On April 19th, 2010, I was able to participate in what was one of the proudest days I have had since my involvement with MNO first began back in 1994.

In the past 16 years of living history many of us have witnessed first hand a steady progression in the resurgence of Métis pride, identity and Métis nationalism. Within the MNO we have stood together, collectively and asserted ourselves as proud Métis, proud of who we are, proud of our ancestors, proud of our contributions both past and present, and we have asserted ourselves as fully fledged rights bearing people—one of the three distinct Aboriginal peoples recognized in section 35 of the Canadian Constitution.

During these past years, there have been special moments that stand out, moments when events have happened and one immediately knows that something important has happened, and that Métis realities are now somehow different, better, and that our future will be a little brighter. Such historic events for the MNO include, of course, the ten year struggle and battle all MNO citizens fought along with Steve and Rod Powley in the first ever Métis test case to go all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada. We fought together, collectively for full recognition of Métis harvesting rights, and in 2003 the Métis were victorious, a special and significant day that we will all remember, one that forever changed how Métis rights would be recognized. That day will always stand in our memory.

Another significant day was a year later in July of 2004, when after long and difficult negotiations we concluded a harvesting agreement with the MNR to recognize Métis harvesting rights and MNO’s harvesting policy. This remains even today, the only provincial harvesting agreement with any Métis governing body.

Although more work needs to be done, it should remain a significant day of accomplishment, one that finally allowed Métis harvesters to harvest with pride, without fear of reprisal.

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**Métis Voyageur**

**GROUNDBREAKING DAY FOR MÉTIS:**

**Métis honoured at Queen’s Park**

For the first time ever, a Minister of the Ontario Government rose in the House to greet the Legislative Assembly in the Michif language.

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**ROADTRIP**

MULTIPLE COMMUNITY COUNCILS HIT THE ROAD IN SEARCH OF MÉTIS CULTURE AND ADVENTURE

**HOUSING**

Students complete first phase of new internship program in Thunder Bay

**FORT FOOD**

Sunset Country Métis partner with other Fort Frances ORGs for healthy food program

**SLOW RIVER**

Métis Writer tells a story of mental illness and healing
by Carmen Pregent

M y step-grandson, James, passed away on May 15, 2010. He was barely 24 years old and the accident that killed him happened, 500 yards from his home. What makes this loss even more devastating is that the accident could have been prevented. If only he had not answered his cell phone. As a result, he lost control of his pick-up truck which rolled three times before slamming into a post. He died instantly. James was such a wonderful young man with so much potential before his body was crushed and needed to be extracted from his truck by the “Jaws of Life”. He leaves behind his fiancée, family and friends. His friend, and passenger, was transported to the hospital with a broken ankle. It too used to use his cell phone while driving and is ashamed that it took my step-grandson’s death to enlighten me. If you, your family members or friends talk, text or e-mail while driving please take this message to heart and stop doing it. That call that can’t wait to be answered, that text that must be read or sent—these distractions could kill you, someone you love, or even an innocent bystander. Our James could have been your precious child, grandchild, sibling, nephew, niece, cousin or friend.

Please, let this become a behaviour changing turning point in all of our lives. Let it be the end of tempting fate when we are behind the wheel of a moving vehicle. Until each of us chooses to make this one simple change the number of needless deaths and grieving families will continue to rise. It is definitely a growing epidemic.

How many times have you already avoided a near accident because the other driver was distracted by one of the many forms of this technology? The internet abounds with articles, blogs and video so I will cite only a few. Wikipedia.org has a very illuminating entry titled “Texting While Driving”. YouTube has footage from the television show “MythBusters”. This video comes in three parts under the title “MythBusters Cell Phones Versus Drunk Driving”. Finally, cnet.com outlines a recent research study where one of the co-authors states that “driving while talking on a cell phone is as bad as—or maybe worse than—drinking drunk, which is completely unacceptable and cannot be tolerated by society.”

What if a family member or client needs you? Let me propose an alternative way to handle this. Let the communication go to voice mail and FULL OVER! Educate your family, friends, clients and especially your children. Let them know that you will have to return their call, and will do so as promptly as possible and that it is against the law to use any communication device while driving. Even more than that, it is a morally irresponsible choice. There are countless side streets, parking lots, breakdown lanes and highway shoulders available. It’s time for all of us to start using them.

I pray that no one else is made to suffer from such a senseless tragedy, so please, don’t wait until someone that you love is maimed or killed. Let us make wiser decisions, now.

Additions to Senator Calder’s clan


In Memory of James

by Carmen Pregent

I t is with heavy hearts that we must announce the passing of our precious soaring eagle, Janée, on May 17, 2010, cherished daughter of Sarah and husband Stéphane Boucher, Philip (PJ) and Mandu, devoted aunt of Alvita Lisa. Janée was a dear friend and inspired many. Janée accomplished so much during her short 30 year life. Her free spirit led to travels all over the world and introduced her to lifelong friends along the way. She gave her all to Transitions to Work and to Hospice of Windermere, a true passion and keen interest in assisting clienteles achieve their goals and is very excited about new prospects for them through the Ready to Work Project.

Chantal can be reached at the MNO head office in Ottawa or by email chantall@metisnation.org

Three New Métis Councils:

Welcome to the Atikokan Métis Council, formed March 25th; the Toronto Métis Council, formed March 27th; and the Peterborough Métis Council, formed April 3rd.

Jeff Watts has joined the Education and Training Branch as the “Job Developer” of the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Centre at Sault College which has recently been established in collaboration with Sault College.

Jeff comes to the MNO with experience as a teacher and a joiner in a secondary school and has developed an alternative way to handle this. He is currently working towards obtaining his Human Resources Certificate. Rebecca brings enthusiasm and dedication to the overall success of the Ready to Work Project.

Chantal can be reached at the MNO head office in Midland or by email chantall@metisnation.org

Janée Dupuis
1970-2010

Three New Métis Councils:
Métis Nation News

Moving Forward

by Gary Lipinski

As the MNO’s Provincial Council nears the two year mark of our current four year mandate, I have been reflecting on our challenges and those original goals that we all set out to achieve by working together. One particularly important commitment on our platform was to strengthen the MNO’s financial management, administration and accountability. I can tell you that the time, energy and complexity of delivering on this commitment, so essential to the MNO’s future, credibility and growth, has far exceeded all of our initial expectations.

It was obvious from the outset that in order for the MNO to be as strong as it can be, it must have its “financial house” in order. Reversing cash flow deficit, never-end- ing cash flow challenges and the lack of timely reporting on the MNO’s finances have held us back in the past. We were often perceived as being “too high risk” by governments and other potential partners. So, when we took office, I, as your President, and the rest of your elected leadership, made strengthening the MNO’s financial management and administrative capacity a priority.

We needed to change the way the MNO “did business” in order to take our nation to the next level. We wanted to make deficits a thing of the past, strengthen the MNO’s balance sheet and demonstrate that the MNO is a reliable partner in every sense. To achieve these goals, we have had to make tough choices and decisions.

Living within our means has meant delaying and cutting costs associated with our Annual General Assemblies and all other business processes as well as implementing demanding accountability, which has only worked because all MNO members, including MNO citizens and many of us growing up have been subjected to over the generations as Métis. I felt vindication that the province that used to deny the very existence of the Métis now recognizes our historic communi- ties and our rights as a distinct Aboriginal people.

“...all of us, and we still have much work to do to build a stronger Métis Nation.”

I also encourage all of you to take part in one of the many cultural and community events that will be held throughout the province this year to celebrate Métis culture and the “Year of the Métis.”

Take pride in who you are and the Nation you belong to! In closing, I would be remiss to not acknowledge the efforts and hard work of former MNO President Tony Belcourt, past and present members of the Provi- sional Council of the MNO of Ontario, senators, veterans, women, youth, captains of the hunt, Métis leadership at the community council level and all of the volunteers and citizens who have given freely of their time, dedication and heart to building the Métis Nation over the last 17 years.

Your tireless and heartfelt efforts made April 19th possible. I was honoured to witness the passing of the resolution on behalf of all MNO citizens. Knowing that the resolution and the “Year of the Métis” belongs to all of us collectively.

I look forward to continuing to work together and to share and celebrate our collective accomplishment throughout Ontario in 2010 and beyond!

Read the Hansard from the Ontario Legislature on April 19th online at: www.metisnation.org/news_media/news/metics-honoured-at-queens-park.aspx

Métis Nation of Ontario President's Update:

Moving Forward

Gary reflects on the past two years...

continued page 16

More recently, on November 17th, 2008, the Ontario Govern- ment took an amazing leap for- ward in signing a Framework Agreement with the Métis Nation of Ontario. This Framework, for the first time recognized Métis in Ontario in an official way and committed us to work collabora- tively on a number of commit- ments, including recognition of our past contributions. It also laid a foundation for positive relations with the Ontario Government and a path towards reconcilia- tion.

April 19th, 2010, we took a giant step forward on the road to reconciliation as the declaration of 2010 as the “Year of the Métis” by the Ontario Legislature was announced. It was truly an his- toric and humbling experience that I want to share with all MNO citizens.

In the gallery of the Ontario Legislature, I, along with other members of the MNO Executive, were privileged to be one of the few political party in the province give their unanimous consent to a resolution declaring 2010 the “Year of the Métis”. Specifically, the resolution stated:

“The Ontario Legislature com- memorates 2010 as the Year of the Métis.

“The Ontario Legislature recog- nizes and honours the distinct culture, identity and heritage of the Métis people in the province as well as the historic and ongo- ing contributions of the Métis in Ontario.

With this resolution, the Ontario Government joined with the Parliament of Canada and the Saskatchewan Legislature who had already declared 2010 as the “Year of the Métis”.

This resolution in the Ontario Legislature had addi- tional historical significance of just in how far our Nation has come. This additional historical sig- nificance came from the fact that the resolution was passed in the same Ontario Legislature that put a bounty on Louis Riel’s head in 1872 and sent troops out to fight against the Métis Nation’s demand for recognition and respect for Métis lands throughout the northwest.

Now, over a hundred years later, Members of Provincial Par- liament for all political parties rose to acknowledge and pay their respects to Ontario Métis and the Métis Nation. It was truly a watershed moment in our his- tory as Ontario Métis. As the repre- sentative for all MNO citizens at the event, words cannot express all the different emotions I felt on behalf of our Nation that day. I felt sorrow for all of the Métis who died in the Battle of Batoche and other Métis uprisings throughout our history—those who were standing up for Métis rights and lands. I felt anger about all of our ancestors who were forced to hide their culture, deny their identity and who were often referenced to as “half-breeds” in a derogatory manner.

I was reminded of all the hurt- ful statements our Elders and MNO citizens and many of us
Moving ahead on Métis economic development

Métis National Council (MNC) President, Clément Chartier, is welcoming commitments from provincial and territorial leaders of Aboriginal Affairs to work with First Nation, Inuit and Métis leaders to improve education and economic development opportunities, and to end violence against Aboriginal women and girls.

The commitments were made at the second meeting of the Aboriginal Affairs Working Group (AAWG) held April 28, 2010, in Toronto. The group, comprised of Aboriginal Affairs Ministers and leaders from across Canada, meets regularly to move forward a collaborative plan to address the unique socio-economic challenges and opportunities of First Nation, Inuit and Métis communities.

At the 2009 Council of the Federation meeting in Regina, Saskatchewan last August, premiers from across the country expressed an interest in reinvigorating the federal-provincial-territorial Aboriginal affairs process. They agreed to ask ministers responsible for Aboriginal affairs to form a working group to examine how to work more effectively with the federal government to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people.

The federal government is invited to participate, and was represented at this meeting by Chuck Strahl, Minister of Indian Affairs and Federal Interlocutor for Métis. In its closing communique, the AAWG pledged to develop specific action plans on Aboriginal child welfare and early learning, and ending violence against Aboriginal women and girls.

The action plans will be presented at the August meeting of the Council of the Federation and leaders of the national Aboriginal organizations.

The MNC is advocating for the action plans to be regionally-specific and distinct.

The priority areas being addressed by this working group are of great concern to Métis Nation citizens,” said President Chartier. “By embracing a distinct-based approach, I am confident we will continue making progress in finding practical, Métis-specific measures to achieve concrete results.”

During the AAWG meeting, an example of how successful a regionally-specific, distinction-based approach can benefit the Métis Nation was brought forward. Bill Hutchinson, Saskatchewan Minister of First Nation and Métis Relations, and the AAWG planner Chuck Strahl both highlighted the recent announcement that the Government of Canada was contributing $5 million to Saskatchewan’s Clarence Campeau Development Fund to establish a new Métis energy and resource program.

Minister Strahl told AAWG participants how the contribution will increase Métis participation in the resource and energy sectors, and build on the Métis Nation Protocol and Métis Economic Development Symposium.

“This new program is a fine example of how Métis-specific approaches can yield significant benefits for Métis Nation citizens,” President Chartier said. “We should use this success as a template for our continued work through the AAWG on economic development, education and ending violence against Aboriginal women and girls.”

The Council of the Federation is a council in Canada made up of the premiers of Canada’s provinces and territories. Its main function is to provide a forum for amongst the provincial and territorial governments when interacting with Canada’s federal government. It also promotes “constructive Confederation”, working for Canadian unity and promoting differences amongst the various provinces and territories within Canada’s federal system of government.

The Council of the Federation meets twice annually to discuss issues relating to Canadian intergovernmental relations, those between the provinces and territories and the federal government.

Ontario appoints first Aboriginal advisor on Child Welfare

Ontario appointed John Beaucage as Aboriginal Advisor to the Minister of Children and Youth Services, Laurel Broten.

Mr. Beaucage will help improve services for Aboriginal children and youth, both on and off reserve by providing advice on Aboriginal child welfare issues for a period of one year. He will also be available as an expert resource to the Commission to Promote Sustainable Child Welfare.

A former Grand Council Chief of the Anishinabek Nation and current Chief Executive Officer of the Lake Huron Anishinabek Transmission Company, Mr. Beaucage is a strong advocate for First Nations children, youth and ensures that the best way to build solid relationships is to listen.

"I am honoured to be a part of Ontario’s efforts to help its Aboriginal communities. Experience teaches us that the best way to build solid relationships is to listen. I sincerely look forward to hearing from, and engaging with, Aboriginal leaders across the province in an effort to advance our government on how to better support our children and youth," said Mr. Beaucage.

At this time, approximately 21% of Ontario’s 9,000 Crown wards are of Native heritage. It is hoped that the appointment of an Aboriginal Advisor will improve support for Aboriginal children and youth and ensure they have every opportunity to succeed.

POLITICS:

Aboriginal Members of Parliament still rare

This March, 2010, marked the 50th anniversary of the first Aboriginal Member of Parliament, John Diefenbaker amended the Canada Elections Act to recognize First Nations Canadians as equal to other Canadians.

Before 1960, status Indians were only able to cast a ballot if they gave up their status and applied to be enfranchised. Only 250 had the vote.

Even now, Aboriginal candidates are rare, and Aboriginal candidates who win even more so. In the last 50 years, Canada has elected just eight First Nations people to the House of Commons and appointed nine First Nations senators. Currently there is only one First Nations MP—Conservative Bob Clarke from Saskatchewan—and four senators.

Federal Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq said that there are also three Métis, including Manitoba Conserva- tive Senator Rob Black, and Liberal senators Gloria and Labrador Liberal, Todd Russell.

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“Canadians cannot afford, from either a national perspective, or in their regions and communities, to see Métis people lag behind.”

This new program is a fine example of how Métis-specific approaches can yield significant benefits for Métis Nation citizens,” President Chartier said. “We should use this success as a template for our continued work through the AAWG on economic development, education and ending violence against Aboriginal women and girls.”

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The Council of the Federation meets twice annually to discuss issues relating to Canadian intergovernmental relations, those between the provinces and territories and the federal government.
Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS) helps house Métis family

A large Métis family in northern Ontario now has a safe, affordable place to call home. Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS) administers the new off-reserve First Nations, Métis, Inuit Urban & Rural (FIMUR) Assisted Homeownership Program. The FIMUR Homeownership Program provides up to $30,000 for eligible applicants with assistance for a down payment and other related closing costs.

Tim Pile, Secretary Treasurer of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and Board Member for OAHS, was on hand to see Cornell, Eleanor and their four children get the keys to their new home. “MNO is so pleased to see one of the many Métis families that needed a safe home be successful. This clearly demonstrates that the program is working.”

Cornell and Eleanor, both Métis, are moving from a rental property that had mould growth and was causing health problems for them and their children. Cornell says with emotion, “This is a dream we didn’t think we could attain and OAHS made it happen.” Their family was also on a waiting list for safe, affordable OAHS rental housing. Now that Cornell and Eleanor are homeowners, this removes six people from that waiting list.

Don McBain, Executive Director of OAHS, comments, “The FIMUR Homeownership Program will help many Aboriginal individuals and families move from a rental unit to their very own home. With this funding provided by the Province of Ontario from the federal off-reserve Aboriginal Housing Trust, we will be able to help more than 250 Aboriginal people and their families find a safe and affordable home.” Since the program was launched in September, 2009, there are 70 Aboriginal families and/or individuals actually living in their new homes. There are about another 100 applicants who have received conditional approval and are actively shopping for their new home.

The FIMUR Assisted Homeownership fund is almost fully committed so potential applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

For more information on OAHS or the FIMUR Program, please visit: www.ontarioaboriginalhousing.ca or call 1-866-391-1061. Providing safe affordable housing is our mandate. Creating homes is our goal.
Tony Belcourt receives honorary degree from Lakehead University

by Linda Lord

Dr. Belcourt began his address to the 46th Convocation of Lakehead University by saying, “I will never forget the day I got the phone call from President Gilbert to tell me that this wonderful university had decided to confer the great honour that you have given to me today. It was a call that was ‘out of the blue’. I had no idea I was even being considered. I was taken completely by surprise and well, to be honest, shocked....”

Tony went on to speak directly to the student body, who, he said, like him were probably very aware of the debt they owed their parents. He said that hard work and determination were qualities that his parents had instilled in him, not for his personal benefit, but for the security of the family.

Born in the historic Métis community of Lac Ste. Anne, Alberta, shortly after the end of the depression, Dr. Belcourt grew up speaking Michif and Cree until the age of seven when the family moved to Edmonton. Lacking an education, Tony’s father worked two and sometimes three jobs at a time in order to support his growing family. When the children were a little older Dr. Belcourt’s mother also joined the workforce where she was employed in a glass factory.

At the time it was Tony’s duty to complete high school and get a full time job which might help ensure that his brother and sisters were also able to finish at least a basic education that had not been available to his parents. Dr. Belcourt joked that his father’s goal was that Tony should get a “government job.” After high school, I did get that government job – in fact it was my dad who found it for me: a clerk at Alberta Government Telephones. This brought the secure employment and how this played an important role in his family life and political career.

But the struggle for the Métis Nation and all other Aboriginal peoples for the full recognition and respect of their rights is far from over. It’s one thing to have recognition and respect of their rights is far from over. It’s one thing to have a declaration by the courts, but it’s another for governments to live up to those rulings.”

Dr. Belcourt is now involved with an international Indigenous organization to promote the appropriate use of communications and information technologies. “We need to find new and better ways to deal with the issues of poverty, health, and sub-standard education in our communities”, he said.

Tony commended the Legislature of Ontario for passing a resolution to commemorate this year, 2010, as the “Year of the Métis”, but went on to challenge the legislature to pass a “Métis Recognition Act”.

Dr. Belcourt closed with these words: “As always, I am grateful to the opportunity that comes by learning and by doing. Always move forward. As my dear friend and mentor, Dr. Suzanne Rochon-Burnett once said: ‘always move forward–even if you fall flat on your face–at least you are still moving forward.’”
**SAULT STE MARIE**

**Métis Centre reopened in Soo**

*by Donna St. Jules*

April 28, 2010, was an historical day for the citizens of the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Community because a number of exciting events took place. All of the fun began at 8:30 A.M. with an open house at the Sault Métis Centre at 26 Queen St. East to celebrate the grand re-opening of the newly renovated Métis Centre.

Senator Brenda Powley, Council members and MNO staff greeted visitors and provided information on the various programs and services available. Tours of the renovated facility concluded in the newly dedicated Powley Room, a fully accessible program space equipped with a state of the art kitchen, where participants were able to enjoy a variety of nutritious snacks and light refreshments.

At 2:00 P.M., Gary Lipinski, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario, and Dr. Ron Commons, President of Sault College, signed an Aboriginal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Sault College and the Métis Nation of Ontario at the Énaw’nétaa’gaming Centre at Sault College. The signing of the MOU marked the official opening of the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Centre (AAC) at Sault College, a new program focused on developing apprenticeships for Aboriginal people. This Aboriginal Apprenticeship Centre is, first of its kind in Northern Ontario, is delivered by the Métis Nation of Ontario.

At 5:00 P.M., the Métis community celebrated its accomplishments with a community feast featuring a variety of traditional Métis dishes. President Gary Lipinski delivered a passionate and inspiring speech to the Métis citizens as he spoke about the accomplishments of the Métis people at the provincial level. He also congratulated the local leadership, Métis citizens and MNO staff on their hard work and continuous dedication which led to the many accomplishments that we gathered to celebrate on this historic day. It was truly a wonderful day to celebrate being a Métis citizen.

The MNO staff and Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council would like to invite you to drop by the newly renovated Métis Centre. We are open weekdays from 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. with various programs available in the evenings and on the weekend. Call 705-254-1768 for more information.

Donna St. Jules is MNO Health’s Community Wellness Coordinator in Sault Ste. Marie.

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**New Métis Council in Peterborough**

About 40 MNO citizens gathered at the Burnham St. Lions Club in Peterborough to form an interim council.

Franco Picotte, MNO Chair, said, “What this does is bring awareness to Peterborough that we have Métis people here, and the Métis culture is alive. This gives people a nucleus where they can gather, share information, enjoy their culture and develop programs.” She went on to say that there are about 500 to 600 people in the area who identify as Métis.

**INTERIM PETERBOROUGH MÉTIS COUNCIL**

President: Helene Savard
Senator: France Picotte
Council members: Debra Palandrino, Terry Bloom, Christa Lemelin, Greg Bloom

We extend our warmest welcome to all citizens of our area and beyond to come out and enjoy our community events.

**Georgian Bay Métis Council**

**Midland office opens new computer lab for labour market development**

*by Jo-Anne Parent*

Region 7 Midland MNO office now has a labour market computer lab. Citizens can come to the Georgian Bay Métis Council office located at 355 Cranston Crescent and use the resource room. Seven new computers have recently been set up for the needs of our citizens. We are happy to help you with:

- creating a resume
- creating a cover letter
- job research
- skills development

Come in and check it out, or contact Jo-Anne Parent, Education and Training Branch by phone: (705) 527-1226 or email: joanne@metisnation.org.

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**Northumberland Métis Council gets involved**

*by Kathy Bazley*

Last year, I found an article in the *Prince Albert Daily Herald* about a family in Alberta who was trying to obtain a proper monument to recognise their ancestors who had fought alongside Louis Riel.

Mr. John was seeking donations towards the purchase of two tombstones that were to be dedicated to the soldiers in the battle of 1885. This was a project devoted to all the valiant Métis who fought side by side, during that fateful struggle, which in turn would change history.

I brought the article to the attention of our Northumberland Métis Council and we unanimously approved a motion to assist in the fundraising. We have now heard back from the family that sufficient money was donated to erect two beautiful monuments in remembrance of Joseph Ouellette and Ambrosie Jobin as well as a “thank-you” plaque.

You will notice on the plaque that the Northumberland Métis Council is the only Métis organization that made a donation so we are very proud of this accomplishment.

Kathy Bazley is the Secretary for Northumberland Métis Council.

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**Community Councils**

**OSHAW & DURHAM REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL**

A new name with a new look

*by Art Henry*

The members of the Oshawa Métis Council are excited to announce their new name and logo. Our council will now be called “The Oshawa and Durham Region Métis Council” (ODRMC).

This name change was necessary in order to be more inclusive of Métis citizens in our chartered community area. We wish to thank James Wagner, ODRMC community member for designing our beautiful new logo.

We extend our warmest welcome to all citizens of our area and beyond to come out and enjoy our community events.

**OSSANIA & DURHAM REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL**

Métis youth dancers at re-opening of Sault Ste. Marie Métis Centre.

**New COUNCILS: OSHAWA & DURHAM REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL:**

**MÉTIS VOYAGEUR**
Taking part in any kind of fun with my Métis brothers and sisters is always fantastic. But this trip was one I was looking forward to as we were building a connection with our Métis family across the border in Rigaud, Québec.

I feel so fortunate having been to Rigaud and back! New relationships were formed and certainly new friendships. The sugar shack was a rather interesting business, and the feast was one I will never forget. There was too much food as usual, and I confess I even tried the sugar pie! I took part in some good old fashioned Métis dancing; let’s just say I haven’t moved like that in a little while.

On the way back we stopped at the Museum of Civilization in Hull; they have an amazing Métis exhibit. It left me yearning to learn more.

My sidekick Barbaranne Wright and I talked almost all the way there and all the way back! Oh the laughter! I apologized to those on the bus who were trying to sleep, but we simply couldn’t help ourselves.

I am looking forward to the next trip to Rigaud. Let me know when the bus is leaving; I’ll be on it! A big thanks goes out to the Oshawa and Durham Métis Council for arranging this trip.

I hope all of my Métis family will recognize that the Homeland stretches from coast to coast, that being Métis is deep within the soul, and that there are no borders and partitions when it comes to accepting your family roots. Being and feeling Métis is something you can be proud about.

A great family adventure brings Métis Councils together

This was a great family adventure, organized by the Oshawa and Durham Métis Council. Included on this bus trip were members of the Grand River Métis Council; The Toronto Métis Council; The Northumberland Métis Council; and, The Niagara Region Métis Council.

We travelled by bus from Oshawa to Rigaud, where Métis Elder, Archie Martin, hosted a sugar bush event that was very “habitant”. We entered the park on a large horse drawn wagon where we were met by an area Métis group. The Oshawa and Durham Métis Council had the Olivine Bousquet Métis Dance Troupe under the direction of Dance Master, Trina Lee LaVallee.

Many friends and family members came to visit. It was so wonderful to see Karole Dumont Beckett make the journey in from Ottawa to visit with us! Archie Martin had his tee pee up and entertained the crowd. Bob Stevenson came to join the party. The experience was very humbling, yet we had such a wonderful time. We danced, drummed, told stories and watched the dancers do their magic—not to mention the special treat of Alicia Blore and her fiddle. The spoons were a-flapping and the crowd was just having the best time! To end the evening we took some time to thank the Creator for the event and watched the fire burn into cinders before heading back to our hotel.

The next day we were off to Gatineau and the Museum of Civilization where we met President Pilon’s cousin, Jean Luc Pilon, who gave us an interesting view of our ancestors in the North West Exhibit.

I would travel again with these folks. We had an awesome time and did not lose anyone in the process! So now we are planning for Batoche: Who is coming? See you there!

Thanks for the memories.

Barbaranne Dominick Wright is the Women’s Representative / Genealogist for the Niagara Region Métis Council.
North Bay’s Métis spring celebration

by Brian Cockburn

10th is the Year of the Métis, but it is also the 15th anniversary of the North Bay Métis Centre, which was officially opened in March 1995. The centre serves as a place for Métis citizens to participate and to learn about the Métis culture. On May 15th, the centre was the site of a special event celebrating the 15th anniversary of the North Bay Métis Centre.

The event was officiated by Senator Marlene Greenwood, Mel Jamieson, and Lise Malette. The celebration began with a traditional aboriginal ceremony, which included a blessing of the land and a prayer. Following the ceremony, a children’s workshop was held, where participants learned how to make a rattle from beginning to end. The workshop was led by Tracy Dale, who demonstrated the art of making a rattle, and participants were given the opportunity to try their hand at the craft.

The workshop was followed by a feast, where participants enjoyed a variety of Métis cuisine, including bannock baked by Valerie Boese and maple syrup collected from a maple tree. An additional 300 maple trees were donated to the centre, and the ceremony ended with the ceremonial planting of a red maple tree.

In addition to the rattle workshop, the event included a variety of cultural displays and activities. The North Bay Mall had a booth set up, where participants could learn about the Métis culture and view samples of Métis beadwork. The AHWS and NRMC shared information about the Métis people, and the NIAGRA REGION METIS COUNCIL provided information about the activities of the council.

The event was a fun day for one and all, as everyone was immersed in the culture and traditions of the Métis people. The North Bay Métis Centre has become an important hub for Métis culture and community, and the 15th anniversary celebration was a fitting way to mark this milestone.

Honouring Earth

by Terry Lynn Longpre

As part of Welland’s fifth annual Earth Day celebration, the Métis community was asked by Paul Grenier, chairman of Welland City Council’s conservation committee, and a Métis citizen, to participate and share with the public its connection to the earth. The AHWS program and NRMC partnered for a day of homage to Mother Earth.
The event took place at Merritt Island and began with Clayton Latham and his brother James, who performed a traditional aboriginal smudging ceremony as the crowd gathered around. The weather was cold and rainy, but it did not deter any of us from paying our respects to Mother Earth and teaching our community about the Métis people.

At the end of the opening ceremony, James Latham dressed in full regalia presented his brother Clayton with an Eagle feather, a high honour and ultimate sign of respect in the aboriginal community. From there we all moved over to the Merritt Island trail for the ceremonial planting of a red maple tree. An additional 500 trees will be planted by student volunteers.
The AHWS and NRMC shared bannock baked by Valerie Boese (NRMC Councilor) with all participants. Barb Wright (Woman’s Rep and Genealogist) presented samples of Métis Beading—moccasins, gauntlets, furs, a beaded saddle pad, and smoked tanned beaded flower samples. AHWS created feathered key chains with the children and spent much time educating the community about the Métis. All in all it was a day of honour and respect for us all. Special thanks to Suzanne Matte and Valerie Boese for their great contribution and effort at this event. Terry Lynn Longpre is MNO Health’s Community Wellness Coordinator in Welland ON.

Arts & Crafts:

Shake, Rattle and Learn

by Tracy Dale • The Métis Nation of Ontario Bancroft office held a “rattle-making lunch and learn” on May 12th and 19th 2010. During this two-part workshop participants learned how to put together a rattle from beginning to end. One particip-

Materials Needed:

- Hide
- Pen
- Snow
- Needle
- Scissors
- Beading needle
- Water
- Paint
- Utility knive / hide
- Hot glue
- Punch
- Leather facing

Instructions:

Soak hide until you are able to cut it with scissors. Using a pen, trace 2 circles– a Circle works well for a pattern (approximately 6 inches in diameter). At the bottom of each circle add a small square, 1 inch squared (this will be where the handle goes at the end), ensure both circles are identical.

Cut out both circles. Place circles with smooth sides facing outwards. Using a hide punch or utility knife cut holes around the circle approximately 1/8 inch from the outside of the circle. Leaving 1/4 inch between each hole. DO NOT put holes on the square at the bottom. The holes only need to be large enough to fit a single piece of sinew.

Ensure while cutting holes that the hide doesn’t slip, check to see that both pieces have the holes matching up. Put some water on your hide to keep it damp. Any time you feel the hide is drying out, add a bit of water. Cut a piece of sinew long enough to stitch your rattle around the entire edge. If you choose to use fancy stitching to remember it takes more sinew and you need to allow for that. Using a hide needle (beading needles work well) thread the sinew, using the needle, single strand only.

Starting at the bottom hole closest to the square put your needle through the two pieces of hide and tie a knot in the sinew. Stitch your rattle all the way around the circle stopping at the last hole before the square. When you are finished tie a few knots to ensure the sinew is tight. You may make the stitching as fancy as you wish. Blanket stitching looks great or you can stitch the hide all the way around then start at the end and stitch back to the start and each stitch will look like a cross.

Place a small balloon in the square opening at the bottom of the stitched up circle leaving the end of the balloon stuck out just enough to blow it up.

Blow up the balloon until your rattle is the shape you like and tie the balloon in a knot. Ensure the rattle is still damp. Start painting both sides of the rattle. To help during painting put your rattle on a disposable cup to dry. Let rattle dry completely over night. When rattle is completely dry cut the end of the balloon off. Try not to let the balloon fall inside the rattle.

Add different beads, stones or other materials as you wish until you get the sound you like. Put a stick in the bottom of the rattle and then you can tighten the balloon, (NRMC Councillor) with all participants. Barb Wright (Woman’s Rep and Genealogist) presented samples of Métis Beading—moccasins, gauntlets, furs, a beaded saddle pad and smoked tanned beaded flower samples. AHWS created feathered key chains with the children and spent much time educating the community about the Métis. All in all it was a day of honour and respect for us all. Special thanks to Suzanne Matte and Valerie Boese for their great contribution and effort at this event. Terry Lynn Longpre is MNO Health’s Community Wellness Coordinator in Welland ON.
The re-enactors at Fort William Historical Park in Thunder Bay are called upon to portray Métis people, like Métis identity itself these performances are layered and complex.

LeGros explains, “is that we don’t know what they were thinking. We don’t know how they identified.” At this time period, there may not have been great incentive to self-identify, but the interactions were based on fur-trade ties. LeGros notes that the re-creation of characters is problematic because they are not represented in the fur-trade records. “We are torn between wanting to represent history and facing that they were real people.” Do these performances give agency to the characters that were there 200 years ago? Do they tell us more about how history can be used to understand current identity concerns?

LeGros’ reflective approach to understanding history suggests that interpreters take a critical stance towards interpreting the past and that they are also concerned with creating an authentic response in viewers, a “magic moment” in which they imagine they are in the past. She has studied this affective response in other cultural arenas. For example in Katherine Jackson’s work on a civil war re-enactment, she argues that affective responses to understanding history in a “realistic” role in understanding the “multiple authenticities” of history making is important.

How are Aboriginal people re-enacted at the fort? According to the re-enactors I interviewed, they do not portray “Métis” characters with a large “M,” but rather a small “m,” indicating that there are many Métis with different cultural identities. In 1815, Qewa and European origin in 1815 but they did not identify collectively as Métis from Western Canada. One reason for this could be that Métis in western Canada needed to align politically to have their voices heard as white settlers were encroaching on their lands. Great Lakes Métis were intermingled with other Aboriginal groups and fur-trade interpreters. It can also be remembered that many Métis were illiterate at this time and thus would not have written down any specifics on what they thought of themselves as Métis. Although the park does not state an understanding of what life was like for people of mixed heritage in the nineteenth century through the clothing the re-enactors wear and the stories told. Many visitors may have their own preconceptions and stigmatize people solely on the visual appearance of the re-enactors with their clothing and the way they carry themselves. In this way, they do perform a broad educational function and give agency to the presence of Métis. However, we need to think critically about what types of narratives are being privileged when we give an exclusive or unifying shape to our identity as Aboriginal people. How do concerns for a visitor-friendly approach of the site contribute to make the site appear more authentic?

As LeGros noted in her explanation, there is a fair amount of room for the imagination in her interpretation of Marguerite. In her words, she “tries to think like how her character would have thought. Although there is a degree of impossibility our aim is to promote living history and immerse the visitors. We make anecdotes using plausible history and a fair amount of creativity to make these things seem real. The visitor is interacting with a real person.” LeGros knows that this cannot replicate history, but can only try and reproduce and recreate it. “The primary difficulty,”
At The Cottage:

Peace of heaven, piece of mind

Cottage season is here! Remember, it is law in Ontario to have working alarms on each storey and outside all sleeping areas of your cottage, as it is in your home. Please check your local laws regarding carbon monoxide alarms. Fire Chiefs across cottage country want you to have ‘Peace of Mind at Your Piece of Heaven.’ Here are these five tips:

1) Change all smoke alarm batteries at least once a year;
2) Replace all smoke alarms over 10 years old;
3) If your cottage has a fire-place, or gas or propane appliances, install a Carbon Monoxide monitor;
4) Clean heating appliances and BBQs before use. Ensure all combustibles, as well as children and pets, are kept away while grilling;
5) Check with local authorities for restrictions on campfires or burning brush.

Visit www.safeathome.ca for further tips

BATOCHO, 1885

Rob Pilon remembers Métis ancestors--those who stood tall at Battle of Batoche

A child I spent many days walking around Batoche, reading the gravestones in the cemetery overlooking the South Saskatchewan River, checking out the bullet holes in the church where my father and other relatives were baptized over the generations, wandering through the fields around this historic settlement. At the time I didn’t know very much about the significance of this prairie landmark. I hadn’t learned yet about the fight at our people fought against the forces of Canada. And I didn’t know that many of my own ancestors had put their lives on the line during that fateful time in spring of 1885.

When I was six or seven my family visited my dad’s cousin, Placid Pilon; their farm was less than a mile from Batoche. At the time I met Placid’s elderly father, Louis Pilon; he sat in the dimly lit house with old photographs of other long gone relatives covering the walls. The old man gave us hard candies from a can. I still remember him handing them to us. What I didn’t know is that this same old man was alive during the Battle of Batoche. As noted in the paper “Women of the 1885 Resistance” by Lawrence J. Barkwell with this contribution from author Diane Payment, this man was a part of Métis history.

“Christine Pilon (nee Dumais) and most of the women and children had sought refuge in dugouts and tents down by the trenches, the advancing Government troops had burned their new home. She was cold, there was little food and after the debacle on May 12, she was forced to flee in the woods (Minatways Hill area) with her “bibs” (Louis, 19 months). She was with Mme Riel (who had been coughing blood for three days) and her two children. After days of hiding in the bush, they walked the 18 miles back to Batoche.”

Over the years I’ve learned more and more about other family members who played a role in the Resistance. These men and woman are part of the stories that for so long remained unspoken. As a child I would hear bits and pieces, but for the most part these stories were kept quiet by our elders, many of them probably lost over time.

I recently learned more about my great, great grandfather on my mother’s side, Gilbert Breland. As a child I would hear bits and pieces, but for the most part these stories were kept quiet by our elders, many of them probably lost over time.

When I return to Batoche this summer, to honour the memories of those who participated, and to reconnect with the descendents of other families who fought for our rights on the prairies of Saskatchewan, I am particularly proud to be Métis and to say that my family stood tall in the historic battle. For many generations this was not spoken about with pride, it was not spoken about at all. But in this, “The Year of the Métis”, it is time to take pride in all that our Métis ancestors did from coast to coast did to promote and preserve our culture and heritage.

Rob Pilon is the President of the Oshawa & Durham Region Métis Council.

“Mark a point in our collective history where the Métis stood up to the government of the day to fight for their land, for their families, for their place in our country.”

They mark a point in our collective history where the Métis stood up to the government of the day to fight for their land, for their families, for their place in our country.

Angelique and Joseph Pilon

Left to right: Gilbert and Félicité Breland

Visit www.safeathome.ca for further tips

BAR-B-QUE PORTOBELLO MUSHROOMS

4 Portobello mushrooms
4 slices of pineapple
1 medium zucchini
1 medium sweet onion
2 roasted red pepper
olive oil
dried basil
salt and pepper to taste
4 pieces of aluminium foil
(approximately 16 inches each)

On each piece of foil place your ingredients as follows: Brush olive oil on each cleaned mushroom and place mushroom flat side down on foil. On each mushroom now add 1 slice of pineapple, 2 slices of zucchini, 1 slice onion, and 1 piece of roasted red pepper. Sprinkle basil, salt and pepper to taste. Close foil and place on hot BBQ and cook for a half hour.

If you don’t like Portobello mushrooms, you can use ordinary large white mushrooms.
In remembrance Day is not just on November 11th. In fact, that day started as a memorial to the end of the Great War—“The War to End All Wars”. Despite a small country, Canada answered the call in the global conflicts of the First World War, the Second World War, and again in the Korean conflict. Like today, the Canadian Forces of that time found themselves in all corners of the world. After the wars, many former military personnel from the Commonwealth countries and from amongst our allies relocated to Canada and became part of Canada’s collective consciousness of “war heroes”. All too often we have been reminded of the sacrifices of the women and men of the Canadian Forces, when the tragic news of yet another death of a Canadian in faroff Afghanistan is spread across the news, photos shown, military press releases given and the privacy of grieving families violated. Canada has even held debates on whether or not to lower our national flag on the occasion of a soldier being killed.

Left behind on the battlefields of the world were Canada’s young men and women, those who made the ultimate sacrifice. In my travels I have had a chance to pay my respect to these fallen heroes. I have been to commonwealth war cemeteries throughout Europe and various sites in Canada. My Canadian involvement includes that of fallen police officers, especially those members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, a force I once served in.

In April I had the opportunity to pay my respect to the fallen of the Second World War in Thailand. I also visited the famous Bridge over the River Kwai and other such sites connected to the “Death Railway”. Kanchanaburi War Cemetery commemorates the 6,982 prisoners of war who died there.

My visit to the Kanchanaburi War Cemetery was not by luck; I did not stumble across this cemetery by chance. In fact, I started my quest to pay my respect months and months before I departed for Thailand. I knew of the existence of commonwealth war dead from reading history and from famous films such as “The Bridge on the River Kwai”. I even went out to buy a new DVD copy of this film to get a sense of what these individuals went through.

Like visiting commonwealth war graves in Europe one is immediately struck by the sheer number of tombstones. Interestingly, the markers in Thailand are very different from those found throughout Europe. I was looking for the grave marker of WOI Ernest Joseph Leonard Bolingbroke, a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force. I had obtained his name when I contacted the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in Ottawa. I was told he was the only known Canadian commemorated at Kanchanaburi. Private sources told me of another Canadian buried near the Bolingbroke grave marker, but that individual had served in a British unit.

Before I entered the Commonwealth War Cemetery in Kanchanaburi I paid a visit to the Death Railway Museum and Research Centre (Thailand-Burma Railway Centre), located outside of the cemetery. This private initiative was able to assist me by searching their database and records. They came up with a number of additional names and information about Canadians commemorated there and in fact Canadians killed in that conflict.

I took this new list and headed off to the main gate of the cemetery. I don’t have to say it but the Commonwealth War Graves Commission certainly meets and exceeds their mandate of keeping these sites in beautiful condition. They and local staff (groundskeepers etc) are to be commended on the care they take of the cemetery. I was indeed impressed as I entered the area and looked in confusion at the plot maps. Immediately one of the workers rushed over to help me locate the markers that I wished to see. When he found out I was Canadian he was able to direct me to all the grave markers spread out amongst the multitude of graves at this site.

I had come prepared. I had a small desk flag for WOI Bolingbroke, a bag full of poppies, a bag of small lapel flaps and a supply of tobacco for prayers and offerings. If you have never been to a war cemetery it would be hard to explain the feelings that come over you as you set foot on this sacred ground. The feeling of grief that hits you as you first view the thousands of grave markers is replaced with the feeling of calm from the serenity of the setting. One can’t but help but have combined feelings of sadness and pride for all those commemorated there. There are many Dutch in addition to the fallen commonwealth soldiers. History has told me of the many local forced labourers who perished building the “Death Railway”. These are buried where they fell.

There are two Commonwealth War Cemeteries in the Kanchanaburi area, both of which I had the opportunity to view. We can be proud of our men and women of the Canadian Forces, past and present, as we continuously answer the call to make this world a better place for all.

To know where we are going in life we must know where we came from. Our war dead are an integral part of the Canadian fabric; they must never be forgotten and their deeds need to be told and honoured. Their gallant efforts forged Canada into the nation it is. I remember them daily, not just on November 11th.

Shaun Redmond at Kanchanaburi Cemetery in Thailand.

## CANADIANS COMMEMORATED IN THAILAND:

- Ernest Bolingbroke (RCAF - shot down)
- Edward Crumley
- Norman Donal (executed after escape attempt)
- John Goodman
- Howard Hallett
- James McCracken
- Arthur Roberts
- Arthur Rycroft
- Percy True

Shaun Redmond visits Kanchanaburi Cemetery in Thailand.

VETERANS:

Called to serve

Metis veteran, Norman Horlock, says good-bye to his grandson, 19 year old Kyle Hardy, who left May 5th, 2010, for Afghanistan.
The dark wind blows on everyone sometime

by Michelle Goodeve

The dark wind blows on everyone sometime. I
right now need to find a safe, same place to go inside my head, not to run away from reality but to rest my shocked and swirling mind for a short while. It suddenly remembered someone asked me, “What was your favourite day barnstorming—bird?” For once the memory comes to my rescue immediately. The first passenger of the day is always special. I suppose it is the joy of remembering how a seemingly straightforward, 15 minute flight in a biplane can summon such aches of emotions. What appears to be a simple gift often has complex ramifications.

This particular morning a frigidity little girl, about three years old, waits in a long line of eager passengers. Occasionally, she deigns to hold on to her mother’s hand, but what this kid really needs is a leash. She has waited impatiently for almost an hour while the morning fog burns off and the biplanes are gassed-up. She looks a little lost in the crowd—no, not lost exactly, more annoyed to be way below everyone else’s eye line. I can identify.

As I in response to that thought I wiggle a bit to settle myself farther into the tower of mismatched cushions that allows me to see out of the cavernous, four-seat biplane. Inside the Thruston Jackaroo, affectionately dubbed T.J., I pick up the check list and begin. At last count, this determined woman a longer, more special flight. Tiredness vanishes.

I automatically glance over my right shoulder to check on my passenger just as she leans eagerly toward the canopy to get a clearer view of leaving earth.

Something in this slight movement urges me to give this determined woman a longer, more special flight. Tiredness vanishes.

The first passenger of the day is 93 and it takes three men to load her into the cabin of the human sedan chair. The woman is 93 and it takes three men to load her into the cabin of the human sedan chair. The woman is 93 and it takes three men to load her into the cabin of the human sedan chair. The woman is 93 and it takes three men to load her into the cabin of the human sedan chair. The woman is 93 and it takes three men to load her into the cabin of the human sedan chair.

I make sure my two passengers are secured and when I notice the apprehensive mom near the front of the line. I’m glad for the door in the ground, I ask T.J. to try and make sure, as one fellow loading passengers for me once commented, “Every one of your people comes back smiling.” This is the challenge that has been passed down through the decades since WW1, when barnstorming was a living and a way of life for so many disenchanted, war-weary pilots. It is part of the job as I was taught it, by those who were the real deal. I take it very seriously, and the ultimate goal is to let each passenger find the sky they dreamed it would be.

A fellow pilot might want a shot at the controls to get the feel of a unique bird. Some folks want to see their home from the sky or perhaps take in the Oz-like cityscape on the horizon. One teenage boy asked me to really “Let ‘er rip!” After he turned greenish after one falling leaf, I returned him to his buddies with bragging rights of surviving fantastic aerobatics. Another young guy on his first flight ever, was shocked enough to blurt out, “Hey there’s birds up here!” Some passengers want technical knowledge—one that perhaps could last a lifetime and can be trundled out of the dusty file cabinets in the brain whenever life gets too difficult to bear. What the heck. Why not set your goals high?

After T.J.’s run-up, I do a check circuit to feel out both sky and plane and make sure all is well. The wind is starting to pick up and it’s a little bumpy coming in over the trees, but otherwise everything is ticking over quite nicely. I taxi to the loading zone to pick up my first passengers.

Immediately my eyes meet those of the wiggly little girl and the apprehensive mom near the front of the line. I’m glad for the challenge. The girl’s glance is intense, inquisitive. I smile. She doesn’t. “What a tough little thing. I’ve got to fly this one.”

I give ‘the nod’ to my pilot friend Brian. He gets the girl and her mom and loads them into the two seats behind me. The mom seems terrified now; the kid is not—a curious combination. I go about setting them at ease. “There are the usual polite comments...”safer than driving...unique biplane...”and pleasant instructions—this is how to open/close doors/windows/seatbelts, what not to touch—then I stic the stick to show its breadth of movement. I make sure my two passengers are secured and when I notice the mom is beginning to sweat, I check she is still good to go. The mom glances at her fidgety daughter who is raring to go, then gives me an abrupt nod. Surprisingly, I check that a “barf bag” is within reach. I’ve never had a passenger sick yet and wouldn’t want to start the day that way. As we proceeded, I explain what is happening and what to expect, then T.J. is trundling down the runway and leaping into the sky. Once established on climb-out I turn and glance at my passengers to gauge how they are doing. The mom smiles bravely.

I look at the little girl, who is finally sitting still. She breaks into this huge grin and gives me a spontaneous ‘thumbs up!’ The gesture from such a tiny hand, with such unashamed joy, makes us all laugh out loud.

I head north over the lake. We are in luck, the dragon-boats are practicing their racing techniques. The ornate vessels are all primary colours with ours flashing over the grey-green waves of the man-made lake. I fly straight but not level, kind of sideways, right wings low and out of the way, so the short one in the back can see better. I know this is a moment she will not soon forget, nor will I for that matter, and that is part of the magic.

Back on the ground, I ask around but no one knows where a three-year-old girl learned to give me a ‘thumbs up!’ She must have picked it up on her own, maybe while she was watching us start the plane’s smart kid that one. She’ll go far.

The last passenger of the day. They bring her to me in a way that looks like a scene from an old Hollywood movie. A Nubian princess boistered high upon a human sedan chair. The woman is 93 and it takes three men to load her into the cabin of the
First Nations hoop dancing has become as familiar at the Calgary Stampede as chuckwagons and sheep shearing. What is this popular and culturally inspiring Indian Village or the travelling Stampede company that has grown to love this beautiful, story-telling dance and the native men and women that grace us with their skill.

Sixteen-year-old Christian Hazell is Métis (meaning part First Nations and part European heritage), and an extremely skilled hoop dancer. He knows all about the demonstrations that occur every summer during Stampede.

In fact, back in 2006 Christian appeared as one of the feature acts in the famous Grandstand Show, every evening delighting audiences with his amazing showmanship and flair.

Last month, though, marked a milestone for Christian. He and his 14-year-old sister, Chantika, also a talented hoop dancer, traveled to Phoenix, Ariz., for the 20th annual World Championshio Hoop Dancing competition.

Christian has been competing in this particular competition for six years now. Chantika for five years, and both have come in the top 10 every time.

However, this year, this brother and sister duo achieved a personal best. Christian took the first place trophy in the teen category and Chantika for five years, and both have come in the top 10 every time.

“My kids don’t like being told ‘no.’ They have stuck with it through all the difficult times and have really had to work a lot harder because they are Metis,” Ginette says.

“If I was them, I would have given up a long time ago. It must be hard having people tell you that you shouldn’t be doing something. But they didn’t give up. Christian was the first Métis person to win the competition. It was a really proud moment.”

Being there to revel in their achievements at the competition were Christian and Chantika’s 78-year-old grandparents, who have always been an influential force in their hoop dancing.

With all the shows and demonstrations that Christian and Chantika, as well as their 11-year-old brother Freddie (who performs with them), have really had to work a lot harder because they are Metis, Chantika Spirit Dance), have performed around North America, their grandparents have only missed two.

“It means a lot to them,” says Ginette. “They love that the kids are carrying on a family tradition.”

“I really want to honour my native culture,” says Christian. “And it means a lot to my grandparents. They spoil me and love me a lot.”

These two youth have definitely achieved enough in their young lives to make their grandparent proud.

Besides their personal ‘never give up’ motto and their recent World Championship achievements, they have a number of other accomplishments when it comes to their dancing careers.

They together won the Calgary Stampede Legacy Award in 2009, and then have separately won the Youth Optimist Award, and in 2005, Christian won the Alberta Centennial Medallion.

They have danced for both Premier Ed Stelmach and former Premier Ralph Klein, and in addition to their dancing are both honours students in school.

All of the above experiencing a certain amount of discrimination with their dancing, they now support the Catholic and Public schools anti-bullying program and have visited between 30-40 schools in the city where they give a hoop dancing demonstration and then do an educational talk with the kids about the Métis and First Nations cultures and the history behind hoop dancing.

“My kids don’t like being told ‘no’,” says Christian. “I’ve had to keep going through hardships but my love for dance is what kept me going. When I dance, it makes it all better, and that is why I keep doing it.”

Christian and Chantika plan to keep going.

“I want to do dance until I can’t dance anymore,” says Christian. “I want to make a career out of it.”

Christian, who admits to being really competitive with her big brother, just wants to win.

“I’m going to keep going until I win first place in the World Championship. When Christian started getting good, I knew I had to go in last time,” she chuckles.

“But dance does make me feel really good. I love it.”

This story was purchased for reprint by the world’s most dominant haunt. Image Factory. It originally appeared in the Calgary Herald, Thu, Mar 18 2010.

By Yans Doyle

The Last Three Years

by Bobbi Aubin

I t is with regret and sadness, yet good memories, that I write these letters. I had the opportunity to work with the Métis Nation of Ontario occurred in 1998, when I applied for Métis citizenship through the Sudbury Métis Council which was housed at Georgian College.

I was the “new kid on the block,” not having known nor experienced any of my roots or culture until then. Having just graduated from the Addictions Worker Program at the Ontario Business College I entered my enrolment in the Native Child and Family Worker Program at Cambrian College, which afforded me the opportunity to learn about my Métis roots and make me realize that I do actually belong somewhere.

“Give me the opportunity to work and meet so many wonderful people in both the Health and Education branches.”

I then pursued another diploma in the Child and Youth Worker Program at Cambrian. All of these courses led me on various paths within the work force, including different areas such as special needs, at-risk youth, therapeutic group work, crisis intervention counseling, and generally working with youth from the special needs branches.

I was honored when I was chosen by the MNO to be Sudbury’s Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Coordinator back in February, 2007. Six months later, the Families Learning Home Community, and the Healthy Children Coordinator back in February, 2007. Six months later, the Families Learning Home Community, and the

Métis Nation of Ontario Training | Success Stories

Student achieves goal

by Hollis McPhee

In the spring of 2008, I graduated with my Honours B.A. in English Language and Literature from the University. I applied to the Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) program at the University of Western Ontario. Despite being accepted into the program, I had little hope of attending because of financial restraints.

At this time, I learned of the Training Purchases program offered by the Métis Nation of Ontario from my cousin, Mary Beth Brooks. Mary Beth had recently graduated from the University of Western Ontario’s Teachers College with financial support provided by the MNO.

With help from Kathleen Lanigan, I successfully applied for and received the MNO’s financial aid. As a result, I was able to accept my offer of admittance into the MLIS program. In September 2008, I began my studies at Western. My goal after graduating was to work in a library as a professional librarian.

My studies lasted for 16 months. I was able to gain employment as a library technician with the Niagara Catholic District School Board. Four months before graduating, I graduated from the University of Western Ontario in February 2010. I have been working as a library technician for eight months. Without the support of the Métis Nation of Ontario, I would not have been able to achieve my dream of working in the library and information field!

“Without the support of the MNO, I would not have been able to achieve my dream.”

∞

Share This...
Helen Viner was born in Sheffield Mills, Kings County, Nova Scotia in the early forties. The family moved from there to Gibson Woods, also in Kings County, where she and her family lived until she was 11 years old. From there the family moved to Canning, Kings County, which was an all Caucasian community, and this was where all the hatred started. She lived there with her family until she was 17 years old when, unable to take it any longer, she convinced her parents to let her go and live with her eldest sister in Halifax.

Living in Canning was the tragic time of her life. She had no friends and was very lonely. For those six years she encountered name calling, throwing of rocks and stares of hatred. Although only a young child, she endured an enormous amount of racism.

When Helen moved to Halifax all of that was gone. She lived in Halifax for 29 years; got married; had three children--two girls and one boy. Divorced with eight grandchildren, Helen went back to Kings County to live in the year 2000 and to find out if anything had changed. She felt that nothing was different. She still encountered name calling—though not to her face—and the stares of hatred were still there. She remained for five years, until, again, she could take no more.

Helen moved to Mississauga and lived with her son and his family. When she turned 65 she decided she wanted to do something for her family so they would have something to remember her by. It was in her son’s kitchen looking out of the patio doors that an idea came into her mind. First, she thought, “I can’t do this; I can’t write.” But as the days went by it was on her mind and she wondered what she would write about. She thought back to when she was a child and how poor they were, and things just kept flowing into her mind. She decided she would write a poem and call it, “Poor Little Country Girl”. That was her first poem. After that, everything just started coming back to her. She might be at the dinner table, on the bus, out walking, in the grocery store or the mall. She had to carry a pencil and paper with her at all times to write down the things that she recalled. This went on for months. The pages were piling up, and that is when she decided to write a story in verse about her life. She contacted various publishers on the Internet but chose authorhouse.com because they gave her the best deal as a self-publisher.

Helen plans to write children’s books in the future.

Métis writer tells life story in poetic-form with reference to heritage, the Canadian poor, the government, what is going on in the world today and what we take for granted...

The Life & Times of Helen Viner Doyle
(Her first poem)

My People
The Forgotten Ones
by Helen Viner Doyle

They have been here for five generations and are struggling but still going strong.

It is the government that is doing them wrong. I look everywhere there is not one to be seen. I think that is very mean.

The government places them in remote parts of the country where nothing can survive. They have no running water or toilet facilities. They are always shutting the door to my people’s faces. My people are in despair. We need your help not tomorrow but today. At this moment it is all I can say.
But she's only 13

A parent or caregiver should consider the following steps when their youth under age of 16 years, runs away or has gone missing from home:

by Louise Logue

Every day, parents and caregivers reach out for help as they try to understand situations involving their teen-aged children find themselves in. For example, last evening at 10 p.m., Mrs. Bee, who claimed to have received a call from Mrs. B. who tearfully reported that her daughter was not spending much time at home and her safety assured.

Mrs. Bee had no idea who these boys were. They were not spending much time at home or has gone missing from home:

Start a record of all the steps that will be taken--that is to say, start a journal of actions you will be taking as you attempt to locate your child. The journal will prove helpful in being able to review all the steps you took in locating your youth. Once you have the opportunity to locate the child, child make better choices once located. Call as many other parents of your youth's friends as possible and let them know that you are looking for your daughter or son, because kids will often stay at a friend's place by telling the parents that they have the parents' permission to sleep over when that is not the case. Once you have made all the calls to other parents, and have looked or called at local "hang out" places that you know your youth frequents, call the local police to report your child as a "missing person" under the age of 16 years. Be sure to record all of these actions in your journal.

Work with local police to help locate the youth. The police officers will have suggestions for you to divulge in finding your son or daughter and bringing them back home safely.

Once located, ensure your youth's safety and allow some time before confronting them about their overall behaviour. Be sure that they are safe and medical attention is not required before starting the other intervention. This may require a medical check-up at the hospital or doctor's office, depending on the situation, especially if they are impaired by drugs or alcohol. Other questions you will want to explore could include: Did they engage in sexual activity while away from home? Do they require a blood test to rule out sexually transmitted diseases/infections?

"Prevention starts at home and every child deserves a caring and concerned parent!"

We were they assaulted or abused in any manner?

If you have the opportunity to speak with them, remain calm and share your concerns and your expectations. Seek the assistance of a professional counsellor or Elder if need be.

Remember that it is normal for youth to want to be out with friends and even to engage in some risk-taking activity. However, as a parent you have both the right and the responsibility to know where your kids are at all times and also to intervene when they are making dangerous poor choices.

Locate your home and every child deserves a caring and concerned parent!

Louise Logue RN, invites individuals to send questions to her at louise

oguer@bomail.com. All questions will be answered directly and confidentially via return email.
MÉTIS WRITERS

Slow rivers & whitewater
Ottawa writer tells a story of mental illness and healing

BOOK REVIEW:
RIDING THE TIDES OF LIFE
by Raymond D. Tremblay

by Chris Paci

P

t and author Raymond Tremblay has a way of spinning a tale, but you will have to ask him how closely his art imitates life.

In his first novel, “Riding the Tides of Life”, one of his characters comments, “it’s an easy read and right on target” (120), and that pretty much sums up my thoughts on his book.

It was the end of winter when I received an email from this MNO citizen, requesting I review his book for The Métis Voyageur. I don’t normally review fiction, but Raymond offered me a unique opportunity and it is important to accept those with humility. What made this assignment so interesting was that it was new fiction written by a Métis, a story set in Ottawa. I couldn’t resist the read and neither should you.

Unlike John Ralston Saul, who inaccurately mused that Canada was a Métis civilization, author Raymond Tremblay writes from Métis experience and the difference between these two writers does not end there. Without a doubt Canada is a country of many different cultures, some of which have come together, but more important we are a people shaped by our relationships to one another in the most beautiful place on earth. We become part of this land the first time we set foot on it, and that pretty much sums up my thoughts on his book. Greta’s fall and healing may not end there. Without a doubt Canada is a country of many different cultures, some of which have come together, but more important we are a people shaped by our relationships to one another in the most beautiful place on earth. We become part of this land the first time we set foot on it.

The book opens with Greta Ludwig, the main character, a young apparently successful Ontario Métis woman, canoeing in the early morning hours. Tremblay provides enough material to give Greta substance and I connected with her as I would with a friend. Ludwig's brother Hans, best friend Julie and Mary, the manager of her book store, fill out the main characters, until eventually a host of mental health professionals and a love interest enter as the story matures. The character “Julie” is a particularly interesting one in that she speaks both French and English, often in the same sentence. I found the dialogue between characters at the start of the book kind of choppy and somewhat predictable. A dozen pages in there are dark clouds of drug and alcohol abuse and loss of control, a manic breakdown looming on the horizon. The story is perhaps a familiar one to some, success leading to failure and struggle, but will there be redemption?

By page 65, Chapter 18, I began to think this was a case study for mental health and recovery, but like a car accident, I couldn’t take my eyes from, the story kept pulling me along. Seamlessly, the dialogue between the characters in the book became less predictable, more compelling and engaging. Tremblay had me hooked. I am not a sentimental reader, but the story is captivating. I won’t give away the ending of the book. Greta’s fall and healing may bring her to a deeper understanding of her place in the universe, or she might relapse and spiral out of control into the abyss. You will have to read the book to find out which path she takes. Raymond Tremblay offers an insightful read, an interesting and compelling book that will be of interest to students of mental health and addictions, social workers, MNO citizens, and to those looking for a great summer read.

WHERE TO BUY?
“Riding the Tides of Life”, can be purchased for $24 in Ottawa at the Teatine (33 York St.); Books on Beechwood (35 Beechwood Ave.); Yaddi Art Gallery (55 Byward St.); or directly from Raymond Tremblay by calling 613-746-9926 or by sending an e-mail: wei-min@sympatico.ca.

Special Presentations by the Métis Fiddler Quartet, Alicia Bore,
Jaime Koebel, Pauline Huipie, Daryle Gardipy, Marg Raynor, & La Famille Lefaive

Métis Nation of Ontario

Métis Day
Bo’jou Neejee
Saturday August 7
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Discovery Harbour
Pentanguishene

Celebrate the dynamic culture of the Métis People, and learn the compelling story of the relocation of Métis and British Forces from Drummond Island to today’s Discovery Harbour. Music, juggling, Métis crafts, hands-on activities, special Education group Kakwa games for children, and much more!

Info: (705) 549-8064
www.discoveryharbour.on.ca

Métis Voyageur • Summer 2010 17
A dark wind blows on everyone sometime

continued page 13

biplane. Her facial expression remains stone, despite the obvious pain these maculations cause her limbs. Even though this long, thin body is frail, the woman seems unusually lucid. This is a woman who must have been formidable in her prime and who, in her later years, retains her stoic gaze and commanding stature.

We speak little. My own body is finally feeling the effects of a long windy day of hopping passengers, and the elderly woman seated beside me seems content to be focusing inward, on a world of promises which live only in her mind. I think this one will be a quick, easy flight then back down to wipe T.J. clean of splattered oil and then maybe a treat—a glass of good scotch. Sounds great!

Then she’s dropped, so the take-off is a simple transition from the ground to air as smooth as silk. I automatically glance over my right shoulder to check on my passenger just as she leans eagerly toward the canopy to get a clearer view of the leaving earth. Something in this slight movement urges me to give this determined woman a longer, more special flight. Tiredness vanishes. That scotch will have to wait.

We head east toward the winding river. I keep T.J. low and tight so we will be flying towards the sun as it goes down.

Remarkably, the sunset colors the horizon into a stunning spectrum of deep yellows and oranges. The ruins of an old mill set on the meandering shoreline now show up as silvery blond stones flashing an array of colours. This once-magnificent, feudal-styled château still stands, but still beautiful—like my passenger. The water beneath us sparkles like a mica, a magic shadow, and sun passage over our four wings takes our breath away. I glance at my passenger to see if she gets it, to see if this beauty is having the same effect on her. The woman’s gnarled hands are primly folded in her lap yet her whole body leans, years toward the magnificent view. On her face, I find a gentle smile creasing those steely eyes, which seem softer now. Her broken body is finally as free and as beautiful as her vigorous mind. Calmness settles over both of us. ‘Together we know this is a perfect moment and our minds’ eyes are greedy for the slightest detail. Effortless movement, floating above all troubles and pain, is an ideal ending for this long, thin body.’

When we land her solicitous sister immediately come for her. I turn off the biplane and she suddenly grasps my hand and stares out of the biplane she suddenly grabbed my hand and stares meaningfully into my eyes for what seems an eternity.

Then she is gone.

Later, I learn this same woman had made the arduous journey to fly with us the year before but was physically unable. And this year, fearing the worst for her allotted time she decided to arise despite all. For some reason, I wish I had learned her name.

Then it dawns on me that my first and last passengers of the day have ninety years between them; one existence just beginning, the other soon to end. This is the circle of life, cradled by four wings.

The memory of one of my best days revives me and gives me strength. I will now lift my head to face the so-called ‘real’ world.

I’ve just found out that my nephew, Greg Goodeve, has been murdered.

Murder. Not a word one uses in everyday parlance. A word more often used for bad television and cheap detective novels than reality. Greg, “the Gentle Giant” of our family, was cut down in his prime by the soft, yet violent hands that once loved him. It is a thought that can barely be grasped.

My hyper-active mind has always been predisposed to randomly replay the worst unbidden moments in life while burying deep the memories of the best of times. It is a distressing fact that I have never been able to control this tendency. But I choose to let the shocking images of Greg’s last moments be how I remember him and his half-life. Every time my mind’s eye is closed by the shadow, his soft expression while cradling a baby the same size as one of his huge hands, the intelligence of expression while he attends to our conversations. I will be ready.

The shock of his loss will help me teach to choose what memories I recall and when, whether it be the best of days while haranguing or his smiling face. Greg will now stand for me as ‘The Bearer of Good Memories’ and he will be with me always—less than he deserves and all that I know how to give.

For each of us who loved Greg, the gifts he proffers on leaving will be different. But it has already been discovered that his real legacy will be to draw closer those he has left behind.


Michelle Goudere is a citizen of the Be MNO, and co-founder of Whynot.

Kayaking the Credit River

by Judy Moreau

The Credit River is a new business venture called Kayak the Credit. It is family owned and operated. It was my brother Grant’s brain child. Grant’s idea came from his love of the outdoors along with his love of family and kids. I’m not sure if it’s to keep himself young or his family close. Either way, it works.

Kayak the Credit’s mission is to bring families closer together through adventure, teamwork and of course, enjoying all the outdoors has to offer. While on a guided kayak trip starting in Brampton, we teach beginners how to handle the kayak themselves as well as sharing how the Credit River got its name, how the land was shared and respected, why the Mississaugas of the New Credit left this area, and naturally, a few Michif words.

We have made this kayak trip quite affordable ($60.00 includes, lesson, kayak, paddle, helmet, personal flotation device, river trip guide and a courtesy shuttle). Kayak the Credit would like as many people as possible to experience the same thrill, challenge and excitement as many First Nations people did heading down the river with their pets, not that long ago.

Please come out and join us at Kayak the Credit and enjoy an awesome experience you will not forget. We hope to become another Métis success story. See you out on the river!

To book your adventure or for more info contact Judy at kayakthecredit@hotmail.com or 416-809-6519.

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SAULT STE MARIE | SAULT COLLEGE SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH MNO

Opportunities for Métis

SAULT COLLEGE becomes the seventh Ontario post-secondary institution to recognize and address the unique needs of Métis and to agree to work in partnership with the Métis Nation of Ontario.

SAULT COLLEGE, April 28, 2010: The Métis Nation of Ontario and Sault College have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in recognition of the unique education needs of the Métis people. The MOU, signed on April 28th, is a formal process that allows for the identification of potential opportunities and partnerships to address the unique labour market needs of Métis people in the province.

President Gary Lipinski said. “This is the sixth MOU signed by the Métis Nation of Ontario and Laurentian University, reinforcing their joint commitment to address the unique educational needs of the Métis people in Ontario. This agreement represents a new level of collaboration and partnership, and it too, will help to ensure the unique education needs of the Métis in Ontario are met.” President Gary Lipinski.

The MOU signed today will support the ongoing evolution of and public awareness about the Métis in Ontario because it will lead to new research and funding partnerships for the Métis Nation of Ontario,” said President Gary Lipinski. “This is the sixth MOU between MNO and a post-secondary institution in the province and it too, will help to ensure the unique education needs of the Métis in Ontario are met.”

Dr. Ron Common, President of Laurentian University, added. “These partnerships, with colleges and universities across the province also support similar MOUs previously signed between the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and the MNO.”

The Métis Nation of Ontario and Laurentian University have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) last April.

The MOU signed today will help to ensure the unique education needs of the Métis in Ontario because it will lead to new research and funding partnerships for the Métis Nation of Ontario. It will also help to ensure the unique education needs of the Métis in Ontario are met. This too will support the postsecondary education sector in northern Ontario and are actively partnering with key institutions like Laurentian.”

Chair Picotte said. “I am also excited about the targeted scholarships and bursaries that will be available to Métis students as a result of this MOU,” she said. “This too will support the university’s goal of becoming the ‘university of choice’ especially for Métis students pursuing post-secondary studies in the north.”

CONTACT: Chris Paci, Métis Nation of Ontario chrisp@metisnation.org Tel: (613) 798-1488, ext.118 or Chris Mercer, Laurentian University cmercer@laurentian.ca Tel: (705) 673-6566

SAUDIE E slim Education

Métis Education

Maanjidowin Pow Wow and Métis Rendezvous July 17, 18, 2010 J.C. Saddington Park

Heritage Mississauga, in conjunction with the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, the Credit River Métis Council and the Region of Peel, will celebrate Maanjidowin (Ojibwa for “the gathering”). From sunrise to sunset the sounds of our aboriginal history will come alive.

Drummers, fliddlers, Dancers, Jiggers, Throat Singers and Heritage Re-enactors will entertain, while Elders share teachings and stories of the past. This event is for everyone. Experience our early history first hand at workshops, demonstrations and community booths. Foods such as Venison Sausage, Bison Burgers and Strawberry sauce will be enjoyed as we share these two days of Aboriginal celebration.

FREE ADMISSION!

Sat. July 17th begins with a Sunrise Ceremony at 6:30am and continues to 9:00pm
Sun. July 18th begins at 10am ending at 6pm

Event Sponsors

For more information please contact Heritage Mississauga at 9121 Dundas St, W, Mississauga, ON L5W 1A2 Tel: (905) 825 4243 Fax: 825 5066 info@heritagemississauga.com www.heritagemississauga.com

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION MILESTONE: MNO signs agreement with Laurentian University

SUDBURY, ON-April 21, 2010: The Métis Nation of Ontario and Laurentian University have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) reinforcing their joint commitment to address the unique educational needs of the Métis people in Ontario.

“This MOU signed today will support the ongoing evolution of and public awareness about the Métis in Ontario because it will lead to new research and funding partnerships for the Métis Nation of Ontario,” said President Gary Lipinski. “This is the sixth MOU between MNO and a post-secondary institution in the province and it too, will help to ensure the unique education needs of the Métis in Ontario are met.”

Dr. Ron Common, President of Laurentian University, added. “These partnerships, with colleges and universities across the province also support similar MOUs previously signed between the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and the MNO.”
The Knowledge Canoe

by Chris Paci

France Picotte and President
Gary Lipinski agree that the Mêtis Educators Boot Camp is a great idea. Thanks to the generous financial assistance of the Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Mêtis and Non-Status Indians, MNO Education and Training Branch is planning two Mêtis education Boot Camps for 2010. The first camp is planned to take place in August for 2010. The second camp will be to have graduates of the initial boot camp lead sessions on everything from Métis culture, story-telling, environmental knowledge, and history.

The Knowledge Canoe

THE KNOWLEDGE CANOE: Artist and canoe-builder, Marcel Labelle, made this canoe to present to Elder William Commanda. “Cedar teaches us balance. For every branch growing above there is a root growing inside.”

Well known Métis canoe builder and artist, Marcel Labelle, was recently asked by Willis College to provide artwork for a scholarship being named after Grandfather William Commanda. “Because this artwork is for the Dr. William Commanda Scholarship which is received by Aboriginal students to learn an environmentally based education, I felt it appropriate to use the bark from a specific tree. The birch bark used comes from the same tree used to make a canoe that will be used to teach the Ojibway language (Anishinaabe-mowin). We decided not to include any symbols or words on the canoe to demonstrate that the canoe speaks Anishinaabe culture on its own.”

“the root used to secure the piece of bark that represents the sky seen from Mother Earth is attached to the tree trunk to remind the recipients of this scholarship where they come from—remind them of their own Anishinaabe roots.”

“the piece of birch wood used to represent the sky around our planet is a very special one. A few years ago while searching my backyard (50 km by 80 km of Algonquin uncultivated land) I came upon a tree that had just been hit by the first thunderstorm of the year. The bark was still good. It is the one I used to build “Nimki”, a full sized canoe donated to the Grand River Community Métis Council. Nimki has been instrumental in creating a Métis community that had once been forced underground.

“When one looks at the piece’s backside, which has been treated with bear grease to enhance the markings, the centre represents Mother Earth. If you count the yearly rings from the outside you can see what looks like a meteorite on or about nine decades ago—about the same time that Grandfather William Commanda’s spirit came to Mother Earth.”

Fellow artist, Del H. Ashkewe, described his contribution. “The turtle itself is a hybrid composed of a sea turtle and a land turtle. The three central hexagonal plates depicted on the turtle’s back represent the sea, earth, and sky. The 13 moons and 26 days represent the continuity of women indicating the 13 moons and 26 days represent the continuity of women indicating the monthly cycle.”

“The scholarship will be awarded annually to eleven Aboriginal students from across Canada who would otherwise not have the opportunity to obtain the career-oriented education provided at Willis College. The scholarship will accommodate one Aboriginal person, per location, to take one program in clean energy or business valued at $10,000. The scholarship provides tuition and book cost for one year program at Willis College. The student may select courses from the curriculum offered at the time of selection. Students will also be able to choose which Willis College locations they wish to attend. The award process will take place annually in Ottawa with many prominent individuals involved on the scholarship board of trustees. Students of First Nations, Métis or Inuit heritage will be chosen based on academics and community involvement along with other criteria. Interested candidates must apply to: 95 O’Connor Street Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5M6 Tel: (613) 233-1128 Toll free: 1-877-233-1128 Willis College of Business, Health, & Technology was established in 1966 and specializes in accredited adult college education. Students may take individual courses to upgrade their skills or enroll in a full career program that leads them to jobs in the clean-energy and business sector.”

CONTACT
Chris Paci, chrisp@metisnation.org
To register contact: Guyline Mosi-Cleroux gmosi@metisnation.org
Both can be reached by phone 1-800-263-4889
**Fort Frances food program**

by Charmaine Langis

Through the Healthy Living Food Box Program, the Fort Frances Métis Council welcomes an average of 80 volunteers each month. The Healthy Living Food Box Program began in November of 2007 with an optimum of 40 boxes. Currently, there is an average of 530 boxes per month with the highest recorded month being 875 boxes. The total number of boxes filled with fresh produce and distributed to date is 18,705. The Healthy Living Food Box Program is made possible through partnerships between Sunset Country Métis, Gich-e-waadiziwin Health Access Center, Northwestern Health Unit and Valley Diabetes.

Volunteer opportunities can offer an escape from everyday routine and create balance in our lives. Some reasons the volunteers lend a hand include adding volunteer work to resumes, being a part of the community, meeting new people, learning a new skill, making a difference, and just having fun. To show appreciation, we have monthly draws, quarterly breakfasts/hunches, spotlight a volunteer in the newsletter, and give credit where it’s due.

We have noticed the Healthy Living Food Box volunteers take ownership and pride in the impact their efforts have made. Each month, a diverse range of people is brought together for one reason: to help others—to have an impact on another’s well-being. High school students, 4H groups, hockey teams, seniors and volunteers are just a few examples of the many types of helpers.

As the program grows, so does the reputation of all involved within the community. The volunteers’ work ensures that programs run smoothly. Over 500 food boxes can be packed in less than two hours.

Our Senator, Gordon Calder, drives recognition as our most versatile volunteer. Gord arrives before any of us to shovel the walk and turn up the heat throughout the winter months. He delivers our mail, helps with program activities; celebrates the Christmas tree and consistently delivers Chef’s fresh banana bread or tasty peanut butter cookies. Senator Calder contends with everything in a cheerful and optimistic manner, no matter the task at hand. Thank you to all the volunteers for making our community just that much better.

You must give some time to your fellow men. Even if it’s a little thing, do something for others—something for which you get no pay but the privilege of doing it.”

— ALBERT SCHWITZER

1875 – 1965

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∞

**Timmins Métis represented at Northern College powwow**

by Jessica Cameron

The Health Team from the MNO Timmins site had a blast at the powwow at the Northern College, the weekend of April 10th.

The emcee of the powwow reported that there were actually a couple thousand people coming and going and participating in the many cultural activities throughout the weekend.

There were many people from across Ontario and Quebec with their booths of crafts and different traditions, and also a variety of service providers and Aboriginal committees with booths to educate our community.

I would like to brag that the most attractive booth there, wouldn’t you agree, was the Timmins Métis Nation of Ontario? Decorated to the max, with ballons for the children, and draws for all ages, many people said, “It’s great to see the Métis taking part in such an event.” When the drumming was over, you could hear the fiddles and see the jigging taking place at the Métis booth.

We represented our culture and educated the people who took part in the powwow. Many people left with knowledge that they were seeking about the Métis culture. What’s the difference throughout Canada? Why do you wear a sash? Why are you doing the jig? How do I find out? As a worker at the Métis Nation of Ontario, I feel feeling proud of the Métis culture and everyone who takes part, and stands up for their traditions. How many of those thousands of people learned what “Métis” is? Enough to feel like we made a difference!

Jessica Cameron is the MNO’s Community Wellness Coordinator in Timmins.

**MNO health staff host youth workshops in Renfrew**

by Shannon Davis

The flowers are blooming, the smell of fresh cut grass is in the air and the birds are chirping. It’s summer—a time of growth and renewal.

The beautiful weather encourages our youth to venture out and socialize. They develop new relationships, some of which are intimate. With that in mind, the Renfrew site decided to hold a “Healthy Sexuality” presentation and a “Self Esteem” presentation.

These topics were chosen to help educate our youth in making healthy choices for their physical, spiritual, emotional and mental wellbeing. There was a big turnout; people were talking to one another and appeared to have gained a fair amount of knowledge.

Now that summer and hot weather are at our doorstep we are looking forward to seeing more of the community.

Shannon Davis is MNO Health’s Community Wellness Coordinator in Renfrew.
and not another person. I feel so
me to live my life through “me”
respect and love. My voice helps
awareness, to learn to trust my
was to find my voice."

I have begun to make this change,
given myself what I needed. I
need or what would be best for
of what could be and of the
age and the subsequent doors
used to find our voice.

There is a difference in hav-
using a sense of control and hav-
control. I used to do things to
influenced the decision and

There are many things I have
derived from my voice. Recognising I make
my values and beliefs, experi-
ment in the future decisions I have made.
I realized I always had a
what the future decisions I have made
influenced the decision and

with each passing day, each new
gain a more confident voice
is the continued roast of life. I
think of the people around
knowledge to get a better under-
future and have a voice in the

my values and beliefs, experi-
and find my
life mapping
journey of
self-discovery.

"Life mapping is a journey of
self-discovery. It allowed me to
look at my past; confront my
fears and weaknesses, and
find my strengths."
MNO health staff host “Holistic Day” in Welland

by Terry Lynn Longpre

A

boriginal people are at high
risk for type 2 diabetes. The
• Traditional lifestyle of Aborigi-

nal peoples was active and
included healthy foods. Today,
lifestyles have changed—people
are not as active and eat less
healthy food.

On May 11, Welland AHWS
partnered with SOADI to host an
“Holistic Day of Foot care”. Guests
were treated to nutritious
food, foot care examination by
a certified chiropodist, reflex-
ology treatment, a sharing circle,
self foot care, diabetes resources
and educational materials to take
take home. It was a highly successful
day of learning and treatment for
26 clients in need.

Type 2 diabetes is when your
body does not make enough
insulin to use the sugar in food as
energy. Type 2 diabetes is when
your body can’t use insulin effec-
tively to control blood sugar.

“Holistic Day” participants.

WELLAND HEALTH OFFICE:

left to right: Members of the SOADI Team: Kathleen, Ashley and Linsay.

DIABETES RISK FACTORS:

• Over 40 years old
• Overweight
• High blood pressure
• A parent, brother or sister with diabetes
• Had a baby weight over 9 lbs or had gestational diabetes while pregnant.

If you have any of these warn-
ing signs see your health care provider or the Canadian Dia-
abetes Association.

MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

Congratulations to the Fos-
ter Family from Bancroft
Ontario who won the
Nintendo Wii. This family is ded-
icated to staying active. I can see
on a regular basis how much fun
they have “Making Tracks”
together. It pays to be active!

Physical activity improves
health and well-being. It reduces
stress, strengthens the heart and
lungs, increases energy levels,
helps you maintain and achieve a
healthy body weight and it
improves your outlook on life.

Research shows that physical
inactivity can cause premature
death, chronic disease and dis-
ability. Health Canada encour-
ages Canadians to integrate phys-
ical activity into their everyday
life. At home, at school, at work,
at play and on the way—that’s
active living!

Keep watch for the new “Learning through arts program” that is being offered through the CAP program.

Smoothee Wednesdays have been a great success! Learn how to make healthy smoothies and other creative ways to eat healthy.

Amanda Cox is MNO Health’s
Community Action Program Coordinator in Bancroft. She can be reached at 613-552-2573.

ABORIGINAL DIABETES EDUCATION PROJECT | MNO Health staff

Diabetes prevention project

by Shelley Gonneville

A

s Aboriginal Diabetes Edu-
cation Project Coordinator
I am pleased to report that
the Aboriginal Diabetes Edu-
cation Health Research Project
(2009/10) (ABDEP 2009/10)
was an overwhelming success.

A total of 645 people partici-
pated in this Ministry of Health
and Long Term Care (MHLTC)
funded project far exceeding
the anticipated 500 participants.
This initiative included visits in Oc-
tober, November and January in
Bancroft, Chapleau, Cochrane,
Dryden, Fort Frances, Kenora,
North Bay, Midland, Ontario, Sault
Ste. Marie, Sudbury, Thunder Bay
and Welland.

In the fall participants took
part in “Baseline” sessions where
they received a Basic Health
Assessment (height, weight,
waist-to-hip measurement and
blood pressure) and a scan using
the ES TECK Complex. This tech-
nology is a Health Canada certi-
cified Class II and Class III medical
device that offers information
about Body Composition, Gen-
eral Metabolic Functions and
Dietary System Analysis. These
“Baseline” sessions also included
presentations and interactive
games from healthcare profes-
sionals about diabetes risk factors
and complications from this dis-
ease. Maintaining a proper diet
and exercising were outlined as
instrumental in reducing suscep-
tibility to diabetes and its complica-
tions. The importance of vigi-
lance as a key factor in staying off
this disease and diabetes complica-
tions was also stressed.

“Diabetes and its complications continue to be a health priority for the Métis Nation of Ontario.”

Follow-up sessions were held
in January to track the progress
of participants who decided to
embark on lifestyle changes as
a result of the information they
received at the earlier “Baseline”
sessions. Of the 491 who
took part in a “Baseline” session in
the fall, 276 returned for a follow-
up session held in January. The
return rate of over 50% is espe-
cially remarkable considering
that due to scheduling restric-
tions we could not provide a
circle of dates to those who
were interested in attending a fol-
low-up session.

Participants of follow-up ses-
ions were asked for their feed-
back about this project. The com-
ments from the “ABDEP 2009/10
Participant Report Card” outline
the success of this project. For
example, “77% ‘strongly agreed’
that the Basic Health Assessment
was beneficial in helping them
avoid diabetes risk factors and/or
complications from diabetes
75.3% of respondents thought
the same of the ES TECK Com-
plex scan.

The ABDEP 2009/10’s useful-
ness was also apparent when con-
sidering that nearly 90% reported
having changed their diet,
level of physical activity, or sup-
plement use as a result of the
information they received at their
Baseline session. This percentage
represents close to 250 of the 276
participants who attended a “Fol-
low-up” session! It is also impor-
tant to note that over 80% stated
they had shared the information
they learned at their “Baseline”
session with a family member or
friend. Doing so goes a long way
towards spreading the word about
diabetes prevention.

As the previous content
shows, the MNO’s ABDEP
2009/10 met with all the sign-
posts of a successful initiative
as anticipated participation rates
were surpassed, the approach
was well received by the partici-
pants, many undertook tangible
changes.

“...the approach was well received by the participants, many undertook tangible lifestyle changes as a result of this project.”

Lifestyle changes as a result of this project, and the information pro-
vided was broadcast in the Métis community.

Diabetes and its complications continue to be a health priority for the MNO. The ABDEP 2010/11 annual proposal has
been submitted to the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care
including the allocation of dollars to continue this specific project.

Slight changes have been pro-
posed from last year’s project
including an additional site visit.
Three visits per year will allow
participants to gain more infor-
mation to support their lifestyle
changes and to see the results of
their hard work more often.

Based on the submission of the
“ABDEP Summative Report” we
expect that the MHLTC will give
us the go ahead. Please note that
the final “ABDEP 2009/10 Summa-
tive Report” will be available July
1st, 2010 on the MNO web site as
well as at your local health site
office. Translation into French
was undertaken so that all partici-
pants and/or future participants
can enjoy.

On behalf of the Métis Nation
of Ontario and the Aboriginal Diab-
etes Education Project I would like to thank the respective health site staff and participants for embracing this special dia-
betes initiative. Your participation
and enthusiasm demonstrates your willingness to own your health and make the changes necessary to prevent diabetes or further complications of this di-
ease.
Celebrate The Year of the Métis Nation

AGA 2010

METIS NATION OF ONTARIO • 17th ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORT WILLIAM HISTORICAL PARK • THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO
AUGUST 21ST - 23RD, 2010

Join us in Thunder Bay for AGA 2010!

Celebrate the Year of the Métis Nation with friends and family at Fort William Historical Park from August 21 to 23, 2010.

The celebration of Ontario Métis history and culture kicks off Friday evening with a Meet ‘N Greet campfire at the Fort William Historical Park.

AGA 2010 will be a full three days with a Gala Dinner Saturday evening which pays tribute to MNO’s Founding President Tony Belcourt. Tickets are available for sale on a first come, first served basis.

The Annual General Assembly formally begins with a Traditional Métis Opening at the dock behind Fort William Historical Park at 8:30 a.m. on August 21, 2010.

Sunday night will be special too – with the Thunder Bay Métis Council hosting an evening event.

Need more information about available camping facilities or hotels? Please contact: Rebekah Wilson rebekahw@metisnation.org

ARE YOU PLANNING TO ATTEND AGA 2010?
Please complete the pre-registration* form below and fax it to us at 613-722-4225.

First Name: __________________________ Last Name: __________________________
Mailing Address: __________________________
City, Province: __________________________ Postal Code: __________________________
Daytime Phone Number or Cell: __________________________ Fax Number: __________________________

Please indicate whether you are a:
Voting Delegate** □ Non-voting delegate □

*Please note that the pre-registration deadline is August 13, 2010; all registrations completed after this date will be processed on site at the event. Thank you.
**Only those delegates contacted by the MNO will be reimbursed for their expenses. All other registrants are responsible for all costs related to attending the AGA.