer, and in memory of those who have lost the battle against this terrible disease.

Stephanie Cruise’s (Employment & Training Coordinator for Region 8) father was diagnosed with lung cancer in March of 2007. After their first trip to the traditional healer, Stephanie was inspired by an idea to show her support for her dad. Stephanie says, “People living with cancer are challenged every day, if we can challenge ourselves for three days, after our trip our challenge is over, but for these people living with cancer they can’t just walk away from their challenge.”

She wanted her dad to know that no matter what, as a family, they were going to stand together through this challenge.

The paddle of hope started on August 25, 2007, in Buckhorn, Ontario. We loaded our canoes with what we would need until we reached our first destination of Barlough Falls and away we went. Through thunderstorms, rain, bugs, and burnt food, I realised that I could not challenge myself more, but, at the same time watching my team mates and listening to their stories of family and friends that they have lost, I felt that it was a very emotional and healing trip. As Jamie Taylor said, “cancer is not prejudiced, you can be black, white, red, or yellow, and beyond the human race, how many have lost their beloved pet to cancer as well?” We reached each of our destination points to cheers from our loved ones on shore, as our ancestors would have done after coming home from a harvesting trip. We arrived at our final destination—Lakefield, Ontario—on August 25th, exhausted and full of pride. Tears flowed, smiles glowed, we were happy to finally be finished our challenge.

We would like to thank Adventure Outfitters of Lakefield for their generous donation of three of the five canoes that we used in the paddle of hope 2007, along with the Trent Severn Waterway for their continued support, and all the paddlers (below). We could not have done this without the amazing support system that was in place, from hot meals to cheers of delight. We are grateful to everyone who submitted the name of a loved one. We proudly flew our flag with each person’s name during the entire trip.

See you again next year!

Supporters: Sharon Stevens, Art Stevens, Cathy Frost, Butch Frost, Amor Seager, Tim Doughty, Jennifer Godfrey, Tyler Cruise, Bill Taylor, Suzie Cruise, Anna McLaughlin, Ron Johnson, Joey Stevens, Adventure Outfitters, Trent Severn Waterway.

PADDLERS OF HOPE ’07

Black oak left to right: Jamie Taylor, Jordan Godfrey, Kevin Frost and Raymond Godfrey. Front row left to right: Stephanie Cruise, Kim Sicker, Lesley Frost, Cara Frost, Dean Wood and Samantha Stevens.

The Paddle of Hope sets off from Buckhorn, Ontario.

The Paddle of Hope sets off from Buckhorn, Ontario.

Métis families learning together

BY BONNY CAIN

The past summer the Métis Nation of Ontario’s new literacy program “Métis Families Learning Together” took place in August at Frontier College in Toronto. In attendance were numerous volunteers, as well as Bonny Cain, one from Provincial Education Initiatives Coordinator and Literacy Project Supervisor, Philip Fernandez, Manager Aboriginal Programs Frontier College, Natalie Wilson, Frontier College Community Coordinator, Lesley Program Coordinator, Heather Purdon (Toronto/Hamilton), and Bobbi Aubin (Sudbury/North Bay). A big “thank you” to all the volunteers who dedicated their time and effort to raise literacy levels, the “Métis Families Learning Together Program” was launched in two pilot areas, North Bay/ Sudbury and Toronto/Hamilton. In partnership with Frontier College (a national literacy organization), the mno submitted a successful proposal to the Ontario Trillium Founda- tion and received approval for a two year funding commitment.

Métis-specific resource materials and a training program have been established to engage community volunteers, peer tutors and families in literacy initiatives. Eventually these services and resources will be brought to Métis communities across Ontario. For more contact Bonny Cain, Provincial Education Initiatives Coordinator (bonny@metisnation.org or call 888-466-6684, in c. 416-977-9881). Please check wwwmetisnation.org for details on the program and to access community volunteer application form.

LITERACY |

Reading does a Métis mind good

BY BOBBI AUBIN

Training for the Métis Nation of Ontario’s new literacy program “Métis Families Learn- ing Together” took place in August at Frontier College in Toronto. In attendance were numerous volunteers, as well as Bonny Cain, two Provincial Education Initiatives Coordinator and Literacy Project Supervisor, Philip Fernandez, Manager Aboriginal Programs Frontier College, Natalie Wilson, Frontier College Community Coordinator, Lesley Program Coordinator, Heather Purdon (Toronto/Hamilton), and Bobbi Aubin (Sudbury/North Bay). A big “thank you” to all the volunteers who dedicated their time and wisdom to the training.

The training saw us put ideas together as to how the reading circles and homework clubs would work. Philip, who taught us how to run the programs and set them up, was a great motivation instructor. All participants were encouraged and given the opportunity to incorporate their knowledge, skills, education and experiences throughout the training.

Personally, I found the training satisfying in that it enabled me to pick up new skills and knowledge, as well as affording me an opportunity to learn from all participants. I am pretty excited about this new project as it will allow children to benefit from the programs and increase literacy.

The training gave me a chance to recognise my role and responsibilities, where my strengths lie, and what I need to learn more about. The volunteers shared a lot of their strengths and we had a really good working group throughout the training—a lot of laughter when needed as well as seriousness when required.

I look forward to working with the volunteers, parents, community members, co-workers, supervisors and most important the children who will be accessing our programs.

Bobbi Aubin/MNO Literacy Program Coordinator Sudbury/North Bay Ph. 705-919-2425

MÉTIS FAMILIES LEARNING TOGETHER

REGION 8

Métis Christmas celebration

BY CECILIE WAGNER

A Métis Heritage Celebration 2007 took place in Brooklyn, Ontario, on June 23rd. Guest speakers included Tony Belcourt, Métis Nation of Ontario President; Pat Perkins, Whithby Mayor; and John Gray, Mayor of Oshawa.

The event was hosted by the Oshawa Métis Council in conjunction with other Celebrate Canada events across the country. There were Métis games, displays and demonstrations of traditional leather work, beadwork, hanoock making, fiddling and a fiddle display. Senator Ruth Wagn- ner-Millington of the Métis Nation of Ontario. Those in attendance were also treated to a draumtism of Louis Riel’s wife by Amy White; a visit from Trapper Rob; a singing workshop and performance by Lawrence “Red Boy” Houle; a jigging contest, silent auction and a 50/50 draw.

First Nation and Métis tales and legends were also fea- tured along with live music by Charlie Fife, the Shiva Drum- mers of Oshawa, a potluck dinner, and much more. This fun event gives the Oshawa Métis Council an opportunity to expose family friends and the general public to Métis culture and history.

MÉTIS CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Make plans to attend our Family Fun Day on Saturday, December 1st, 2007, at Central Public School auditorium from 1-4 PM. There will be something for the whole family: catered food, Christ- mas carolling, storytelling, raf- flies, crafts, dancing, a possible visit from Santa Claus and much more. Refreshments and admission are FREE.

To register contact: Sibibi Metis Laffcerri e: 905-454-8951

Note: Children’s book dona- tions for the MNO’s new Fam- ily Literacy Program would be much appreciated.
Discovering Métis history

2nd Annual Métis Day at Discovery Harbour - A Growing Success!

BY SCOTT CARPENTER

The second annual Métis Day, a partnership between the Métis Nation of Ontario and the Huronia Museum, was held on Saturday, August 11th, and it was another huge success. The event was hosted at Discovery Harbour in the historic Métis community of Penetanguishene, one of the many villages along Lake Huron, that settled here in the 19th century. The story of the many visitors enjoyed a horse and wagon ride and the entertainment provided by the following list of Métis artisans and performers. A big thank-you goes out to everyone who so ably demonstrated our culture throughout the day.

Thanks to Joanne Parent for her assistance and a special thank-you to the costumed youth volunteers, Karly, Alexa and Brittney Chapman and Park Erb For their enthusiasm and the pride they show in their Métis heritage. See you all next year!

Scott Carpenter is the Regional Employment & Training Coordinator for Region 7.

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After 22 years UN affirms Rights of world’s Indigenous

In September, 2007, the United Nations adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at a meeting of the General Assembly at UN Headquarters in New York by an overwhelming majority of 143 votes in favour, four opposed and 11 abstentions.

The Métis Nation, represented by Métis Nation of Ontario President, Tony Belcourt, joined leaders of Indigenous peoples from around the world on this momentous occasion to applaud the Nation States who voted to approve the Declaration and to express profound disappointment in Canada and the small number of other countries (Australia, New Zealand, USA) who voted in opposition to its adoption.

Mr Belcourt said: “This is a truly remarkable milestone in the history of the struggle by Indigenous peoples for the recognition of their rights by the global community of Nation States. It is in the spirit of debate and negotiation between Indigenous Peoples and Nation States for more than two decades since it was first drafted in 1985. The Declaration is an ‘aspirational’ affirmation of our rights consistent with international law and as such provides a framework for the protection of Indigenous peoples and the promotion of harmonious relations within the States where they live. We call on Canada to work with the Métis Nation and other Aboriginal peoples to develop policies and actions which are consistent with the provisions of the Declaration despite its opposition to its adoption. Now that we have achieved this great moment in history, it is incumbent on all states, including Canada, to pursue co-operation with Indigenous peoples within their borders towards the implementation of the provisions of this historic declaration.”

For the text of the Declaration and other resources see the UN web site at: www.metis-nation.org

INDIGENOUS WORLD CELEBRATES PASSAGE OF UN DECLARATION

Seeking young Métis educators

The Métis Nation of Ontario, Toronto regional office is looking for youth volunteers interested in participating in a “Métis youth travelling education group”.

The City of Toronto has funding for a group of youths (with training) who could respond to the needs of schools and corporations who wish to be better educated about Métis culture and history.

Remember, training will be provided so don’t worry about what you don’t know! It is an opportunity to get together, get involved and to teach others. We are looking for people from age 12-24 who are interested in getting volunteer hours for school or who just want to do something fun.

I am looking forward to hearing from you! This is specific to Toronto Métis Youth because of funding requirements, however, if you are outside of Toronto and still interested, contact your local Métis council office.

CONTACT: Bonny Cann, MNO Provincial Education Initiatives Coordinator
Ph: 416 977-9881 bonnyec@metisnation.org

New program for Aboriginal seniors

The Ontario Aboriginal Housing Support Services Corporation (os cons) has recently received funding for the New Horizons for Seniors Program.

This program funds a wide range of local projects and non-profit activities that encourage seniors to contribute to their community. The New Horizons Program supports projects led by seniors by providing funding of up to $25,000. It supports seniors to lead activities that will benefit other seniors, vulnerable groups and communities where they live by volunteering, mentoring and teaching.

The Gabriel Dumont Institute education with a Métis flair

By VIRGINIA BARTER

The Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Research is a post-secondary education institution that provides a unique, Métis-focused program of study. The institute is named after Gabriel Dumont, a prominent Métis leader and hero of the North-West Resistance of 1885.

The institute offers a range of programs, including Bachelor of Education, Bachelor of Business Administration, Bachelor of Social Work, and Master of Social Work. These programs are designed to prepare students for careers in the fields of education, business, social work, and more.

In addition to its academic programs, the institute offers a range of services and resources to support student success. These include academic advising, career counseling, and access to a variety of research and community engagement opportunities.

The Gabriel Dumont Institute is proud to offer a Métis-focused education, providing students with a unique perspective and understanding of Métis culture and history. This focus is reflected in the institute’s curriculum, which is designed to prepare students for success in Métis communities and beyond.

The institute is committed to fostering a welcoming and inclusive learning environment for all students. It is proud to offer a range of programs and services that support student success and help students achieve their goals.

The Gabriel Dumont Institute is an incredible resource for Métis students and the broader Métis community. Its programs and services offer a unique and valuable opportunity to learn and grow in a Métis-focused environment.

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ACHIEVING THE DREAM

Education and Training News from North Bay - the Gateway City

BY LINDA KRAUSE

W ill summer is at an end but here at the southwest Region 5 North Bay site things are just a-buzzing.

With a new school year underway lots of students are preparing to settle themselves in for a long winter of studying. We have been hard at work making sure everything goes well for both our clients who are entering school for the first time and for those who are returning. Bursary time is also upon us and I do encourage all students to apply not just for the Métis Nation of Ontario bursary but any bursary that would help Aboriginal students.

I travelled a lot at the beginning of this year to learn how to better help my clients, and it was a very mind nurturing experience.

Now, having had my vacation, I’m looking forward to keeping busy making sure all goes well at the office and supporting as many Métis citizens as I can with schooling, sse applications or just a chat. Everyone is welcome to stop by the office.

Besides being busy bees in the whole North Bay office has been much occupied this summer and it’s not over yet. The health programs have been running all kinds of activities. These were listed in a calendar that was sent out and proved to be very successful.

In July we organized a Family Fun Day at our local Elks Lodge where we had display booths and fund-raising events (makeshift casino); a delicious spaghetti dinner; kids activities; and a costume parade where we had display booths and fun-raising events (makeshift casino); a delicious spaghetti dinner; kids activities; and a costume parade where we had display booths and fun-raising events. The annual Métis Harvest  Gathering, 2007,  was held Octo-

With a little help from MNOTI, Devin Shank was able to graduate from Seneca College’s Commercial Diver program.

REGION 5

Darlene McIsaac
Regional Employment & Training Coordinator
darlene@metisnation.org
1-888-825-1742 (705 only)

Sudbury Office
240 Hill Drive - Units 235-101 Northgate St E
Sudbury ON P3C 5P4
Ph: 705-674-1501

Hello everyone, from the Métis Nation of Ontario Training Initiatives in Region 5 Summer has already come and gone. Time sure flies when you’re busy. And busy we were, starting in May with our Annual Métis Awareness Day, the Timmins Multicultural Festival and ending with our attendance at the MNO AGA.

We also helped Métis students with summer employment. We had students from the construction course at Northern College build beautiful offices to accommodate all our programs in our regional office. We are now working diligently to serve all the Métis citizens returning to school and the work force.

As a regional office we are also preparing for Riel Day and our Annual Christmas Pot Luck.

REGION 3

Colette Risewick
Regional Employment & Training Coordinator
Nicole Charron
Employment & Training Office
349 Spruce Street South
Trenton ON P4N 2J6
Ph: 705-264-3939

We’re looking for Métis families with school-aged children who would like to participate in weekly homework clubs or reading circles in four regions across Ontario.

If you feel your child would benefit from one of these programs, or if you would like to volunteer, please contact the Métis Literacy Coordinator in your area for more details:

Toronto & Hamilton:
HEATHER PLATER
heather@metisnation.org
Ph: 1-888-466-6684 or 416-977-9881

Sudbury & North Bay:
BOBBI AUBIN
bobbi@metisnation.org
Ph: 705-699-0866

DILIGENT SERVICE

BY COLETTE & NICOLE

Hello everyone, from the Métis Nation of Ontario Training Initiatives in Region 5 Summer has already come and gone. Time sure flies when you’re busy. And busy we were, starting in May with our Annual Métis Awareness Day, the Timmins Multicultural Festival and ending with our attendance at the MNO AGA.

We also helped Métis students with summer employment. We had students from the construction course at Northern College build beautiful offices to accommodate all our programs in our regional office. We are now working diligently to serve all the Métis citizens returning to school and the work force.

As a regional office we are also preparing for Riel Day and our Annual Christmas Pot Luck.

REGION 3

Colette Risewick
Regional Employment & Training Coordinator
Nicole Charron
Employment & Training Office
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Trenton ON P4N 2J6
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Hey from northwestern Ontario! Winter is right around the corner, autumn surrounds us with brilliant colours and you can feel the excitement in the air! We’re busy in Fort Frances, Kenora, Dryden, Sioux Lookout and surrounding communities preparing ourselves for the upcoming months.

If you are thinking about education and employment, sse has a number of programs which may offer support and opportunity to Métis individuals. Some of the programs available through the sse Training Branch are training purchases, self-employment, apprenticeship support, mobility, disabilities, wage subsidies and cultural economic development.

Our Summer Career Placement program is an excellent example of planning and preparing for the work force. Once again, students in Region 1 acquired skills that will help them prepare for their future employment. They’ve added skills to their resume and will now continue their education with a better understanding of the workplace environment. Good luck to all our Métis students this school year. Remember, your academic career will give you options and choices in your future employment pursuit.

Recently, the sse launched the Health Careers Support Program, a program for Métis people working toward a health career. This is a wonderful opportunity for many Métis people. For more information on this program, and for next year’s deadline, please visit our website www.metisnation.org.

A reminder to everyone through a partnership with the Province of Ontario, the sse has established the sse Bursary Program which is a bursary trust fund at 32 colleges and universities in Ontario. You can visit our website for a list of partnering institutions.

This perpetual fund allows bursaries to be paid to successful applicants from the interest accumulated annually. The applications, including deadlines and requirements, are accessed by students once they have been accepted into one of the partnering institution’s programs.

Stay safe and have a great autumn season!
**Métis Voyageur**

Owen Sound Métis and well-wishers officially open the community garden on June 26, 2007.

**BY DIANE OWEN**

Indigenous herb & food garden

Grey-Owen Sound Métis cultivate

**Grande River Métis**

New Council looking for Métis in south central Ontario

**BY CAROL LEVIS**

If you are Métis, or believe you are of Métis origin, and live in the Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge or Guelph area, the Grand River Community Métis Council (GRCMC) wants and needs your help and support.

Your interim council has been working hard to set up the charter for our area since our very first meeting on March 31st. We were thrilled with the turn out for that meeting and we are now looking forward to our first election and the Charter Signing Ceremony taking place on October 29th, 2007. That will be a “don’t miss” event.

Métis Nation of Ontario (1860) President, Tony Belcourt, 1800 Chair, Gary Lipinska, and 1900 Senior Policy Analyst, Hank Rowlinson, will be in attendance for the charter signing. We are hoping Eric Scofield, our 2000 Councillor for Region 9 can also be present. Your attendance would be a great way to show pride in our heritage. The meeting will be held at 7:00 pm at the Doon Campus of Conestoga College at 299 Doon Valley Drive in room 3E19.

Carol Levis is a GRCMC Councillor.

**CONTACT:**

Ruth Robbins, President

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**Métis booth a hit at giant yard sale**

**BY JEFF WILSON**

Senator Leora Wilson and a small, but mighty contingent of local Métis, peopleled the Grey Owen Sound Métis booth at the “Hottest Yard Sale Under The Sun” event, in connection with the 2007 Owen Sound Homecoming celebration.

The book, “Historic Saugeen & Its Métis People,” edited by Port Elgin resident Pat McArthur, was the centre of interest for many visitors. Copies of the Wayway, and local Métis community newsletter, “The Outpost,” as well as photo albums displaying recent Métis community events caught passing eyes. Displayed also were a number of items relative to the local Métis community. The booth offered give-aways, as well as a small number of items for sale.


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**All aboard the “Atomic”**

**BY LINDA LORD**

Meet Jim Turner and his tugboat. Jim built the boat from scratch—everything except the little rubber tires and the anchor was made by hand. There is enormous detail and it is 1/24 scale.

The tug is the “Atomic” from Amherstburg, Ontario, where he used to work on her and others. McQueen Marine owned in the 60s through the 70s.

It took two years to build, and Jim says that he was lucky to get the scale plans from the captain. Cliff Morrison who now lives in St. Catharines.

The hull was made from a solid block of wood that was laminated together from 3/4 inch pine. Then it was spoku shered to size and formed and finally sanded. The upper decks are cut pieces of pine and the windows are Plexiglas. The lifeboat is carved from a piece of wood, and all rigging is exact. Everything you see including anchor, windlass, all pulleys etc. were made on Jim’s lathe from brass. There is absolutely nothing that is left out and it is complete in every way.

Several museums have been eying the tug, but Jim does not want to part with it. Russell Broth-
It is ironic that the Crown continued to appeal decisions all the way to the Supreme Court, yet 20 years earlier in 1982 Métis rights were entrenched in the Constitution of Canada and they were recognized as one of the country’s Aboriginal nations.

Furthermore, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples states that “It is unjust and unreasonable to withhold from the Métis the services and opportunities available to other Aboriginal peoples.”

Powley knows first-hand how taxing the mental and physical toll can be when faced with having to prove one’s Aboriginal ancestry.

On Oct. 22, 1993, her late husband Steve and their son Roddy shot a bull moose near Sault Ste. Marie and tagged it with a homemade Métis harvesting card, a note stating the catch was for winter food and their Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association membership numbers.

The pair were charged by the Ministry of Natural Resources conservation officers with hunting without a licence and unlawful possession of moose contrary to the Game and Fish Act.

They fought a 10-year battle through the Ontario Court of Appeal and on to the Supreme Court of Canada, where Powley’s claims to Métis ancestry were signed. “His Métis heritage came from his mother’s Ojibwa blood and goes all the way back to the original Métis settlement here.”

Even though the Crown appealed each victory, “we’d win the round,” she said. “Justice was finally served when the Supreme Court ruled that Steve Powley’s Métis ancestry could not be disputed, nor would minimum blood quantum be required as his ancestry evolved from an established Métis community.”

The ruling also described how Aboriginal rights are collective and must be grounded in the existence of a historic or present community.

Sault Ste. Marie’s Métis community continued to be a presence despite a decline in numbers after the signing of the Robinson-Huron Treaty, in which reserves were set apart for natives. Court documents clearly described the ongoing existence of the Métis in Sault Ste. Marie, even though many had gone to the reserves or migrated to outlying areas. They did not cease to exist - they survived by virtue of their inherent practices of hunting, fishing, harvesting and trapping.

The Crown continuously appealed “with the intent of discrediting these facts,” Brenda said.

Steve’s journey toward self-realization had begun years before he ever entered a courtroom.

“Steve found out as an adult that he was Métis. He and his siblings were called Indians as kids, but no one talked about it,” she said. “It wasn’t something to be proud of, and in many cases family members who looked Indian were scratched from photos. If they weren’t visible, there was no explaining to do.”

Brenda agrees pride is once again replacing these feelings.

Sault Ste. Marie Mayor John Rowswell and members of council have been very supportive. The Métis flag is flown at city hall for the week of Nov. 16, which is Louis Riel Day.

Brent McHale always knew he was native, “but as a kid it was all hidden away.”

McHale, a Métis who resides in Searchmont and is a councilor, says his mother was protective, “and didn’t expose us to that side of the family.”

She referred to them as friends, “but I started asking questions, and finally my mother relented and admitted to being aboriginal.”

He left the Sault in the 1960s and worked in southern Ontario for 30 years, “but when I came back I got involved with the Métis Nation of Ontario.”

He has traced his Métis ancestry through his grandmother Sarah Cochrane of Batchewana First Nation, back to the early 1800s in Sault Ste. Marie’s Métis community. In order to prove his Métis ancestry, he searched records at the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary Catholic Church in Garden River First Nation, and got information from the Corbiere family.

“The Powley decision makes the process of establishing Métis ancestry more precise,” he agreed.

On Sept. 19, 2003, Steve Powley wore his Métis sash draped over his rights shoulder. Flanked by his lawyer Jean Téillet, great-grandniece of Louis Riel, and Métis leaders Tony Belcourt and family and friends, he said a few words to the press.

“A landmark victory after a 10-year battle was to be celebrated by all Métis from coast to coast,” said Brenda.

Steve suffered from the complications of diabetes for some time and was in frail health. “He said he’d get the case to the end of the court battle, and then he’d go,” his wife recalled.

He died Feb. 24, 2004, five months after the historical Supreme Court decision, but not before he left a legacy of enormous proportions.

Brenda Powley at the Supreme Court of Canada in 2003.

Steve Powley at the Supreme Court of Canada in 2003.
Pawkar Raymi

Andean ceremony and the sounds of sacred drums

BY VIRGINIA BARTER

In coordination with the Alom Kajolom Maya of Toronto and the Andean First Nations Council-Toronto (CANO), the sacred Andean ceremony, “Pawkar Raymi” took place at the Project Amik community room on March 24th. Around 70 people attended the ceremony, representing the four directions—yellow, white and red—from Toronto, Markham, Ajax, Brampton, York, Mississauga and Scarborough. They brought drums of all sizes and shapes—Mapuche, Haida, Ojibway and even an Andean “Wayqarca,” which were played to honour Mother Earth or Pachamama.

The evening began with a traditional smudge by Amik resident Amber O’Hara, who said that it was good to share this native North American practice with other cultures. Then the “Manitou Kwe Singers” drummed the welcome and healing songs. The native North American songs were a special welcome to other cultures. Then the Andean Andean neighbours, the brother and sisters of Alom Kajolom Maya, led by Elder Bartolo Alvarez with an eagle feather as a symbol of peace and harmony among all nations. They brought drums of all sizes and shapes—Mapuche, Haida, Ojibway and even an Andean “Wayqarca,” which were played to honour Mother Earth or Pachamama.

The presentation of the Andean Dance Group, Incasabrac, was the highlight of the evening as they conducted a traditional Andean prayer ceremony to the four directions, then danced in honour of Mother Earth. After the formal presentations, the audience was invited to participate in a mass drumming circle led by Toronto musician, Rick Monaco. Rick has a deep experience working with groups in schools and workshop settings and soon had the room throbbing in a brilliant mix of international sounds—African drums, native hand drums, powwow drums, bongos and an array of percussion sounds. Everyone participated. Even the children joined in.

Drumming is fundamental to all indigenous cultures, and is now reawakening in Métis culture too. The Métis song was brought to the drum in Ontario at a Pawkar Raymi ceremony in Toronto last spring.

REGION 7

Community Election Notice

Georgian Bay Métis Council

Special notice to all Citizens of the Georgian Bay Métis Council that the election process is now underway.

Nominations open
September 26th, 2007

Nominations close
October 24th, 2007

Verification by
October 31st, 2007

Advanced Poll
November 17th, 2007

and the Election date is
November 24th, 2007

Please notify your friends, relatives and neighbours of the election! For more information please contact:

Georgian Bay Métis Council
9170 Cry Rd. 95W, Unit 501
RR#2, Box 50
Midland, ON
L4R 4K4
Ph: 705-526-6535
Fx: 705-526-7537

The November election is now underway. Please make sure to vote for our representatives of your choice.

Métis Jam

“Métis Jam” is a series of Métis jam nights which began September 1st at The Old Sed at 2936 Bloor Street West in Toronto, between noon and 1am. The location of each Métis Jam is different in order to allow each area in the GTA a chance to share our wonderful music and culture. This is a family event and all ages are welcome. However, children must be accompanied by an adult and will be required to leave at 9pm whenever the jam takes place at a licensed establishment.

Bring your instruments and join host Charlie Fife for a night of music. For info call 905-763-9840 or email charlieffie@rogers.com.
Back to the Bay

The Métis Nation of Ontario heads back to familiar ground to hold another great Annual General Assembly.

BY MARC ST. GERMAIN

A few hundred metres upstream delegates were starting to gather at the big tent. The MNO Registry team made sure everyone was accounted for and voting cards and kits were distributed while friends and relatives from the four directions of Ontario met again.

Young people from Old Fort William Historical Park dressed in fur-trade era fashion sang and danced in-the-round in anticipation of the arrival of dignitaries. Several assembly delegates were coaxed into their reeling circle.

As though out of the misty past a train of canoes appeared, the three voyageur canoes carried President Tony Belcourt and other dignitaries up the channel to cheers from the crowd along the bank and a salute from Old Fort William’s cannonfire.

The paddlers disembarked, greetings and a few laughs were exchanged. Then, with colors flying and with Roger Grosout’s fiddle keeping the beat, the assembly proceeded into the big tent where Senator Bob McKay offered the opening prayer.

“For many people this may not be a typical business agenda,” said PCMNO Chair, Gary Lipinski, in his opening remarks. “This is the launch of a week long schedule of cultural activities AND business for the Métis Nation of Ontario.”

At the MNO’s AGAs, Monday, Wednesday and Friday are comprised of meetings during which the business of the Métis Nation is discussed and debated. But, as Gary explained, “while conducting this important business we want family, friends and the extended community to join us. So, we combine that with cultural activities on Tuesday and Thursday and in the evenings.”

“One of the things that the Métis people have always been good at—a role we played in building Canada—is bringing people together,” Gary said. “It is in that spirit that we continue to do that. We have a number of leaders from all levels of government... We welcome each and every one of you and we want to say how much we appreciate you giving your time to spend it with us to learn from us, to understand a bit about us and work with us in the future.”

Thunder Bay Métis Council President, Bill Smith, welcomed everyone and looked forward to the work at hand and the sharing of Métis culture and traditions during the coming week.

Secretary-Treasurer of the PCMNO, Tim Pile, a resident of Thunder Bay, extended warm greetings.

Delegates salute as they arrive at Chippewa Park in Thunder Bay by canoe on the opening morning of the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation Ontario.
Robert Doucette, who had been elected President of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan only a few days prior, took the floor next and offered a gift, saying: “I would like to present this tobacco to the leader of the Métis people of Ontario, Mr. Belcourt. It is tradition to do that—to honour the grandfather and elders and the Métis people of Ontario and also to respect Mother Earth and all of the things that she brings.”

President Doucette spoke about the challenges facing the Métis as a nation, such as the hard work being done to obtain justice for Métis veterans, to gain recognition of those Métis who were in residential schools, and to achieve inclusion in the many programs and services available to First Nations and Inuit peoples.

The national president also mentioned that much of the progress reported in 2005 had been put on hold while the Métis struggled to find ways for the current government to honour the agreements of the past governments: in particular, the 2005 Kelowna Accord, and the Canada-Métis Nation Framework Agreement.

President Chartier concluded by saying that he believed that the Métis would continue to persevere and would succeed.

Dignitaries and guest speakers were then each presented with an MNO 14th Anniversary AGA paddle by members of the PCMNO.

Related materials distributed under Tab 1 of the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario Agenda package: Report – President’s Message from President Tony Belcourt.

Then, MNO President, Tony Belcourt, stepped forward to address the assembly.

“I want to say how wonderful it is to follow our traditions and come in by canoe, remembering that historically our people here in Ontario travelled by canoe,” said President Belcourt. “It is wonderful to hear the fiddle and see our dancers. I’m sure everyone feels the same way about how privileged we are to be all together in these wonderful facilities.”

A heartfelt thank you to all the people involved with the many tributes to Marion (Larkman), and thank you for the invitation to this year’s AGA.

– Paul Elcombe
Métis Voyageur

A moving tribute to the Grandmother of the Métis Nation was held on opening day of the AGA.

FROM PAGE 13

Tony went on to talk of the rich and often tragic history, the exhilarating and sometimes trying present, and what will surely be a bright future for the Métis Nation.

"When we look back in our history to 1869 and 1870, to Riel and the provisional government," said President Belcourt, "our leaders came forward and said we want to be treated with. Our people again stood up and said we have a right to exist, and what will surely be a bright future for the Métis Nation.

"Mr. Macdonald said 'no' and this is the end," said Tony. "And we know what happened. The lands that were promised to be set aside for the children of the half-breeds were soon assumed by others. Our people were dispersed. In 1895 our people again stood up and said we want to be treated with. Mr. Macdonald said 'no' and this time Mr. Macdonald brought the Gaoling gun. And I think Mr. Macdonald thought, 'that is the end of the Métis; we won't hear from them again.'"

"Even though it took another hundred years, the Métis did not go away, and finally, in the Constitution Act, 1982, the Métis were recognised as one of Canada's Aboriginal peoples. Tony went on to talk about the founding of the soxo in 1995 and its continuous growth since then. The return of the Métis people to their cultural and spiritual roots, including the sacred fire, sacred song, granite of fire and smoke, and the recent introduction of the pipe ceremony between the MNO and First Nations by inviting all soxo citizens to participate in a pipe ceremony between the soxo and the Anishnabek Nation on August 20, 2007, in Sault Ste. Marie. He went on to say that he and Grand Council Chief Beaucage had discussed a relationship on harvesting between the two nations.

"At the Anishnabek Nation AGA a few weeks prior, there was support for moving towards the creation of a treaty on the issue of harvesting. In addition, Grand Council Chief Beaucage had invited the soxo to participate in a meeting on inter-treaty harvesting."

Another item of good news was the recent announcement of an Ontario Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. In June, as a result of the Upperwash Inquiry, it was recommended that a new Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs be established. The Premier named David Ramsay (MPP, Timiskaming-Cochrane), and presently Minister of Natural Resources and Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, as that minister. It is expected, however, that the provincial elections are over, there will be a new stand-alone minister to advocate on behalf of Aboriginal peoples in Ontario.

"With regard to upcoming and on-going negotiations, President Belcourt told the assembly that the soxo would press for resource revenue sharing and for provincial and federal policies on land claims. He also said that Métis were currently seeking to participate in the treaty making process in the Algonquin claim, and emphasised that any land claim process must have room for the Métis people.

"The assembly was also told that the soxo was representing to the Government of Ontario that the soxo could no longer be excluded from the opportunity of gaming revenues, while allowing other Aboriginal peoples in Ontario access to those revenues."

Tony went on to speak about new opportunities and endeavours, such as the soxo's rapidly expanding programs and services in various areas including health and housing. The president also told the assembly that very soon the MNC will turn its attention to the building of a Métis Nation Constitution and other governance issues.
President Belcourt thanked MNO staff, volunteers and the rexo for their work on behalf of the Métis Nation citizens, and his family for their support of him in his role as president.

As for the future, “We are going to be busy,” said President Belcourt. “We are going to need the active support of all of our people. To me in my language this is ‘New Dawn’.”

Following President Belcourt’s address the rexo received a cheque in the amount of $244,300 to enhance the literacy to the Métis, and this was the first rexo aca at which she was not present. It was the sentiment of all gathered that day, that she will always be in the hearts and minds of those who were fortunate enough to know her.

Senator Larkman’s grandson, Jason Defosse, spoke of having accompanied his grand- mother to meetings for 32 years. He called “graney” his hero, saviour and inspiration.

Jason shared a “Marion Moment”: when they were in France as part of the Aboriginal Spiritual Journey she wore her buck- skin poncho at the Vimy Ridge Memorial. A French reporter ran up to Senator Larkman and asked, “Madam your backskin poncho, you’re not worried it will get ruined in the rain?” and she responded: “Have you ever seen the big tent, so when Sierra kicked in with her fiddle the tent pegs really had their work out for them.

The 6th Annual Building Bridges Festival

Sierra Noble’s incredible skill with the fiddle and charming stage presence took last year’s set at Ojibway Park in Sault Ste. Marie by storm, to say the least. So, when news spread that Sierra would open up this year’s Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission’s (mno) 6th Annual Building Bridges Music Festival empty seats were hard to find in the big tent. Of course, Sierra was great again. She had the jiggers pounding the dust out of the dance floor and every toe in the tent tapping. Then, another aca favourite took the stage. Loma Rowlinson is the rexo’s mild-mannered Teledicine Coordinator, but on stage under the lights, she is “Loma,” the swoc’s Building Bridges Festival emcee and an extraordinary entertainer. Loma’s powerful voice threatened to blow the roof right off the big tent.

Journey she wore her buckskin poncho at the Vimy Ridge Memorial. A French reporter ran up to Senator Larkman and asked, “Madam your backskin poncho, you’re not worried it will get ruined in the rain?” and she responded: “Have you ever seen a deer with a raincoat on?” Marion’s indomitable spirit shone out in a video interview played for the assembly and her quick wit brought wistful smiles to many faces.

Manitoba fiddler, Sierra Noble, played the “Warrior’s Lament” in honour of this brave, unforget- table Métis woman. After that no more words were necessary.

The opening day’s meeting was adjourned.

Building Bridges Festival

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Then, another aca favourite took the stage. Loma Rowlinson is the rexo’s mild-mannered Teledicine Coordinator, but on stage under the lights, she is “Loma,” the swoc’s Building Bridges Festival emcee and an extraordinary entertainer. Loma’s powerful voice threatened to blow the roof right off the big tent. When Sierra kicked in with her fiddle the tent pegs really had their work out for them.

The 6th Annual Building Bridges Festival has brought a lot of great acts to the aca over the past few years, and this year saw one of the biggest acts yet take the stage. Michelle Wright is a multi-award winning country singer who has charted songs on the Billboard Top 40 several times, has been a country radio staple since the early 90’s and seems like a real nice person too.

Michelle and her band played an incredible two plus hour show. She played all the old favourites (yes, there were few dry eyes in
the house after *He Would Be Sixteen* and songs off her latest recording. After the show Michelle signed autographs and took photos with her biggest Métis fans. Bet you’re sorry you missed that one!

**- TUESDAY -**

The sun was a no-show at Tuesday’s sunrise ceremony as the morning of Day Two brought some gloomy clouds. However, the sacred fire was well cared for and the spirits of the assembly kept burning brightly.

Sierra Noble led a jigging and finger-weave workshop. France Picotte gave the ins and outs on how to finger-weave a Métis sash. Nicole Noble led a jiggling and full-dress workshop. The seo’s Historical Researcher, Virginia Barter, set up a genealogy information table. There was snowshoe and paddle making and no doubt other activities that haven’t been listed. Cultural days are busy days at the AGA.

They say jigging is bred in the bone for many Métis, and to be sure all Métis like to dance and have fun, and like their voyageur forbears many Métis have a competitive nature. That being said, no AGA is complete without a dust-kicking jiggling contest, so that was how Tuesday night’s entertainment got started. The acoustic guitars took over after that. Folk-country songwriter Charlie Fie and home-styled duo the Real McCoy’s were easy on the ears and kept the crowd mellow. Then André Giroux and Julie Lapointe finished off the evening country-style.

**- WEDNESDAY -**

Beginning with a prayer offered by Senator Alis Kentroedoe, the assembly was back in business mode again on Wednesday morning. Reports were made by the Senators, the wuxoo, and Veterans. As well, financial and audit information from the Administration Department of the seo were presented. Lawyer Jean Telliet, a member of the great legal team that took the historic Powwow Case all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada and won, was then on hand to talk about the seo bylaws. (Related materials distributed about the MNO by-laws.)

The seo’s Director of Health, Doug Wilson, introduced Allen Prowse, Vice President of Mental Health Services for Providence Care in Kingston. Mr. Prowse explained that the seo and Providence Care along with Queen’s University were entering into a Memorandum of Understanding. This partnership will see Providence Care provide training and certification for all seo mental health workers. Queen’s University meanwhile will conduct a survey of the mental health conditions of Métis in Ontario. Then, together, the partners will plan for the appropriate resources to meet the identified needs.

President Belcourt praised the efforts of the Health Branch managers and France Picotte the seo’s portfolio holder for health issues, who, over the last year-and-a-half made this partnership a reality. (Watch for more on this partnership in upcoming issues of Métis Voyageur.)

At last year’s AGA the Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award was created to commemorate the life of Suzanne Rochon-Burnett, a Métis who gave a great deal to her community and also to recognize the tremendous contributions that volunteers make to the Métis Nation of Ontario Agenda package: seo Youth Branch Challenge of 2007.

Allison Croft, appointed Chair of the Métis Nation of Ontario Youth Council (MNOC) in January, reported that the seo had been working hard to establish support and representation in the regions. Ms. Croft concluded with an introduction of the seo members in attendance who stood and were acknowledged by the assembly. Jean Telliet returned to the stage and briefly discussed changes to the seo Electoral Code. (Related materials distributed under Tab 2 of the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario Agenda package can be obtained by contacting the seo head office in Ottawa.)

Jean also gave the assembly the “lay of the land” with regard to Métis legal issues from Ontario to British Columbia and outlined some relevant court cases involving First Nations. She discussed the recent victory in the Lautin case and how the seo won two rulings at the time of the decision on June 12, 2007: protection of negotiations, and that the seo had breached the terms of the 2004 Harvesting Agreement. Since the ruling the Crown has been withdrawing all charges as they come up.

**TAKE IT LIKE A MÉTIS:** Country music star Michelle Wright performing at the Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission (MNOCC) 6th Annual Building Bridges Festival.
Big step forward for Métis education

New Post-secondary Chair In Métis Studies announced at this year’s MNO Assembly

On July 13th, the Honourable David Ramsay, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, announced on behalf of the Honourable Chris Bentley, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, that the McGuinty government is establishing a new Research Chair in Métis Studies.

“Establishing the Research Chair in Métis Studies is a step in acknowledging the significance of the Métis contribution to Ontario,” said Ramsay in an address to the Métis Nation of Ontario’s Annual General Assembly. “The funding announced today provides for ongoing support for this Chair.”

The McGuinty government is providing an endowment of $2 million to the Council of Ontario Universities for the ongoing support of a Research Chair in Métis Studies. The council will ensure the Métis Nation of Ontario is involved in developing the goals and criteria for the Chair, as well as the call for proposals.

This initiative also supports Ontario’s new Aboriginal Education Strategy for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. The strategy is intended to help close the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students and increase knowledge and awareness of Aboriginal histories, cultures and perspectives among all students.

Through the Aboriginal Education Strategy, the Minister’s Advisory Committee on Aboriginal Post-secondary Education, and the Ministry of Education’s Partnership Table, which includes First Nation and Métis representatives, the Ontario Government continues to strengthen Aboriginal voices and involvement in education.

The Métis Nation of Ontario President, Tony Belcourt, said, “We look forward to having a Chair in Métis Studies which will now help to counter the void of information about the culture and history of the Métis people of Ontario in our school curriculum and in our libraries. I applaud the Government of Ontario for establishing the Chair in Métis studies which will enable us to increase public knowledge about our communities, our people and contributions made by the Métis Nation in the building of Canada.”

Gary Lipinski, the Provincial Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario Secretary of Education and Training, added: “The new is looking forward to a long-term partnership with the Council of Ontario Universities in establishing the criteria, goals and mandate of the Chair in addition to playing an ongoing role in ensuring that the Métis people are directly engaged in and benefit from the work undertaken. We have been working towards this for many years, and we are truly happy to see this come to fruition.”

“The Council of Ontario Universities is extremely pleased that the government has made this important investment to advance Métis studies,” said Council President and CEO, Paul Genest. In administering this initiative, the council will put in place a rigorous competitive process to select the host university for the Chair, similar to the process used for the Ontario Research Chairs.

“The Research Chair in Métis Studies will contribute to a greater common understanding of the Métis people, past and present, while enhancing the quality of post-secondary education for Métis students,” said Minister Bentley.

MNO Literacy program gets boost from Trillium

The Ontario Trillium Foundation presented a plaque to the Métis Nation of Ontario in recognition of the “Métis Families Learning Together” literacy program being offered this September in North Bay, Sudbury, Toronto and Hamilton.

The funding commitment of $244,500, provided by the Trillium Foundation has permitted us to continue the program into the year 2009.

The co-ordinator for the North Bay and Sudbury literacy program is Bobbi Aubin and for Toronto and Hamilton it is Heather Purdon. These co-ordinators and several volunteers received training through our partner Frontier College, in early August and are set to go for September.

The Metis Nation of Ontario is very excited to bring this program to the selected communities as pilots for the next two years. Bonny Cann, Provincial Education Initiatives Co-ordinator, is confident that the program will be so successful that other funders will want to get on board to assist in getting the program into all Métis communities across Ontario.

“We need what is a great team, and we have it,” says Cann. “We hired excellent co-ordinators and the Métis Nation has always prided its success on a strong volunteer population within the nation; so how could we go wrong?”

If you are interested in volunteering please contact the co-ordinator. Check our web site at www.metisnation.org or call the Provincial Education Co-ordinator, Bonny Cann. If you are a Métis citizen who is interested in starting this program in your community, then call your local Metis office or Bonny. We can provide packages that will assist you and other interested volunteers in your area in getting started. Imagine your children being involved in a culturally appropriate homework club or reading circle. Watch their literacy skills improve and their grades rise while their confidence increases.

Please get involved! Thank you to our partner Frontier College and our funder Ontario Trillium Foundation for making this program possible. Now watch what we can do!

Bobbi Aubin
Literacy Co-ordinator
North Bay/Sudbury
1-888-789-0868 705 674-1502
bobbia@metisnation.org

Heather Purdon
Literacy Co-ordinator
Toronto/Hamilton
heatherp@metisnation.org

Bonny Cann
Provincial Education Initiatives
Co-ordinator
bonnyc@metisnation.org
1-888-466-6684 416-977-9881 (ext. 206)
Métis Nation of Ontario signs groundbreaking mental health agreement with Providence Care and Queen's University

On July 11, 2007, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), Providence Care and Queen’s University signed a groundbreaking agreement that will dramatically expand the MNO’s access to mental health resources, training and research.

“The health and well-being of our citizens has always been, and continues to be a priority for the MNO. By working in conjunction with Queen’s University and Providence Care will become the mental health training resource, provider,” said Allen Prowse, Vice President of Providence Care Mental Health Services. “We are proud to sign an agreement today that formalises our commitment to help meet the educational and mental health care needs of the Métis people of Ontario.”

Under the agreement, Providence Care will become the mental health training resource, providing training and certification for all MNO health care providers, including an annual certification in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills and Non Violent Crisis Intervention training. Additional access to clinical training and mental health expertise will be provided via video conference and on-line education. To increase educational capacity, the MNO and Providence Care will use an internet portal to provide Métis caregivers access to educational materials and clinical education 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Researchers at the Centre for Health Services and Policy Research at Queen’s University in Kingston will work with Providence Care and the MNO to conduct a survey of mental health conditions among the Métis people. Data from the survey will be used to help plan, access and provide the appropriate resources to meet the identified needs.

“The decision to partner with Providence Care and Queen’s University was based on their willingness to embrace and learn about the Métis culture. Providence Care and the MNO have agreed to work together to ensure all training, services and materials are culturally appropriate and sensitive to the needs of the citizens of the MNO,” added President Belcourt.

Franco Picotte, Health Portfolio Holder and Vice-Chair of the MNO added, “This agreement is groundbreaking as it will finally allow the MNO to gather very important mental health data which currently does not exist for the Métis of Ontario as well as enhance the capacity of our health care workers across the province.”

Providence Care is south-eastern Ontario’s leader for specialized mental health, rehabilitation, geriatric medicine and complex continuing and long-term care. Providence Care’s Mental Health Services is an accredited 198-bed facility providing a continuum of inpatient, outpatient and community treatment. Affiliated with Queen’s University, Mental Health Services is also an important teaching and research facility, where professional staff train students and conduct clinical research to contribute to the understanding of mental illness and the development of new approaches to treatment.

Established in Kingston in 1841, Queen’s is one of Canada’s leading universities, with an international reputation for scholarship, research, social purpose, spirit and diversity. With 17 faculties and schools, Queen’s is also one of Canada’s most research-intensive universities.
The week's second cultural day dawned to much better weather than the first. The low-handicappers were out early to the Fort William Country Club for the President's Challenge golf tournament. The Voyageur Games had unfortunately somewhat truncated this year because of insurance issues, but there was a long list of challengers signed up for the singleshot and air rifle competition. In spite of the smaller slate of activities Hank Rowlinson and son Scott did their usual bang-up job running the Youth and Adult Games. (Game results page 21)

In the Marion Larkman room there were assorted activities for kids (of all ages). Claudette Gingras had a table full of feathers, leather, beads and assorted shiny gewgaws for making talking sticks. Outdoors, John Prud'homme ran a youth archery workshop and competition. The MNO Health Services held their enormously popular fund-raising Bingo in the big tent. There was softball on the athletic field where a team named the “seo Misfits” took on another team named the “seo Misfits”. The Mights won in the last inning.

In the afternoon aspiring entertainers and artists took part in a “Métis Idol” style talent contest for Métis youths. The judges had a very tough time choosing the top three who would perform that evening in front of the entire assembly. Dancers Ashton Desaulniers and Paris Shubaly along with singer Aqau Rennae were the finalists and all received thunderous applause from the assembly when they hit the stage. In the end the graceful and gravity-defying acrobatics of Ashton and Paris took first and second respectively. Aqau's sultry rendition of Etta James’ classic At Last won the audience favours.

Another great night of entertainment: The Jig Fest Band hail from Manitoba and play a version of Métis music laced with a heavy of Great Lakes Water Quality, and the need to develop partnerships with Métis organizations. The Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award was created to commemorate the life of Suzanne Rochon-Burnett and to recognize the contributions that volunteers make to the MNO. It is an award that honours one exemplary volunteer every year. This year’s recipient of the award was Reta Gordon, PCMNO Executive Senator. Reta offered a tearful thank you for the nomination, and added that the award was not hers alone, but belonged to all MNO volunteers.

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Minister Ramsay announced that the Government of Ontario is providing an endowment of $2 million to the Council of Ontario Universities to support a research Chair in Métis Studies (see Big Tent on page 16). He indicated that this funding provides support for co-ordinating and sharing research, reflects the government’s commitment to the Métis. The minister said that Ontario is committed to involving Métis in decision-making in various careers (film industry, software development, tourism, and restoration of the location to its original state. Senator Earl Scofield offered the closing comments: “It is a great thing that we do in the Métis Nation, coming together once a year to meet, to visit, to say ‘hello’ and to meet new people and share ideas…and above all to share our respect and love for each other. As Métis people we have come together as one,” said President Belcourt. “Our people have come together because they care. Our staff work for the MNO because they care. Nothing can ever destroy the strength of the Métis Nation when we come together in this way.”

The parliamentary Secretary indicated his presence demonstrated the federal government’s commitment to and interest in Métis issues. He said that these issues are discussed with the minister on a regular basis and that the minister is eager to work with all Aboriginal Canadians in a constructive way.

Mr. Bruinooge stressed some of the opportunities available to Aboriginal peoples through Human Resources Initiative scholarships and bursaries, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) providing funding to pursue business opportunities, renewal of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy, Aboriginal Workforce Partnership Agreement, and $105 million in new projects to help Aboriginal Canadians through the development of 9,000 jobs. Referring to himself, the Parliamentary Secretary said he could not overstate the importance of the education he had received as an aid to his business, (film industry, and software careers) noting that he was the first Aboriginal in Canada to be featured in Forbes Magazine. President Belcourt presented Parliamentary Secretary Bruinooge with a 14th Anniversary sea gift paddle.

Chair Lipinski commented on the symbolism of the paddle, noting that when you were in a canoe, you were in the same direction, or you go nowhere. Dignitaries were encouraged to reflect on that, and the benefits of working towards common objectives. The Resolutions are the real meat and potatoes of the sea. Any Métis citizen can bring a resolution to the assembly and have it put to a vote by the delegates. In this way important to the Métis people of Ontario can be dealt with by the assembly. This year’s resolutions are printed in their entirety on page 20.

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And with that, many safe journeys began.
**RESOLUTIONS from the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario, held July 9-13, 2007, at Chippewa Park in Thunder Bay.**

**Review and Accept Agenda**

It was MOVED (Eric Scofield) and seconded (Sharon McBride) that the Agenda for the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario be approved as follows:

- Approval of Resolutions Committee
- Review Minutes
- Business Arising From Minutes
- Tribute to Senator Marion LeBlanc
- Meeting Reports
- Senators
- MNO
- Veterans
- Finance and Administration
- TPSA Report
- Audit 2005-06
- Financial Report
- Appointment of Auditor
- MNO By-Laws
- MNO on Mental Health
- Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award
- Meeting Reports Card
- MNOCC
- MNO Electoral Code
- Legal Update/MNO Rights Issues
- MNO Branch Reports/Updates
- Intergovernmental Relations
- Parliamentary Assistant to the Federal Interlocutor, Reid Bruneau
- The Honourable David Ramsay, Minister of Natural Resources and MNP, responsible for Aboriginal Affairs

**Resolutions**

- Closing Ceremonies
  **RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-01)**

**Appoint a Resolutions Committee**

It was MOVED (Bonnie Cane) and seconded (Pauline Saulnier) that the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario approve the membership of the Resolutions Committee as follows: Senators Gerry Bedford, Paul Heighington, Jason Maddern, and Richard Samson. **RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-02)**

**Review Minutes**

It was MOVED (Joseph Polenta) and seconded (Eric Scofield) that the Minutes of the 13th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario held July 10-14, 2006 be adopted as circulated. **RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-03)**

**Financial Report**

It was MOVED (Pauline Saulnier) and seconded (Eric Scofield) that the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario approve as presented the MNO Annual General Statement for the year ending March 31, 2006. **RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-04)**

**Appointment of Auditor**

It was MOVED (Lawrence Gladue) and seconded (Sharon McBride) that the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario appoint the accounting firm of Collins Barrow Chartered Accountants as the MNO Auditor for the fiscal year 2007/08. **RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-05)**

**MNO By-Laws**

It was MOVED (Cecile Wagner) and seconded (Louis McCallum) that the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario approve as presented the Métis Nation of Ontario Secretarial By-Laws, as endorsed by the PCMNO on June 1, 2007. **RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-06)**

**MNO Electoral Code**

It was MOVED (Tim Pile) and seconded (Laura Wilson) that the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) approve as presented the MNO Electoral Code, as endorsed by the Provincial Council of the MNO on June 1, 2007. **RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-07)**

**Appointment of Chief Electoral Officer**

It was MOVED (Sharon McBride) and seconded (Allan Valade) that the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) appoint Lawrence Gladue to serve as the Chief Electoral Officer to oversee the 2007 MNO provincial elections. **RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-08)**

**Métis Nation of Ontario Veterans’ Committee**

It was MOVED (Pauline Saulnier) and seconded (Eric Scofield) that the Métis Nation of Ontario Veterans’ Committee (MNOVC) is the only legitimate body recognized to represent the interests of Métis citizens in the Province of Ontario and therefore the MNOVC has been invited to join the National Metis Veterans Association (NMVA) and vice versa. The MNOVC sees the value in joining the NMVA provided that the MNOVC is the only representative body of Métis veterans from Ontario. **RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-09)**

**Publication of Notices within the Métis Voyageur**

It was MOVED (Pauline Saulnier) and seconded (Dina MacManus) that the Métis Voyageur be mandated to publish notifications as submitted by Community Councils to advertise Community Council Elections and events. **RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-10)**

**Consideration of Richard Lake as Venue for Future Annual General Assemblies**

It was MOVED (Eric Scofield) and seconded (Pauline Saulnier) that the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Annual General Assembly (AGA) is a costly event and visitation is a significant amount of the cost is attributed to covering travel expenses and accommodation for MNO citizens to participate in the AGA, and therefore the MNO has partnered with the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan in Sudbury for use of the Richard Lake site at our request, and therefore the Richard Lake site has improved the on-site facilities to accommodate the needs of the MNO, and therefore the Richard Lake site could provide each MNO Region and community council an opportunity to host the AGA, and therefore it is RESOLVED that Richard Lake be considered by MNO citizens to be an available location for future AGAs, with each region afforded an opportunity to host an AGA. **RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-11)**

**PHCNO Correspondence to Community Councils**

It was MOVED (Norm Marcoux) and seconded (Andre Boase) that the correspondence between the Provincial Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PHCNO) and Community Councils be sent to the Council’s Senator or another verified individual of the Community Council Executive. **RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-12)**

**Métis Access to Lands and Resources**

It was MOVED (Pierre LeBlanc) and seconded (Brent McHaffie) that the MNO and the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) enter into an agreement to accommodate Métis harvesting rights, and therefore it is RESOLVED that the MNO, MNR, and FNTR have agreed to new discussions based on the July 7, 2004 Agreement that was legally enforceable and highly principled, and therefore the MNO and FNTR have agreed to new discussions based on the July 7, 2004 Agreement that was legally enforceable and highly principled, and therefore there are many MNO without access to land and resources, issues that remain unaddressed by the FNTR, including, forestry, revenue resource sharing, priority allocations, titles, etc. **THHEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the MNO Negotiations Team be mandated to pursue negotiations with the FNTR on these and other MNO access to land and resources issues in order to arrive at accommodations and agreements for the benefit of the MNO people in Ontario.**

**RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-13)**

**Establishing Métis Economic Development Fund**

It was MOVED (Pauline Saulnier) and seconded (Andre LeBlévene) that the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and the Minister of Natural Resources and MNP have agreed to a priority for the MNO Nation; and vis-à-vis economic development at the business, community and provincial levels is key to realizing self-sufficiency; and vis-à-vis the Government of Ontario has rightly set aside resources from gaming to support First Nations economic development throughout the province; and vis-à-vis the MNO Nation continues to have challenges accessing funds from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to support Métis priorities and self-sufficiency; and vis-à-vis other jurisdictions, such as Saskatchewan, have established Métis- owned foundations from gaming revenue to support Métis economic development; and therefore it is RESOLVED that the Métis Nation of Ontario pursue the establishment of a MNO-specific economic development fund with the Government of Ontario in order to address the current lack of Métis access to gaming resources and the need for economic development support for Métis businesses and communities. **RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-14)**

**Support for Participation in the Sacred Fire**

It was MOVED (Eric Scofield) and seconded (Peta Gordon) that the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) strike a volunteer Planning and Development Fund to support Métis economic development; and that the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) strike a volunteer Planning and Evaluation Committee for the purpose of strengthening cultural exchange and nation building. **RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-15)**

**MNOVC Location at Future AGA**

It was MOVED (Matt Rouchand) and seconded (Reta Gordon) that it is RESOLVED that the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) strike a volunteer Planning and Evaluation Committee for the purpose of strengthening cultural exchange and nation building. **RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-15)**

**Establishment of a Planning and Evaluation Committee**

It was MOVED (Cherie Belcourt) and seconded (Tina Green) that it is RESOLVED that the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) strike a volunteer Planning and Evaluation Committee for the purpose of strengthening cultural exchange and nation building. **RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-17)**
**Check your tickets**

**AGA: Being There**

The Veterans of the Métis Nation of Ontario would like to thank everyone who supported us with the purchase of fish dinners on Tuesday and Thursday as well as the raffle for the drum.

The winning number was 532099 and was unclaimed at the AGA. If you are the owner of the winning ticket, please contact Maurice Sarrizin at 705-897-6079 with the ticket and we will send the drum to you ASAP.

Thank you to Lorraine Trembleau for the fine craftsmanship in making the drum. A long list would be required to thank the makers of the feather cases presented to our veterans but since they know who they are, I will just say “thank-you ladies.”

A big thank-you goes out to all the volunteers who helped sell tickets and prepare the fish dinners. You are a great group of people.

Once again, thank-you all for your support! Maurice Sarrizin is the current facilitator for Zone 5 and the portfolio holder for Veterans Issues.

**DRUM WINNER**

Maurice Sarrazin is the winner of the drum. He was made, painted and donated the drum to you asap. If you are the owner of the winning ticket, please contact Maurice Sarrazin at 705-897-6079.

**DRUM WINNER**

Maurice Sarrazin at 705-897-6079

BY SENATOR EARL SCOFIELD

The AGA in Thunder Bay from the 9th to the 14th of July turned out to be a great event, in spite of the heavy rains at times.

The local people did not complain, they said, “no forest fires!” The countryside was fresh and green but the water levels were low in the lakes and rivers. The temperature was quite cool and my long sleeved jacket felt good against the wind.

On opening day the dignitaries came in by canoe. Led by a colour guard of Métis Elders, a colour guard from the Thunder Bay Legion and Chaplain Rodger Janzen, Amazing Grace, they marched up the hill to the big tent where another group was playing Métis music. When everyone was settled in the big tent, Senator Bob McKay gave the opening prayer and welcomed to Thunder Bay and Chippewa Park.

With business and workshops during the days and entertainment in the evenings, the time passed quickly. There were many guest speakers, including the Hon. David Ramsay, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs who announced that the Ontario Government is providing an endowment of $2 million to the Council of Ontario Universities for the ongoing support of a Research Chair in Métis Studies. (See page 16)

The Veterans Committee put on a delicious fish fry to raise money for future veterans’ events. The event raised $1500—a super job by all concerned, thank you.

I got up every morning at 4:30 to attend the ceremonies at seven o’clock. I am pleased to say that I was there every day right to the closing of the fire. We began with smudging and offering tobacco to the fire, next, water and berries were passed to the people in the circle.

We were blessed by good songs from the Creator, such as a big white-tailed deer that walked a long way on the far shore. We saw four Canada geese; a family of small ducks, a group of pelicans, ravens and sea gulls.

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On the last day a Friday dedicated to the veterans, I and other veterans were presented with an eagle feather in a blue cloth case with bead work on the folder. What an honour it was for me to receive a feather from our president, Tony Belcourt.

Thank-you to the Métis women who did the bead work and made the cases.

Migwetch, Creator of the universe.

**AGA: First-hand accounts**

**Sharing their songs**

**BY ARLENE LEHTO**

This was my first year attending the Métis Nation of Ontario’s Annual General Assembly.

As with any organization that one works for, we always hear both positive and negative stories. Initially I felt some discomfort or uneasiness about what I was getting into. Then I realized, people and events are what we make them. We can choose to see the negative or to see the cherished moments that are always in front of us.

On the first day I felt very welcomed and I managed to keep myself busy and entertained for the entire week. We had an interesting and dynamic trainer who held our interest and made learning fun. My most favourite part of the AGA was meeting and getting to know my colleagues from different locations. I got to connect with a few of them during my shuttle shift. I really enjoyed meeting and visiting with the Senators as well.

Many of them shared heart warming stories of their childhood and memories of their heritage and traditions. It really was an honour to meet and spend time with them.

The AGA invited the local women’s drum group to participate in our cultural days. It was great to get together with them and to share songs and stories with the rest of our citizens. We had a good turn out of people and our circle was very strong indeed, full of laughter, heart warming stories and healing songs. We were fortunate to be able to gather a few times during the week at the main hall and around the sacred fire.

As I have mentioned before I am Métis and also a drummer. Since 1998 I have been learning to play the shaker. I got up every morning at 4:30 to attend the ceremonies at seven o’clock. I am pleased to say that I was there every day right to the closing of the fire. We began with smudging and offering tobacco to the fire, next, water and berries were passed to the people in the circle.

We were blessed by good songs from the Creator, such as a big white-tailed deer that walked a long way on the far shore. We saw four Canada geese; a family of small ducks, a group of pelicans, ravens and sea gulls.

I was荣幸 to hear a beautiful song in French. I didn’t understand its actual translation, however, I did feel the beautiful energy in the room...

It was great to see the children listen intently to the creation story as they learned the teachings and responsibilities that go along with these sacred gifts. After the shakers were made we taught the children the brave heart song. What an honour it was to see the children each take a lead and proudly sing and shake their new shakers.

There are many cherished stories I could share but that would take pages and pages. In conclusion, I want to say “thank you” to the shakers, and those who organised and worked so hard to make the AGA a success, as well as those who participated. A special thanks to Senator Reta Gordon and Senator Lois McCalum. They really went out of their way to make so many people feel welcomed and loved and they truly touched my heart.

I am honoured to have met them.

Arlene Lehto is the Diabetes Prevention Co-ordinator in Thunder Bay.
Many Miles

Largest ever group of Métis Nation of Ontario Senators meet in Thunder Bay to laugh, cry and talk the business of the Nation

A

other wonderful Annual General Assembly (AGA) has come and gone. I always feel that the AGA is a wonderful time where Senators, staff, families and citizens from every region share not only the business of the meetings but also laughter and togetherness.

Preceding the AGA for the second year, a Senators’ Forum took place (July 7th and 8th). In attendance were Council Senators, four recess Senators and three Honourary Senators. This was the largest group of Senators that has ever gathered together.

A beautiful memorial service was held to honour the memory of the late Senator Marion Larkin, the Matriarch of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

I began the service by reading a prayer submitted by Senator Antonio Bosse. Following the prayer, a special musical tribute was presented by Senator Elmer Ross, he played a touching rendition of “Amazing Grace” on the harmonica. Senator Ruth Wagner of the Nation of Ontario.

The remainder of the day, we had some wonderful presentations from President, Tony Belcourt; Chair, Gary Lapinskas; Registrar, Karole Drouin-Beckett; Director of Housing, Jean Micsiaw Wittala; Director of Health, Doug Wilson; Mental Health Services, Jo Mac Quarrie; and Health Care Manager, Bobbie Burns. Each speaker gave the Senators updates on their departments and on programs or services their staff provides in our communities.

I would like to say a special thank you to recess Councillor, Pauline Saulnier, for all the time she spent talking minutes at the Forum, to recess Representative, Lynn Paruto, for registering the Senators and for all of her help throughout the Forum. Meegwetch to the facilitator, Wendu Wattanyae. I could not have accomplished all the work that went into making this year’s Forum a success without the help of Laurie Fontong, who met with me many evenings and weekends to put the Senators’ Forum in place. Thank you, Laurie.

This 14th Annual General Assembly was one of the best AGA’s held.

On Wednesday the inaugural Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award was given and I am very thankful to say that I was the recipient of this prestigious award. To recess Senator Gerry Bedford and to recess Councillor Cam Burgess, who nominated me, to the Senators, citizens and many councils who wrote in letters of support for my nomination, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I was given the letters that you all submitted and I am eternally grateful and touched by your kind words.

SPOTLIGHT

SENATORS

BY RETA GORDON

PIMCO SENATOR

WIDOut Without Volunteers The Mno Would Never Have Come These Many Miles.

As I said in my acceptance remarks, “I share this award with each and every one of you who has ever sat on a council, participated in any MNO activity, those of you who have worked tirelessly to serve your constituents and to partner with other Aboriginal organisations for the purpose of housing developments.”

I for future surveys and consultations, often it is difficult to contact those that are most in need. It is important to come into the communities for improved communications and consultations.

The following day, we had some wonderful presentations from President, Tony Belcourt; Chair, Gary Lapinskas; Registrar, Karole Drouin-Beckett; Director of Housing, Jean Micsiaw Wittala; Director of Health, Doug Wilson; Mental Health Services, Jo Mac Quarrie; and Health Care Manager, Bobbie Burns. Each speaker gave the Senators updates on their departments and on programs or services their staff provides in our communities.

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L et me begin by saying how wonderful that this year’s Forum opens up with a special tribute to a wise Senator who in her own way managed to touch each and everyone of us. During this time, all the Senators had the opportunity to voice their own personal comments about the Grandchifar of the uxo and a true veteran at heart. It made me take note that even in her lifetime Senator Marion Larkin still manages to bring Métis citizens together and still emphasizes the importance of sharing the knowledge and the wisdom that all Senators hold.

Telling all about themselves in their autobiographies, allowed all Senators to share their unique lives. Each dealt with a lot of hardship, but managed to survive and become stronger as a result of their experiences and survival strategies. I also heard and witnessed first hand the personal strengths of 51 Senators as they shared their stories. This was truly an eye opening moment for me. I got to record the strength and the true soul of our nation. I realised that Métis Senators are a tremendous source of knowledge and wisdom. It is vital that opportunities for more of these gatherings and this type of sharing be created.
DURING the last six months the stone has held two successful meetings with the nine representatives from across the regions in Ontario. These meetings were designed to set the objectives and priorities for the council.

At our initial meeting in Oshawa, May 19, 2007, we set up an open session where presenters introduced topics such as the Urban Multi-cultural Aboriginal Youth Centre Initiative (UMAC) and gave important information regarding how the stone is involved in making decisions. Governance was also introduced to ensure that all members were aware of the Métis Nation of Ontario structure and how the stone fits into the tiered system.

These topics gave way to an open discussion regarding stone: priorities to establish goals and trajectories for the youth council.

The stone: had collectively agreed to talk about the stone’s priorities. Through an open discussion regarding stone and difficulties about engaging and attracting youth to the stone, we decided on two priorities:

1. Finding youth and developing the visibility of the stone
2. Empowering youth through identity and pride and spirituality in métis culture.

This discussion led to describing our personal journeys and experiences. We talked about what it feels like to be métis, how we connect to nature and how we can empower youth to pass on knowledge and understanding of our values through our personal journeys. We described how we could find and create opportunities through youth being part of the gap and describing incentives and possibilities for youth.

To ensure that we are targeting the needs of youth, the youth members decided to write down their own specific interests, which were then compiled into a portfolio system so that representatives could be involved in activities that they find interesting.

During the 14th Annual General Assembly (AGA) stone: meeting, members of the council were asked to elect members into internal governance positions. The selected members now hold the following positions: Alison Croft, Chair; Benny Michaud, Vice Chair, Amber Griffith, Treasurer and Joni Labbe, Secretary.

This political exercise developed into a discussion regarding the specific role of each member and the importance inside the stone structure, and naturally evolved into extending the gap and describing the stone and the core and their respective roles in the stone.

The stone gave the floor to Joni Labbe, who talked about her documentary project, “Métis Youth as Leaders”. She talked about the need for the council to complete this project and how the supportive community of Sault Ste. Marie has come together to help Joni and her selected participants carry out this project. If you or someone you know is interested in the Youth Council or becoming a part of the stone: and would like more information regarding activities or events that are happening please email your local representative.

Alison Croft is the Youth Representative on the stone:.

This story appeared in The Huntsville Forester on August 22nd, 2007, and is reprinted with their kind permission.
he Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) has been actively engaged in the delivery of employment and training programs and services since 1996, with the introduction of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada’s Regional Bilateral Agreement.

For more than ten years, a service network that spans the province with dedicated and committed front line staff has made every effort to serve the employment, education and training needs of Métis people. While program limitations and funding restrictions have occasionally presented challenges, these programs and services have assisted thousands of Métis clients and in turn improved the standard of living of Métis families and communities throughout Ontario. This is a testament not only to the strength and vigilance of the staff but to the efforts of Métis people pursuing new opportunities and labour market success.

The successes achieved have been substantial and lessons learned extremely valuable. The MNO continues to employ a community-based review structure of Regional Approvals Committees and Métis Awards Committees that is unparalleled in other service delivery networks. These community volunteers play a pivotal role in the request and offer an additional level of program accountability.

The true strength of these labour market programs has been their ability to design and deliver programs and services in direct response to the needs of clients and communities. Programs have been modified and enhanced in an effort to address emerging priorities including apprenticeship, mobility and self employment and to adequately address the unique cultural needs of Métis people. Over the years, support has been provided for a number of innovative projects including two canoe expeditions, an indigenous exchange to Ecuador, two important community-based research publications, self employment grants, the Community Sports Initiative, the Conflict Resolution Program, and many more. Individual client success has been unmeasurable and every effort is made to highlight these achievements through a publication titled ‘Journeys’ and within the branch annual report (documents are available on the MNO’s web site).

The following is a brief snapshot of 2006/07 labour market activity.

Métis Youth Interventions

- Funded 572 clients 2006/2007
- 205 found employment, 201 related to school

- Approximately 38% were male and 62% were female
- 68% were under the age of 30

Summer Student Program

A total of 96 students were employed through the Métis Summer Career Placement Program, 95% of which were post-secondary students.

Métis Bursary Program

In 1998 the MNO established the Métis Bursary Program and 32 Colleges and Universities. This unprecedented financial assistance program for Métis students provides awards to more than 100 students each school year with an overall investment of more than $100,000.

This past school year 140 students were awarded bursaries for a total of $177,752.

School Board Outreach

A number of meetings have been held with local school boards across the Province including Lakehead District School Board, Nipigon River District School Board, and Toronto District School Board. Métis representatives are involved on these local boards and have been engaged in the Aboriginal student identification policy.

Ministry of Education

The MNO participates on the Ministry of Education Partnership Table to ensure strong voice for Métis people is reflected in policy and program development. The MNO also represented on various other ministry working tables on education including: Conflict Resolution, Learning to 28, and Special Education Committee.

Ministry of Training Colleges & Universities Committees

The MNO is represented on the Ministry Committee on Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education as well as other committees including Centre of Excellence review Committee, and Aboriginal Education & Training Strategy Review.

Chair of Métis Studies

The establishment of a Chair of Métis Studies at an Ontario University has been a priority for a number of years. The MNO did receive a commitment to establish a Chair of Métis Studies from Premier McGuinty and Chris Bentley, MPP, Minister. Since these commitments have been made, the MNO has held many meetings with interested universities to determine their priorities and potential contribution to move this important initiative forward, and SUU has formally set aside an endowment of $2 million for the position.

Métis Family Literacy

Métis Families Learning Together - Literacy Program – The MNO was successful in obtaining funding from the Trillium Foundation to develop a Métis-specific literacy program in partnership with Frontier College. Two Literacy Co-ordinators are now in place in Toronto and Sudbury. A phase of training has been provided and resources are being developed.

In an effort to effectively manage the development and implementation of these new priorities and programs the Education and Training Branch has undergone a reorganisation and staff expansion. The following is a snapshot of these important changes and the branch structure overall.

There are 18 staff members located in communities across the province with various education and training responsibilities of a regional or provincial focus.

This network of skilled and experienced professionals is truly the foundation for program success. The following representatives include a Provincial Education Initiatives Co-ordinator, Provincial Apprenticeship and Employer Development as well as Provincial Youth Co-ordinator. Further, the Provincial Contracts Administrator has been revamped to a Provincial Projects Officer position that assumes additional financial and project management responsibilities to enhance program accountability and allow for a greater segregation of duties.

The Community Development Officer (CDO) and CDO Assistant (CDAO) each have been tasked with implementing key projects. The CDO has an in-depth understanding of Métis needs and has been engaged with various community development programs to ensure that the Métis community is informed and involved in the development of provincial and restricted funding initiatives.

The Community Development Officer and the CDAO have been tasked with the implementation of the MNO’s Métis Pathway Literacy Program. The program is designed to provide information and staff contact information is available on the MNO’s web site.

While the branch continues to focus on providing quality, accessible and accountable services and support to Métis people, over the coming months, a number of priority areas will be addressed. Efforts are already underway to develop new policies for the Literacy Program to implement community-based programs, to strengthen the existing review, assessment and monitoring policies and procedures, to expand upon partnerships that will create education and employment opportunities, and to establish a comprehensive branch strategic plan to guide our efforts as we move forward.

The MNO Education and Training Branch is always interested in hearing from members of the community and welcomes your feedback.

MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO
EDUCATION AND TRAINING BRANCH

MÉTIS VOYAGEUR
MÉTIS VETERANS ISSUES:

In short, Métis veterans seek recognition. In their view, their contributions to society are just as valuable as those of military service; however, they also face additional challenges and sacrifices of all Canadian veterans. The veterans affairs minister has publicly supported the idea of creating a national board to address these issues. The board could help to educate the public about the contributions of Métis soldiers and their families.

There were a number of concerns and ideas discussed and possible solutions advanced. It was suggested that veterans could help to educate in our schools and assist the Métis Nation locally and nationally by attending events and becoming more visible.

The Métis Veterans of Canada voiced the following concerns:

- Initiatives should be taken to democratically elect, an organized body, from each province throughout Canada as a prerequisite to applying for funding.
- Provincial presidents should then sit on a national board, which in turn would appoint or elect one of its members to sit as the only recognized spokesperson representing Métis Veterans’ concerns and issues under the direction of the body of provincial presidents. (Such an arrangement would ideally have the co-operation of the provincial Métis federations and the Métis National Council for assistance with administrative resources. Métis National Council and provincial Métis federations would be invited to elect or appoint a Veterans Affairs Minister.)
- Membership should include:
  - Veterans who are willing to apply for Métis citizenship;
  - Veterans who are deceased.
- There should also be more extensive and organized work with local military museums and education for younger people, so that others may learn of our combined efforts to preserve freedom for Canadians.

Both the Métis Veterans Association and the provincial and national Métis federations should set in place clear protocols by which they can work compatibly with others and help promote peace and goodwill and in so doing, assist our nation in the enhancement of our national heritage.

**HEROES**

**MÉTIS SERVING IN THE CANADIAN FORCES**

**BY SENATOR RETA GORDON**

**Métis veteran honoured for lifetime of service**

Recently, Métis citizen and veteran, Shaun Redmond, became only the second area person to receive a commendation from the Canadian Ministry of Veterans Affairs. The Cornwall resident comes from a long line of military men, so it’s not surprising he found himself joining the Canadian Forces in 1975. Redmond’s father served in the Canadian Air Force and his uncle died in the Second World War. He has been active with the Canadian cadet movement and the Royal Canadian Legion and is an Officer of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem and a Golden Jubilee Medal recipient. It’s a tradition he’s not only passed on to his own children, but one that served to inform what would become one of his passions—veterans’ issues. Shaun has worked with the National Aboriginal Veterans’ Association and the Métis Nation of Ontario Veterans’ Council. He was also a driving force behind an Aboriginal Spiritual Journey in 2005, which took more than 200 Métis to Europe. The trip was organised as part of the effort to repatriate the spirits of Métis soldiers who died overseas.

“It is a belief among the Aboriginal people that when a warrior dies outside his territory, his spirit must be returned to his land,” said Redmond. “We went there to bring their spirits back, to help them cross over.”

The group used a miniature birch bark canoe to carry the spirits from Europe back to the Métis territory in this region of Ontario where many Métis settled years ago. “It offers closure to the families of those who died over there,” said Redmond. “At the same time, it helps educate people about the contributions made by the Métis in times of war.”

**MÉTIS VETERANS ISSUES:

**Voices of Métis veterans heard at forum**

In June, 2007, veterans from across Canada were invited to take part in a Métis veterans information forum. The veterans discussed how a better quality of life might be achieved for veterans and their families, and how the contributions of Métis veterans to the Métis Nation and to their respective communities could be adequately recognized. The veterans expressed a profound concern that neither the contributions of veterans nor their needs are adequately recognized. Such recognition, they maintain, should acknowledge not just the broadly understood sacrifices of all Canadian veterans, but also the additional challenges. In the transition from the Métis cultural environment to that of military service, challenges that they willingly met. In short, Métis veterans seek to be recognized for their loyalty to both their country and to the Métis Nation.

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**Autumn 2007**

**Soldier back with family after Afghanistan tour**

Sudbury-based Métis Military Police Officer attached to the Royal Canadian Airforce

By Pam Tremblay

Jamie Tremblay of Métis ancestry, son of Denis Tremblay of Sudbury and Donna Tremblay, successfully came home after his six month tour in Afghanistan. While Jamie was overseas, he was based in southeast Asia at a location he cannot disclose for security reasons. Jamie is 28 and a military police officer with the Canadian Armed Forces. He has stood by caskets of fallen comrades and has transported some of the dead and injured soldiers from the aircraft to the hospital, but also the additional challenges of all Canadian veterans.

He protected the aircraft’s contents and military officials.

He may be called to another tour in Afghanistan as he is willing to cover for soldiers when they take their needed breaks. Jamie Tremblay spent five years as a military police officer based out of Cold Lake, Alberta. He is a graduate of St. Charles College and of the Police Foundation Program.

At his recent homecoming, which happened to fall on Canada Day, Jamie got engaged to his high school sweetheart. Welcoming Jamie home, we are proud of you.

Shaun Redmond at Louis Riel Day ceremonies in Toronto (November 16th, 2004)

Shaun Redmond

Autumn 2007
Technology key to growth for Aboriginal-owned small businesses

70% anticipate expanding either locally or nationally within five years

Canada’s Aboriginal business community is thriving, according to a national survey of Aboriginal-owned small- and medium-sized businesses (SMBs). The Xerox Canada / Legser Marketing poll attributes much of the annual growth to new technology solutions that make it easier for smaller businesses to compete in the Canadian marketplace.

The survey revealed that 72% of Aboriginal business owners plan to expand over the next five years, with more than half (51%) planning to grow locally, and another fifth (21%) expecting to expand nationally.

Three-quarters (77%) of the businesses surveyed said that scalable technology solutions, including collocated printing and document management capabilities, are critical to business growth.

Most Aboriginal-owned businesses adopted colour around 2000, a year ahead of non-Aboriginal-owned SMBs, according to the same survey. “Since our inception we have worked hard to promote Aboriginal culture, and it's encouraging to see this important demographic come into its own in such a short period of time,” says Chief Clarence Louie, Chairman, National Aboriginal Economic Development Board. “A strong Aboriginal business community ultimately means a strong Canada, and the support of companies like Xerox has enabled us to prosper in ways that would have been impossible as little as 10 years ago.”

When asked about the greatest challenge facing Aboriginal businesses today, 25% said that finding quality staff was one of their greatest barriers to success.

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BY MICHAEL McWHINNIE

O n Thursday, May 31st, 2007, Tyrone H.W. Pile, Rear-Admiral in the Canadian Forces and citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario was presented the insignia of Commander of Military Merit, signifying his membership to the Order of Military Merit. Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General and Commander in Chief of the Canadian Forces presided over the Investiture Ceremony, which took place at Rideau Hall in Ottawa.

This prestigious honour is conferred upon only a few select flag and general officers in recognition of outstanding meritorious service and demonstrated leadership while fulfilling duties of great responsibility.

Rear-Admiral Pile is from Geraldton, Ontario and enrolled in the Canadian Forces in 1975 after graduating from Geraldton Composite High School. He is a graduate of Royal Military College Kingston and conducted post-graduate studies at the University of Victoria. Rear-Admiral Pile is the brother of Mr. Tim Pile who is currently serving as the Secretary-Treasurer of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

Over the course of his career, Rear-Admiral Pile has served on sea onboard ships in positions of increasing responsibility, culminating with his appointment as Commanding officer of Inshore Rescue, a Canadian Patrol Frigate based in Esquimalt, BC.

Rear-Admiral Pile currently serves as Chief of Military Personnel and Commander of Military Personnel Command at National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa. This summer, he will assume command of both Maritime Forces Pacific and the recently formed Joint Task Force Pacific. Rear-Admiral Pile will be responsible for naval operations in the Pacific while overseeing the conduct of all CF domestic contingency operations in British Columbia.

Rear-Admiral Pile has been a strong advocate of ensuring that the many opportunities offered by the Canadian Forces are actively discussed and advertised to Aboriginal Canadians.

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BY GEORGE LEPINE

Since 1997, Native Canadian Centre of Toronto’s Aboriginal Mortuary Services has been providing instruction in the traditional arts in the Toronto area. Oki Chi Taw employs a variety of hand techniques although most are a derivative of the tomahawk, lance, gunstock, war club and knife are applied throughout the system. Hand to hand techniques are utilised, but the adoption of impact weapons is always present. Oki Chi Taw has a strong team of instructors with a variety of Pacific, European (i.e., the tomahawk, lance, gunstock, war club and knife) and Native (i.e., the tomahawk, lance, gunstock, war club and knife) techniques.

The hands positions and movements are very similar, if not identical to that of students holding the tomahawks, lances, etc. in both hands. Find out more online at: www.blackbelts.ca/ocincta

George J. Lépine is the Chief Instructor of Oki Chi Taw at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto (16 Spadina Road, Toronto. Oki Chi Taw can be reached at 416-964-9087.

Oki Chi Taw: Métis developing indigenous martial arts system since 1997, Native Canadian Centre of Toronto’s Mortuary Services has been providing instruction in the traditional arts in the Toronto area. Oki Chi Taw employs a variety of hand techniques although most are a derivative of the tomahawk, lance, gunstock, war club and knife are applied throughout the system. Hand to hand techniques are utilised, but the adoption of impact weapons is always present. Oki Chi Taw has a strong team of instructors with a variety of Pacific, European (i.e., the tomahawk, lance, gunstock, war club and knife) and Native (i.e., the tomahawk, lance, gunstock, war club and knife) techniques.

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Métis identity & experience explored

Known as ‘Canada’s forgotten people,’ the Métis have long been here, but until 1982 they lacked the legal status of Native people. At that point, however, the Métis were recognized in the constitution as one of Canada’s Aboriginal peoples.

A significant addition to Métis historiography, The Long Journey of a Forgotten People, includes Métis voices and personal narratives that address the thorny and complex issues of Métis identity from historical and contemporary perspectives. Topics include: eastern Canadian Métis communities; British military personnel and their mixed-blood descendants; life as a Métis woman; and the ongoing struggle for recognition of their rights, including discussion of recent Supreme Court rulings. Ute Lischke, an associate professor at Wilfrid Laurier University Press, teaches English, film studies, and German cultural studies. She is the co-editor with David T. McNab of Walking a Tightrope: Aboriginal Peoples and Their Representations (WLU, 2005). McNab is a Métis historian who has worked for more than 25 years on Aboriginal land and treaty rights’ issues in Canada. He is also an associate professor of Native studies at York University.

BOOK REVIEW by Virginia Barter

The Long Journey of a Forgotten People
edited by Ute Lischke & David T. McNab
Wilfrid Laurier University Press

The book has a good index and bibliography, as well as a very useful chronology of Métis events from 1670 to 2005. The authors have even included a list of various Métis organizations in Canada. I especially like how the authors have put a separate reference list at the end of each chapter or in some cases even sub-chapters to specifically provide the reader with further sources of research material on the particular subject. In addition each section or topic will often have key points summarised or listed in point form. The section “F” of the book deals with memorable key events in Métis history, again each event is dedicated to its own chapter making for easy reference. Each event is pivotal to the evolution of the Métis identity beginning with the early history and continuing right up to the present. The Battle of Seven Oaks, Events after the Battle of Seven Oaks, The Buffalo Hunt, Red River Resistance, The Métis Dispersion, The North West Uprising, Constitutional and Government recognition, Supreme Court of Canada decisions.

The third section of the book features “Memorable Personalities” such as: Cuthbert Grant, Premier Métis Leader; Pierre Pélissier, Bard of the Métis; James McDonald, Métis Martyr; Pierre Delorme, Politician and Métis Rights Advocate; Gabriel Dumont, Buffalo Hunter and Military Strategist; Thelma Charles, Social Activist and Métis Matriarch; Harry Daniels, Métis Crusader; Tancho Cardinal; Métis Actor Extraordinary.

Undoubtedly, there are many more personalities and events that could be included in the book so perhaps the authors will consider doing a second version someday. Admittedly, they do comment in the book that the memorable events are specific to western Canada—so it is an Ontario perspective. However, in their criticisms of Métis definitions and political boundaries, they give significant acknowledgement to issues of Métis identity in eastern Canada. The authors are seasoned researchers who have collaborat- ed on many other books, particularly on Métis history. George Goulet is the best-selling author of The Trial of Louis Riel. Justice and Mercy Denied, his wife Terry was the chief researcher.

Battle of Grand Coteau

One of the events that George and Terry Goulet discuss in their book, is the Battle of Grand Coteau. This is, perhaps, one of the least known Métis historical events, yet one of profound significance in forming the identity of the western Métis as a unique and unified people. The Goulets give especially intriguing details of the famous battle between over 2,000 Sioux warriors and a small group of 67 Métis hunters in the summer of 1851. The Métis won against incredible odds and thereafter were respected by the Sioux as their equals on the plains. Among them was 13 year old Gabriel Dumont who would later become the most famous of Métis military strategists.

The battle occurred in July 1851, in an area called the Grand Coteau in present day North Dakota. The word “coteau” is derived from the French language and describes elevated land such as a butte, a plateau, or a divide between two valleys. The Grand Coteau is just that, a vast elevation extending over many kilometres, the eastern edge of which is a long escarpment marking the beginning of the second steppe of the North American plains. This was an area claimed by both the Sioux and the Métis as traditional buffalo hunting territory. Consequently, there was always danger of war- ring attacks from the Sioux. This was no light matter. As George and Terry Goulet quote from: “The Sioux are a bold and numerous race, whose very name has been the terror of every nation... War is their profession, horses, guns, and hunting their delight.”

The Métis hunting parties were huge, often involving thous- ands of people—men, women and children. It was their custom to travel in close proximity to each other for protection in case of attack from the Sioux. On this occasion there were three main groups from the Red River area—one from St. Boniface, one from Pembina and another from White Horse Plains. The first two bands (St. Boniface and Pembina) con- sisted of 3,900 people, 35% of whom were hunters. There were over 1,000 Red River carts as well as horses, oxen and dogs. These two parties headed west from Pembina to join up with the White Horse Group—a group consisting of just 67 hunters and their families. Initially all parties hunted together, but for some reason the small White Horse group split off on their own around the end of June. On July 12th, they arrived at the eastern edge of the Grand Coteau. It was here the trouble began.

Prelude to the battle

Five Métis scouts discovered there was a large encamp- ment of Sioux numbering 2,000 to 2,500 not far from their own camp on the Grand Coteau. They immediately alerted their group and throwing caution to the wind...
**NEW DIGS FOR DRYDEN**

Council, MNO Health, Education and Training programs settle into new home -- ready to serve Métis community

**BY AVERY HARGREAVES**

The Northwest Métis Nation of Ontario has moved into its new facilities located at 34B King Street in Dryden, Ontario.

Local Community Council President, Alvina Cimon says: “Now that we have moved into this new facility we are looking forward to having old and new friends and contacts to come in and visit our office and learn more about the local council and program services.” She is pleased with the recent expansion program of the Northwest Métis Nation of Ontario and is proud to be a part of such a progressive community council.

Long Term Care Program Coordinator, Don McDonald, says: “The new facilities have given a new energy to the local program as the Health Branch Services office anticipates continuing to care for those benefiting from the present program and increasing its future role in the community.” He also stated that the agency is prepared to implement the new on-site Telehealth Services for those who will benefit from this remarkable program.

The Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program Coordinator, Carol Hazelip, anticipates improved services for those benefiting from this key program. Further she explains: “The new location is wheelchair accessible which will accommodate all clients: Our new facility has enhanced visibility and awareness in the community. The Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program is part of a province-wide network of prevention and early intervention services for families. Our mandate is to assist families in need in order to ensure that babies and children develop in a healthy manner.” She predicts a definite improvement in services within the coming year.

New to the local office’s programs and services is the Community Action Program for Children (CAPC). Program Coordinator, Lee-Anne Moore, excitedly states that: “The purpose of this outstanding program is to invest in the well-being of children. Its focus is on the health and development of children ages 0-6 years and providing support and information to parents for healthy approaches to child care and development.” She further foresees the early success of the local program because of the custom facilities in the Northwest Métis Nation of Ontario, Dryden office.

Key to the services available through the Northwest Métis Nation of Ontario is the Métis Nation of Ontario Training Initiative (MNOTI). The MNOTI programs provide employment services and support to the Métis people of Ontario through an assessment and approvals process Dana O’Donnell, the Regional Employment and Training Coordinator works within the Region One (1) area which includes Fort Frances, Dryden, Kenora, Sioux Lookout and surrounding areas (read Dana’s report on page 6.). The examples of programs are geared toward finding and keeping work or increasing career skills. A number of programs have been introduced which offer financial support and opportunity to Métis individuals. The focus of each program is employment and employability through wage subsidies, training purchases, skills development and special projects.

Anyone interested in obtaining information or volunteering with the local programs is encouraged to contact:

Aboriginal Healthy Babies, Healthy Children
PH: 807-223-4540
CAPC
PH: 807-223-5280
Long Term Care
PH: 807-223-4535
Training Initiatives
PH: 1-888-793-3334 Ext. 22
Local council office
PH: 807-223-8082

**NORTHERN ONTARIO MEDICAL SCHOOL NEWS:**

**Métis Med student on new path at age 50**

**BY RICK GARRICK**

Penny Forth is excited about her new career path in medicine.

“I have two diplomas, a university degree, and now I’m in med school,” says the 59-year-old Métis woman from Sudbury, who began her first year at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine on August 27th along with 55 other first-year medical students.

“I feel so humbled that the school and the programs have taken a chance on me at my age, I won’t let them down.”

Forth has followed a long path to her current goal, a path that began with the births of son Michael at age 15 and daughter Nicole at 19; academic upgrading and an attempt at college in her early 20’s; a wide variety of jobs, including store detective; a bout of acute anxiety; a move across the country from B.C. to Sudbury in 1996; three years of study at Cambrian College, where she met her husband, the birth of son Christopher; 18 months of study at the Canadian College of Massage and Hydrotherapy, and the development of her own massage therapy business in Sudbury.

“Toward the end of her 18 months of study in massage therapy, Forth remembers coming to the realization that her true path was through medical school. “At the time I knew that was what I was supposed to be,” she says. “I’m supposed to be a medical doctor.”

But she’d just spent 18 months away from home, so she told her husband that she would wait five years before continuing her studies. Three years later she woke up one morning with the realization that she couldn’t wait any longer; she needed to start working towards her goal right away.

“Of course I went,” she says. “I started my four-year science degree at Laurentian University in Sudbury. It’s been about where I needed to go.”

Forth knew that NOSM was the school for her from the start, with its focus on the north’s diversity of cultures, differing healing methods, and an attempt at college in her early 20’s; a wide variety of jobs, including store detective; a bout of acute anxiety; a move across the country from B.C. to Sudbury in 1996; three years of study at Cambrian College, where she met her husband, the birth of son Christopher; 18 months of study at the Canadian College of Massage and Hydrotherapy, and the development of her own massage therapy business in Sudbury.

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This was a proud moment for the audience learned and how it could answer their questions. This was a proud moment for the audience learned and how it could answer their questions.

It was the first of many events throughout the year and all participants were asked to not pick the first seven bushes they touched. We found there are enough berries left for the berries and for next year. For each large cup of blueberries they picked they received a ticket to win incentives. Everyone left happy and the “house” picked up eight extra large freeze bags of blueberries.

At different picking sessions we managed to get raspberries and strawberries, so we made four different types of jam includ- ing a mixed berry. Each participant received one jar of each and the remaining jars were stored for our community events, feasts, ceremonies and giveaways.

Other joint programming ses- sions included community pic- nics, a walking group, diabetes prevention workshops, empower- ment circles, active living ses- sions, community Christmas parties! We will find an emo- tional wellness series which focuses on healthy living and less bullying. In the fall the health team will be harvesting wild rice and will host another community event to show how to process wild rice.

Through them we offered an opportunity to grade three classes. The Canadian Diabetes Association and the Heart and Stroke Foundation came to show their support. It was a very healthy and muggy days and this would prove to be a challenge as most every- one believed we couldn’t be able to pull it off. We were prepared with sun screen, hats and water. The children took turns carrying baskets and they had made. We were very proud and honoured to be part of this suc- cessful group. The children had hard time but they persevered and were great role models for the community. At the end of the walk the children feasted on healthy foods and they were all rewarded with some active living give-aways.

In June, we participated in the Children’s Festival. Again, Ashley and I had a beautiful information table for this three day event. We made our booth enticing to the chil- dren with fiddle music, jigging and spooning contests. The festi- val days were hot and many of the children were drinking our lim- ited supplies of drinks and snacks for the day so the juices and fruit we gave out were very appreci- ated.

Our highlight was watching the grade three class debut their play, “The Day the Animals Learned About Diabetes.” This play was originally created by Eileen Malcolm, a previous Dia- betes Prevention Worker funded through the Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative. The children worked hard to make the puppets and they even added signs that said: “Diabetes is a Disease”, “The pancreas produces the insulin”, “Healthy eating and physical activity pre- vent diabetes”. At the end of the play the students answered their audience questions like: “What is diabetes?” “What does the pancreas produce? Can you prevent it?” I was amazed at how much the audience learned and how well the parents and children could answer their questions. This was a proud moment for sure.

There is no doubt we reached our goal, knowing these children really did learn about diabetes and health with the knowledge shared with peers, parents and the community.

This was a proud moment for the audience learned and how it could answer their questions.
"The Red River carts had been formed into a circle, axle to axle, and slightly angled up from the ground. The shafts were pointed outwards like spears. Poles were shoved through the wheels of all the carts to provide them with shelter, and the livestock were placed inside the circle. The Métis had literally to close the circle. The circle was formed into a circle, axle to axle, and slightly angled up from the ground.

"The Sioux莨scared the wagons."

They approached the Sioux, presumably to parley. The scouts were taken hostage, but two of them were able to escape and fled on their speedy steeds back to their Métis camp.

"When they reached the safety of their camp, they found that hostile preparations were being made under the Chief of the Hunt, Jean Baptiste Falcon (son of Métis minstrel Pierre Falcon). Under his leadership, they were taking measures to defend themselves against the attack that they knew was imminent.

The Métis decided to form a circle in front of their camp, they found that the enemy would not allow a subsequent Sioux delegation to come near the bulwark. The Métis were determined to conceal from the Sioux the military preparations they had made in their makeshift fort.

"That night (in which an eclipse of the moon occurred) an attempt was made by the Métis to furtively dispatch scouts to the St Boniface and Pembina hunting parties to ask them to urgently come to their assistance. These scouts were seen, but sometime later two other Métis were able to elude the Sioux and make it to the other brigades." [But would their help come in time?]

The First Day

"The next day, July 13th while Father Louis Lafîchê (the priest from White Horse Plain who was accompanying them) was administering the sacraments, the Métis scouts warned that a multitude of Sioux warriors was rapidly approaching. Thirty armed Métis huntsmen rode out to meet the lead band of oncoming Sioux, offering them gifts and asking them to turn back. The Sioux refused and, as they continued to approach, the Métis scouts raced back into their camp, corralled their horses, and jumped into their rifle pits.

The remaining three Métis captives of the Sioux made a break for freedom. Two were successful; the third Jean Baptiste Malarette, who was riding a slow horse, was unable to make it to safety. His disemboweled body was later found with three bullet holes and 67 arrows in it.

The Indians, painted and decked out for war, did not charge the Métis fortification en masse. Undoubtedly this would have seen some part in discouraging the Sioux. His understanding of the situation (together with the moon the night before and a sudden thunderstorm that day) made the Sioux believe that the Métis were supported by a Man- itou, a supernatural being.

Among the 77 riflemen, was not only the senior Isadore Dumont but also his two sons 17-year-old Isadore and 15-year-old Gabriel. Young Gabriel was destined to become the great military leader of the Métis during the North-West Uprising of 1869 over 40 years later. Many of the lessons he learned at the Battle of the Grand Portage, particularly the effectiveness of the rifle pits, he later used during that uprising.

The Métis went on the first day of the battle continued for six hours until a heavy downpour, coupled with their losses, caused them to withdraw. However, they continued to wheel and shout all night long, indicating that they were not yet done with the Métis.

The Second Day

"Before sun-up the next morning (July 14th) and the return of the Sioux, the Métis decided to make a run for safety to the other Métis parties some 25 or 30 miles away. Sentrys were dispatched to watch for the approach of the native warriors, while Red River carts were hastily readied, after which they quickly departed.

"However, it was not long into their flight before their sentinels warned them that the Sioux were in hot pursuit. The same procedure of circling the wagons, as they had used the day before, was quickly implemented by the Métis.

Dudley George’s spirit continues to inspire

I n June, the Elementary Teachers of Toronto (ETT) issued a press release in support of the Ipperwash Report. “Teachers in Toronto are extremely pleased with the report of the Ipperwash Inquiry,” says Martin Long, President of the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario. “It stands as a landmark not only for Aboriginal rights in Ontario and across Canada, but also as a significant contribution to justice for all Canadians.”

The ETT represents over 30,000 teachers in the Toronto District School Board.

The union has long supported the George family’s search for answers to the shooting death of Dudley George by an OPP officer at Ipperwash Provincial Park in 1995.

“When you realise that Dudley was the only native killed in Canada in a land claim during the 20th century, huge questions arise, especially considering the fact that all the natives occupying the park were unarmed," adds Long.

Elliott George (son of the family’s call for a public inquiry. The provincial government stubbornly refused to open an inquiry even after the trial of the OPP officer Kenneth Deane found him guilty of the shooting and raised questions about the actions of the police and government. In frustration, Sam launched a potentially costly private lawsuit against the OPP, the government and the Premier, Mike Harris. ETT responded to the family’s need for financial help. In 2001 it held a standing-room-only fundraising concert at Concert Hall to support the Ipperwash Legal Fund. The following year, supporters filled Massey Hall to hear musical giants like Buffy St. Marie and Molly Johnson and to raise more money in support of the lawsuit. Commenting on these events Sam George noted: “The teachers came along at a very difficult time for us. The concert raised much-needed funds for our legal action. More than that, they really raised up our spirits at the same time.”

With the election of the Liberal Government in 2003 and the out-of-court settlement of the George family’s lawsuit, the remaining funds raised by ETT were transferred to the Dudley George Memorial Education Fund, whose mandate was to further educational opportunities for Aboriginal youth.

The fund has supported projects from Ipperwash to Toronto to Trunk Lake in northern Ontario. The Ipperwash program, designed to help ease the transition into high school for Aboriginal youth, has been adopted by communities as far away as New Zealand.

“The fund is doing the kind of work that would have made Dudley smile,” says Sam George. Long adds, “We hope Dudley’s name and spirit will continue to inspire young people from all backgrounds for a long time to come.”

Dudley George Memorial Education Fund

Elementary Teachers of Toronto

Martin Long, President

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Ipperwash tragedy spawns fund to provide educational opportunities for Aboriginal youth

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RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING AWARENESS: OUT OF LUCK

Are you feeling lucky? Maybe not after you hear some facts on gambling and the odds

BY GLEN LIPINSKI

“Local Métis Strikes It Rich!”

The headline above, although fictitious, is one that we are all quickly attracted to with longing interest, curiosity and excitement. We want to know: How did they get rich? What did they win? Can I get some too? If that person did that, I should be able to do it too, right? Well, maybe with some “luck.”

The word “luck,” what is it? What does it do and how does it work its magic?

Good luck! Had luck, best of luck, wish me luck, feeling lucky, getting lucky, all of these phrases that are used. The mere word is cause for excitement and a promise of good things to come. Why are we so fascinated with the word “luck”? Let’s have a look at “luck.”

The dictionary defines “luck” as “a force that seems to operate for good or ill in a person’s life, as in shaping circumstances, events, opportunities, etc., good fortune, advantage or success considered as the result of chance.” What makes you lucky or how do you get luck on your side? You could carry a lucky rabbit’s foot, a lucky stone, a special amulet, lucky oils, a lucky coin, etc. Are any of these things going to aid us in our quest for luck? Maybe, possibly, some people swear by it, others are not so sure. Here are some interesting points worthy of consideration on the subject of luck:

Probability and odds say that aids such as a rabbit’s foot and lucky coins will not improve your chances of becoming “lucky” (and that implicitly rich) while playing games of chance because of your supposed new found “good luck.” A significant number of Aboriginal people play games of chance or gamble, hoping that “luck” will make them rich. In fact, recent studies from five Aboriginal communities in Ontario indicate that between 48% and 93% of respondents say that they gamble in some form. Between 43% and 69% of Aboriginal women in the surveyed communities are gamblers, between 52% and 57% of Aboriginal men in the surveyed communities are gamblers.

Gambling defined as “any gambling behaviour involving risk and considered reward where money or valuables may be won or lost.”

...DON’T THINK THAT ‘PROBLEM GAMBLERS’ ONLY GO TO CASINOS!

In a recent Aboriginal gambling study of Aboriginal communities in Ontario, bingo, instant win tickets, lottery tickets and slot machines were indicated as the gambling activities that were most prevalent among Aboriginal people in Ontario.

Gambling has been a part of all of our lives for a long time. It is estimated that 63% of people gamble in some form, 6% of them will become what is considered “at risk” and have the potential of becoming problem gamblers. “Problem gambling” is defined as “any type of gambling that compromises, disrupts, or damages personal, family or work pursuits.” You are probably wondering if you are one of those people who are at risk or are one of those people who will have problems with gambling. Approximately 6% of people who gamble are at risk of becoming a problem gambler. Most of us can relax and continue to enjoy moderate, recreational gambling within limits.

However, this does not mean that we should all relax to the point that we ignore responsible gambling, or turn our health and say “gambling has nothing to do with me” and please, don’t think that “problem gamblers” only go to casinos!

There is a general lack of interest, along with the classic “it can’t happen to me” idea, or “it’s not my problem”, that is causing major concern with issues over problem gambling among Aboriginal people. Remember that “problem gambling” can lead to additional health problems including, emotional, physical, mental and social difficulties.

Health care workers across the province and indeed across the country and the world are becoming more and more concerned with the exploding issues surrounding gambling. Responsible gambling practices are needed now more than ever due to the following:

• Increased ease of access to gambling
• Creation of huge mega-Bingo halls
• Easy access to internet and television gambling
• Increased ease of access to large amounts of available credit (cash)
• Large advertising budgets designed to make “striking it rich” look very easy and very attractive for the ordinary, everyday person
• Availability of lottery tickets, pull tabs and on-line gaming to children and youth

We want to draw your attention to and make you more aware of this evolving and escalating problem. Only through knowledge and understanding of the issues that surround gambling can you make correct and informed choices to the very best of your abilities and in turn promote wellness for yourself, your families and your communities. Throughout the coming months I will be offering you (in an easy to understand and factual format) the latest and most up-to-date information to guide you to increased health and wellness in your lives through the promotion of responsible gambling practices.

Please remember that “gambling” and more important “responsible gambling” is everybody’s concern and only by working together can we increase that awareness all across the Métis Homeland.

The next time you are feeling ‘lucky’ and want to exercise your gambling right, consider the facts and gamble responsibly and safely.

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THE SIOUX & MÉTIS WARS

FROM PAGE 13

erupted. Almost immediately after, a large group of Métis hunters from the Red River and Pembina mountains galloped on to the scene. It was decided not to pursue and seek revenge, the unsuccessful native adversaries, but to carry on with the buffalo hunt.”

Aftermath

• The exact number of Sioux casualties is not known, but has been estimated at 80 killed and numerous wounded, and the loss of dozens of their horses. They had been emphatically repulsed. This battle forever ended warfare between the Sioux and the Métis. This triumph made the Métis the undisputed Lords of these plains and of the buffalo herds in this area and the nearby Turtle Mountains.

• Astonishingly, the Métis did not lose one man, woman or child during the lengthy onslaughts. However, several were wounded and a number of their horses and oxen were killed and the unfortunate Malaterre had been killed by the Sioux before the battle started.

• The Métis who fought for their lives at the historic Battle of the Grand Coteau, figuratively wore badges of honour and courage. Their valiant actions in this dramatic conflict were an accomplishment par excellence and vividly exemplified the fighting spirit of this unique people.

As you can see from the excerpt above, the authors combine good narrative writing with historic detail. As an introduction to Métis history, for those intent on finding out more about the origins of our people, this book is recommended.

MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO

HEALTH CAREERS SUPPORT PROGRAM

Do you want to be a health professional? Have you wanted to go back to school but not had the opportunity? Are you currently pursuing a health career and having difficulty making ends meet? If so, the Métis Nation of Ontario may be able to help you through a new funding program designed to assist Métis students from Ontario.

TRAINING & SUPPORT: This program assists and encourages Métis students to gain the necessary prerequisites to position themselves for ongoing education ultimately leading to a career in health.

SCHOLARSHIPS & BURSARIES: This program helps Métis students who have demonstrated need for assistance to complete their program of study.

CONTINUING EDUCATION: The Continuing Education award helps Métis health professionals who provide services to Métis people in Ontario to enhance their education.
Métis man hoped to thank Métis Nation of Ontario health worker

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

At the time of his death, Mr. Hass was composing a letter of thanks to the Windsor Essex Métis Council. His family has requested that the letter be shared.

M y name is Donald Hass. I live in French River, Ontario, where I have lived most of my life. This is an area that is located just north of Parry Sound. I was born in a hospital in Toronto, Ontario in 1945. When I was a little boy my parents bought some river front property and built a tourist camp. I worked for my parents at this camp where I met the love of my life Marie Lacasse. I married Marie in 1968 and we both moved into a home at the camp. During this time we continued to work at the camp and I began my own wholesale business. I would drive all over selling minnows and worms to camps and businesses. In 1980 we bought a piece of property on the river and build our home where we are still living. At this time I began my own cut and split firewood business. I spent the bulk of my time after 1980 working in the bush and built my business up from a firewood business with only one truck, to my own logging business with a cherry picker, two skidders, and a staff that ranged from 2 to 10 men. Over the next 14 years I built my business into a stable and prospering enterprise. In the fall of 1994 I suffered from a silent heart attack. At this point my doctor told me I would no longer be able to work. Due to doctor’s orders I was forced to retire due to medical reasons. Because of my medical history I lost both my A and B licenses.

Over the next several years I argued and fought with the government who refused to grant me a disability pension. To help make ends meet we were forced to sell off many of our belongings one piece at a time as well as use up all the money which we had been saving up for our retirement. After one long years the government finally granted me a disabil- ity pension. By this time the equipment and the savings were gone and I was now diabetic. With the pension in place we were able to survive for the next few years without problems.

In 2001 my doctor changed my life again. This time I was told that because of the health problems I have had since the heart attack that my kidneys were failing and that it was only a matter of time until I would have to go for dialysis. A year and a half later the inevitable happened. I began dialysis in the summer of 2003. I had been on dialysis from that point until March of 2006 when I received a phone call telling me that they had found a kidney match and that I would have to leave my home and go down to London where the transplant would take place. My wife and I were flown down to London from the Sudbury airport. We were told that we would have to spend at least four weeks down there after the surgery was over to make sure that everything was working and to settle all the medical questions and issues that might arise. I spent four days in the ICU after my transplant. Once stable and in recovery, my wife tried to find a place where we would stay once I came out of the hospital. My wife contacted many different agencies to see how much help they would be able to give. The one agency for which we are both extremely grateful is the Métis office of Windsor. When my wife called them to explain our situation a wonderful woman by the name of Patricia Messenger drove all the way from Windsor to London to help. She drove my wife around the city showing her different apartments and hotels. She was able to show my wife short cuts and show her where different places could be located. Not only this but she was extremely pleasant and was able to provide companionship and friendship to my wife who had been stressed out ever since I went in for surgery. Patricia vowed to help us in any way that she could.

I spent a week in the hospital and we were able to eventually find a place to stay. The apartment in which we stayed has placed another strain on our finances. We stayed in this apartment for the month of April. I have only been back home since the end of April and I may now have to go back down to London due to complica- tions in my transplant.

I have now had the new kidney for almost two months. I am feeling much better and I am glad that I no longer have to go and spend four days a week for five hours a time stuck to a dialysis machine.

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