Generations: The spirit of Marion Larkman marches on in the form of her grandson, Jason Delosse and her great grandson as they carry the Métis Nation staff during the procession to the Northwest Rebellion monument at Riel Day ceremonies on November 16th, 2007. Marion Larkman passed to the Spirit World last December. More about the 15th Annual Riel Day Commemorative Ceremonies on page 10.
Senator Scofield saluted at Six Nations

Métis Nation of Ontario Senator, Earl Scofield of Region 9, was invited to the Remembrance Day service and parade at Ohsweken, Six Nations, where he was honoured to take the salute when the parade marched past. Senator Scofield enjoyed the beautiful bearded veteran’s neck piece that I wore that day. It was a great day with beautiful weather. The Creators blessed us, with a very good turn out of veterans and spectators.”

A PRAYER from Senator Earl Scofield

Creator. God of love and father to us all, we wish to thank you for the time you gave us to be alive with our comrades. Senator, Marion Larkman, grandmother, a faithful warrior to the very end.

Creator, we pray that her spirit is with you and her ancestors in heaven.

Marion Larkman, may God bless you and give you well-earned rest and peace. We also pray for all our comrades who made the supreme sacrifice and served in all wars from the war of 1812, the Boer War, the 1st Great War of 1914 to 1918, the Korean War, the 2nd World War from 1939 to 1945, the Vietnam conflict and now the war in Afghanistan.

Lord God all mighty we pray for peace and safety for all our brave warriors—men and women—in Afghanistan. The MNO is proud of our troops, in the morning and at the going down of the sun. We will remember them.

Oh Great Spirit we thank you for the Métis Nation of Ontario, please bless our leaders, and grant us success in negotiations with all governments. Thank you for bringing us all together for the 14th Annual General Assembly of our nation.

Thank you for the fresh air we breathe and for the water we drink; we tend to forget all the blessings you provide for us. We praise you for being the creator of the universe.

We have met in your name, seeking your presence and wisdom.

Thank you for your presence in our fellowship. Please keep our womenstrong enough to raise the children to be proud Métis.

Lord for all these blessings, Che Miig wetch getchee manitou, Amen.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

THINKING ABOUT INFINITY

I sit here thinking about being Métis—the infinity sign, the fusion of two nations, symbolicising who we are. It was a very special thank-you to Senator, Marion Larkman, grandmother, a faithful warrior to the very end.

I had expected the entertainment to be from people from our Nation, using our traditional songs, dances, and including music from more modern Métis artists for those who want a more modern touch and for our younger people. I think we have enough talented Métis people to have been entertained for the entirety of the AGA.

I wondered where all the Elders were. I had expected Métis Elders to be present to tell stories by the fire for the children and the grown up children. I thought they would teach and share about some of our traditions, about how our parents, our grandparents, our great grandparents and so on lived in both worlds as both sides were brought together; you know, the other part of the infinity. I won’t name it as there are two halves and both have important teachings so really there is no naming of sides. Truly there is no side when I look at the infinity symbol, as there is no separating and no end, a fusion you could say of two cultures, one running smoothly into the other.

I would like to have seen both the fiddling, jigging, drumming, dancing, crafts, story telling, and for those who would like to attend, the traditional ceremonies from our Elders. I would like to have honoured and enjoyed all the smoothness of the infinity. For this to happen, I believe we need our Elders to help organise and give us some direction in what to include in our gatherings. We need to invite our Elders. We believe we need to be conscious of having Métis and non-Métis people in all our events. I know my Greek—indeed, this is the gift of being Métis. How unique and special is that?

If anyone would like to contact me and share please do at donnagrenier@hotmail.com

— DONNA GRENIER

POETRY

Who Loves You? Awen Shákeyshk? (Michif)

Anger is depression erupting outward. Depression is anger turning inward. Love is forgiving others. Forgiveness is love itself. comenzó: 2007.


Thank you for the fresh air we breathe and for the water we drink; we tend to forget all the blessings you provide for us. We praise you for being the creator of the universe.

We have met in your name, seeking your presence and wisdom.

Thank you for your presence in our fellowship. Please keep our women strong enough to raise the children to be proud Métis.

Lord for all these blessings, Che Miig wetch getchee manitou, Amen.


Contribute.

Scott Carpenter
Anne Trudel
Alas (Plants) Kennedy
Rick Poulette
Heather Pardon
Ravenna Aulaha
Senator Earl Scofield
Jeff Wilson
Shane Belcourt
John D. Hamilton
Glen Lipinski
Pam Tremblay
Rick Carrick
Chelsey Quirk

Contact
Linda Lord, editor
RR #1, Hasting, ON K0H 1W0
Phone: 613-374-3430
lloyd@lirong.net

If undeliverable return to Métis Nation of Ontario
500 Old St. Patrick St., Unit D
Ottawa, ON K1N 9G4
-phone: 613-798-1488
marco@metisnation.org
www.metisnation.org
New Métis council to cover Niagara

BY RICK PAQUETTE

The newly formed Niagara Region Métis Council is off and running.

We have only been together three weeks (at time of printing) and under the leadership of President Barbara Wright and with the diligent work of Senator Stephen Quesnelle, things are starting to take shape. With assistance from the rest of the council, Glen and Shawn Lipinski, Barbara’s husband, Harry, we have managed to get our council office running, complete with generously donated furniture.

Although it was very short notice, Senator Quesnelle was able to make contact with the mayor of Welland and two city councillors to request that they put forward a motion before council to have a ceremony at city hall in honour of Louis Riel Day. With the Senator’s perseverance, all this came to be on November 16th, 2007 and we met at city hall in Welland at 8:45 a.m. for the ceremony.

The prayer was offered by Amanda Lipinski, Councillor, and the flag raising ceremony. Glen Lipinski delivered a speech about Louis Riel which included many interesting and historical facts about the leader of the Métis Nation. It was not a huge turnout, but the council was pleased with the number in attendance, many of whom wore their Métis sashes.

A flag raising ceremony. Glen Lipinski delivered a speech about Louis Riel which included many interesting and historical facts about the leader of the Métis Nation. It was not a huge turnout, but the council was pleased with the number in attendance, many of whom wore their Métis sashes.

The day started out dark and dreary, but as the ceremony began and the flag was raised, the sun came out and shone brightly on all of us. As the speeches ended, a gentle breeze brought the flag to attention. As I looked up at it I remembered many Remembrance Day services in which you would see the veterans with their poppies and medals, tired with age, but as the ceremonies began, they would snap to attention full of youthful pride. As I looked back at the gathering, I could see the same pride on all the faces in attendance. It was truly a wonderful moment and hopefully a positive sign of future success for our council.

Rick Paquette is the Chair of the Niagara Region Métis Council.

New Grand River Métis Council covers the Kitchener-Waterloo area

NEW MÉTIS COUNCIL AIMS TO BRING COMMUNITY TOGETHER

It means that our community has been officially recognized,” Levie said.

Métis are a distinct Aboriginal people with unique language and culture. Levie estimates there are between 500,000 and 800,000 Métis in Canada, taking into account that many are not registered, she said. She added that there are a couple of thousand Métis in Waterloo Region.

Ruth Robbins, interim president of the council, started working months ago to bring the local Métis community together.

“It means that our community has been officially recognized,” Levie said.

Métis are a distinct Aboriginal people with unique language and culture. Levie estimates there are between 500,000 and 800,000 Métis in Canada, taking into account that many are not registered, she said. She added that there are a couple of thousand Métis in Waterloo Region.

Ruth Robbins, interim president of the council, started working months ago to bring the local Métis community together.

“This (council) leads to better understanding of problems and solutions, she said.

Métis account for more than 20% of the Aboriginal population across Canada.

There are over 300 Métis communities, most in western Canada, both in remote and urban communities.

The charter signing ceremony was held at Conestoga College Doon Campus on October 29th.

Reprinted with the kind permission of The Waterloo Record.

MNO is on the grow!

Recently, the MNO family has increased with the creation of two new community councils. Welcome to the Niagara Region Métis Council, and the North Channel Métis Council.

The Niagara Region Métis Council came into being at a general meeting, facilitated by the MNO held October 27, 2007, at the Days Inn in Welland. An interim council was formed.

In attendance were Gary Lipinski, MNO Chair; France Picotte, MNO Co-Chair and Hank Bowlinson, MNO Senior Policy Analyst and many sox citizens of the Niagara Region.

The office will remain in Welland at its present location, but will serve the entire Niagara Region, not just one city or area. At the time of printing this edition, the official name was not yet cast in stone, but many people seem to favour the Niagara Region Métis Council.

The North Channel Métis Council encompasses the territory from the Bruce Peninsula to the Bay of Quinte, the area known as Northern Ontario.

On October 25th, 2007, the former Thessalon and Bruce Mines / St. Joseph’s Island councils united to form the North Channel Métis Council.

The new interim council encompasses the territory from the Bruce Peninsula to the Bay of Quinte, the area known as Northern Ontario.

“This action will strengthen the voice of sox citizens in the area and will provide strong local governance,” said MNO President, Tony Beckout.

MNO Chair, Gary Lipinski, added, “With a strong voice at the community level, communi-

nates can identify and set their own priorities while working to improve the social conditions of their citizens, as well as ensuring Métis rights are being respected and dealt with.”

“The new united community council will better serve the Métis citizens of the north shore through a larger volun-

teer base and enable us to pool our resources to secure programs and services for the Métis citizens in our area,” said Art Bennet, the newly appoint-

ed interim president.
BY JEFF WILSON

This summer has been a whirlwind of activity for the Grey-Owen Sound Métis community participating in so many events in Owen Sound and farther afield. In June another successful Aboriginal Day Picnic was well attended and provided great fun for about 100 of our community. This year we received a small grant from the Heritage Canada Committee. We enjoyed great entertainment from our musicians (consisting of music ranging from Métis fiddling to the blues) and shared a huge Aboriginal Day cake with the attendees. Our youth were active, demonstrating their many talents. A delicious pot-luck dinner was enjoyed by all. We were honored by the presence of various levels of government dignitaries. At the “Hottest Yard Sale” the Grey-Owen Sound Métis exhibited offered information to the many visitors who stopped at the display. It was an enjoyable day, and definitely HOT.

During Homecoming Week, thanks to Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy (AHWS) Outreach, Diane and a representative of the Métis Nation (Malcolm Dixon did the honours), were invited to attend the planning committee meetings, resulting in a lot of preparation on their part followed by a busy week.

Children’s Day Workshop with crafts, scavenger hunt, story time, etc. was very well received. Diane and Mal assisted by several volunteers did a great job.

During the Amazing Race, a stop at M’Wikwedong Native Friendship Centre provided Ralph Cadotte, Métis fiddler, accompanied by me on the guitar, and Diane’s children, entertainment for the contestants.

A float entered into the Homecoming Parade created a fun time. Malcolm Dixon led in constructing a Red River Cart with Métis-specific trappings, and Clare and Donna Hillyer floated the tour de force. (Plans are in the works for a float in the Christmas Parade too.)

As Senator, I was honoured to attend the annual ski at Thunder Bay, representing the Grey-Owen Sound Métis Council. The Senators’ Forum was a two-day session with 31 of the 35 Senators of the Métis Nation of Ontario attending. The AGM, as always, provided interesting reports to keep the various representatives informed and current, as well as providing opportunity for entertaining banter and socializing.

August brought around Scott Carpenter’s Métis Day celebration at Discovery Harbour in Penetang. It featured displays, activities, music, etc. for a record crowd. Jane and Rolle St Germain had their tobacco display there, and Rudy and Jean Couture were featured musicians.

The 2nd Weaving our Communities Conference held at the Outdoors Education Centre near Wiarton was a huge success (Diane again included in planning committee). Métis presence was very evident there as well. A Métis display by Scott Carpenter, a Michel language workshop by Rene Laureu, and Métis fiddling by Ralph Cadotte were a few highlights of the two-day event. On September 22nd an information meeting with Hank Rowlinson, Gary Lipinski and Doug Wilson was held at the Owen Sound Coliseum. Gary Lipinski updated guests on diplomatic and legal scenarios involving the use. He told of the current court cases that will define the Métis hunting rights. It is an ongoing process, and each time a case is won, there are more rules needed to prove Métis heritage. Therefore we need to present more genealogical research.

Doug Wilson shared info on the ground-breaking health initiative and we learned how much work is being done on our behalf. We lead the field in health with a “Tele-Health” system already in place in some communities. This allows people in remote areas to have access to specialists in the field of medicine by computer. Another breakthrough is a corporate sponsored semi-truck tour north with medical and dental support, plus capabilities to do necessary testing. These innovations are models for other organizations.

Hank Rowlinson made it clear that a local election must be undertaken to maintain the community’s charter status. Mr. Rowlinson was subsequently elected returning officer and will handle the Grey Owen Sound community election.

The Rendezvous at Lafontaine closed September, with many events to attract Métis games, vendors, music; hide skinning, crafts; a barbecue and a fish fry.

We are fortunate to be represented by our directors, who continuously work towards a national region, better housing, health and recognition for the Métis people. There are bursaries available for health-related careers, training and employment opportunities. There are youth opportunities, seniors’ programs, all waiting for some innovative person to write a proposal and make it happen.

We are blessed with a roomy, comfortable gathering place in Owen Sound. We have a library of Métis/Aboriginal reading material. There is a room for genealogical research. You can make use of the computer with internet access. You can make use of the computer with internet access. You can make use of the computer with internet access. You can make use of the computer with internet access. You can make use of the computer with internet access.

We are grateful for that freedom, to be allowed to think and speak our thoughts and to realize our dreams.

We thank you for the beauty that surrounds us, for sunshine and sunset, for clear clean waters, and undying blue heavens. Thank you for the forests and the trails that allow us to walk in the beauty of Your creation. Let us pledge to do our part to keep Mother Earth in a sustainable order.

We thank you, Creator, for family and the warmth of the love that surrounds us as we approach the holiday season. Be with those who suffer loss and illness. Keep them strong in faith and grant them peace and hope.

We send our prayers to those less fortunate people across this earth who suffer indignities, atrocities and hatred, and we pray that one day all mankind will walk together in peace and harmony.

Thank you, Marcié, Mipetch

Leora Wilson is the Senator of the Grey-Owen Sound Métis Council
On September 29th, 2007, the southern Georgian Bay Métis community hosted the third annual Métis Rendezvous at its new location, the Lafontaine Parks and Recreation Centre.

The Métis Rendezvous is a community gathering that is held every year to celebrate the history and culture of the Métis people who have resided in the area for many generations since around 1828. The activities began at 10:00 a.m. and the music didn’t stop until 2:00 a.m. Sunday morning.

This year’s event also celebrated the Métis victory on June 12, 2007, in the Ontario Court of Justice. The Court ruled that the historic harvesting agreement entered into by the Métis Nation of Ontario and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources is legally binding on the Government of Ontario and that the laying of charges by the MNR against three Métis harvesters violated the terms of that agreement. In light of this decision, charges against local Métis harvesters were subsequently dropped.

The Rendezvous provided plenty of hands-on activities for children and adults alike, including cultural activities and demonstrations at scheduled times throughout the day. Jeannette Brunelle, one of the many Métis demonstrators, provided beading sessions where participants could purchase a beading kit at a reasonable cost and bead along with her. Ruth Quesnelle demonstrated how to finger-weave a bookmark. Finger-weaving is a Métis art that is used to make the famous ceinture fléchée or arrow sash that is one of the most recognizable Métis symbols.

Think you can fillet a fish fast? Competitors put their fish filleting skills to the test against the LePage Fisheries team. There were many other cultural activities including the Métis Voyageur Games (hatchet throw, air rifle, sling shot, etc.), corn husk dolls, skinning and stretching pelts, dressing the game, snowshoe making, gourd art, Michif, traditional tobacco and smudging, quilting, and a variety of activities for children and youth.

The Métis market “Vendor’s Village” featured a wide array of Métis wares, including unique hand made arts and crafts. There was something for everyone, and everyone had a good time.

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

Senator Ruth Wagner-Millington (left) and Senator Leora Wilson (right) provide a little Métis music during the harvest celebrations at Lafontaine.

AHWS Coordinator Tracy Bald ran a cornhusk doll-making workshop at the Rendezvous.

Bernie LePage fillets fresh caught whitefish for the Rendezvous. The fish dinner brought over 200 people from the surrounding community to Lafontaine Park.

Senator Roland St. Germain and Grey Owen Sound Métis President Pete Couture.

right:
The Hunt & the Harvest

Region 5 Métis mark the Harvest with Gathering at Sturgeon Falls

BY LINDA KRAUSE

Our Harvest Gathering was held on Saturday October 13th, 2007, at Dutrisac Cottages in Sturgeon Falls. With a backdrop of autumn colours and crisp cold air the Harvest Gathering was once again a success. Thanks to the devotion of the employees and councils of MNO Region 5 everyone who attended the event enjoyed themselves. A big thanks goes to each person who helped make this a memorable occasion.

We started our day at 11:00 am with registration and Métis cultural displays. A lunch of salads, hamburgers, hotdogs, chilli and stew followed—great fare for a cold day.

There was a fire that was kept going throughout the day. The afternoon was full of such activities as moccasin making, paper tole making, beading, dot painting, all kinds of kids’ games and crafts, lots and lots of socializing between friends and family, all accompanied by live Métis music. Our local television network came out to interview some of us. A very good friend brought her drum with her and sang some songs for us.

Jason Jamieson, our Community Wellness worker here in North Bay, hand painted a paddle to go with the five beautiful photographs taken by Walter Deering as some of our door prizes. The winner of the paddle was Mr. Jean-Guy Gingras, and the following people each received a beautiful photograph, Amanda Desbiens, Normand Gingras, Christine McLaughlin, Ann Marie Smith and Fernand Tessier. Congratulations to everyone. Linda Krause of MNOTI donated door prizes for each child.

To end our beautiful day we had a succulent fish fry dinner with all the trimmings, down to home-made sugar and pumpkin pies for dessert. As you know, when Métis people gather, food is always in abundance.

As we said good-bye to the last of our guests we felt a bit sad that it was ending, but we consoled ourselves with, “hey, we’ll see you next year.”
Métis Nation of Ontario welcomes new Cabinet

Naming of new Ontario Cabinet viewed as important turning point in Crown-Aboriginal relations in province

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) leadership enthusiastically welcomed the announcement of Premier Dalton McGuinty’s new cabinet. MNO President, Tony Belcourt, attended the swearing-in ceremony on October 30th.

“This new Ontario Cabinet signals an important point in the relationship between the government and Aboriginal peoples in this province. The appointment of the Honourable Michael Bryant, as the first minister to solely represent the interests of Aboriginal peoples around the cabinet table, is truly historic. For years, Aboriginal leaders have pointed out the inherent conflict of having the Attorney General or Minister of Natural Resources also acting as the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. Premier McGuinty has not only acted to address this issue, but he has appointed the ideal person for the job—a person who knows our issues, who is sensitive to them, and who has the kind of political currency needed in order to advance our issues at the cabinet table,” said Belcourt.

Métis Nation of Ontario Chair, Gary Lipinski, added: “With Minister Bryant’s appointment, and the remand recommendations from the Ipperwash Inquiry report, we have strong momentum to move forward on strengthening the relationship between the government and the Métis people. More specifically, we look forward to moving forward on our priorities of signing an Ontario-Métis Nation Framework Agreement, improving the educational outcomes for Métis students in the province, addressing the pressing housing needs of Métis families with Minister Bryant and Ministers Watson, Milloy, and Wynne.”

President Belcourt also welcomed the appointments of the Hon. Donna Camfield as Minister for Natural Resources, the Hon. Gerry Phillips as Minister for Energy, and the Hon. Michael Gravelle as Minister for Northern Development and Mines. “We look forward to working with these three ministers to ensure Ontario is meeting its constitutional obligations to consult and accommodate Métis communities in relation to energy and resource development across the province.”

“Both Ministers Phillips and Gravelle know the Métis people well and we look forward to once again working with these honourable men,” added Belcourt. We also look forward to working with Minister Dumont on implementing the historic sec-westo harvesting agreement and renewing our discussions with MNR on harvesting and other Métis access to resource issues.

The sec-westo also acknowledged the efforts of David Ramsay in his former roles as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Minister of Natural Resources. “David Ramsay was the first minister in Canada to negotiate and enter into an agreement on Métis harvesting rights following the release of the Supreme Court of Canada’s decision in R v. Barton. His efforts show that if the political will is there, Aboriginal peoples and governments can resolve their issues at the negotiating table, rather than in the court. On behalf of the Métis people in this province, I want to thank him for doing the right and honourable thing,” said Chair Lipinski.

President Belcourt concluded: “Premier McGuinty’s new team signals an exciting road ahead for the Métis people in this province. We see today’s announcement as a positive and proactive approach to Aboriginal issues, so that our work is focussed on co-operative approaches rather than those which are confrontational. We are very optimistic for the future.”
Years ago, a Métis mother was “protecting” her children from hurtful people. Surely, she was not aware that these same choices she made to hide her children would one day be shared with people of influence. Take the mother who “protected” her children, so many Métis parents have taken steps to “hide” us from the hurtful people and in so doing have even hidden much from us, the Métis children, about our people’s story. This is about to change. Inherently, some of the people who came before us maintained our ways, and now documents that affirm our existence are starting to surface, to be understood and accepted. Who better to know our Métis story than educators?

Brent McHale, reeve Region 4 Councilor, told his story: He talked about growing up in an historical Métis community surrounded by a large First Nation population, and yet having to hide his heritage. Who listened to his story? Algoma District School Board (adsb) educators—principals and teachers from towns and villages such as WaWa, Sault Ste. Marie, Chapleau, Desbarats, Blind River, and Elliot Lake listened intently.

So how and why did Brent McHale have this opportunity? Kimi Coliver, superintendent of the adsb brought together an Aboriginal Focus Group. The group included First Nation people from Batchewana, Garden River, Indian Friendship Centre, North Shore Tribal Council, and local and provincial level Métis Nation of Ontario representatives. Being only one or two Métis voices at a very large table may seem overwhelming, but no voice and face was lost thanks to Ms. Coliver.

The adsb of Sault Ste Marie and area on October 12, 2007, held an aboriginal workshop titled, “Educating Our Educators: Educating Our Students: An Aboriginal Focus”. In a short time frame—since the spring of 2007—the group produced a guide for staff that reflects First Nation and Métis knowledge.

On the day of the workshop, participants and presenters were welcomed to Garden River First Nation’s Recreation Centre by Chief Lyle Sayes. Gatherings were given to all by Mario Tarico, Director of Education and Woman McQueen Chair of the adsb. Principals and teachers from elementary and high schools were overwhelmed with information from key note speakers, breakout sessions, and Aboriginal community agency displays such as Tammy Welch’s for the Region 4 sdom office.

Elder, Shirley Roach of the Garden River First Nation gave a personal account of her residential school experience and the treatment of First Nation people. This was followed by Dr. Pam Toulouse of Laurentian University who enthralled teachers with the discoveries that belonged to the First Nation people. Other speakers included Ministry of Education’s Bryon Brisard and his educational journey. During breakout sessions, Brent McHale had roughly threeises minutes to educate the participants about the Métis. With Neil Trudel’s assistance, the new audio visual equipment aided the presentation while Brent spoke. These same educators were given the opportunity to feel the Métis rhythm of the dance which I instructed.

North Bay Canoe club racers bring home 22 gold medals

by Jennifer King

Members of the North Bay Canoe Club brought home 22 gold medals after competing at the National Aboriginal Regatta in Montreal. The competition featured athletes from Ontario, Quebec, BC and the Maritimes, and North Bay athletes dominated the marathon and sprint racing events.

The club is coming off one of its best seasons and is proud of the fine sportsmanship and fair play its athletes have demonstrated. The regatta was the first of its kind and was held at the Orakei Canoe Club, home of Canada’s 1984 Olympic kayaking gold medalist Alwyn Morris. The club also hosted fall training sessions and is looking forward to next season. For information, call 705-254-2030.

North Bay Canoe club racers bring home 22 gold medals

by Jennifer King

Members of the North Bay Canoe Club brought home 22 gold medals after competing at the National Aboriginal Regatta in Montreal. The competition featured athletes from Ontario, Quebec, BC and the Maritimes, and North Bay athletes dominated the marathon and sprint racing events.
Go out for groceries, pay bills or get some needed rest themselves. Before such a visit can occur, coordinators need to know in advance so they can arrange for a volunteer or go themselves.

Other Services: We also provide supportive services to our clients who have Long Term Care needs such as advocacy work when needed, assistance with forms or other documents. We have helped locate financial support for medical devices, at times through generous donations from community members and the public at large.

There is a lot we are able to do, and if we can’t do it we will do our best to find the resources the client needs. So, if you are facing illness, or are isolated, or want support to stay in your home for as long as possible, then contact the nearest LTC Coordinator to see what we can do for you.

Natalie Lloyd is the MNO Health Branch’s Long Term Care Supervisor.
She works in Ottawa.

Grey- Owen Sound Metis Council Community Garden.

Grey-Owen Sound Metis Council Community Garden.

Long Term Care Needs Volunteers!

For years, the Long Term Care (LTC) Program has been serving Metis citizens who are dealing with health problems like cancer, diabetes, HIV, and other illnesses. We also assist seniors who are isolated and need support and we offer help to those who are caring for loved ones. Many of our LTC offices are trying to meet these needs with only one staff member on hand.

We need caring, responsible and dependable volunteers to help in various areas. If you are looking for something to fill up some of your spare time or want to help out with an event then contact us. We are also looking for volunteers who are in outlying areas to help us best serve our clients in need.

Volunteers are needed for the following:

- **Transportation:** Drive clients to their appointments, if needed to the pharmacy or grocery store, after medical appointments.

- **Friendly Visiting:** Meet with clients who are isolated in their homes or in the community and spend time with them. Share stories, play cards and listen. For some people the Friendly Visitor is the only reliable outside contact.

- **Office Help:** Filing, stuffing envelopes, doing posters, etc.

- **Season Specific:** Shovel snow or cut grass for seniors who have no one else to help them. We also need help with Christmas events in the community.

- **Fundraising:** LTC gets a lot of requests that cannot be met by our program dollars. Therefore, we need help with fundraising for needs that are community specific.

If you can help us help community members who are already facing a lot, then please contact your nearest LTC Coordinator.
Congratulations to Alvin McKay and all of the Métis in the London area. This year, for the first time, the City of London flew the Métis flag on Louis Riel Day.

Close to a dozen people gathered in the frosty temperatures and marched from the MNO office on Spruce Street to the Cenotaph to pay tribute to Riel.

Sunset country Metis President and many others gathered for the raising of the MNO flag in honour of ‘Riel Day’ outside the Civic Centre in Fort Frances.

A TIMELINE OF LOUIS RIEL’S LIFE AND LEGACY

1806
Louis Riel Sr., the son of a voyageur born in Saskatchewan in 1806. He was educated in Quebec and worked for the Hudson's Bay Company as a fur trader in the Fort Frances area. He later settled on a lot on the Red River and became a respected leader of the Métis community.

1844
Louis Riel is born in the Red River Settlement in Rupert's Land, the present day City of Winnipeg.

1868
Riel was a bright student and was sent to Montreal in 1858 to study. After working jobs in Quebec and Minnesota, Riel returns to Quebec in 1868.

“WE SHARE THE SAME GRANDMOTHERS”

Grand Council Chief of the Anishinabek Nation, John Beaucage, offers Métis Nation of Ontario President Tony Belcourt an eagle feather to be put on the Métis Nation staff. This sacred gesture, which according to Grand Chief Beaucage, goes “beyond treaties, beyond any written word”, will further cement the bond between the Métis Nation and the Anishinabek Nation.

LONDON: Congratulations to Alvin McKay and all of the Métis in the London area. This year, for the first time, the City of London flew the Métis flag on Louis Riel Day.

TIMMINS: Close to a dozen people gathered in the frosty temperatures and marched from the MNO office on Spruce Street to the Cenotaph to pay tribute to Riel.

FORT FRANCES: Sunset country Metis President and many others gathered for the raising of the MNO flag in honour of ‘Riel Day’ outside the Civic Centre in Fort Frances.

THUNDER BAY: Thunder Bay celebrated Louis Riel Day with representation from the City of Thunder Bay Council, and NDP MP Tony Martin from Sault St Marie.

MINISTERIAL
Métis Nation
Louis Riel Day
09
The Minister of Status of Indians and Northern Affairs John T. Manley said that Louis Riel Day is an opportunity to celebrate the heritage, pride, and contributions of the Métis people to Canada.

It is with pride that I join in this year’s celebration of the Heritage of the Métis People. This is a celebration of the spirit of Riel and the Métis people, a celebration of pride in who we are and a celebration of respect for the past. Riel is a symbol of this unbreakable bond between the Métis and the Anishinabek Nation.

By 1869, the Métis people had united to form the Metis National Committee (MNC) to fight for their rights. This committee played a significant role in the formation of the Manitoba Act of 1870, which granted the Métis people full rights of citizenship and represented a significant step towards reconciliation.
On November 16th, Michael Bryant, Ontario’s new Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, invited everyone in Ontario to recognize the culture, language and heritage of Métis as he took part in the 15th Annual Louis Riel Commemoration Ceremony at the Legislature.

“This is all about strengthening our relationships with the Aboriginal community,” said Bryant. “It recognises that the establishment of co-operative relationships is the basis for ensuring the well-being and prosperity of Aboriginal communities, now and for the future.”

Bryant also delivered greetings to the Métis Premier McGuinty when he addressed a Louis Riel public forum hosted by the Law Society of Canada at Convocation Hall at the University of Toronto that afternoon.

Bryant reiterated Ontario’s commitment to recognize the unique needs of the Métis in Ontario by working in collaboration with the Métis Nation of Ontario and the federal government to identify priorities and approaches to addressing the Ipperwash Inquiry Report recommendations. A key step in developing a bilateral framework agreement that reflects the social and political growth within the MNO-Ontario process.

Earlier this year, Ontario made an initial investment of $6 million to support the implementation of the new First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework.

“It is important for all school children to learn the rich history and continuing contributions of the Métis people,” Bryant said.

Louis Riel’s role as a nation builder was not recognized during his lifetime. It is only recently that Canadians have begun to acknowledge Riel’s contributions in shaping the bilingual, multicultural Canada that we live in today. Louis Riel Day is an important opportunity to share in this rich history.
MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

NORTHERN ONTARIO MEDICAL SCHOOL PROFILES:

Métis medical student hopes to give back to her northern community

BY RICK GARRICK

Carole Tessier enjoys using her French language skills while on her eight-month Comprehensive Community Clerkship in her home community of West Nipissing. “That’s why I’m back,” says the third-year Northern Ontario School of Medicine medical student and Sudbury Métis Council women’s representative. “I have family here and I like that it’s bilingual, so I can use my mother tongue.”

Tessier grew up in the community of River Valley, which is now part of the Municipality of West Nipissing, and had been practicing as a midwife for three years in the nearby community of Sudbury before deciding to join the booster’s charter class in 2005.

Once she completes her MD, Tessier wants to bring her knowledge back to the area and serve the Francophone and Métis community. “I want to work with the Métis people,” Tessier says. “Hopefully, I will provide more Métis people with a physician.”

Tessier is one of 56 étudiants third-year students who are working on clerkships in 10 communities across northern Ontario, all the way from Kenora in the west to Bracebridge in the east. Three of those 10 individuals—two Aboriginal students are located in Timmins while the other two are in Fort Frances and Sioux Lookout—have been assigned to West Nipissing.

Tessier usually puts in eight-hour days Monday to Friday at the West Nipissing General Hos- pital and its long-term care facility. She is learning at NOSM.

She also finds the community environment overwhelming. Everyone was tired but appreciative of the tremendous amount of valuable knowledge and information that was gained.

Motivational interviewing included the principles, philosophy and techniques involved in good interviewing. Health staff learned about addictive behaviors and mental health. Various screening and assessment tools were discussed and practiced. Addictions and the Forensic System dealt with stigmas, interventions, risk management and community reintegration. Drugs and addiction from the street perspective—with rather intense and at times disturbing content—was passionately delivered by Métis citizen, Louis Logue (Ottawa Police Service). Who gave staff a comprehensive overview of the identification of street drugs and drug use. This included very graphic and sometimes unpleasant images of what street drugs can do to people and their families.

Overall, it was an ambitious agenda for the week to say the least.

The four days of training allowed staff to acquire skills and knowledge that will be very beneficial to the delivery of Métis Nation of Ontario Health programs and services to all Métis.

In family medicine you see a lot of the same concerns, diabetes, high blood pressure, sometimes depression, and sometimes it’s just aches and pains,” Tessier says. “She usually comes back in the examination room with me to confirm my findings and to make sure we have a good plan in place. The patients are very open to having students involved in their care.”

While Tessier did three ER shifts this past week, on Wednesday and Saturday, she still hasn’t had an OBI (obstetrics) shift yet. “But I used to be a midwife,” she says. “So I’ve delivered many babies.” Although Tessier was a midwife, she explains that the knowledge she has as a midwife is only a portion of what she is learning at NOSM.

“Obviously, I still have as much to learn as anyone else,” she says, noting that she is finding the learning curve at NOSM to be “pretty steep. There is a lot to learn and there is a lot of self-study.” But she is also enjoying the clinical style of learning during clerkship. “For me, this is how I learn best,” she says. “Hands on and seeing cases. It helps me to remember more.”

Tessier and her fellow student in West Nipissing usually work together during Monday and Thursday morning classes held via videoconference with the other students in their groups of eight at their clerkship sites across northern Ontario.

The students work in pairs during the clerkship, continuing their study of the five themes from years one and two, Northern and Rural Health, Personal and Professional Aspects of Medical Practice, Social and Population Health, Foundations of Medicine and Clinical Skills in Health Care, increasing their knowledge of medical care through clinical encounters with patients and their families, enhancing their personal and professional development, and improving their clinical thinking and lifelong learning skills.

Because Tessier is one of many étudiants who has a family at home, in her case a husband and stepson, she has to balance her studies and family life with any community events, such as the welcome barbecue and boat ride that she and the other students took part in at the beginning of their clerkship.

Tessier finds that the community, which consists of large segments of Francophone, First Nation and Métis people, has taught her a lot. “Overall, it helps that I’m from the community,” she says. “I have a pretty strong interest in West Nipissing. I want to give back to my community after I’m done medical school.”

MNO Health staff receive training in addictions

BY GLEN LIPINSKI & NATALIE LLOYD

The Health Branch held another successful training week, September 24th-27th at the Providence Care training week, September at the Providence Care Training Centre, Kingston. The theme for the training week was “Addictions and the Family.” Approximately 50 health staff participated in the four days of training involving such topics as “Motivational Interviewing,” “Concurrent Disorders,” “Addictions and Mental Health,” “Addictions and the Forensic System,” “Drug Identification” and “Gambling Awareness.”

Training was delivered by numerous experts from Providence Care. Training was headed up by Murrison Murray, NOSM’s Clinical Supervisor, and included Dr. Jim Muirhead, Kimberly Walker, Niki Kiepe and Louise Logue of Ottawa Police Services (See Métis Voyageur, May-June, 2007, for more on Louise).

The days were long, the training was intense, and at times a bit overwhelming. Everyone was tired but appreciative of the tremendous amount of valuable training. T Tessier usually puts in eight-hour days Monday to Friday at the West Nipissing General Hos- Northern Ontario Medical Student Carole Tessier is currently on a clerkship in Sturgeon Falls.

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.

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.
A Good Bet?
The MNO’s Addictions Wellness Coordinator Glen Lipinski examines the contrast between traditional games of chance and the modern gambling industry...

BY GLEN LIPINSKI

I t is that time of year again, the holiday season, a time for gift giving, feasting, good times and abundance. Many of us give lottery tickets, scratch tickets and pull tab tickets as gifts (often stocking stuffers) to our family members and children. Scratch tickets may seem like the ideal stocking stuffer, but Santa’s gift could begin or fuel a gambling problem. Young people can’t legally buy scratch tickets or lottery tickets on their own, but many parents and grandparents buy tickets and put them in children’s stockings, and that could begin a lifelong gambling addiction. We do this and think nothing of it, the fact is that our actions may be seen as promoting and condoning gambling. Consider the following.

One recent study reported that approximately 80% of adolescents aged 12-17 have gambled in the last 12 months. The top five gambling activities for youth as reported in a 2006 survey of 499 youth are: 1) raffle tickets; 2) scratch/pull tab tickets; 3) date or challenge bets; 4) lottery tickets; 5) pool tickets.

More than a third of the revenue from gambling in Ontario, or $2.3 billion, comes from ticket expenditures, making it one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy. Over $270 million is generated by federal or provincial government revenues from gambling (VLTs). These two activities alone account for about 10% of government revenues from gambling in the year 2006, government net gambling activity was underway. Since 1995 there has been a 2.5% increase in the number of people gambling at casinos and using video lottery terminals (VLTs). These two activities alone accounted for approximately 60% of government revenues from gambling in the year 2006. Government net gambling revenue from gambling activities in 2002 was $11.3 billion dollars. In 2003/04 gross profit from government-run gambling activity was 12.8 billion. Gambling currently accounts for 10% of total leisure expenditures, making it one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy.

Young people can’t legally buy scratch tickets or lottery tickets, but many parents and grandparents buy tickets and put them in children’s stockings...

Note: if anyone is aware of any other Aboriginal games of chance (Métis-specific if you know of any) that were played by Métis people either historically or present-day, please let me know. I can be reached via the information below.

My, fast forward to more modern times. In 1969 the criminal code of Canada was amended to make lotteries legal if authorized by federal or provincial governments. This opened the door for huge changes to contemporary Aboriginal gambling and by 1976 every province and territory in Canada was running a lottery. The very first Canadian Aboriginal casino opened March 1, 1996, at the Golden Eagle Casino in North Battleford, SK. In July, 1996, Casino Rama opened. Full-scale Aboriginal casino style gambling was underway.

Early traditional gambling brought communities together for socialization, included traditional elder teachings, contained a spiritual component; instilled a sense of pride, and taught people to share ideas and resources. Early gambling, practiced by and taught people how to build on skills such as memory and hand-eye coordination, taught them how to play and work as a team or group and aided in conflict resolution, leadership development and anger management.

Some of the early Aboriginal games that were played were: Moccasin Game – hide an object under 1 of 4 moccasins and wager a bet as to which moccasin the object is under. Baggatawaya – a wild and relatively unstructured original version of lacrosse, bets were placed on who would be the winning team.

Snow snake – played with a spear that had a blunt head (resembling a snake) spear was thrown for distance and accuracy and bets were placed on the outcome.

Ngaseau – also known as “the bowl game,” dice-like objects were placed in a wooden bowl and bets were wagered on which side would turn up when the bowl was struck...

Did you know that the odds of being struck by lightning in your life time are 1 in 6 million. Therefore, you are twice as likely to be struck by lightning as to ever win the lottery jackpot.

Today the impact of gambling on Aboriginal families and communities is much different. Gambling has become an accepted enterprise or economic fund raiser. Activities such as bingo, lottery/scratch tickets and casinos have become commonplace. Unity among families and communities has diminished, community and individual spirit has been diluted; children are often left to fend for themselves, lacking proper nutrition. Money is leaving the community, going to gambling establishments; crime and corruption are increasing. There is a loss of productivity in communities due to gambling and a loss of dignity and respect.

This Christmas lets all put some extra thought into the gifts we give to our families and friends, especially the stocking stuffers, and remember to have a “Responsible Gambling Season” this year.

Glen Lipinski is the MNO’s Addictions Wellness Coordinator.

Métis Canoe Expedition 3
SEEKING YOUNG ADVENTURERS

The Métis Nation of Ontario is looking for Métis individuals to participate in the Third Métis Canoe Expedition. This adventure of a lifetime will take place between May and August, 2008.

Two weeks of training will be arranged, but applicants are encouraged to be in good physical condition. Applicants must submit the following: a current resume; three (3) references; Registration Form; Métis verification form; medical form; an essay (max 500 words) describing why you want to be a part of this project and why you should be selected for the expedition. Please include details regarding your involvement with the Métis Nation of Ontario and the Métis Community, your leadership experience and any other qualifications or information you feel are relevant.

The Canoe Expedition connects Métis youth with Métis culture and heritage while immersing them in the outdoors. These journeys demonstrate the courage and integrity of Métis youth and what they are capable of accomplishing. They create youth leaders and role models who embody the strength and pride of the Métis Nation. More information and forms are available on line at: www.metisnation.org

CONTACT:
Chelsey Quirk
Work: 613-798-1488 Ext. 104
Cell: 613-299-6085
chelsey@metisnation.org

20 Division Street, Welland, ON
ph: 905-714-7864
Cell: 613-299-6085
Métis Youth partner with province on youth magazine

Métis Nation of Ontario Youth Council (resou) Secretary, Joni Labbe, has been working on a newsletter in partnership with the Government of Ontario, Ontario Women's Directorate. Titled, “Métis Youth as Leaders,” the three-page magazine is well worth your time. Here are a few excerpts.

...an Elder told us a story about leadership in green. He said that green fly in a "20," and when the leader gets tired, he goes to the back and a new one steps up. This means you don’t always have to be in charge. Everyone can have a turn offering ideas— it’s not just about one person.

---by Sarah Atken

...Some seniors spoke about how they grew up Métis, showing some items and explaining them. They made the fiddle and sang. At the end of the gathering, we took the tobacco to the fire keeper at the sacred fire.

---by Anthony Powney

...Many Métis in the Sault area that also live and practice the Métis ways of life are very proud of Mr. Steve Powney and his son Rodney Powney. If they hadn’t stood up for the rights of their people in this area, then the Métis might have been dying breed. But thanks to their courage, the Métis no longer need to call themselves “The Forgotten People.”

---by Hunter Lefler

For more information on “Métis Youth as Leaders” contact Region 6 Métis Nation of Ontario Youth Council representative Joni Labbe: jonilabbe1252@rogers.com

---

Eric Wasylenko, a Métis student at Springfield Collegiate in Dépôt, Manitoba, and a member of the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, has received a $4,000 award, towards the cost of any Canadian university or college. The significance of the event is twofold. The symbolic nature of the tipi represents the coming together of various administrative and student groups to recognize the importance of celebrating Aboriginal culture on campus as well as making a positive statement to the country that Carleton University is an inclusive and diverse campus.

Carleton Students & staff celebrate tipi’s arrival on campus

OTTAWA, Nov. 13—Staff and students at Carleton University gathered to celebrate the addition of a tipi to the campus.

The opening ceremony, hosted by the Carleton University Students’ Association (CUSA) in collaboration with Equity Services, and the Centre for Aboriginal Culture and Education included performances by Aboriginal artists from the Inuit, Métis, and First Nations communities. President, Shelley Melanson, and representatives from Carleton University joined Aboriginal students at the podium to reflect on the achievements of Carleton University’s Aboriginal students. "I am pleased to see Carleton be recognized as one of the first universities in the world to establish a tipi on campus," said CUSA President, Shelley Melanson. "This is a symbolic gesture of unity by students to enhance the national and international identity of our university. It is a meaningful symbol for our students to feel recognized and valued as members of the Carleton community."

The significance of the event is twofold. The symbolic nature of the tipi represents the coming together of various administrative and student groups to recognize the importance of celebrating Aboriginal culture on campus as well as making a positive statement to the country that Carleton University is an inclusive and diverse campus.

The tipi is not only a sound representation of the Carleton University’s commitment to diversity; it is also a symbol of Carleton University’s movement towards greater inclusivity of Aboriginal peoples,” said Carleton University’s Aboriginal Cultural Liaison Officer, Irwin Hill.
Each year the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards celebrate the musical contributions and artistry of Aborigi-

nals people by honouring the premier musicians, groups and industry mem-

bers across Canada. The Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards (CAMA) are part of the Canadian Aboriginal Festival and Pow Wow which took place at the Rogers Centre in Toronto from November 30th to December 2nd, 2007.

The 9th annual Canadian Aborigi-

nal Music Awards (CAMA) Gala show was a star-studded night of Canada's Aboriginal celebrities and top Native musicians, and an entertaining event for everyone interested in Aboriginal music and contemporary musical innova-

tions being made by Native musicians. Hosting this year's show were father and daughter Ray St. Ger-


man, Manitoban TV host, politi-

cian, and classic rock ’n roller, and Cathy St. Germain, successful Vancouver-based vocalist and TV host.

The performance line-up for the Gala show included:

• A Bird” instrumental vio-

linist (nominated in three catego-

ries this year;)
• Oviir Maniac; actor, singer, and songwriter known for her jazzy ballads, smoky blues, indie rock and traditional roots sounds (nominated in the Best Female Artist category);
• Derek Miller: guitar-fuelled scores (nominated for 2007 Best Rock Album);

Drifting Roots: known for their old-school rebel music blending traditional Indigenous influences with blues, jazz, spoken word, reggae and roots music (nominated for three CAMA this year;)

Donny Parenteau: noted for his 100% original country music (nominated for five awards);

Leela Gilday: known for her soulful belting and beautifully melodic roots music interwoven with native musical influences, (nominated for the 2007 Best Album of the Year and Best Song Winter awards);

Priscilla’s Revenge: from Yel-

lowhead, peaking up with scorch-

ing blues-rock (nominated for Best Blues Album and Best Group/ Duo);

Sandu Scofield: established roots music artist and innovative collaborator (three nominations this year for Best Female Artist, Best Folk Album and Best Female Traditional Roots Album);

Shane Yellowbird: known for his country music with a positive

message (nominated for five cases this year);

Taobie Singers: a northern-

style singing group of Arishtahu-

men (nominated for Best Pow Wow Album Traditional). A special appearance was made by Stevie Salas, Apache funk/rock guitarist, producer, and music director for Mick Jagger, D’Arby and many others, currently co-writing and music directing three recent Idol win-

ners, nominated for best International Album for his 2CD retrospective. Stevie Salas appeared with his all-star band, including vocalist Bernard Fowler (Rolling Stone), bassist Ron Blair (Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, Stevie Nick, Del Shannon), and drummer Steve Perrone (Eric Clapton, Aretha Franklin, Duran Duran, Bette Midler, Michael Jackson, Steve Winwood, and many others).

CAMA’s Musical Director, Don-

ald Quan, assembled outstanding Canadian musicians to perform in the orchestra and provide the backdrop of the awards show as the house band. This year the orchestra included Assistant Musical Director, Ranav Kanakta (from Digging Roots) on gui-

tar, Bob Thompson on bass, David Maracle on flutes and per-

cussion, Rick Lazar on keyboards, plus additional talented musi-

cians on vocals and drums.
A family of young cheetah cubs keeps an eye on their mother while hunting on the Serengeti plain.

PHOTOS: Alis Kennedy

Senator Alis Kennedy recounts an African adventure that made her an advocate for keeping wild things wild.

As a Métis, I truly enjoyed exploring new territory and discovering new adventure in Canada and around the world; beside my six month sojourn in the Amazon jungle this exploration was truly amazing. My adventure in the Serengeti deeply affected my life in ways that were not realised until several months after my return.

Our group of 19 persons participated in a photographic safari (journey in Swahili) that took us on a trek that travelled through six African countries. The members of the party came from Canada, Argentina, Australia, England, Germany and New Zealand; a nice mix that caused some friction on occasion. We were on our way to a three-day outing in the Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater National Park. Our Land Rover was one of three; of course, I was in the “no one wants to be with you” vehicle, as the others had already partnered up. So here we were, four misfits in the same means of transportation, and for three whole days!

We left our base camp of Arusha quite early in order to observe some animals and to be able to reach our first campsite by late afternoon. Our guide was very nice to recognise that we “misfits” were actually a group of people who had come to Africa to see animals; he made sure that our vehicle was, for most of the time, leading the mini caravan. Because of this, only the “misfits” were able to see the last of the “Big Five”, the mighty leopard. We briefly admired that stunning big cat before she went for cover. The entire group had been trying to see that feline since the beginning of the safari!

We stopped for lunch at a very small outdoor shop that sold food and souvenirs on the side of the road. After my meal, I wandered around and found a tame chameleon. I picked him up—a very odd looking animal; he probably thought the same about me! We spent some time together, time truly enjoyed. I showed him to the rest of the group. Several were interested and took pictures, while others just continued socialising, completely ignoring my new friend. After a meagre, but healthy lunch, we were on the road again.

On our way to the Serengeti Plain, we stopped at the top of the Ngorongoro Crater—what a view! It took four pictures just to cover the whole panorama. With the help of binoculars or camera zooms, we were able to see animals moving around at the bottom of the crater. This was a very good “sneak preview” of what we were going to see on our way back to base camp, as we had planned to spend a day inside the crater upon our return. After the “obus” and “ahhs”, and for some of us, full or near full rolls of pictures, we moved on to our first destination, the vast plain of the Serengeti.

We had to drive up a lonely road to reach the Serengeti Plain. On that road were some white mini vans, with all the gadgets that one can dream of, stuck in the mud; many did not have four-wheel drive. For some, it was amusing to see groups of “mil-lionaires”; faces purpling, while pushing their vehicles up the road! We were lucky enough to pass them and reach the Plain at a decent hour.

Imagine a vast area with nothing but tall grass and, in the distance, some rock formations. There was only one road cutting through the vegetation; it was surreal. This immense land seems to be a super self-managed zoo, but without zookeepers. The animals are responsible for their own survival.

Along the way we saw cheetahs, giraffes, hyenas, wartogs, lions and impalas—not bad for a first glance of the two days ahead. The idea was to give us the “movie trailer” view of the whole expedition.

On the way to our temporary home, we had a brief encounter with a spotted hyena. I’ll bet that he was as surprised to see us as we were to see him. After setting up the tents and having dinner, we admired the equatorial sky. Just visualise a clear sky, without clouds, not even a moon, and no light pollution for at least one hundred kilometres! We fell asleep with the sound of lions roaring in the distance in search of mates, with some hyenas cackling close by.

The next morning, those of us who had actually slept, woke up well before sunrise. The rest had been either too excited or too afraid to sleep and had been up all night. We had a small but enjoyable breakfast. Next, we took the tents down and prepared ourselves for a full day exploring this great land.

Our guides cautioned us to remain in our vehicles at all times, unless they judged that it was safe to get out. Two weeks earlier, a lion attacked and killed a German tourist. He had gotten out of his vehicle without the guide’s permission, insisting that he wanted to take a close-up photo of the feline’s head.

You should have seen the beautiful African sunrise; it was breathtaking. The picture that was taken pales in comparison to the original splendor! As we proceeded on the second leg of our journey; we saw two lionesses relaxing with their cubs. It was strange at first to see wild animals not paying much attention to us, with the exception of some cubs, but their attention span lasted a very short time, and soon they lay back again, sprawling in the early morning sun, so if totally uninterested in seeing so many humans invading their privacy and territory on a daily basis, sur- rise to sunset.

After that, we saw many zebras and a large number of wildlife; they were starting to gather for the long and risky migration to the Masai Mara, the Kenyan continuation of the Serengeti in Tanzania. Again, they did not pay much attention to us; some even remained lying down while others continued grazing. Still, it was amazing to see so many animals gathered in such a large group. After a while, we noticed that there were several other species that we had not observed at first; several types of gazelles and other predators.

Then, our guide noticed a cheetah at a distance. As the three Land Rovers approached, it became apparent that she was not alone; five majestic cubs, almost as big as her, emerged from the tall grass. It was astonishing that she was able to raise so many cubs and that so many had survived. As some of you may know, 90% of cheetahs do not make it past the first year of life, due to disease, inbreeding, infections and predators (mainly lions and hyenas). Therefore, to see five of them, almost old enough to leave.
MUSIC REVIEW

by Linda Lord

Our Stories:

Charlie & the Wolf

An old family photo reminds Jim Turner of a story of a boy and his wolf and the names of our ancestors

by Jim Turner

I found this picture in the old album the other day when Linda Lord was asking for articles for the Voyageur newspaper. It’s strange what we remember when we study an old picture. It seems the photo brings all the associated memories rushing back. My Mother told me the story decades ago and when I look at the picture of Charlie, I remember the story she told about him and his wolf pup.

It’s a short story about a boy and his pet in the early 1900’s when Rossburn Manitoba was just a speck on the map. (Rossburn is located on the south west side of the province on Hwy 21.) Métis children then weren’t much different than the children of today. Youngsters wanted a dog. Good dogs were few and far between, as most were just mutts and outside dogs used to give warnings to intruders.

Now, as far as kids and dogs go, there is, of course a special bond, and I’m sure this would apply to all animals and all generations of children. In Charlie’s case he and his wolf formed this bond, and this was before the movie Dances with Wolves with Kevin Costner.

My Mother had three brothers and two sisters. I think Charlie was the oldest boy, and was the one in the family that craved the Métis life. My mother never said this in exact those words as she would never speak of anything like that, but once in a blue moon I could pry bits and pieces out of her memory bank. She said he was the one who preferred the old ways, and if he could, would step back in time to his ancestral roots. She recalled that Charlie was a very resourceful boy. Apparently one day he was out in the bush and found a young wolf pup and brought it home. He worked with it and eventually it became very tame and loving.

I recall my Mother telling me that on occasion Charlie’s pet would get the wild wolves out in the bush howling which annoyed her dad to no end.

When he did go into the town of Rossburn, Charlie would take the wolf along for the walk. Eventually the townsfolk accepted the fact that Charlie wouldn’t let the wolf off the chain, so some folks felt they could humour Charlie and pet his ‘dog’.

There wasn’t much to the story after that. I don’t know what happened to the wolf or if it was still around when Charlie died a couple years later of a ruptured appendix.

When I did hear stories, many never seemed to have an ending. My Mother would always pull herself quickly back to the present and change the subject. I always felt there was so much for her to tell us about her family, but there was very little offered. I do remember her telling me about Uncle Charlie and his wolf pup so I can share it with you.

As I gazed at this picture, I pondered the idea of how we got our names. I wondered how I got my middle name, “Charlie”. There was Charlie with the wolf and another Charles in our family. Uncle Charlie was Charles Simpson and he was Sir George Simpson’s grandson, that’s another story for another time.

Jim Turner is the President of the Windsor/Essen/Reist Métis Community Council.

Omeiwessi Ensemble is a result of a continuous bond between Alyssa and ‘Teddy Boy’ to keep this historic old-style Métis music alive through public presentations and by recording this music for future generations. The concept of an Elder and Youth collaborative exchange continues to be of great interest, particularly in the Aro- riginal community and this Omeiwessi Métis ensemble continues to receive requests to perform—most recently on Riel Day, 2007.

Thanks to the Métis Nation of Ontario for their financial assistance and to Bernard Leroux for his photography, design and creative input.

For a free sample go to www.myspace.com/omeiwessi

If that doesn’t get your toes tapping, lay down because you are dead!
MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

FROM PAGE 14

their mother was simply amazing! So as we came closer to the mother and her cubs, she stood up and stared off into the distance; they can see up to five kilometres away. What a magnificent and athletic feline; it was a pure delight to see her sprinting to unharvest her dinner. Our guides were truly animal lovers. They let her go after her prey, and then we followed behind, at enough of a distance not to alert the herd of Thompson gazelles that a predator was after one of them. The cubs seemed confused and lost at first, their mother having left them behind for a moment. But it seemed that she knew what she was doing, and as soon as we drew closer to her, up to her, they followed us! None of us were the actual killer, as we were still too far behind, but none of us in our vehicle tried to get too close. In fact, it was far more important for the mother to get the kill than for us to see a parent. The kill was prepared and served up in a lost meal, as we would have "used" us, at first as baby sitters.

An unusual event happened amongst the cheetahs whilst their occupants were taking tons of pictures. After having photographed the scene we left the cheetahs alone to enjoy their meal, though by this time not much was left of the gazelle.

This whole sequence of events with the cheetahs was the turning point of my attitude towards wild animals. Like many people, I did not give much consideration to their intelligence, as I thought that their thinking was mostly driven by instinct. It was only a few months later, after a great deal of research, that I realised this mother cheetah "used" us, as first as baby sitters. It is rare to see a predator leaving her cubs with other predators, especially from another species! Secondly, she utilised us as protectors. She knew that she and her cubs were safe to enjoy their dinner, as vultures, hyenas and lions will not come near humans. Her knowledge did not come from books, but only from life experience.

Because of her, I became a strong advocate for the survival of wild animals. The following year I volunteered in South Africa for two months, helping cheetahs with their right to share this planet with humanity. Subsequently, I wrote my doctoral disser-ration on developing a model program to come to our rescue. Who will argue with an elephant?

After that episode, we encountered ostriches, a black jackal and a rabid cheetah. We also met some of our not so distant relatives, the baboons. It was quite surprising, to some of us, to see that the troop's social structure so closely resembled our own. There were some females gathering attending their young, mostly nursing or playing with them. Some of the males were parading in front of their females, behind the back of the alpha male who was sitting, relaxing on a rock with his arms resting on his knees, looking everywhere except behind him. I guess some people before us felt them, as they were looking for handouts. Our guide discour- aged that practice and most of us agreed with his words.

On our way to the lodge for our evening meal, we saw many herbivores settling in for the night. It was amazing to see giraffes drinking water. They have to spread their front legs apart a good distance in order for their mouths to reach the water, thus putting them in a vulnerable position. Other animals were gathering in “secure” areas to spend the night, some bunking up with other species, thus com-bining their survival resources and skills.

As the day ended, we encountered some hippopotamuses getting out of a water hole where they had spent the day, searching for succulent vegetation to put between their teeth. In the water, they do not look so big, but outside a pond, what a massive animal! We enjoyed our dinner while watching animals moving to their night “quarters”. Then we drove to our own lodgings. On our way in, we came across some hyenas and lions. It was astonishing to see their brilliant eyes scanning the land in search of food. As long as the food was not us, we enjoyed looking at them.

It was also so dark that we needed the vehicles’ headlights to assist us in putting up the tents and getting ready for our last night in the African wilderness. What a silent night with, of course, the exception of some nocturnal animals doing their thing!

Again, we awoke very early to take advantage of an early start. After breakfast and having packed our gear for the last time, we headed off to the majestic Ngorongoro Crater, leaving not a trace of our presence behind, except for our footprints.

On our way to the crater, we saw some African buf- falo, one of them had a partnership with a bird. The bird was eating small bags from his ride’s ear while the buffalo was getting rid of the pests, thus working togeth- er in a perfect symbi- otic relationship.

Between the Serengeti and the Ngorongoro Crater, there is a small Masai village. Here we wit- nessed the Masai villagers jump- ing up and down, some very high above the ground. They also had some camels and other domestic animals. We saw even more wildebeests and zebras gathering for the long journey to the Masai Mara.

As we drove around the top of the Ngorongoro Crater to reach the only road leading in and out of the mini ecosystem, our Land Rover’s passengers were the only ones to see the mighty leopard. We just had a glimpse of her, but what a sight. She looked at us, and then very elegantly went for cover. It was astounding to see so many animals living together in such a relatively small “enclo- sure”. The first group that we encountered was a cheetah and her cubs, relaxing and grooming each other, totally ignoring us invaders. Then we came across some more African buffalo and springbokss, as well as some Thomson gazelles.

We stopped by a lake to admire some hippopotamuses swim- ming and playing together. At that time, we were on foot, but remained vigilant, as these ani- mals are the leading killers in Africa. Do not let their size fool you, they are very fast on their feet and can outrun any human! We had to leave the crater sooner than planned, as threat- ening dark clouds were moving in. If you are unlucky enough to be caught in the drager during a heavy rainfall, it is not unusual to be stuck there for three to four days in order for the ground to dry out. It is impossible to drive off the site when the ground is still wet. Therefore, we left fairly quickly.

On our way back to base camp in Arusha, we did the usual tourist stops along the way to purchase souvenirs. Upon arrival at the base camp, we were sur- prised to hear that our main guide was stricken with a bout of malaria and was totally out of commission. Luckily, we had with us a guide-in-training and he con- ducted the rest of the safari.

We left Tanzania the following day and reached Nairobi, our final African destination in Kenya, and bid our adieu to Africa.

Alis (Plantes) Kennedy is the Sen- ator for the Credit River Métis Council.

The Chase was a Very Short One; The Young Gazelle was No Match for the Fastest Land Animal on Earth...
THE BUFFALO HUNT OF THE PLAINS CREE

As told by Plains Cree Elders of Echo Valley, Saskatchewan, (circa 1972) to Joy Asham

Members of Echo Valley, Saskatchewan. As told by Plains Cree Elders (short-sighted bison was attracted one that has not been tanned, it

frame, over which Buffalo flint would be closed with a loose wood directly opposite. The latter would one for the Buffalo to be led into height to contain the beasts. Two materials found on the Plains: round, constructed of the heaviest er Bison to it. The Pound was building of the Pound and the turned to bring them to the how fast the Buffalo needed to be and determined how much and determined position in the settlement was held by the Poundmaker. He was the head of the Hunt and was responsible for its success or failure. He was technician, teacher, leader and was full of Courage. Once a herd’s location was identified his work began in earnest. He observed the weather, the wind and determined how much and how fast the Buffalo needed to be returned to bring them to the Pound.

Everyone participated in the building of the Pound and the Drive Lines that would lead Brother Bison to it. The Pound was round, constructed of the heaviest materials found on the Plains: rocks, wood and rubble built to a height to contain the beasts. Two openings were left in the circle: one for the Buffalo to be led into the structure and a smaller one directly opposite. The latter would be closed with a loose wood frame, over which Buffalo flint hides were placed. A flint hide is one that has not been tanned, it makes a crisply sound when brushed against, a sound that the short-sighted bison was attracted to but did not like, This opening was placed so that once the herd was captured, the Creator could enter and take His pick.

On the other side, the larger opening was actually the end of Drive Lines which often extended out up to 25 miles, wherever the herd lurked on the prairie. They were constructed out of various materials which formed a funnel shape between them, the largest opening being nearest the Buffalo, the small one leading into the Pound. Nearest the Pound the construction was strongest. The further out these funnel arms extended, the less heavily con- structed they were as along the way they were personnel with elders and the young, waiting on signal from the Poundmaker to set afire small piles of grasses.

This is why it was so important for the Poundmaker to accurately know the wind and weather. He calculated in which direction the wind smoke would range and how this would turn the Buffalo. His job was just beginning. He would prepare himself. He gave thanks to the Creator for the opportunity to help feed his village, he cleansed himself with smudging of Sacred Grasses, and he also donned a flint Buffalo hide.

Taking rattle and drum and song into the herd, the Pound maker joined the Buffalo. He looked a bit strange: he had two heads and curling skin. Brother Buffalo would be drawn to him, yet keep their distance as he charmed them. He would dance and rustle and lurch until all the herd would follow him, deep into the Drive Lines on the way to the Pound.

Every once in a while there might be a stray. To stop this Brother, the Poundmaker would signal to a drive line helper and grasses would begin to smudge the air and turn the Buffalo back in the right direction. Bit by bit the drive lines closed behind the animals as they entered into the pound.

The entry would then be closed and the Buffalo fell captive. They would not be killed as yet, as the ‘Warrior’ had more work to do. They counted them, they were as along the way they were personnel with elders and the young, waiting on signal from the Poundmaker to set afire small piles of grasses.

What of the Poundmaker? He has led an Honourable and suc- cessful hunt but how will he live? And then they come from their lodges, all of them. They bring him the steaks and roasts and the cuts of meat that he knows he loves and needs. They express their Gratitude and Respect for him in this way, knowing that in the greatest Humility he would never ask.

I somehow think that this must have been a very good system: the workers determining the boss’s salary.

Joy Asham is a Cree storyteller and storymaker, cultural activist and regular columnist for the Thunder Bay Chronicle Journal. She can be reached through the Chronicle Journal or via email at joyasham@gmail.com.

About this story: This story was sent to us by Region 2 Captain of the Hunt, Ken Simard, who also obtained permission for us to reprint it. The storyteller, Joy Asham, pointed out the importance of the buffalo to Cree, as passed on to her directly from Plains Cree Elders who lived at the time of the treaty signing in the west.

“I am pleased to have you use this piece,” said Ms. Asham, “it is one of my favourites and it talks directly to the benefits we had historically living in a co-operative way, and how the Creator was acknowledged in everything we undertook.”
Métis artist Christi Belcourt's solo exhibit:

*Off The Map: Perspectives of Land, Water & Métis People*

January 18th to March 1st, 2008,

**Urban Shaman Gallery, Winnipeg, Manitoba**

Maria Campbell and Joanne Arnott will be reading from their works at the opening.

This is Christi’s first solo show outside of Ontario.

For more information please visit Christi’s website:

[www.christibelcourt.com](http://www.christibelcourt.com)