SLOWLY you awaken. It is still dark, and your bamboo and thatch roofed house is damp from the rains. It’s about 4:00 A.M., time to go to work. Where are you? A primitive village in Africa or New Guinea? Maybe a First Nations’ settlement a couple hundred years ago? No, you are Q’eqchi; you live in Alta Verapaz Province in Guatemala, and the year is 2007. Typically, you are 37 years old and you share your house with four or five family members, probably your wife, your youngest children and perhaps your parents, or your wife’s parents, or a cousin or two.

With the coffee harvest underway you have been working longer hours, more than eight hours, and then there is the four to five hour walk each way—morning and night. Too bad you don’t get paid for overtime. There is a government decree that says they have to pay you overtime, but it is written in Spanish and you cannot read it. You never had a chance to go to school, but you are hoping that things will be better for your kids because there is talk of building a school right here in your village.

You drag yourself out of bed; eat some beans and rice and begin your 16-hour day for which you will be paid the equivalent of $2.48, unless it is the half of the month for which you are paid nothing at all.

What can we do? Where can we start? If each of us donated one day’s pay we could probably build a school.

When we think of building schools, we think of Canadian schools that cost millions of dollars. We also think of homes that cost thousands of dollars. Think of a two room school built of concrete blocks. Add some books and a couple of teachers. Now consider that according to a Guatemalan Government decree, the minimum daily wage for agricultural workers is the equivalent of $2.48 or $74.62 per month. As if that weren’t shocking enough,
OBITUARIES:

**Sharon Regina Comeau**

COMEAU, Sharon Regina (nee Schultz) passed away peacefully on Friday, February 2, 2007, at home in the age of 50. Loving wife of Marcel for 32 years; mother of Melissa and Seth, although young will forget you. He thought you were the coolest auntie who had wrestling fights and sword fights with him. How cool was that?

In the few years that you spent with us you expressed so many people and instantly they became your friends. Sharon will be forever missed by Melissa and Seth. You came down just in time when Melissa needed you the most. She cherished the one on one time she had with you. I don’t imagine that Seth, although young will forget you. You thought you were the coolest auntie who had wrestling fights and sword fights with him. How cool was that?

If undeliverable return to: Métis Nation of Ontario
P.O. Box 1000
Portage, ON K0H 1W0
Ph: 613-798-1488
l lord@kingston.net

**Helmut Bradley**

On March 20th, Helmut Bradley passed away at the Penetanguishene Hospital after a very lengthy battle with cancer. The funeral took place on March 22nd and was followed by a luncheon at the Royal Canadian Legion.

It was Helmut’s wish that in lieu of flowers a donation be made to the Midland OSPCA. He loved animals—tame or wild—and his favourite was his dog Cricket. Some of you may not know that the Midland OSPCA burst to the ground in September last year and many animals were burnt to death. A new building is badly needed and they expect to start building a new one this spring.

Helmut is survived by his wife of 47 years, Helen Bradley.

**JANINE MAE MARLENE ROCHELEAU**

Sincere sympathy to the family and friends of Janine Mae Marlene Rochelleau (nee Beaty) who died suddenly and unexpectedly on the 20th of June, 2007. She was the beloved wife of Bradley, daughter of Walter Beatty and mother Marlene Beatty and partner Doug Rochelleau; daughter-in-law to Grace Rochelleau (Patsy), cherished sister to Leah and brother Mike Vigneux; beloved aunt of Jasper; dear sister-in-law to Jeff Rochelleau and wife Lisa. She is survived by grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and adored cats Tyles and Sonny.

Janine was a member of the Windsor/Essex/Kent community council, the niece of PCMD Counsellor and Captain of the Hunt for Region 9, Erin Scofield, and the granddaughter of Senator Earl Scofield.

**New Arrival**

JANNA ROCHELEAU

Isaac Glen Beckett-Corbin, issa was born on July 28, 2007, in Sault Ste. Marie, and weighed a healthy 9 lbs. and 6 oz. His third grandchild of two, is the son of Karen Durnott-Beckett and her husband Glen Beckett, and first grandson of Lory Rivard and Denis Corbin. Proud great-grandparents are Claire Donon and Renald Dumont, Lucie Rivard, Georgette and Marcel Corbin.

**A Letter to the Deceased Sharon**

Sharon, I am so grateful of you for taking the path of freedom, and coming out of your shell, to follow your dream, and do the things you wanted to do. You were one of a kind, playing to the beat of your drum, always trying to please everyone and in the end pleasing yourself; for we admire you", excerpt from Deb.

You ventured out on your own to see what life was like. You got to know Melissa and Seth. You came down just in time when Melissa needed you the most. She cherished the one on one time she had with you. I don’t imagine that Seth, although young will forget you. He thought you were the coolest auntie who had wrestling fights and sword fights with him. How cool was that?

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**Married 70 Years and Still Going Strong**

A PLATINUM ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to Rudy and Jesse Couture of Owen Sound as they celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary. They were married on June 19, 1937.

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**Port Colborne Métis Citizen passes in her 81st year**

After a long and courageous battle with her sickness, Alice Marie Grondin passed away peacefully with her family by her side at the Port Colborne General Hospital on March 1, 2007, in her 81st year. Alice Grondin was the beloved wife of the late Lorenzo Grondin—1998, loving mother of John Grondin, Gary Grondin (Chris), Clara Hearns (Bert), Robert (Nan), the late Fred Grondin (Dan), Donald Grondin (Chris), and Judi Trott (Ian), Richard (Laurie) Trott, Mike Vigneux; beloved aunt of Isabelle, the spitting image of you. Sharon, you were an earth angel to everyone that knew you and now you will be able to watch over the things you do best—our heaven’s guard. I’ll miss you little sister and it’s our loss and great grandchildren.

Dear sister of Jacqueline Lafontaine, Alice was born on March 29, 1926, in Maniwaki, and survived by her many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

**Sharon is the niece of Senator Jacques Leroux is a great grandfather! His granddaughter, Sue Van Eyk gave birth to 46-kg baby Isabella Rea on January 29th. Another Metis baby comes into the world!**

**Congrats Kelly!**

Sault College student Kelly Nicole Reid scores a perfect 4.0 GPA

The Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council and the Métis Nation of Ontario Region 4 Field Office’s Regional Employment and Training Co-ordinator, Tommy Webb, are pleased to announce the recent achievement of Kelly Reid. Kelly, the daughter of Judy and Steven Lef-

Even though graduation for the students in this program is not until August, Kelly has already been recognised for her academic achievement. She has obtained a 4.0 GPA. On Tuesday, March 20, 2007, at her first Western, Kelly was formally presented with the St. Michael Aca- demic Excellence Award. Once again, congratulations Keli for your dedica- tion and hard work.

**New National Aboriginal Day**

Grey-Owen Sound Métis Council is celebrating Aboriginal Day with their Annual Potluck Picnic at Harrison Park Community Centre, Owen Sound, on Sunday, June 24th, 2007, from 1–4PM. Music, prizes, draws, activities for children and youth, delicious food, great company—invite lots of relatives and make it a family reunion at the same time.

**The Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council and the Métis Nation of Ontario Region 4 Field Office’s Regional Employment and Training Co-ordinator, Tommy Webb, are pleased to announce the recent achieve- ment of Kelly Reid. Kelly, the daughter of Judy and Steven Lef-**

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Dear sister of Jacqueline Lafontaine, Alice was born on March 29, 1926, in Maniwaki, Quebec and has lived in Port Colborne since 1946. She was an avid member of the Port Colborne Ladies’ Shuddleboard League for over 25 years. She will be missed by family and friends. **A Letter to the Deceased Sharon**

Sharon, I am so grateful of you for taking the path of freedom, and coming out of your shell, to follow your dream, and do the things you wanted to do. You were one of a kind, playing to the beat of your drum, always trying to please everyone and in the end pleasing yourself; for we admire you", excerpt from Deb.

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**Current obituaries**

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Janine was a member of the Windsor/Essex/Kent community council, the niece of PCMD Counsellor and Captain of the Hunt for Region 9, Erin Scofield, and the granddaughter of Senator Earl Scofield.
**MÉTIS RIGHTS:**

**Final arguments heard in Métis harvesting case**

On February 16th, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) executive and Métis Nation citizens filed the Ontario Court of Justice in North Bay to hear legal council, Jean Téillet and Jason Maddren, present final arguments in the latest Métis harvesting rights case, Government of Ontario v. Larison, Lemieux and Lemieux.

At issue is the obligation of the Government of Ontario to uphold the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) Interim Harvesting Agreement, entered into on July 7th, 2004, between the MNO and the Ontario government. This agreement was intended to respect and begin to implement the 2003 landmark decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in R. v. Powley. Contrary to the Government of Ontario’s promise that MNO harvesters, who are harvesting for food within their traditional territories would not be subject to enforcement procedures, charges have been laid against some harvesters in select Métis Nation traditional harvesting areas south of Sudbury.

The court is scheduled to reconvene on June 12th, 2007 in North Bay.

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**MÉTIS YOUTH:**

**Young Métis role model to appear on TVOntario**

Daltin Mathias, son of Loma and Hank Bowlin- son, has been selected as one of the ten interesting and inspiring children from Ontario to be featured on TVO’s annual special called, “In a League of Their Own.” The kids chosen are role models because of their healthful living and ability to provide inspiration to others, such as anti-bullying.

The program is a tribute to the International Year of the Child (2007). Other countries and a bunch of pictures from the MNO and the Ontario MNR.

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**THE MÉTIS IN WINTER**

**The Métis in winter**

In the Métis harvesting case, the court is scheduled to reconvene on June 12th, 2007 in North Bay.

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**Calling all young Aboriginal writers!**

The 2007 Canadian Aboriginal Writing Challenge, a national storytelling initiative to educate Canadians about the defining moments in history, is underway. Win cash prizes; see your story published in The Beaver Magazine, and meet the governor-general in Ottawa.

Deadline is June 29, 2007.

www.our-story.ca

1-866-701-1867
Albertine was born in Ste. Amelie Manitoba, one of fourteen children born to Joseph Marion and Marie Callewaert. In 1935 she met her future husband Willie Roussin at a dance and two years later, in November, 1935, they were married.

In 1938, Albertine, Willie and their young daughter, Alvina, (now Alvina Cimon, President of the Northwest Métis Nation of Ontario Council, in Dryden) set out in a caravan of three horse-drawn covered wagons. With them was Willie’s sister, Adele, her husband and family, and Adele’s married daughter Marie, with her husband and family. We travelled until the men found work and then would move on when the jobs were completed. Three months later we arrived in Quibell, Ontario, where Willie found work on the C&NR, Albertine recalls. “When he got laid off, he got the job of custodian at the Quibell school, where we lived in the basement. Willie also drove the ‘school bus’, which was a horse and caiboose, for the next year.”

(Quibell is located due north of Fort Frances and Vermilion Bay, not far from Rainy Lake.) In 1940, the Roussin family moved to their homestead in Quibell and Willie worked at cutting wood for the railroad. “The following spring, I returned to Ste. Amelie to await the arrival of our son Rosaire. Willie worked for one year on the Ottawa River before we moved to Dryden.”

In 1943, the family moved to their homestead in Quibell and Willie worked for one year on the Ottawa River before we moved to Dryden. In 1953, daughter Esther came along, followed by Wilfred Jr. in 1955 and Paul in 1958. In Dryden, Willie worked for the Dryden Paper Co., cutting wood, and on construction, and during lay-offs he worked for Ontario Hydro. In 1959, the family bought a farm and moved to Eagle River (located between Vermilion Bay and Dryden). In 1960, Lorraine, the youngest of Alberta’s children was born. Eventually, Willie was employed full-time as a watchman at the paper mill where he worked until his retirement in 1969.

Albertine is the mother of nine children, the grandmother of 21, and the great great grandmother of 3. “And she’s been knitting socks for all of them.”

PLANNING HAS STARTED FOR SECOND ANNUAL SENATORS’ FORUM AT 2007 AGA

Can you believe that it’s already spring? The long cold winter is a thing of the past and we can see the beautiful summer that Mother Earth has in store for us. Before we know it we will be on our way to the wonderful city of Thunder Bay for our Annual General Assembly (AGA). How great it is to meet and greet after a long year away from one other! We will be able to gather together and share the news of what has been happening in our community councils and in our personal lives, not to mention, we get to renew our friendships during the time we spend together throughout the week.

Again this year I have obtained funding that will enable the Senators to hold their second “Senators Forum.” It will begin on the evening of Friday, July 6th, with day meetings on Saturday and Sunday (July 7th and 8th). On Sunday evening, each Senator and a guest will be invited to attend a beautiful banquet, the perfect way to end our forum as we gather to hold our second “Sena- tors Forum.” It will begin on the evening of Friday, July 6th, with day meetings on Saturday and Sunday (July 7th and 8th). On Sunday evening, each Senator and a guest will be invited to attend a beautiful banquet, the perfect way to end our forum as we gather to hold our second “Sena- tors Forum.”

Albertine Roussin

The Youth opened up and also told stories of their own. This year, although Kelly Omeyene is no longer with the seniors, Eiders and Youth gather and learn from each other. I encourage the youth staff to contact me to help organise this important evening. I agree with Kelly, “the Youth are the future of the Métis Nation, we need to learn from our Senators and Eiders before it’s too late and our wonderful culture is lost”.

We were planning to put together a video to be shot at the AGA of our Eiders telling stories, but I do not foresee that happening this year as I have only received videos of three Eiders’ interviews. Perhaps next year we will have enough stories to complete a video. Please don’t let this discourage you from sending me your videos. The more we collect, the better it will be for the Nation. We need to be heard and our stories need to be told.

SPOTLIGHT

BY ALVINA CIMON

Mother of 9, grandmother of 21 celebrates 90 years

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MÉTIS HERITAGE CELEBRATION

June 23rd, 2007 · Oshawa, Ont.

The Oshawa Métis Council invites you, your family and friends to attend our Métis Heritage Celebration 2007. There will be Métis games, displays and demonstrations of traditional beadwork, cuisine, and leather work, music, dance and a potluck dinner. This is going to be a fun event through which we will be able to showcase our Métis culture and history for our families, friends and the general public. This event is being held at Brooklin Community Centre, 45 Cassells St. East, Brooklin, Ontario, from 2pm - 9pm.

DIRECTIONS FROM HWY 12 & HWY 401 IN WHITBY:
1) Travel north through Whitby on Hwy 12 (Brook St.)
2) Brook St. becomes Bakken St at Tanton Rd.
3) Continue on Bakken St past Winchester Dr. (Hwy 7)
4) Turn at first right onto Cassells St. E
5) Drive over a small creek
6) Brooklin Community Center on right (HG Cassells St. E - an old church)

PARKING: turn right onto Church Street, parking is available behind Centre

CONTACT:
Cecile Wasag at 905-668-1632 or email cecilewasag@gmail.com
Rob Pilows at 905-725-1635 or email pilowsalf@rogers.com
Olivo Tiedema at 905-579-5401 or for more information

Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull, QC

IT’S FREE!

Stephen Augustine, Aboriginal Curator at the Museum of Civilization in Hull, has announced that ALL Aboriginal people are able to access the museum FREE of charge on a daily basis.

Obviously, anyone wanting to visit the museum will have to prove their Aboriginal identity, so don’t forget your cards. If you experience problems accessing the museum ask for Stephen Augustine.
Moon River meeting inspires Métis Pride

An amazing day of "Métis history in the making"

by PAULINE SAULNIER

I am beginning to realize that the Métis Nation of Ontario Regions 7 councils, are made up of some truly creative citizens and outstanding leaders. My wildest dreams could not compare to the accomplishments of our Métis leaders. April 15, 2007, is a day to remember and a highlight in my memory book.

It started through the creation of a Métis paddling song, "Louise Waltz", that Senator Ruth Wagner proudly shared with the Métis citizens at the Moon River Métis Council General Assembly, or the very proudly announcing our new Métis Health Careers Bur- sary and Scholarship Program (jointly with the Hon. Tony Clement, these are proud moments. The crowed of 200 Métis people excitedly cheered the announcement of $210,000 in bursaries and scholarships to 30 Métis students in health pro- fessions—an amazing moment for me, both as the Region 7 repre- sentative and as a Métis. That we had the time to introduce live of the 30 award recipients was exhilarating, but to have them be presented their cheques by the Federal Minister of Health, Tony Clement, the President of the sso, Tony Belcourt, and the CoChair of the reno, France Picotte leaves me speechless for the proper way to express my pride and excitement.

In addition—also on April 15, 2007—I witnessed the launching of the book, "From the Straits of Mackinac to Georgian Bay - 300 years of Métis History." It is a concise documentation of the history of our Métis ancestors in the Georgian Bay region. It is the second research book written by the Federal Minister of Health, Tony Clement, and the President of the sso, Tony Belcourt, and the CoChair of the reno, France Picotte leaves me speechless for the proper way to express my pride and excitement.

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The first line has 10 syllables, the second line has 8 syllables, and paddles switch over to the other side, the third line has 10, the fourth line has 8, and switch, and on and on for each stanza.

The melody I also wrote and called it "Louise's Waltz," in hon- or of the Moon River Métis Council President, Louise Goulding. Her vision and drive were what got the book started. She is the Moon River Presi- dent, the Captain of the Hunt for Region 7, president and operator of her own fishing business, and also a dancer at the sea. For that reason, the piece was a dance and a speedy waltz rather than a slow one! It is a standard waltz with four bars per line. The second line and fourth line have only music, and no words for the last bar as the canoeists would be switching sides then.

I hope this explanation is a help. When reading it with this "switch-over" in mind, one can get the paddling rhythm.

A quick explanation: Canoists have to change sides paddling to prevent sore shoulders and backs. Thus the rhythm of the poem/song.

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**MÉTIS LEARNING & LITERACY**

The Métis Nation of Ontario is pleased to announce an important new learning program. With the goal of bringing Métis families and communities together and in recognition of the importance of literacy and in an effort to raise literacy levels, The Métis Families Learning Together Program will be launched in the coming months in two pilot areas, North Bay & Sudbury and Toronto & Hamilton.

The MNO in partnership with Frontier College (a national literacy organization) submitted a proposal to the Ontario Trillium Foundation and recently received approval for a two year funding commitment. The MNO will be seeking interested families, community volunteers and youth interns to participate in the literacy program and to contribute to its overall success. Métis-specific resource materials will be developed and a training program established to engage community volunteers, peer tutors and families in literacy focused initiatives. The intent is to eventually bring these services and resources to every community across Ontario.

For more information please contact Bonny Cann, Provincial Education Initiatives Co-ordinator, at bonny@metisnation.org or call 1-888-466-6684 (in the GTA call 416-977-9881).

As well, please continue to check the MNO’s web site (wwwmetisnation.org) for more details on the program, job postings for two Community Literacy Project Co-ordinators and to access the community volunteer application form.

**SIERRA’S UNFORGETTABLE PERFORMANCE AT VIMY**

On April 9th fiddler Sierra Noble stood alone atop the Vimy memorial in France and played a haunting lament for the soldiers who died at the Battle of Vimy Ridge. Sierra was invited to be a part of the re-dedication of the Vimy monument on the 90th anniversary of the devastating battle. You can see video of Sierra’s moving performance at her website: www.sierranoble.ca.

News you may have missed

News and events in and about the Aboriginal community courtesy of the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (www.ccab.ca).

**FIRST NATION MOVES TOWARD CREATING A RESERVE IN REGINA**

REGINA, SK - A Regina-area First Nation has signed an agreement with the city that could be the first step toward establishing an urban reserve in the heart of a city neighbourhood. Piapot First Nation has bought property in the city’s north-central area that it hopes could become home to a grocery, pharmacy, gas bar and offices. Some members of the First Nation, located about 50 kilometres north of the city, live in Regina.

**INUIT LEADER NOMINATED FOR NOBEL**

TORONTO, ON - An environmental activist in Nunavut has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize along with former US Vice-president Al Gore. Sheila Watt-Cloutier, who was chosen by The Globe and Mail as a nation builder last year, said that she was told about her Nobel candidacy by a reporter. Ms. Watt-Cloutier is formerly from Kuujjuaq, a community in Nunavik, which is what the Inuit call the northern portion of Quebec. The 53-year-old activist has worked on a range of social and environmental issues affecting the Inuit, and has most recently focussed on global climate change.

**DECHO CALL FOR TAR SANDS MORATORIUM**

FORT MCMURRAY, AB - After completing a tour of the Suncor oil sands facilities, Grand Chief Herb Norwegian of the Dehcho First Nations, called on Canada and Alberta to support a moratorium on further development of the massive oil producing Athabasca Tar Sands “until some sanity can be brought into this situation.” Norwegian led a delegation of chiefs and elders from the Dehcho to view Suncor operations, and to discuss what he called “the serious decline of the quantity and quality of water in the Mackenzie River watershed.” The Mackenzie River watershed flows through some 212,000 sq km of Decho land.

**MÉTIS VOYAGEUR**

Hear these great artists and many more. Traditional and contemporary Métis music on-line 24/7 on Métis Radio.

For news on the AGA watch upcoming issues of the Voyageur and the MNO website: wwwmetisnation.org

www.metiradio.fm
EIGHT YEARS OF LENGTHY AND SOMETHINGS DISCOURAGING RESEARCH, AND THE KINDNESS OF A PERFECT STRANGER LED TO THE DISCOVERY OF A RARE DOCUMENT. MANY GENEALOGISTS AND RESEARCHERS KNOW THAT THE MID-1800S DOCUMENTS CONFIRMING MÉTIS ANCESTRY ARE SOMEWHAT OF A RARITY IN ONTARIO. HOW WONDERFUL IT WAS TO BE AMONG THOSE WHO FOUND SUCH A PEARL! I AM OF COURSE TALKING ABOUT AN 1837 MARRIAGE RECORD IN ONTARIO THAT ACTUALLY Contains THE WORD “MÉTIS”—IN FACT, IT IS THE FRENCH WORD “MÉTIS”. BY KAROLE DUMONT-BECKETT

The record states that Narcisse was an engage of the Hudson’s Bay Company at the Post of Mattawan, and that Marie-Cécile MacDonell, dite Mawishk, was a Métisse also residing at the said Post. Witnesses to their marriage were Timothé Réaume, Jean-Baptiste Sabourin, Alexis Benoit and many others. Another interesting fact is that the record for her son states that Narcisse was from “la Nation des Saulteaux” (an Ojibwa) and a census record states that she was born in Manitoba. Narcisse was a voyageur, born in 1807 at Ponte-aux-Trembles, QC, the son of voyageur Bernard Lorion and of M-Catherine Chalifoux, who is believed to have been a Métis herself. Narcisse had at least two brothers, Bernard and Louis, who were also voyageurs. The Lorion voyageurs were among the fur traders at Michilimackinac who returned to Quebec after the war of 1812 rather than settle on Drummond Island and ultimately at Penetanguishene. Narcisse went to Assiniboine in 1827, where he married Cecile “à la façon du pays”. They made their epic canoe journey eastward with their two small children. Narcisse was posted at Fort Couteau before being sent to the Mattawan Post where his contract finished in 1839. The couple had at least six more children, all born in Mattawa. Thus began their large family’s legacy in that very old settlement as many of their children and grandchildren took Métis spouses and settled there.

1) Mary (b.1834) married three times (Alexander Wilson, Jean-Baptiste Sauvé and John McCracken). In all she had eight children.
2) Narciss Jr. (b.1836) married...
In order to approve your application for citizenship with MNO, you must provide documentation certifying that at least one of your ancestors was a descendent of an Indian woman and a European man who had ties with the Métis community, typically through fur trading, or someone who participated in the Fur Trade. Your ancestor or a parent, would be described as "of British, Half-Breed, Métis, dusky, trade, French or English blood," and should include the title of the occupation shown on the records. Supportive documents can be provided by professional genealogists, historians, or other researches. Please note that the information on this form is for the purpose of research and will not be used for any other purpose.

The complete application packet, including a revised genealogical chart, can be downloaded from our web site at www.metisnation.org. The complete application package, including a revised genealogical chart, can be downloaded from our web site at www.metisnation.org.

Please email your completed application to registry@metisnation.org, or by calling our head office in Ottawa: 1-800-263-4889 or by emailing us: registry@metisnation.org.

Please print your name below:

NEXT ISSUE: The ghost Métis village across the Ottawa River
Aboriginal radio hits the airwaves at Carleton University’s CKCU 93.1

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T
une in to Carleton University’s CKCU 93.1 on Sunday mornings at 9:00 for a new Aboriginal program called, ‘Aboriginal Roots’. This is a new program being produced by the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation.

Airing weekly beginning March 11, the program will provide listeners with a medley of music, issues, and information about current and coming events from an Aboriginal perspective:

‘Aboriginal students don’t really see anything of themselves on television,’ said Irvin Hill, Aboriginal Cultural Liaison Officer with Carleton’s Centre for Aboriginal Culture and Education. ‘A radio show written for the community, by the community might just help discussion on issues important to Aboriginal people. Regular features will include a community bulletin board, horoscope, and helpful information. For those unable to pick up CKCU at 95.1 FM, the show is also available worldwide on the web at www.ckcufm.com or on Rogers Cable 944. A show that is produced by and for Aboriginal people – First Nations, Inuit and Métis – with a focus on Aboriginal Canadian talent and issues.

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http://geocities.com/aboriginalckcu

MÉTIS VOYAGEUR > MARCH/APRIL 2007

Jigging group teaches the Soo a few new steps

by ANNE TRUDEL

Recently, Métis dance was re-initiated into our community. Due to lack of professional instruction, the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation grant enabled our community to employ ‘Jig on the Fly’. On the weekend of January 19, 2007, the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis community enjoyed learning jigs, quadrilles and squares. The reasoning behind the Métis Dance Workshop was clearly supported by a poignant comment by a participant in the group’s evaluation sheet. ‘Very helpful in touching on my children’s heritage. I feel it is important for them to know their culture and being around people of the same likeness is important.’

Eric Chamberlin is instructed by Jaime Koebel on the Métis sash/belt dance. Special, while Daryle Gardipy and Jaime Koebel demonstrated their jigging performance technique.

Organization, nourishment and advertisement of the event were made possible by generous funding from the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, Métis Nation of Ontario, Aboriginal Homelessness Initiative, who let us use their space in the Métis Sault Centre, and the help of many local volunteers, especially Carla and Christina Lábbe, Brenda Powley and Nancy Walsh.

Five sessions of two hour classes were offered to the age spectrum, with Saturday afternoon specifically designated for children, and Saturday evening for an adult social. Much laughter and artery pumping fun was enjoyed by all. Our ancestors definitely knew the definition of merriment. Jigging is Métis aerobics. Obviously, these same ancestors were very fit to be able to dance the evening away.

Donna St. Jules, sso Community Wellness Worker’s media work was much appreciated. Featured in the Sault This Week newspaper leading up to the event, was Jezi Powley, granddaughter of Steve and Brenda Powley, performing the broom stick dance. Even though we had typical snowy weather, over 60 individuals participated in the dance sessions.

All participants were given the opportunity to complete a survey/evaluation of the workshop. The surveys’ results confirmed a desire for a weekly Métis dance club and an interest in developing a local dance troupe. My completed report on the workshop including the written proposal to the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, and the survey/evaluation with results can be forwarded to interested communities. You can contact me via email at mno-culture@shaw.ca or through the Sault Métis Centre at 705-254-1708.

Eric Chamberlin is instructed by Jaime Koebel on the Métis sash/belt dance.

Jig on the Fly is an Ottawa-based jiggng group.
Inheriting a Métis Legacy

by LYNETTE HARPER & LORENE BARRON

Congratulations Lana! We are all very proud of you and you are a wonderful example for our Métis youth. Your parents Mervyn and Lynette Harper, sister Leah of Ottawa, your godmother Aunt Lenore Barron of Victoria, BC and all your numerous relatives across Canada and abroad wish you all the very best in your life and career.

Determination, tenacity and focus are just a few of the many qualities Lana possesses that enabled her to graduate with honours from Canterbury High School in 1998. Although she received a diploma in Fine Arts in Dance from Canterbury, Lana decided to pursue a career in accounting. She attended York University, graduating with a BA honours in accounting. During that time Lana also held a full-time job and volunteered with the Toronto Métis outreach program. Shortly after completing her studies, the interview process began and Lana accepted a position as a Certified Accountant (CA) student at the firm of Collins Barrow in Ottawa. This brought her home with her family where she began the lengthy process of achieving the necessary requirements to obtain her CA designation. The first of these was the Entrance Certification Exam (ECE) for the School of Accounting at Collins Barrow in Ottawa. This is considered one of the world’s toughest professional exams. Lana’s dream became reality when the ECE results were posted on their web site November 26th, 2006. Recovering from her success, Lana was further rewarded with the John Cutler “Award of Excellence” by her firm, Collins Barrow, at their annual Christmas dinner. Recently, Lana accepted her designation and took her oath as a chartered accountant on February 24th, 2007, at a prestigious ceremony and gala ball at the Harbour Castle Hotel in Toronto.

Lana is a fifth generation Métisse from the original Red River Settlement at St. François Xavier (now, Manitoba). Her great great great grandfather, Jean Baptiste Branconnier, was born in 1791. He signed on with the Royal Canadian Engineers stationed in Canada and eventually fought at the Battle of Seven Oaks. He was a prisoner in the Korean War. His great uncle, Dave Barron, founded the first national Métis women’s organization in BC; aunt Lenore Barron, founded the first national Métis women’s organization (the Métis National Council of Women). Great uncle Mylhe (Emile) Barron, who will be 97 in June, 2007, has won numerous fiddling championships and was the first Canadian to win the National Fiddler’s Competition in Weiser, Idaho, USA, in the senior’s division in 1981 at the age of 71. He still builds violins and still plays. Lana’s mother, Lynette Harper (née Barron), is carrying on the tradition of playing, on a 160 year old violin made by her maternal great great grandfather, James Miller Adams (born in Madras, India in 1822) who was a stringed instrument builder in the mid 1800s in Toronto.

Lana has inherited a strong cultural legacy from her parents. Her forebears have fought many battles for the rights of human respect and dignity. It’s easy to see where she derives her perseverance and strength—from her maternal and paternal ancestors who honour her success. I hope that anyone who reads this article is inspired to pursue their dreams because Lana has proven that with strong family support, commitment and downright hard work, anyone can fulfill their dreams and create their future.

Written by Lorene Barron & Lynette Harper using the research of Lenore Barron (Victoria, BC).
studies found that almost half of the workers report not receiv-
ing the minimum wage. How could they ever build even a two-room school? People who are not fluent in the language of the governing soci-
ety are at a great disadvan-
tage. Imagine trying to com-
plete your income tax forms if they were in another language. Most of us think they are in another language, but suppose they really were. What if every contract were in another language? What if the company you work for printed its “policies and procedures” in Russian? How would you know your rights? This lack of understanding is exactly what happened to our own ancestors. This is how First Nations and Métis lost their land and so many of their rights. The Q’eqchi are another Indigenous group who are suffering at the hands of the predominant culture. These Indigenous people lost their land when the current “landowners” of the region expropriated it and then registered themselves in the Nation General Registry of Prop-
erty as the owners. In 1999, the Q’eqchi of one isolated commu-
nity, Secanal II, negoti-
ated with the owners in an effort to avoid being put off of their ancestral lands entirely. Finally, they reached an agreement to buy the land in exchange for agricultural labour. The natives would work without pay for 15 days a month. The money that they should have been paid was supposed to go toward pur-
chasing the land. During the other 15 days of the month the labourers tried to earn enough money to feed their families and take care of their homes. Unfortunately, this agreement was too hard on the workers and it could not possi-
ably be fulfilled. They could not earn 550 Quetzales ($46.66), the minimum needed to survive, in 15 days and the situation in the communities was so dire that children, women and elders suffered major health problems. Agriculture also suffered; chil-
dren had intestinal parasites; breastfeeding mothers were weak and sick. Even now, these people are little better than slaves on their ancestral land with small hope of improving their lives or the lives of their children. Every waking hour is a struggle for survival how can they possibly build the schools that could bring education and a better life? Let’s help them to maintain their own culture and to become fluent and capable in Spanish. Schools can bring literacy and liter-
acy can bring a better life.

**Métis Voyageur**

**INTERNATIONAL**

Métis National Council President, Clément Chartier pay a visit to our South American friends

**MÉTIS VOYAGEUR**

**Mção voyageur**

**INTERNATIONAL**

MNO President Tony Belcourt and MNC President Clément Chartier pay a visit to our South American friends

**MÉTIS VOYAGEUR**

**INTERNATIONAL**

*Tony Belcourt*

*Tony Belcourt*

*Tony Belcourt*

*Tony Belcourt*

*Tony Belcourt*

*Tony Belcourt*
Tony and his partner, Danielle, have been making private visits annually to Guatemala for years. They've struck up a friendship with many people there and have been helping to fund a better education and family life for a young girl and her mother. They have also learned a great deal about the struggles of the people in the Alta Verapaz Region where people are living in conditions identical to the feudal system of centuries ago. Many citizens of the Métis Nation have heard about these struggles over the years from them and also from Roderico Teni, Culture Bearer of the Q’eqchi Maya, who has visited various communities on a couple of occasions. Métis people have responded in the past to calls for assistance in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch and the mud slides following Hurricane Stan. At the beginning of 2000, the year of the millennium, leaders from the community of Secanal, at great risk to themselves, walked for hours from their village in the dead of night to spend a day with Rodenoco, others from his organization, Association for Educational, Economic and Cultural Development (ADEC), and Tony to tell their story. Theirs is a tragic account of poor health, extreme poverty and a desolate future in conditions akin to slavery.

In 2003, after being swindled of hundreds of hours and years of labour that they believed were being credited to the purchase of their land, their fortunes changed and they were able to obtain a loan from a US benefactor. They are now in the process of repaying that loan. Now that the community has found a way to buy their land and they no longer need to live in fear, their story can finally be told publicly. The meeting in 2000 was video and audio taped. The text of the interview is now available on the web site; so too is a progress report made some time ago by Roderico Teni. Even though the people of Secanal II are now in the process of buying their land, building permanent dwellings and have even begun to build a school, their financial resources are marginal to say the least. Their needs are great, but so too, and perhaps even greater, are those of the other isolated communities that have not yet been able to take the huge step taken by Secanal II. Thousands of Q’eqchi remain as “squatters” on mountainsides at the tolerance of landowners who allow them to remain if they work for free. (See page 11 “Q’eqchi village struggles to teach children”)

A

generous gift from the MNO Registrar, Karole Dumont-Beckett, has spurred the idea of a fund-raising campaign to assist in building and staffing schools in isolated Mayan communities in Guatemala. Karole and her husband Glen have been contributing to international funds for children for years. Hearing of MNO President Tony Belcourt’s trip to Guatemala at the end of February, and knowing of the plight of children and the need for schools, she and her husband decided to pledge an annual donation of $300 per year for the next five years. When MNO Senator Reta Gordon learned about this, she immediately offered to match the gift. Thus, this fund-raising campaign began.

Métis Citizens lend support to Guatemala

“Children who are poor usually don’t know they are poor. They can be happy and play while their parents anguish, as is the case in Yepocapa, Guatemala, where these children were sitting up for my camera, holding teddy bears and other stuffed toys that are falling apart. These tents were provided by USAID after their homes were washed away during Hurricane Stan in November, 2005. Without permanent homes and an ability to grow gardens, the people are left destitute and poor health is setting in.’’

“...one thing one does is returned tensed. Glen and I are blessed with beautiful grandchildren who have everything they could possibly need. The photos Tony and Danielle brought back from Guatemala last spring really hit a raw nerve with me. One photo in particular, of a young boy carrying a toddler on his back offering a handful of knitted dolls for sale, really broke my heart. There was such haunting sadness in his eyes; I kept thinking that this child should be running, laughing and playing with his friends after classes... that this was much too much responsibility for such a young boy.

I cannot stand the thought that children are going to bed hungry at night, that children are going to work instead of going to school. In Canada we have food banks, shelters, and breakfast programs for the disadvantaged. In Guatemala many of these children have nothing. As far as Glen and I are concerned, there’s always enough money to sponsor a child, but this time we wanted to do something different. The need is so great there that we want to help many children and so I asked Tony and Danielle to bring the children of Guatemala something from us. The rest, as the popular saying goes, is history. Within days we had four more sponsors and I just learned today that Danielle is matching our pledge; I couldn’t be happier! I really, really hope that we will reach 100 matched pledges by the end of the year. The Métis people are among the most generous people I know and I know that we can reach that goal.

Canada is a land of riches and privileges, but we are nothing as a people if we don’t share our knowledge and good fortune with those who need us the most. The Indigenous people we are trying to help are in the same situation our own ancestors were centuries ago. The lessons we’ve learned while fighting for our rights mustn’t go to waste. We must bring our knowledge and support to other Indigenous people to help them reach an acceptable quality of life. In our eyes, it’s the very least we can do.”

Karole Dumont-Beckett

More support for Guatemala schools

Senator Reta Gordon was quick to add her support to the schools project. Like Registrar Karole Dumont-Beckett, photos taken by President Belcourt moved her to take action.

“Tony showed me pictures of the people of Guatemala,’’ she said, “they’re terrible inadequate living conditions and the mud slides that took away the scant earth where they had grown their vegetables... Their government provides them with little or nothing and foreign aid consists of little more than plastic sheets that they hang up as shelter—even though they have temperatures of extreme cold and extreme heat. When Tony told me of the plans to help build a school I thought, ‘they are our Aboriginal brothers and sisters even though they live in a far off land.’ It is a known fact that knowledge is power; they must be educated so they can one day advance their nation.”

THE MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO AT THE FOREFRONT IN GUATEMALA

Campaña de Escuelas para Aldeas Aisladas:

Schools for Isolated Villages

THE MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO AT THE FOREFRONT IN GUATEMALA
Q’EQCHÍ VILLAGE STRUGGLES TO TEACH CHILDREN

IN LINDA LORD

A
fter several years of working for a land-ward who supposedly was crediting fifteen days of their labour each month toward buying back their traditional land, the Q’eqchi of Secanal discovered that they had in fact been cheated and still did not own any land. However, during the last four years the Q’eqchi, with the support of an American benefactor, have been able to buy some land. It is not the best land, which is found in the valleys, but is rather on the side of a mountain. Nevertheless, it is an improvement. So long as they were considered squatters they could not even build a permanent structure to live in, never mind a school. In addition, during the time that the Q’eqchi worked for “the land owner”, they lost the traditional farming knowledge that had been possessed by their ancestors. They are now being helped to regain this knowledge by ACED (Association for Educational, Economic and Cultural Development).

Three years ago the community was able to build a school. This was accomplished by the entire community—men, women and children—haggling concrete blocks up the mountain on their backs. They have been able to hire a teacher who teaches grades one, two and three, and soon grade four will be added. The children wish to learn, but often come to school hungry. The teacher would like to be able to provide milk for them. Meanwhile, the community struggles to pay the teacher, but is very aware that they need to go to school and learn Spanish in order to better their lives.

By our standards the situation in Secanal is beyond imagination, but to neighbouring communities it is a model of success. Secanal discovered that they had the prospects of having a school, the first one ever in the area. Secanal II is in the “cloud forest” area of Guatemala. The community was able to build a school. This was accomplished by the community in Secanal II for a special presentation. The school now has three grades. However there are barely enough funds to provide for one teacher, so they are teaching the teacher three levels. —Tony Belcourt

In Guatemala, Mayan women work untold hours to weave beautiful materials that are sadly sold at bargain basement prices. The products are striking and plentiful. Many Métis people would like to have them in their homes, and these purchases would help Mayan families. On the web site you will find photos which show a variety of products including tablecloths, place-mats, napkins, blankets, wall hangings and other goods such as wood carvings and curios. —Tony Belcourt

By Avery Hargreaves by email: averyh@metisnation.org

www.metisnation.org/International/Guatemala

Send donations made out to “Schools in Guatemala Fund” to
Métis Nation of Ontario - Finance Department
500 Old St. Patrick Street, Unit D, Ottawa, ON, K1N 9G4
Share your thoughts and ideas by contacting Communications Minister, Avery Hargreaves by email: averyh@metisnation.org

LA NACIÓN MÉTIS DE ONTARIO ESTÁ A LA VANGUARDIA EN GUATEMALA

Access to information and communication technologies

The Métis Nation of Ontario has long seen the value of accessing and using the most advanced of information and communications technologies. The MNO makes maximum use of Internet technology through its web sites and recently has begun to establish video-conferencing facilities at its head office and its community councils. This has led to the use of this technology for training and tele-health. The MNO is well advanced in a joint venture with the Anishinabek Nation in developing a virtual call centre that will see employment opportunities brought to Métis and First Nations people no matter where they live.

This focus on the future has also led to President Tony Belcourt to promote the development of ICTs nationally through his position as a member of the Crossing Boundaries National Council and internationally in his role as Métis National Council Minister for International Issues. The MNO and the MNC have been active advocates for access to technology for indigenous peoples through the process leading up to and including the World Summit on Information Societies hosted by the International Telecommunications Union.

Recently, an “Indigenous Interim Commission for the Development of ICT’s in the Americas” was formed by Tony Belcourt, the representative from Canada and is on the three member planning committee. The Interim Commission held its first planning meeting in Antigua, Guatemala on March 6-8, 2007.

The potential for the Interim Commission is tremendous. Included on the trio web site is a report on the 1st Indigenous Workshop on ICT’s held in Mexico City a year ago...

Compra de Textiles para Ayudar a las Mujeres Maya y sus Hijos

Buying textiles to help Mayan women and children

Mayan women of the Guatemalan Province of Solola gathered to show their wares to visitors. The distinctive historic styles of this region can be seen in the predominance of the blue colours in their leggings (blouses) and in the fashion of their hair design. —Tony Belcourt
Yummy Brownies

1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp salt
2 cups white sugar
1/2 cup cocoa
2 cups white sugar
1-1/2 cups all purpose flour
3 eggs
1 tsp vanilla
cup chopped walnuts (optional)
cup chopped nuts (optional)

Put all ingredients in large bowl and mix together until well combined. Preheat oven to 350°F. Pour batter into prepared pan and bake for about 20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
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ABORIGINAL HEALTH

BREAKING THE CYCLE

Ontario launches program to reduce Aboriginal smoking

Minister of Health Promotion, Jim Watson, recently announced that the Government of Ontario is launching, “What You Do Matters,” a public awareness campaign aimed at encouraging members of Aboriginal communities to quit smoking.

“What You Do Matters” campaign is a Crystal of a two part series on the dangers of crystal methamphetamine.

“Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death and we’re determined to work with Aboriginal communities to make a difference,” said Watson.

“The What You Do Matters campaign is a call to action for each individual, family and community to help improve their health environment and the quality of life for all Aboriginal peoples.”

The campaign consists of 30-second radio announcements, print ads in targeted publications, and posters distributed in hand offices, friendship centres, health centres and other gathering places. Pamphlets and fact sheets are available to Aboriginal communities and the media.

Additional information is available at www.ontario.ca/Smoke-FreeOntario.

The rate of smoking among Aboriginal peoples can be three times the provincial average.

Tobacco-related diseases cost the Ontario health care system at least $17.5 billion annually, result in more than $2.6 billion in productivity losses, and account for at least 500,000 hospital days each year.

Anishinabek Nation’s Grand Council Chief, John Beaucage, supports the public awareness objective of the campaign: “The Anishinabek Nation is committed to reducing the non-traditional use of tobacco and the health burdens from the misuse of tobacco amongst its citizens,” says Chief Beaucage.

“Members of communities have signaled their support for developing an Anishinabek Nation Smoke-Free Strategy to encourage and promote the case of Anishinabek First Nation initiatives aimed at reducing non-traditional tobacco use to improve smoke-free environments within Anishinabek territory.”

“We will continue to work with the province where our Strategy and Anishinabek First Nation initiatives share common goals and objectives. This is an issue that affects the health of children, and healthy children are our future.”

Minister Watson also announced that the Ontario Government had provided $30,000 to Cancer Care Ontario for organizing an Aboriginal Tobacco Strategy Youth Summit which was held in March 2007. The Summit was the first ever Aboriginal youth-specific smoke-free event sponsored by Ontario.

This funding is part of an annual investment of $2 million under the Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy to help Aboriginal communities break the cycle of smoking addiction. The Ontario Government also invests $88 million in programs to prevent youth from using tobacco products.

PART ONE of a two part series on the dangers of crystal methamphetamine

CRYSTAL METH: A speedy way to die

in ERNEST MATON

Will here we are once again, and I am reminded how truly precious life is. Recently, I was watching the news and hammyt they were featuring a meth dump out west, its dangers and the toxins associated with a meth lab. Let me start by saying that sometimes what you don’t know can hurt you. And that doubles when the drug that you don’t know about is “crystal meth.”

“Crystals” are more people using speed, and all kinds of people are getting involved—on purpose or not. And that doubles when the drug you don’t know can hurt you.

Crystal methamphetamine use is a public health matter, featuring a meth dump out west, its dangers and the toxins associated with its use.

There are more than 500,000 hospital days each year.

Anishinabek Nation’s Grand Council Chief, John Beaucage, supports the public awareness objective of the campaign: “The Anishinabek Nation is committed to reducing the non-traditional use of tobacco and the health burdens from the misuse of tobacco amongst its citizens.”

This funding is part of an annual investment of $2 million under the Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy to help Aboriginal communities break the cycle of smoking addiction. The Ontario Government also invests $88 million in programs to prevent youth from using tobacco products.

The Manitoba Métis Federation Board of Directors and its president, David Chartrand, congratulated World Champion Archer, Doris Jones, for winning Manitoba’s first gold medal of the 2007 Canada Games in Whitehorse, YK on February 28, 2007.

“Doris Jones, a young Métis woman, has set a fine example of what our Métis Youth can accomplish through hard work, commitment and determination while working to achieve their goals.” read the press release.

The Summit was the first ever Aboriginal youth-specific smoke-free event sponsored by Ontario.

This funding is part of an annual investment of $2 million under the Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy to help Aboriginal communities break the cycle of smoking addiction. The Ontario Government also invests $88 million in programs to prevent youth from using tobacco products.
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 who are interested in becoming health professionals or who are currently involved in health career related programs.

This funding is available through the Métis Health Human Resources Initiative, a four year national program funded by Health Canada. The MNO strives to create a representative workforce with appropriate numbers of Métis physicians, nurses, dentists and other healthcare providers to be responsive to the unique needs of Métis people.

TRAINING & SUPPORT
The Training & Support 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
The Bursary program helps Métis students who have demonstrated need for assistance to complete their program of study. Bursary amounts are based on financial need of the student and the availability of program funds.

CONTINUING EDUCATION
The Continuing Education award helps Métis health professionals who provide services to Métis people in Ontario to enhance their education.

CONTACT
For further information or guidance in completing your application, please contact your local MNO Regional Employment and Training Co-ordinator as listed on our web site: www.metisnation.org

Other inquiries can be directed to the Métis Health Human Resources Coordinator
500 Old St. Patrick Street, Unit D
Ottawa, ON K1N 9G4
Ph: 613-798-1488 or 1-800-263-4889