



It's not just one community – it's about all communities

June Callwood Outstanding Achievement Award for Voluntarism

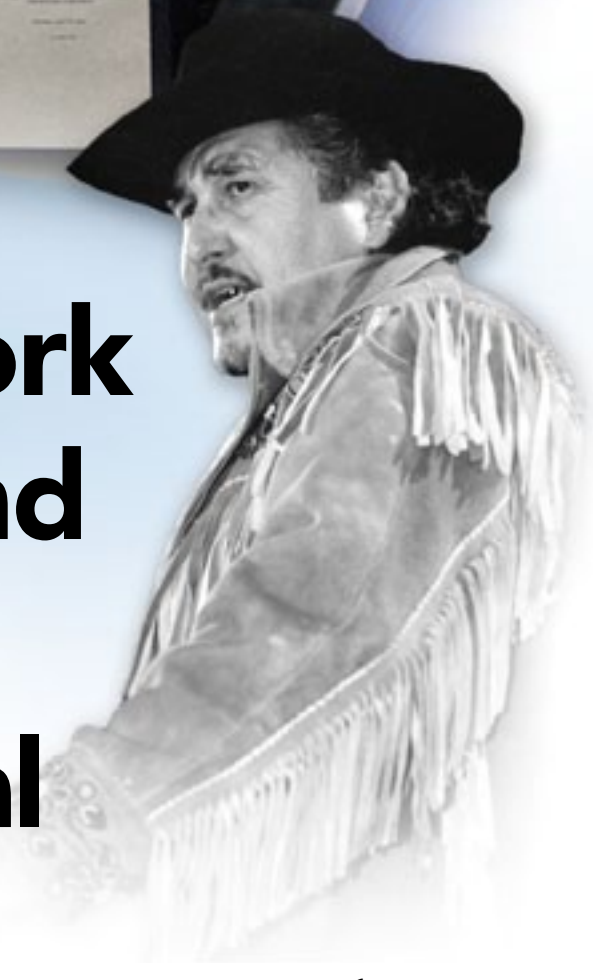
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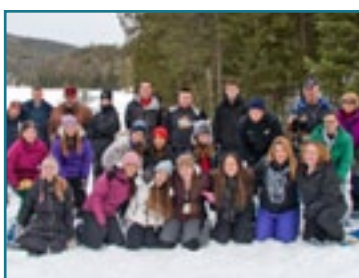
MÉTIS VOYAGEUR



MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement renewed and Métis rights upheld by Federal Court of Appeal in *Daniels v. Canada*



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MARCH BREAK CAMP

The exciting 2014
MNO March Break Camp
experience.

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MNO CITIZEN CONTRIBUTES TO NEW BOOK

Toronto book launch of
"Honouring Indigenous
Women - Hearts of
Nations Vol 2."

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WALKING WITH OUR SISTERS

MNO citizen honours
missing, murdered
Aboriginal women with
moccasin exhibit.

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LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

MNO veteran awarded
Lieutenant Governor's
Ontario Heritage Award
for Lifetime Achievement.

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THE
MÉTIS
VOYAGEUR
WINTER 2014, NO. 79

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Publication #: Pm 40025265

Submission Policy:

MNO encourages contributions from MNO citizens and staff. All submissions are edited to conform to the Canadian Press Style Guide as well as for grammar, repetitiousness, spelling and to accurately reflect the official names and titles of individuals, organizations, bodies and agencies referenced in submissions.

With the exception of letters to the editor and submissions to the family and passages sections, all submissions should NOT be written in the first person.

The recommended length for a submission is between 400 and 600 words. Submissions longer than that may be edited for length.

2014 submission
deadlines:

May 16, 2014
September 5, 2014
November 1, 2014



COUNCIL CORNER

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) benefits immensely from the dedicated volunteers who are members of its Chartered Community Councils. These hard-working individuals spend hundreds of hours building and strengthening their Métis communities.

MNO councils are the cornerstone of a strong foundation for the MNO in its push toward its inherent right to self-government. MNO Councils are important communication hubs who play a significant role in fostering community empowerment and development for Métis citizens living within the geographic territory of that council.

MNO COUNCIL NAME CHANGE

On March 30 a Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) meeting was held in Toronto. At this meeting, the PCMNO accepted the request from the MNO Hamilton-Wentworth Métis Council to change its name to MNO Clear Waters Métis Council.

Here is a list of the new and returning elected officials and their appointments:

MNO Great Lakes Métis Council

President
Peter Coture

Chair
Robert Leclair

Senator
Malcolm Dixon

Secretary
Helen Marietta

Treasurer
Carla McDonald

Women's Representative
Theresa O'Connor

Councillor
James Coture

Councillor
Murray Hillyer

MNO Superior North Shore Métis Council

President
Trent Desaulniers

Chair
Mike Renaud

Secretary / Treasurer
Karen Ritchie

Women's Representative
Deanna Cooper

Youth Representative
Laura Desaulniers

Councillor
Tim Sinclair

Councillor
Brenda Roy

Councillor
Dawn Gionet

MNO Clear Waters Métis Council *(formerly the Hamilton- Wentworth Métis Council)*

President
Jerry Clarke

Chair
Suzanne Jackson

Senator
Dorris Lanigan

Secretary
Don Kennedy

Treasurer
Lisa Clarke

Councillor
Toby Clarke

Councillor
Leon Fleury

MNO Chapleau Métis Council

President
David Hamilton

Chair
Levi Bouchard

Senator
Micheline Boisvert

Secretary / Treasurer
Micheline Boisvert

Women's Representative
Janique Labelle

MNO Temiskaming Métis Council

President
Liliane Ethier

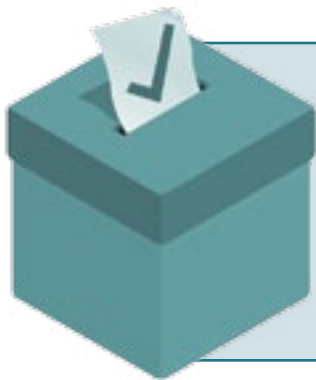
Chair
Claude Dupuis

Secretary / Treasurer
Tina Nichol

Women's Representative
Christina Acton

Councillor
Karen Beland

The MNO would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the newly elected council members and thank all council members for their time and dedication to the citizens of the MNO. ∞



UPCOMING ELECTIONS

MNO Atikokan and Area Métis Council – May 25, 2014

MNO North Bay Métis Council – June 8, 2014

MNO Toronto and York Métis Council – June 8, 2014





▲ Participants in the signing ceremony of the new MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement: (Left to right) MNO Senator Ray Bergie, Deputy Minister of Aboriginal Affairs David de Launay, the Honourable David Zimmer, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, MNO Chair France Picotte, MNO President Gary Lipinski and MNO Chief Operating Officer Doug Wilson.

MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement renewed and Métis rights upheld by Federal Court of Appeal in *Daniels v. Canada*

Métis and Ontario begin to write new chapter in Métis rights recognition and reconciliation

April 17, 2014, was a very important day for Métis all across the Homeland and especially in Ontario. Early that morning, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Gary Lipinski and the Honourable David Zimmer, Ontario Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, signed a renewed five-year Framework Agreement. Then only a few hours later the Federal Court of Appeal released its decision regarding *Daniels v. Canada*.

The new Framework Agreement builds on the previous Framework Agreement signed in 2008, but includes an increased focus on Métis rights through “advancing reconciliation between the Crown and the Métis people” and providing “a framework for meeting Ontario’s constitutional obligations towards the Métis people consistent with the honour the Crown and decisions of the courts.”

Daniels v Canada was initiated by now deceased Métis leader Harry Daniels, for the purpose of forcing the federal government to acknowledge that Métis people fall under its jurisdiction and should enjoy rights and recognition comparable to First Nations. The Federal Court of Appeal decision on April 17 upheld rulings of lower courts that Métis fall under federal jurisdiction and meet the definition of “Indian,” outlined in the Canadian Constitution.

MNO President Lipinski said, “The renewal of our Framework Agreement is timely given today’s Federal Court of Appeal decision in *Daniels v. Canada* which re-affirms that the federal government has constitutional jurisdiction and responsibility to deal with the Métis as a distinct Aboriginal people.”

“In Ontario, Métis rights and claims, as recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada in the landmark *R v. Powley* decision, remain unresolved because the federal government has been denying its responsibilities and not coming to the table to negotiate. We hope that today’s decision is a wakeup call. Canada’s wilful blindness to Métis rights and claims cannot continue,” added President Lipinski.

“The message is clear from the courts: the federal government cannot continue its complete exclusion of Métis from specific and comprehensive claims processes that are open to the two other constitutionally recognized Aboriginal peoples. The jurisdictional football the Métis are subjected to with respect to their rights, claims and needs must end.”

— President Gary Lipinski

Notably, the Framework Agreement commits the MNO and Ontario to jointly “pursu[ing] discussions with the Government of Canada on Métis rights issues and the Crown’s consultation duties.” Ultimately, the MNO hopes a Federal Métis Claims Policy is developed, which would provide a process to address these outstanding rights and claims issues similar to what the federal government has developed for First Nations and Inuit peoples.

“The message is clear from the courts: the federal government cannot continue its complete exclusion of Métis from specific and comprehensive claims processes that are open to the two other constitutionally recognized Aboriginal peoples. The jurisdictional football the Métis are subjected to with respect to their rights, claims and needs must end,” stressed President Lipinski.

The Framework Agreement also makes a new commitment on the part of the MNO and Ontario to “advance initiatives that support Métis children and youth to be the best that they can be.” This enhanced youth-oriented commitment - a priority for MNO President Lipinski’s mandate - reflects the MNO’s ongoing commitment to building a stronger Métis Nation and Ontario.

“Today’s signing of a renewed Framework Agreement,” stated Minister Zimmer, “will build on the 2008 agreement which helped develop important consultation capacity within the Métis Nation of Ontario, supported economic development initiatives and led to improved outcomes for Métis students. I am confident the renewed agreement will further advance the well-being of Métis people in Ontario.”

“Whether it’s enhancing our MNO bursaries at 31 colleges and universities across the province or making strategic investments to support Métis kids to see opportunities rather than obstacles, the processes and commitments set out in this Framework Agreement will assist us in building a stronger Métis Nation and Ontario,” concluded President Lipinski. ∞

A copy of the new Framework Agreement has been posted on the MNO website at www.metisnation.org under Governance/Reference Documents.

More information on *Daniels v Canada* is also posted on the MNO website and can be accessed from a link on the home page.



▲ MNO representatives and June Callwood Award presenters: (Left to right) PCMNO Youth Representative Mitch Case, MNO Senator Brenda Powley, Deputy Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Chisanga Puta-Chekwe, MNO President Gary Lipinski, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration the Honourable Michael Coteau, PCMNO Region 7 Councillor Pauline Saulnier, and MNO Sudbury Métis Council President Richard Sarrazin.

It's not just one community – it's about all communities

All MNO citizen volunteers recognized June Callwood Outstanding Achievement Award for Voluntarism

On April 10, Ontario recognized all Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen volunteers, both past and present, with the June Callwood Outstanding Achievement Award for Voluntarism. The June Callwood Outstanding Achievement Award for Voluntarism recognizes individuals and groups for superlative volunteer contributions to their communities and to the province of Ontario.

The award is named after the late June Callwood, a Canadian journalist, author and social activist. She committed her life to action on social justice issues, particularly those related to woman and children. She founded, or co-founded, more than 50 Canadian social action organizations. The award recognizes dedicated individuals and organizations who, like the late June Callwood, demonstrate exceptional leadership, creativity and innovation in their service to their communities and others.



▲ MNO President Lipinski accepts the June Callwood Outstanding Achievement in Voluntarism Award on behalf of all MNO citizen volunteers from the Right Honourable Michael Coteau, the Ontario Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. ▼ MNO representatives with the June Callwood Outstanding Achievement for Voluntarism Award: (left to right) Richard Sarrazin, Pauline Saulnier, President Gary Lipinski, Senator Brenda Powley and Mitch Case.



Past recipients of this award have included organizations such as Victim Services of Algoma, North Bay Literacy Council, Hospice of Waterloo Region, Alvinston Community Group, The Hutton House Access Voluntarism Program, The Manitouwadge Cancer Assistance Group - Friends Who Care and The Leslieville Tree Project.

The award was presented at a ceremony in Toronto on April 10 where all MNO citizen volunteers were represented by MNO President Gary Lipinski, PCMNO Youth Representative Mitch Case and three past recipients of the MNO Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award. The recipients present were MNO Sudbury Métis Council President Richard Sarrazin, Region 7 PCMNO Councillor Pauline Saulnier and MNO Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council Senator Brenda Powley. The MNO Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award recognizes individuals who volunteer with the MNO on a year round basis and who have done so for a number of years.

The June Callwood award was presented to MNO representatives by the Honourable Michael

Coteau, the Ontario Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

"I am honoured and humbled to accept this award on behalf of the volunteers who founded the MNO and all our past and present citizens," said MNO President Gary Lipinski. "MNO citizen volunteers are the heart and soul of the MNO. These hard-working individuals spend thousands of hours annually building and strengthening our Métis communities and it is through their continuous efforts that we are able to perform our important work. Volunteers are the backbone of the MNO!"

Senator Powley, who was the 2013 MNO Volunteer of the Year indicated that it was important that the award recognized all MNO citizen volunteers: "It's not just one person," she explained, "or just one community – it's right across all the communities who put in the efforts. It's nice to see that we are all being acknowledged for our work."

The 2007 MNO Volunteer of the Year, MNO Sudbury Métis Council President Sarrazin stated that, "It is an awesome thing to come to this volunteer award [ceremony] and to represent all the MNO citizens who volunteer their time – it is what makes the MNO a big success."

The MNO was nominated by John Graham who has worked with the MNO in a number of projects. Graham has witnessed MNO's outstanding voluntarism first-hand while working with the MNO in securing recognition of Métis rights surrounding healthy funding, developing of strategic plans, streamlining the MNO's citizenship registry and while Deputy Chief Electoral Officer.

"As 2013 marks the 20th anniversary of the MNO," wrote Graham in his nomination, "I felt it was an opportune time to recognize the dedicated volunteers who founded the MNO in 1993 and whose leadership continues to sustain the MNO today."

Graham's nomination recognized that in 20 years, Métis in Ontario went from a forgotten people to a people with a strong voice. He explains how Métis went from situations where health and educational institutions were almost entirely unaware of their existence to a place where there is a growing awareness and many of these institutions now work actively with the MNO. Through the work of MNO volunteers, Métis rights have been affirmed and where once the Ontario government refused to recognize these rights, today the Ontario government has

entered into numerous agreements based on Métis rights.

Graham noted that not only was the MNO founded through the sheer will of volunteers, but its past and current governance structure has been and remains based entirely of volunteers. This includes representation and participation for regions, communities, women, youth, seniors and veterans. Last year, members of these bodies contributed 5,280 hours volunteer hours to the MNO.

Past and present volunteers also dedicated countless hours to the advancement of Métis rights, specifically *R v. Powley*. As a result of their efforts, in 2003, the Supreme Court affirmed Métis harvest rights and in 2004 the MNO leveraged this momentous victory to negotiate the first Harvest Agreement in Canada.

"The MNO was founded by volunteers," stated PCMNO Youth Representative Case, "it is where the MNO comes from and it's our history but just as importantly; our future is based on volunteers as well. Our future is bright because we have so many people who are a part of making the dream and vision of the MNO a reality."

Additionally, Graham noted that over the past year alone MNO volunteers contributed over 67,000 hours to enhance the well-being of Métis in Ontario with 52,000 hours volunteered by the MNO's Chartered Community Councils, 1,080 by the Captains of the Hunt and 6,500 in healing and wellness services.

"I think it is very important that the MNO has received this award," stated PCMNO Region 7 Councillor Saulnier, the 2010 MNO Volunteer of the Year, "as it helped make the Ontario government aware of all that MNO citizens are doing across Ontario and how strongly we support our culture."

"MNO community council members volunteer thousands of hours every year. They play a crucial role in the fight for Métis rights, promoting Métis culture and traditions and fostering community empowerment and development," stated President Lipinski. "We would not be where we are today without their endless commitment to the betterment of Métis in Ontario."

Graham's nomination was supported by letters of support from Mike Briggs, Manager of First Nations and Métis Relations with Bruce Power and Wendy Landry, Manager of First Nations, Métis and Municipal Affairs with Union Gas.∞

WSMNO welcomes Rosalyn Calder as newest representative

On March 4, 2014, the Métis Nation of Ontario Women's Secretariat (WSMNO) appointed Rosalyn Adele Calder as their newest representative.

Calder is an active volunteer in her Métis community in Fort Frances. She has been a member of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Sunset Country Métis Council since 1997 and has been active on its Board of Directors since 2005. Calder is also a volunteer with MNO Victim Services in Fort Frances. Additionally, Calder is very committed to the Special Olympics and has been volunteering with the organization for many years.

Calder is very proud of her family. She is a mother of three and grandmother of six. She enjoys spending time with her children, grandchildren, family and friends. Calder is the daughter of Gordon Calder who was the recipient of the MNO Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award in 2012.

The WSMNO posted a vacancy notice for a woman representative on January 20, 2014. Interested candidates were asked to send in a letter of interest and resume to be considered for the position. As of the February 10, 2014 deadline there were a total of six nominations for the vacant position. All

applications were sent to the WSMNO who selected Calder as the applicant.

Thank you to all who applied and congratulations to Rosalyn Calder. ∞



▲ Rosalyn Adele Calder.

MNO hosts mining industry collaborative forum & update

Submitted by: **Joanne Meyer**, Director of Intergovernmental Relations

From February 26-27, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) hosted two events in Toronto for MNO Consultation Committees from Regions 1-5, MNO Métis Mining Strategy students, Métis businesses and proponents.

A collaborative forum was held on February 26. The forum provided an opportunity for MNO Consultation Committees, students and Métis businesses to network with proponents and mining companies.

During the forum, Métis lawyer Jason Madden presented on Métis rights which included information on the Powley case, recent legal developments and the road ahead. Madden also presented on business partnerships with Métis.

Other presentations included an overview of the objectives and opportunities of the MNO Métis Min-

ing Strategy, best practices in Métis consultation and accommodation and on understanding of Métis Traditional Knowledge.

Mining industry members were also in attendance. Representatives from Premier Gold, Argonaut Gold, Rubicon Minerals Corp., IAMGOLD, Vale Base Metals and KGHM International Limited provided project updates for current activities in Regions 1-5.

Additionally, on February 27, the MNO held a meeting on the Modernization of the Mining Act Phase 3. The goal of this event was to educate MNO citizens about the changes to the Mining Act and how it would impact them. A representative from Northern Development and Mines provided presentations on the background of the Act, what they heard and next steps. ∞



▲ Participants of the MNO collaborative forum and Modernization of the Mining Act Phase 3 meetings. (Left to right) **FRONT ROW:** Joanne Hamelin, Liliane Ethier, Cam Burgess, Yvonne Jensen, Juliette Denis, Marcel Lafrance, Roger Rose, Alvina Cimon, Joanne Meyer and Marlene Davidson. **MIDDLE ROW:** Bernie Hughes, Sandy Triskle, Maurice Sarrazin, Mike Guy Laderout, David Hamilton and Ernest Gatien. **BACK ROW:** Richard Sarrazin, Steven Sarrazin, Kevin Muloin, Romeo Sarrazin, Andy Lefebvre, Stan McHale, Al Roussin and Blaine Davidson.

ACROSS THE HOMELAND



BRITISH COLUMBIA

MNBC 9th Annual Governing Assembly

From March 8-9, the Métis Nation of British Columbia (MNBC) held their ninth Annual Governing Assembly (AGA) in Richmond, British Columbia. Marking 9 years since the first Métis Nation Governing Assembly was established. It reviews legislation, regulations, rules, resolutions and constitutional amendments for a second reading at an Annual General Meeting (AGM).

During the AGA, a Grand Entry was held on Saturday March 8 and was led by the Métis jigger Lisa Shepherd, Métis Fiddler Keith Hill and guitarist Rene Lucier. Additionally, on March 7, MNBC chartered community presidents, vice presidents and Board of Directors also gathered for a very successful President's Workshop.

Source: Métis Nation of British Columbia

SASKATCHEWAN

MN-S launches Blue Ribbon Campaign

On December 16, 2013, the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S) launched the Blue Ribbon Campaign: An Alliance of Hope, in support of Métis youth suicide prevention.

The campaign is a two-part undertaking to raise public awareness of suicide amongst Métis youth. The goal is to spread awareness by getting members of the public to wear the blue ribbon and have the train-the-trainer program adopted by Saskatchewan communities or service providers who are often first to notice signs of potential suicide.

The Blue Ribbon Campaign has been designed to encourage Métis communities to take ownership and control over suicide prevention and intervention.

Source: CBC News



ALBERTA

Alberta study links Aboriginal education gap to billions lost to the provincial economy

The Rupertsland Institute, an affiliate of the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA), released the "Bridging the Aboriginal Education Gap in Alberta" report on March 4, 2014. The study measures the economic impact of the education gap in the lifetime earning potential of Aboriginal people in the Alberta. The report concludes that economic loss to Alberta will be in the billions of dollars if it fails to seize this untapped opportunity by investing in Aboriginal education.

MNA President Audrey Poitras stated, "This report points to the need for increased cooperation between the federal and provincial governments with respect to Métis education and training. The report symbolizes the importance of building Métis institutional capacity that is capable of participating in important policy debates affecting Métis people. It should serve as a call for the Government of Canada to maintain its course on Aboriginal labour market programming, and for the Government of Alberta to fund education and training initiatives in the Métis community."

Source: Fort McMurray Today

MANITOBA

Métis archer targeted for Aboriginal honour

Manitoba Métis archer Christie Lavallee is continuing to be awarded for what was a career-best year in 2013.

Lavallee was named the 2013 Manitoba Female Aboriginal Athlete of the Year after a season in which she won several provincial and national archery medals.

The Manitoba Aboriginal Sports and Recreation Council (MASRC) recognizes one Aboriginal male and one female athlete each year who shows a positive role in sports and the community, their personal commitment to athletic development and achievements in sports and their concern for holistic development.

In her spare time, Lavallee is also involved in the Manitoba Métis Federation and dances, plays fiddle and volunteers in her community.

Next up for Lavallee is the North American Indigenous Games in Regina July 20-27.

Source: Portage Daily Graphic

New MNO Employees

THE MNO IS EXCITED TO WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW STAFF MEMBERS.



01

01: ALY N. ALIBHAI

Aly joins the MNO Toronto office in the position of Director of Lands, Resources and Consultations.

Aly has a Bachelor of Commerce (B.Comm.) degree from the University of British Columbia's Sauder School of Business and obtained a Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree from the Faculty of Law, University of Windsor.

Among Aly's professional highlights has been working for the Right Honourable Herb Gray, then the Solicitor General of Canada as well as working as a Government of Canada lawyer and manager in areas including Aboriginal law and policy.

Over the years, Aly has been very actively involved in the community and has served as a member of the Board of Directors of various organisations including, the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario Foundation in Ottawa, the John Howard Society of Ottawa, Joan of Arc Academy in Ottawa, and FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance Canada, an international humanitarian relief agency affiliated with the Aga Khan Development Network. For several years, he was an instructor of the Public Law course component of the Law Society of Upper Canada's Bar Admission Program. He currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors of Legal Aid Ontario, an agency of the Government of Ontario mandated to ensure access to justice for low income Ontarians. In recognition of his voluntary and community service, Aly has received several awards and distinctions including the Deputy Minister of Justice Humanitarian Excellence Award (2001) and in 2010, he was the recipient of the Lincoln Alexander Award from the Law Society of Upper Canada which annually recognizes an Ontario lawyer who has demonstrated a commitment to the public and the legal profession through community service.

Submitted by: **Doug Wilson,**
Chief Operating Officer

02: JYTTE COOPER

Jytte joins the MNO Kingston office in the position Akwe:go Program Coordinator.

Jytte comes to the MNO from the Limestone District School Board where she worked with high needs behavioural students as well as students requiring remediation in math and reading. She also has provided support for people having physical and developmental challenges, autism or

having challenges due to aging. Jytte has found that all people have gifts to share and do better when they are able to share them with their communities.

Jytte has graduated from Loyalist College three times. First with a Mental Retardation Counselling Diploma, then with an Early Childhood Education Diploma and finally almost 30 years later with a Bachelor of Applied Arts in Human Services Management.

Submitted by: **Wenda Watteyne,**
Director of Healing and Wellness

03: SARA KELLY

Sara Kelly joins the MNO head office in Ottawa in the position of Assistant Genealogist with the Registry Branch.

Sara became very familiar with genealogical research when she applied for, and later became, a MNO citizen. Her familiarity with the citizenship application process and accompanying genealogical research will serve the MNO well.

Sara comes to the MNO from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada where she worked as a Web Communications Coordinator. In this and other positions she held with the Federal government, she acquired skills in time management, attention to detail, customer service and maintaining confidentiality that will be very useful to her work in Registry.

Sara graduated from the University of Ottawa with a Bachelor of Arts in Honours English in 2012.

Submitted by: **Jane Brennan,**
Registrar & Director of the Registry

04: ELIZABETH PETERSON

Elizabeth joins the MNO Kingston office in the position of Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children Coordinator.

Elizabeth comes to the MNO from rural Kingston where she worked as a Family Services Worker providing intensive case management to low-income families. Her passion has always been working with families and children as an Educational Assistant, a Day Care Worker as well as a Family Supervised Access Worker.

Elizabeth holds a diploma in Social Service Work from St. Lawrence College. She is excited to begin this new journey focussing on the vital first six years and helping to create positive change for families.

Submitted by: **Wenda Watteyne,**
Director of Healing and Wellness



04

05: CLARICE GERVAIS

Clarice joins the MNO Kingston office in the position of Aboriginal Community Mental Health Program Coordinator.

Clarice comes to the MNO from CERC North where she worked as an Employment Consultant. Clarice also has experience in mental health support through her employment with the Canadian Mental Health Association as the Employment Support Worker for the Routes to Work program offering job search and maintenance support to participant living with mental illness.

Clarice holds a Behavioural Science Technology Diploma from St. Lawrence College where she completed three work placements in mental health support programs at Frontenac Community Mental Health Services and Providence Care Mental Health Services.

Submitted by: **Wenda Watteyne,**
Director of Healing and Wellness

MICHELLE KEHOE

Michelle joins the MNO Kingston office in the position of Program Coordinator of the Urban Aboriginal Healthily Living Program.

Michelle recently completed her MA in Human Kinetics from the University of Ottawa. Her community-based research focused on the foodways of three generations of First Nations women in Northern Ontario. The significance of the teepee in maintaining relationships with the land, the culture and between the women themselves was a fundamental element within the given research. During Michelle's time within the community, she facilitated numerous healthy cooking workshops, recreational programs and land-based intergenerational activities.

Prior to this position, Michelle worked with the Indigenous Health Research Group at the University of Ottawa. She has also worked as a Personal Trainer. In addition, Michelle holds a BSc in Human Kinetics from the University of Ottawa and a diploma in Fitness and Health Promotion from St. Lawrence College.

Michelle is more than thrilled to continue her work with Aboriginal communities and is looking forward to fostering healthy communities through her work with the Métis Nation of Ontario.

Submitted by: **Wenda Watteyne,**
Director of Healing and Wellness



05

SAMANTHA ALKENBRACK

Sam joins the MNO Kingston office in the position of Wasa-Nabin coordinator.

Sam comes to the MNO from Kerry's Place Autism Services where she worked as an Autism support assistant. Sam also has experience working with behavioural children, as a Child and Youth Worker.

Sam holds a BA in Psychology from Carleton University.

Submitted by: **Wenda Watteyne,**
Director of Healing and Wellness

06: BRITTANY MARACLE

Brittany joins the MNO Kingston office in the position of the Life Long Care Program Coordinator.

Brittany comes to the MNO from a residential treatment centre in Belleville where she worked as a Child and Youth Worker.

Brittany has a diploma from Loyalist College in Community and Justice Services.

Submitted by: **Wenda Watteyne,**
Director of Healing and Wellness

VALERIE STORTINI

Valerie, formerly an Employment Developer for MNO's Métis Mining Strategy, has become the Aboriginal Sexual Violence Community Response Initiative Coordinator within the Healing and Wellness Branch. She will continue to work out of the Thunder Bay MNO office.

Valerie was previously an Employment Developer for the MNO, in the Métis Mining Strategy Project office in the Thunder Bay office.

Valerie comes to MNO after having worked several years in the academic sector supporting and guiding Aboriginal secondary students in a professional role. This has included one-to-one and group counselling with Aboriginal women seeking to embrace change and challenges while focusing on their futures. Prior to that, she worked in the vocational rehabilitation sector. Valerie is looking forward to her new role and this new initiative.

Submitted by: **Wenda Watteyne,**
Director of Healing and Wellness



▲ Participants of the moccasin workshop. (Left to right) **BACK ROW:** Naomi Sarzan, Jessica MacLean, Warren Cardinal McTeague, Sydney Ducharme, Benny Michaud and Adam Gauthier. **MIDDLE ROW:** Senator Lois McCallum, Sahra MacLean and Brittany Anderson. **FRONT ROW:** Tegan Mandeville.

MNO Infinite Reach facilitators host moccasin workshop

Submitted by: **Sahra MacLean**, MNO Infinite Reach Facilitator for Carleton University

From March 1-2, 2014, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Infinite Reach Student Solidarity Network facilitators from the University of Ottawa and Carleton University came together to host their first Métis moccasin workshop.

Held at Carleton University, 19 students from the University of Ottawa, Carleton University and Algonquin College attended the event.

The workshop was taught by Tegan Mandeville, the MNO Infinite Reach Facilitator for Loyalist College. An accomplished Métis artisan, Mandeville shared her skills and techniques with the students. MNO Senator Lois McCallum also attended the event and provided the opening prayers, shared stories and kept moral up when stitching got challenging.

This was the second event held in the winter semester by the Carleton University Infinite Reach facilitators Sahra MacLean and Gabrielle Fayant. The workshop was a great success and was enjoyed by students and MNO staff.

"When I started at Carleton we didn't have Métis specific students events," said MNO Post-Secondary Officer and Carleton University Ph.D. student Sheila Grantham, "and thanks to all the facilitators there are now spaces where Métis students can find supports and friendly faces."

The event was one of many held at the university and MacLean was happy to see so many youth in attendance.

"At our weekly beading circle the group kept saying they wanted to try making moccasins," explained MacLean, "and to see it come together with so many new faces was a great feeling."

Maclean hopes that the MNO Infinite Reach program can continue to grow and support more students in their post-secondary journey. ∞

The MNO Infinite Reach: Métis Solidarity Network is comprised of incoming and upper year post-secondary students who have the common goal of working together to enrich and enhance their post-secondary education experience. Infinite Reach facilitators offer assistance to incoming Métis students by helping them adjust to university life and also work to create and maintain a sense of community among Métis students. Throughout the year, Infinite Reach facilitators host cultural and informative events to connect students to the local MNO community councils and various programs, services and events of the MNO. To learn more about MNO's Infinite Reach program visit: www.metisnation.org/programs/education--training/infinite-reach



▲ Participants of the moccasin workshop held at Carleton University.

Kids have stress too

MNO holds meditation workshop for kids

Submitted by: **Ryan Plante**,
MNO Community Wellness Coordinator

On February 6, 2014, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Community Wellness Coordinator Ryan Plante held a meditation workshop for students at the Golden Avenue Public School in Timmins.

Plante was invited by the school's mental health team to hold the workshop as part of their Kids Have Stress Too program. Plante taught a class of Grades 1 and 2 students the benefits of meditation and how it can be a powerful tool in relieving stress.

"I was able to engage with the students, teach them about meditation, where it came from, the benefits of meditation and how to properly execute meditation," said Plante.

When children and youth experience stress, they do not always know how to deal with it. This can result in behavioural issues such as acting out, aggression or not listening to parents. Plante explained how meditation is a great way to help relieve stress in children and prevent these issues from emerging.

"Meditation is a technique that has been used for centuries, and the benefits for children are increased creativity, happiness, self-confidence and an overall well-being," Plante stated. "I was able to inform them that meditation can be fun and engaging. While medi-

tating, children should focus on someone or something that makes them truly happy, the skies the limit. With that, the child would sit down cross-legged and always thinking about that someone or something that makes them happy. Doing this for one to ten minutes is greatly beneficial for children and helps them calm down."

Plante encourages families to join their children in meditation. Meditating as a family is beneficial for everyone and can lead to a greater bond between parents and children.

This initiative is just one of the ways the MNO is addressing the holistic needs of its communities at a local level. Through its Community Wellness Program, the MNO supports holistic approaches to the promotion of healthy living and the prevention of family violence.

Holistic Aboriginal health includes the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and cultural aspects of life. Through an understanding of self, a vision of wellness balances body, mind and spirit and is promoted through the healing continuum.

The MNO actively seeks to partner with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, organizations and governments to promote and encourage holistic health and culture-based programming. ∞

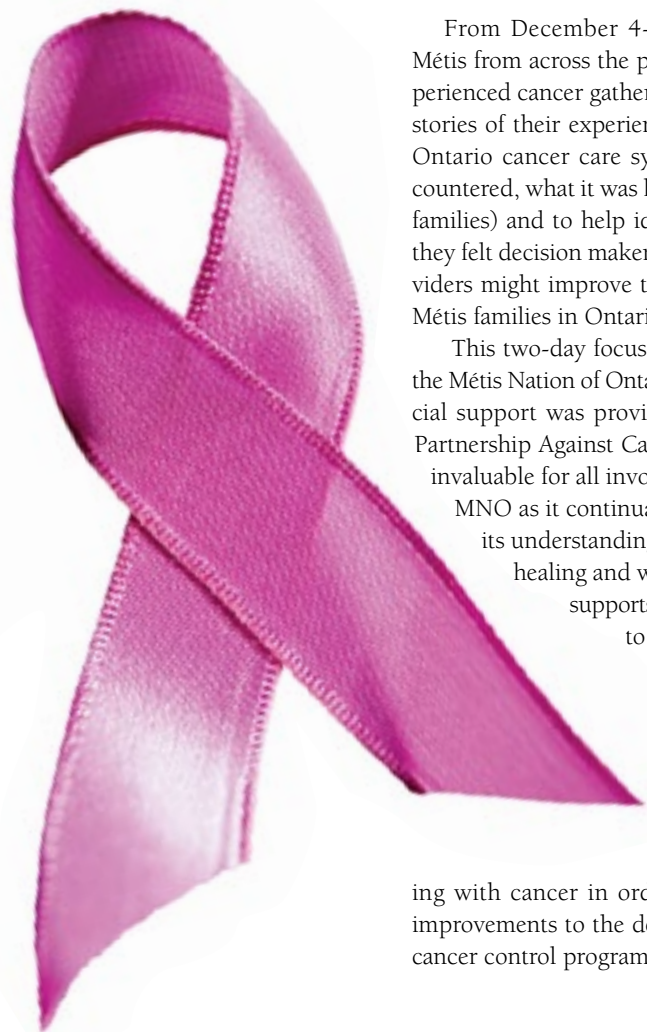


▲ MNO Community Wellness Coordinator Ryan Plante teaching students at Golden Avenue Public School how to meditate.

Improving the cancer care journey for Métis in Ontario

Bringing light to the experiences of Métis people living with cancer and how their cancer journey can be improved

Submitted by: **Storm J. Russell, PhD**, MNO Senior Policy and Research Analyst



From December 4-5, 2013, a group of Métis from across the province who have experienced cancer gathered in Ottawa to share stories of their experiences in navigating the Ontario cancer care system (what they encountered, what it was like for them and their families) and to help identify ways in which they felt decision makers and health care providers might improve the cancer journey for Métis families in Ontario.

This two-day focus group was hosted by the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and financial support was provided by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. The session was invaluable for all involved, especially to the MNO as it continually strives to improve its understanding of Métis community healing and wellness needs and the supports and services available to MNO citizens.

The project is part of a broader Canada wide initiative that aims to better understand issues for clients living with cancer in order to bring about to improvements to the design and planning of cancer control programs.

Findings

Barriers to effective care and treatment identified by the focus group participants included insufficient information about treatment options, lack of access to treatment and services locally, the frequent and often lengthy travel required to access essential care and services, the prohibitive costs of drugs and treatments for those who do not have private health insurance, and the lack of Métis-cultural supports within the provincial health care system.

Participants also highlighted the critical importance of family, the Métis community and culture in easing their cancer journey, as well as the supports they received from the MNO and other sources within the broader health care system. This includes help with transport to and from treatments located outside their communities, assistance with home care and family supports, access to Métis elders and community members to help in making decisions about treatment and care and in navigating the cancer journey.

Supportive clinicians and physicians who take the time listen to clients' needs and inform patients of the full range of treatment options available to them were also identified as being invaluable in the cancer journey, as was access to alternative and traditional therapies for those who chose to use them. The ability to access

cancer screening, care and treatments locally without having to travel long distances and having access to the best drugs and treatments were also seen as fundamental needs. The importance of early detection was also underscored in this discussion, along with the need for regular screening opportunities.

The MNO will continue to learn from these important conversations with its citizens, who in this case demonstrated so much courage and determination in navigating their cancer journey. The MNO also acknowledges their courage and willingness to meet in Ottawa to share their experiences. The MNO is extremely grateful for the wisdom that was gained from this effort and the unique insights they provided into the Métis cancer journey, all of which will benefit the Métis community and broader MNO family both now and in the years to come.

With this information in hand, the MNO will continue to work with the Government of Ontario, the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, Cancer Care Ontario and the Local Health Integration Networks (LHIN) to identify the factors that contribute to cancer in Métis communities, improve cancer services and programs within the province and to help bring about better healing and wellness outcomes. ∞

MNO Consultation Committees receive training

During the weekend of March 15-16, over 60 members of Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Consultation Committees participated in annual New Relationship Fund (NRF) training in Toronto which was organized by MNO Lands, Resources and Consultations Branch staff.

The Consultation Committees work in collaboration with MNO staff to ensure inclusive, transparent and meaningful Métis consultation and accommodation processes with the Crown and proponents are in place. This collective-based, aggregate approach enables the MNO to ensure that regional rights-bearing communities have access to the technical and scientific expertise they need to effectively engage in consultation and accommodation processes.

In addition to MNO Lands, Resources and Consultations staff, training sessions were also provided by MNO Communications staff and MNO Education and Training staff and each committee met separately to consider their priorities for the upcoming year and to discuss their direction and long-term plans. The annual training again proved very valuable and demonstrated the value of MNO citizens and leaders in this field coming to work and learn together. ∞



▲ Participants at the 2014 MNO Consultation Committee 2014 NRF Training.

Métis students explore their culture and future aspirations

The 2014 MNO Infinite Reach March Break Camp



This March break, 22 Métis high school students from across Ontario gathered in Mattawa for the 2014 Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Infinite Reach March Break Camp. This was a large increase attendance from previous camps as the event becomes more popular each year.

Held at the Canadian Ecology Centre (CEC), this four-day retreat provided an opportunity for students to discuss post-secondary options and learn about the MNO and its Infinite Reach Métis Solidarity Network while embracing their culture and heritage.

The MNO Infinite Reach Network is comprised Métis post-secondary students who have the common goal of working together to enhance their post-secondary experience. The program is designed to ease the transition of Métis high school students to post-secondary by creating a community where Métis students can share experiences and support one another in their academic pursuits.

"Infinite Reach March Break Camp is a chance for university and college students to connect with high school students and introduce them to not only what post-secondary is about but also what's available as far as support and community at the institutions they are applying to," explained Sahra MacLean, MNO Infinite Reach Facilitator for Carleton University.

Throughout their stay, the students participated in various cultural activities that allowed them to connect with nature. A favourite of Sudbury student Melanie-Rose Frappier was the snow shoe hike through the beautiful grounds. Students were also taught about different tree types while taking a winter hike along the very same waters their voyageur ancestors traveled. At night, a wolf howl was held and enjoyed by all. The evenings consisted of delicious meals, free time and camp fire socials.

"It is a great learning experience because I don't know too much about

being Métis so I wanted to learn about that," said Sudbury student Alexandre Savoie. "Also I knew it would be fun because of the cultural and outdoors activities."

Traditional Métis crafts were a big hit. Students participated in beading, medicine pouch and moccasin workshops and finger weaving lessons were provided by MNO Infinite Reach Facilitators for Sault College, Nikki Doucette and Melody Chislett-Morris. MNO Infinite Reach Facilitators Maclean, Tera Beaulieu and Elijah Cadarette also volunteered at the camp.

“These kids didn’t know each other yesterday and now they are together and sharing, that’s Métis family... It makes me proud and happy to see them all come together and share something... I think it’s just excellent.”

— Senator Porter-Brunelle

"What I liked most about this camp was getting to know people like me

and getting in touch with my roots," said Ottawa student Colleen Ryan.

The cultural and heritage aspect of the camp was also a favourite of Toronto student Will McLean.

MNO Senator Verna Porter-Brunelle and MNO Veterans' Council President Joe Paquette were also in attendance and shared Métis culture and heritage with the students. Paquette shared traditional knowledge techniques which included Toronto student Simone Blais's favourite activity, a fire starting workshop.

"These kids didn't know each other yesterday and now they are together and sharing, that's Métis family," said Senator Porter-Brunelle. "It makes me proud and happy to see them all come together and share something...I think it's just excellent."

Along with cultural activities, students were provided an overview on the future job market, information on various post-secondary opportunities, potential funding, programs, disciplines and took part in a resume writing workshop.

An overview of the MNO, its education and training programs and a screening of the MNO documentary *The Métis Nation of Ontario: 1993-2013* was provided to the students. Additionally, Renée Michaud, the 2012/13 MNO Generation Innovation Challenge runner up talked to the students about how to take advantage of resources available to them.

Many students showed up to camp as strangers but left as great friends. Taylor Cosman from Barrie, Chantele Gouliquer from Atikokan and Ezra McCaveney from Pickering expressed how meeting fellow Métis youth was their favourite part of the experience.

The camp proved to be a great opportunity for students to build networks not just with each other but with the Infinite Reach Facilitators, MNO staff and community members.∞

Check out the March Break Camp video on the MNO website homepage.



▲ **TOP:** The 2014 MNO Infinite Reach March Break Camp participants with MNO staff and volunteers. (Left to right) **FRONT ROW:** Rachelle Normand, Ezra McCaveney, Coleen Ryan, Taylor Cosman, Melody Chislette-Morris, Nikki Doucette and Katherine Stewart-McNeil (MNO staff). **MIDDLE ROW:** Tamarra Shepherd (MNO staff), Sheila Grantham (MNO staff), Chantele Gouliquer, Melanie-Rose Frappier, Sara Belle Ryan, Simon Blais, Shelayne Raymond and Katrina Harrison. **BACK ROW:** Mike (CEC staff), Elijah Cadarette, Brian Tucker (MNO staff), Alexandre Savoie, Joshua Bushey, Matthew Bombardier, Jean-Luc Harrison, Will McLean, Victor Brunelle, Verna Porter-Brunelle and Aaron (CEC staff).

▼ Collage of images from the 2014 MNO Infinite Reach March Break Camp in Mattawa.



MNO Veterans' Council

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Veterans' Council is open to all MNO citizens who have served in the Canadian Forces (Regular Forces and/or Reserves, have completed the Military Occupation Course and were honorably discharged). If you fit that description or know of a family member or friend that does, the MNO Veterans' Council wants to hear from them.

Métis veterans pledged to protect this great country and its people, and the MNO Veterans' Council continues to help them live up to that pledge. The Council represents Métis veterans within the MNO, works with youth and community councils to encourage recognition of veteran contributions and achievements and participates in veterans events. The Council supports veterans by helping where and when it can and works to insure that the great sacrifices made by every veteran are remembered and commemorated.

For more information about the MNO Veterans' Council and its activities contact the following:

| | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|----------|
| President | Joseph Paquette | mnovc@rogers.com | Region 8 |
| Chair | Guy Mandeville | gmandeville@sympatico.ca | |
| Senator | Alis Kennedy | alis.kennedy5@gmail.com | Region 8 |
| Treasurer | Chris Plummer | cmplummer@rogers.com | |
| Women's Representative | Lisa Tessier | lisa.tessier@yahoo.ca | Region 7 |
| Sgt-At-Arms | Greg Garratt | greggarratt63@gmail.com | Region 7 |



▲ (Left to right) MNO Veterans' Council Chair Guy Mandeville, C.D., Veteran Derek Anderson, C.D., and MNO Veterans' Council President Joseph Paquette.

Joining the MNO Veterans' Council ranks

Submitted by: Joseph Paquette, MNO Veterans' Council President

On April 5, 2014, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Veterans' Council presented Veteran Derek Anderson, C.D., with the Louis Riel Commemorative Medal and accompanying certificate as well as the Batoche Reconciliation Medal. Anderson served one tour in Bosnia and two tours in Afghanistan. He was awarded the Canadian Forces Sacrifice Medal for wounds he received while serving in Afghanistan. Currently living in Thunder Bay with is family, Anderson works with the MNO Thuner Bay Métis Council. The MNO Veterans' Council is proud to welcome Veteran Derek Anderson to their ranks.

MNO Veterans' Council Women's Representative honoured by council

Submitted by: Greg Garratt, MNO Veterans' Council Sgt-At-Arms and Joseph Paquette, MNO Veterans' Council President

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Veterans' Council continues to be very active. On April 5, the MNO Veterans' Council held one of their quarterly meetings where they held a swearing-in ceremony for MNO citizen Lisa Tessier as the Council's new Women's Representative. A great addition to the council, on March 23, Tessier was also presented with Louis Riel Commemorative Medal and Certificate as well as the Batoche Medal from the MNO Veterans' Council for her over 30 years of service in the Canadian Forces. The medals were presented at the MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council community meeting by MNO Council President David Dusome and MNO Veterans' Council Sgt-At-Arms Greg Garratt. Congratulations Lisa and thank you for your service.

► Lisa Tessier and MNO Veterans' Council President Joseph Paquette during the swearing-in ceremony to her new position as MNO Veterans' Council Women's Representative. ▼ The MNO Veterans' Council. (Left to right) Chris Plummer, Treasurer; Guy Madeville, Chair, Dr. Alis Kennedy, Senator; Joseph Paquette, President; Lisa Tessier, Women's Representative and Greg Garratt, Sgt-At-Arms.



MNO Council honours three Métis veterans

Submitted by: Thomas A. Thompson, PCMNO Councillor for Region 6

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) High Land Waters Métis Council recently presented the Louis Riel Medal and the Medal of Batoche to three very deserving Métis veterans. Veteran Bill Fraser of Trenton and Veteran Edward Dorian of Seeleys Bay were presented with the medals at the Council's monthly meeting on March 14. Veteran Thomas W. Thompson of Northbrook was presented with the medals on April 6 by Acting Council President Deidre Thompson. All three veterans felt very honoured to receive these tokens of appreciation. "It was an honor to be able to talk with these fine gentlemen and learn about their adventures," said Acting President Thompson. "We are proud to have veterans within our region and are proud that they served for us."

We are proud to have veterans within our region and are proud that they served for us."

— Deidre Thompson



▲ 01: Veteran Edward Dorian Receiving Louis Riel Medal and Medal of Batoche. (Left to right) Guy Mandeville, Chair of the Veterans' Council; Veteran Edward Dorian, Senator Robert Lloyd and Thomas A. Thompson, PCMNO Councillor for Region 6. 02: Deidre Thompson, Acting President of High Land Waters Métis Council presenting the Louis Riel Medal and the Medal of Batoche to her Grandfather Thomas W. Thompson. 03: Veteran Bill Fraser receiving the Louis Riel Medal and the Medal of Batoche. (Left to right) Guy Mandeville, Chair of Veterans' Council; Veteran Bill Fraser; Senator Robert Lloyd and Thomas A. Thompson, PCMNO Councillor for Region 6.



COMMUNITY

MNO council co-sponsor book launch

“Honouring Indigenous Women – Hearts of Nations Vol. 2”

Submitted by: **Tera Beaulieu**, Women’s Representative, MNO Toronto and York Region Métis Council

On the evening of February 12, 2014, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Toronto and York Region Métis Council, Muskrat Magazine and the Sound of My Heart Collective co-sponsored the Toronto book launch of *Honouring Indigenous Women – Hearts of Nations Vol. 2*.

The second volume of *Honouring Indigenous Women*, published by the Indigenous Peoples Solidarity Movement Ottawa, focuses on themes related to women’s lived experiences and relationships and is comprised of written and artistic pieces from 62 women and men from various nations.

The book launch was held at The Toronto Birth Centre, the new home for Seventh Generation Midwives Toronto, a collective of midwives who provide maternity care to women throughout Toronto. The decision to hold the book launch in this community space reflected the key theme and purpose of gathering that evening: to honour the strength and powerful gifts that indigenous women provide in leading, educating, healing, and nurturing our culture, communities and nations.

The evening began with a traditional opening prayer provided by Elder Joanne Dallaire and an honour song was shared by Spirit Wind Women’s Hand Drum Group to honour all of the contributing authors in attendance that evening. Opening remarks were shared by Rebeka Tabobondung, Editor of Muskrat Magazine; Tera Beaulieu, Women’s Representative for the MNO Toronto and York Region Métis Council; and Pei-Ju Wang, Organizer with Sound of My Heart Collective. MNO Toronto and York Region Métis Council President Robert Bird also provided welcoming remarks. Audrey Huntley, Co-founder of No More Silence, an inter/national network to sup-

port the work of activists, academics, researchers, agencies and communities to stop the murders and disappearances of indigenous women, also spoke about a newly formed community run database that documents the deaths of indigenous women/Two-Spirit and Trans peoples.

The bulk of the evening featured readings from contributing authors Zainab Amadahy, Tera Beaulieu, Angela Mashford-Pringle, Catherine McCarty, PJ Prudat and Faith Turner, followed by a panel discussion where authors responded to questions from the audience.

While listening to the inspiring and moving words from the authors, everyone was welcomed to feast on venison stew and bannock provided by the Native Women’s Resource Centre of Toronto. Following the readings and discussion, guests were invited to join in a drumming circle led by Amy Desjarlais and Jenny Blackbird of Spirit Wind Women’s Hand Drum Group.

As songs were being drummed and sung by the circle, it was announced that the first Aboriginal baby had just been delivered by two of the Aboriginal midwives at the birthing centre! As cheers of joy erupted throughout the room, a traditional welcoming song was sung to welcome the newest member of the Aboriginal community into the world. It is hard to imagine a more beautiful and miraculous event taking place that evening, where everyone had gathered to honour the gifts and beauty of our women and all their relations.

As one of the contributing authors and co-organizers for the book launch, Beaulieu was honoured to have had the opportunity to share her writing and story with Métis community members, and also the wider Indigenous community of Toronto. An excerpt of her



▲ MNO Toronto and York Region Métis Council members during the book launch. (Left to right) Tera Beaulieu, Women’s Representative; Marilyn Hew, Secretary/Treasurer; and Robert Bird, President.

contributions can be viewed below. As the Women’s Representative for the MNO Toronto and York Métis Council, Beaulieu found it a privilege to represent the Council that evening and she is grateful for all of the support Council members and the community offered in the organization and implementation of the book launch.

The genuine caring, respect, and warmth that was tangible in the room that evening was not only healing, but energizing and inspiring to continue on in our work to serve and honour our Métis women. ∞

Copies of *Honouring Indigenous Women – Hearts of Nations Vol. 2* are available at: <http://thesoundofmyheart.weebly.com/vol-2.html>



▲ Contributing author and MNO Toronto Region Métis Council Women’s Representative Tera Beaulieu providing a reading during the launch.

Becoming Métis:

A Journey of Learning and Healing

My identity as a Métis woman is ever evolving and changing. While I have always been connected to my European (Hungarian and Ukrainian) ancestry, my roots with Métis culture and history have only started to grow and strengthen within the past five years. My narrative is one that includes many voices and many stories that have been shared with me by my family. Telling this story is part of my healing process and journey, and represents some of the experiences and teachings that I have gathered thus far along the path that I am walking.

I am Métis on my father’s side. My grandfather was

born in St. Laurent, Manitoba, a large Métis community that takes great pride in its history and the preservation of Métis culture. My great-grandparents were Métis from Manitoba and Saskatchewan. My grandfather passed away when I was a very young child, and because of the effects of colonization and my family’s own experienced intergenerational trauma (e.g., alcohol abuse, internalized shame, physical abuse), I became disconnected from Métis culture. To this day, certain family members refuse to discuss our ancestral ties, as I believe it brings up too much pain and grief. As a result of these experiences, I was not raised in

the Métis culture, nor did I learn of my identity as a Métis woman until later in life.

When I think back to my childhood, I can recall the strong intrinsic resonance that I experienced in connection to Aboriginal culture. For instance, the first time I attended a Pow Wow with my mother, as she has always enjoyed participating and exposing my sister and I to different cultures, I remember how struck I was by the sight of an eagle feather and hearing the drum. While I can recall as a young child hearing my aunts and uncles refer to themselves as

(Continued on page 13)

Walking With Our Sisters

MNO citizen honours missing, murdered Aboriginal women with moccasin exhibit



▲ Some of the moccasin tops donated for the *Walking With Our Sisters* exhibit.

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen and renowned Métis artist Christi Belcourt is using her creative talents to support the social movement working to end violence against Aboriginal women. Belcourt has initiated *Walking with Our Sisters*, a travelling exhibition of beaded moccasin tops, each pair commemorating a missing or murdered Aboriginal woman.

The number of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls in Canada is disproportionately high when compared to the general population. Over the last 20 years, this has involved over 800 Aboriginal women and girls and although many people have called for a national inquiry, the federal government has rejected the idea. *Walking With Our Sisters* is both a memorial and a call to action over this long-simmering issue.

Launched in 2013, *Walking With Our Sisters* is a 100 per cent artist driven commemorative art installation project that seeks to honour the lives of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. The project came to life when Belcourt made a Facebook appeal in hopes to assemble a show of 600 pairs of hand-made moccasin tops. To her surprise, she received overwhelming support and received 1,723 pairs from all over the world. The appeal also resulted in 65 beading circle projects where many people learned the craft for the first time and provided the opportunity for community-based dialogue on the issue.

A truly collaborative project, *Walking With Our Sisters* is an entirely crowd-sourced project. From the artwork, to the fundraising, even to the way the exhibit tour is being booked, are all being fueled by hundreds of people who have chosen to become involved.

The installation of the exhibit consists of the more than 1,700 pairs of donated moccasin tops from 1,372 people. The moccasin tops are installed in a winding path on cloth over a gallery floor. Each moccasin top represents an indigenous woman or girl who is missing or has been murdered. Sometimes called “vamps”, “tongues” or “uppers”, the tops of the moccasins are intentionally not sewn into moccasins to represent the unfinished lives of the women they honour. Each exhibit is specific and unique to the space it is being held in. The exhibits are also installed following specific ceremonial protocol and traditions of the communities with the help of volunteers and elders.

“This project is about these women, paying respect to their lives and existence on this earth,” wrote Belcourt. “They are not forgotten. They are sisters, mothers, daughters, cousins, aunties, grandmothers, friends and wives. They

have been cared for, they have been loved, and they are missing.”

“What I’m hoping this exhibition will do, with the scope of the work, the amount of artists combined and with audience participation, is that it will contribute in a positive way to the dialogue about this issue,” stated Belcourt in a previous interview.

It has been said that in the darkest of times, Métis beadwork was more vibrant as creating beautiful works was a way of countering the dark. This is particularly evident in the *Walking With Our Sisters* exhibit.

The exhibit is scheduled to make stops in more than 30 locations across Canada and the United States, with organizers currently booking dates into 2019. Upcoming Ontario exhibits are being held in Sault Ste. Marie and Thunder Bay.

When attending the exhibition, visitors are asked to take off their shoes before walking on paths of cloth that run alongside the tops.

For more information and tour dates visit:
<http://walkingwithoursisters.ca/>

“This project is about these women, paying respect to their lives and existence on this earth... They are not forgotten. They are sisters, mothers, daughters, cousins, aunties, grandmothers, friends and wives. They have been cared for, they have been loved, and they are missing.”

— Christi Belcourt



▲ *Walking With Our Sisters* exhibit in Regina, Saskatchewan at the First Nations University.



▲ MNO citizen, artist Christi Belcourt.

(Continued from page 11)

“Indian” and once hearing my father tell me that I was good at weaving threads because “it was in my blood,” I never truly understood what these comments meant or that they referred to an aspect of our family, and my personal, identity. Close to five years ago, my family was brought together again as a result of an uncle’s passing. Part of our healing process was to tell stories about our family members, while laughing and crying and reminiscing. It was during this gathering that my aunts and uncles began to discuss our Aboriginal ancestry in depth and that I learned of my connection with Métis culture and community. This event spurred an undertaking that has lasted for the past three years in which I researched, investigated, and reconnected with my Métis roots and culture.

Identifying and connecting with a Métis community has been both challenging and rewarding. For a while I felt very isolated and disconnected from Métis peoples living in Toronto, as I did not perceive there to be a strong and active community that practiced the culture and traditions. One of the most rewarding experiences of my life was to travel to St. Laurent and spend time in my grandfather’s ancestral community, listening to the Elders, learning the history of the community, and laying tobacco at the site of my ancestors’ burial grounds. I felt an incredible and powerful connection to this land and to the community as a whole. Upon returning to Toronto from this trip, I was even more motivated to find a community of Métis peoples that I could exchange stories and celebrate our culture with. Within the past year, the Métis Nation of Ontario started a program entitled the Infinite Reach Métis Student Solidarity Network, which is comprised of incoming and upper year postsecondary students who work to establish a network of Métis students within educational institutions. As the facilitator of this program at the University of Toronto, I organized a number of Métis specific cultural events and activities over the course of the year, strengthening a Métis community within the University, and also within the larger community of Toronto. I have been able to form many wonderful relationships with other Métis individuals in the city, which has helped me in my own healing and development as a strong and proud Métis woman. I look forward to returning these gifts back to my community and the future generations of Métis to come.

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TERESA ROSE BEAULIEU is of Hungarian, Ukrainian and Métis ancestry and resides in Toronto, Ontario. She is currently completing her Doctor of Philosophy in the Counseling Psychology Program at the University of Toronto and is a recipient of a 2011 Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship. Her clinical practice and program of research is Aboriginal mental health and healing.

BOOK REVIEW

Métis Grandfather

All opinions expressed are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect Métis Nation of Ontario policies.

Submitted by: **Raymond D. Tremblay**

The time had finally arrived for Raymond and Louise, residents of Ottawa, to visit their grandsons, Maxime and Sébastien, and their parents, Erin and Éric, who lived on the beautiful shores of Lake Ontario in Bath, Ontario.

Maxime was an outgoing, intelligent, and artistic brown-haired 12 year old boy who had a voracious appetite for new knowledge. Since early childhood, he had developed a close relationship with his grandfather. From the time he spoke his first words in French, he always called his grandfather “Grandpapa Ho Ho.” To him, his grandfather not only played Santa Claus at the Rideau Centre in Ottawa and at other places because he had a beautiful, soft, and long white beard, but until he reached his eighth birthday, Maxime believed that his grandfather was ‘the one and only real Santa.’ That’s why Maxime continued to call his grandfather, “Grandpapa Ho Ho.”

Sébastien was not only an energetic and bright red-haired eight year old little boy, he was gifted with a vivid and wild imagination. Sébastien also came across as somewhat of an attention seeker who never hesitated to question his parents and teachers whenever he did not understand what was being shared with him. He loved playing in the outdoors. Over the years, he too had bonded with his grandfather in a special way. And like Maxime, he always called his grandfather, “Grandpapa Ho Ho,” whenever he saw him or spoke with

him on the telephone. He loved coming to see his grandfather at the Rideau Centre during the Christmas season because he firmly believed that he was ‘the one and only Santa Claus’ in the whole wide world.

“... grandfather was proud of his Métis roots and heritage. Whenever he came, the boys always hoped that their grandfather would tell them more interesting stories about their Métis ancestors.”

Both boys loved it when their grandparents came to visit them. They knew that their

MÉTIS GRANDFATHER



Raymond D. Tremblay

grandfather was proud of his Métis roots and heritage. Whenever he came, the boys always hoped that their grandfather would tell them more interesting stories about their Métis ancestors. Actually, during this week long visit of their “Grandfather Ho Ho,” the boys were now, more than ever, determined to ask him about their Métis background and traditions since they were in the process of learning more about the Aboriginal, including the First Nation, Inuit, and Métis way of life in school. ∞

If you are interested in joining them on their exciting journey of discovery, you may order a copy of this book, Métis Grandfather, being sold for \$20 a copy plus shipping costs by simply contacting the author at wei-min@sympatico.ca.

Métis culture at Textile Museum of Canada

Submitted by: **Jessica MacLean**

On May 21, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Infinite Reach Student Solidarity Network facilitators Sahra MacLean and Jessica MacLean will be hosting a Métis beading workshop in partnership with the Textile Museum of Canada’s Wide Open Wednesday program.

The Textile Museum of Canada offers workshops on Wednesdays that explore maker culture. These workshops bring artists and artisans into the museum to share their craft. In partnership with the museum, the MacLeans will be sharing their traditional knowledge of beading and how they explore Métis identity through making beaded art.

For the contemporary Métis person beading is a pass time, something done to unwind after work or on the weekend. It is an art, an expression of Métis vast creativity and artistic tribute to nature. But for most beading is a social activity, something brought to the coffee shop to work on while spending time with friends. Bead-

ing is a way that Métis connect with their children as it is learned from a mother or grandmother. Beading is also a way to show love for one another, there is nothing sweeter than the gift of beading from a loved one. No matter what it means to each individual, the practice is rooted in Métis heritage and is a defining feature of Métis culture.

“My people will sleep for one hundred years, but when they awake, it will be the artists who give them their spirit back.”

— Louis Riel

Material culture is integral to the Métis way of life. Métis define themselves in many ways; by music, stories, and particularly by the way they adorn themselves. This is especially apparent when looking at distinctive Métis objects such as the iconic sash or Métis traditional clothing. These are physical manifestations of a woman’s love for her family. These are symbols of Métis culture that can only be preserved by making them part of everyday life.

The MacLeans invite the community to join them on May 21, from 5pm to 8pm at the Textile Museum of Canada in Toronto to explore your own Métis identity through the art of beading. The workshop is free with a pay-what-you-can admission to the museum. Everyone from beginners to expert grandmothers welcome. ∞



▲ Sahra (left) and Jessica (right) MacLean during a beading workshop held at Carleton University.

MNO Toronto and York Region Métis Council Governance & Finance training

Submitted by: **Beth Honsberger**, MNO Community Relations Coordinator

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) benefits immensely from the dedicated volunteers who are members of its chartered community councils. These hard-working individuals spend hundreds of hours building and strengthening their Métis communities.

The MNO has been able to develop and deliver a Governance and Finance course that helps community councils perform their important work. Recently, the MNO Toronto and York Region Métis Council participated in this two-day seminar from February 8-9.

The training was facilitated by MNO Community Relations Coordinators Glen Lipinski and Beth Honsberger. The training explains the role of community coun-

cils as the MNO's local governments, whose structure and purpose is coordinated through each council's charter agreement with the MNO. The course covers everything from how to run effective meetings and engage citizens in council activities to budgeting and the various financial practices, as well as regulations and legislation that community councils follow.

Newly elected Council members benefited from the training and veteran members were able to expand their knowledge and share past experiences. Also in attendance were eager members of the Toronto and York Region Métis community who were enthusiastic to learn, participate and become an active part of their local Métis community. ∞



▲ MNO Toronto and York Region Métis Council members who attended the training. (Left to right) **BACK ROW:** Dave Darnely, Derek Johnstone, Women's Rep Tera Beaulieu, Councillor Todd Ross and President Robert Bird. **FRONT ROW:** Rick McIvor, Secretary/Treasurer Marilyn Hew, Chair Katherine Stewart-McNeil and Antoine Pellerin.

MNO Great Lakes Métis Council holds Valentine's & Family Day event

Submitted by: **Susan Schank**, Office Coordinator for the MNO Great Lakes Métis Council

On Sunday February 9, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Great Lakes Métis Council held a Valentine's Day themed Family Day celebration for MNO citizens and friends.

A potluck was held and enjoyed by all. The space was decorated by Métis youth with hearts hanging from the ceiling, draped on the tables and centre pieces. Love was everywhere!

Among the many treats, there were candy dishes created by Métis

youth member Emma Harrison. Each were full with cinnamon hearts and 64 homemade pink frosted cupcakes, which were displayed on a three tiered carousel. The cupcakes were especially enjoyed by many children who even used their fingers to taste before they devoured this special sweet treat.

Gingerbread houses were built, frosted and then adorned with candy by families. The gingerbread house was used to symbolize family and

home. The event was coordinated and facilitated by Métis youth and they did an excellent job!

After the sticky cleanup, the MNO documentary *Métis Nation of Ontario 1993-2003* was shown.

MNO staff members Jo-Anne Parent and Jessica Rice were also in attendance and provided a presentation on MNO education and training programs. What a wonderful way to celebrate Family Day! ∞



▲ Some of the fun at the MNO Great Lakes Council Family Day celebration.

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About

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Take part in the conversation and connect with fellow MNO community members from near and far.

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- Daily postings and updates on weekdays
- Photo galleries of pictures often not seen elsewhere
- Fun and friendly comments from the MNO community

Don't miss out.
Join the nearly 1,000 MNO fans who have already liked our page!

The \$60 poverty challenge

Submitted by: **Nancy Hatch,**
Administrative Assistant Coordinator for the MNO Northwest Métis Council

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Amber Griffiths and her children Anaiya and Jackson took part in Kenora’s annual Poverty Challenge from February 7-12, 2014.

For five days the family had to get by with just the basics in food, entertainment and transportation to raise public awareness about how poverty affects the daily lives of many people in their community.

The challenge, which kicked off the 7th Annual Week of Action Against Poverty, asked families to attempt to stay within a social assistance budget for five days. As a single parent family, the Griffiths were allotted \$60 for the week. This is the same amount provided by the Ontario Works Basic Needs Benefit.

The budget included all food and drink, entertainment, some personal supplies and transportation costs. In addition to making every penny count, the family also contended with unforeseen circumstances in the form of a daily “Challenge Card”. These introduced another variable into their routine and required sacrifice or compromise for the families to stick to their budget. The challenges, which can be read about on the family’s blog, included no Wi-Fi, a school bake sale, lice and swimming lessons.

A difficult challenge for a family whose



▲ **Amber Griffiths and her children Anaiya (left) and Jackson (right) took part in the Kenora Week of Action Poverty Challenge.**

regular “basic needs” budget is double that of what was provided, the Griffiths managed to make it through with some change left over. The family gained a new found appreciation for all that they have. The kids were eager to have their electronics back and Amber enjoyed a Tim Horton’s coffee.

“I am grateful for the opportunity to do this challenge with my family,” wrote Amber in the family’s final blog post, “and hope that we have helped our community in some way understand what is out there.” ∞

The Griffiths Poverty Challenge blog can be viewed here: www.makingkenorahome.ca/poverty_challenge_2014.htm



▲ **MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council members with other volunteers who took part in the 2013 tree planting project.**

MNO citizens continue conservation efforts in Georgian Bay

Submitted by: **Larry Ferris,** MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council Chairperson

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Georgian Bay Metis Council members are being noted by local Conservation Clubs such as the North Simcoe Anglers and Hunters and the Lafontaine Habitat Restoration Association for their environmental work.

Last year the MNO Georgian Bay Metis Council members helped the North Simcoe Anglers and Hunters plant 4,600 trees in the Simcoe County Forest Millennium Tract. Both groups have recently approached the Council asking for help with upcoming tree planting

projects for the spring. The Council is glad to be given the opportunity to continue their conservation efforts in the region.

Council members also partnered with Georgian Bay Bassmasters to purchase 1,000 trees hope which they will reverse the problem of dropping water levels near Lafontaine, Ontario. The Lafontaine Habitat Restoration Association provided volunteers and fantastic local and specific knowledge.

These are great organizations all working in the name of conservation and the Council is proud of its role. ∞

An active winter for Métis youth group

Submitted by: **Larry Ferris,** MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council Chairperson

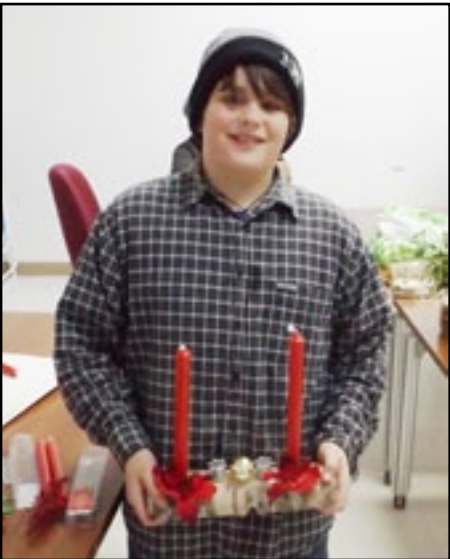
The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Georgian Bay Métis Council Youth Group has been very active this winter. The youth have been working on creating walking sticks and dream catchers as well as activities such as snowshoeing, orienteering and tobogganing.

Lessons were provided to the youth on snowshoeing and how to use a compass. It was impressive how quickly the youth caught on to both activities. While sledding, youth were also shown how the Métis sash was used to keep warm and were taught about the practicality of the sash as well as its symbolic importance.

The group was also fortunate to of enjoyed a dinner and a movie night and a four feature drive-in movie night at the MNO office in Midland.

Additionally, MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council youth enjoyed an evening of making yule logs for Christmas.

Youth member Dalton Latondress took great pride in creating a wonderful yule log decoration. He was generous enough to gift it to the secretary at his school. She was overwhelmed and moved by his generosity. She told Latondress that his yule log would be the centre piece of her Christmas dinner table. ∞



◀ **Youth member Borden Boyer with his yule log creation.** ▼ **MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council Youth Group member snowshoeing.**



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| Listing | \$150 | \$270 | \$360 | \$420 | \$450 | \$495 |

* Double the price for an ad to appear in full colour.

Rates* for MNO Community Councils, MNO Citizens & other Métis Governments

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2014 Publishing Schedule

- May 16, 2014 (publication date June 16)
- September 5, 2014 (publication date October 1)
- November 1, 2014 (publication date December 12)

For more information please contact AlyshaA@metisnation.org

ACHIEVEMENTS

Métis singer-songwriter receives first-ever Juno nomination

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Amanda Rheume was nominated for a 2014 Juno Award in the category of Aboriginal Album of the Year. This is Rheume's first-ever Juno nomination.

Rheume is a Métis singer-songwriter known for her powerful voice. Her latest album *Keep a Fire*, which has been nominated for Aboriginal Album of the Year, is a collection of family stories celebrating

her Métis heritage. Rheume's describes the album on her website as "varied and evocative collection of mostly story-songs about her ancestors that more than lives up to the tradition of epic family-of-origin albums".

"It's such an honour to be nominated in this category," said Rheume in an interview with the Ottawa Sun, "because the album is comprised of songs about my heritage, my ancestors and tells the stories of the things

they had to go through to give me the life I have now."

The Ottawa born and raised musician was the winner of the 2008 LiVE 885 Big Money Shot challenge. She was also short-listed last year for the Council for the Arts in Ottawa's RBC Emerging Artist Award and has sung the national anthems at an Ottawa Senators hockey game.

Fellow Juno nominees included George

Leach, Inez Jasper, Desiree Dorion and Nathan Cunningham with Leach winning the Juno.

The 43th annual Juno Awards was held in Winnipeg on March 30. ∞

For more information on Rheume visit her website at www.amandarheume.com

▼ **Amanda Rheume performing.**



It's such an honour to be nominated in this category... because the album is comprised of songs about my heritage, my ancestors and tells the stories of the things they had to go through to give me the life I have now."

— Amanda Rheume

Métis classical vocalist bound for Europe

Rebecca Cuddy to receive opera training in England, Italy and Switzerland.

Submitted by: **Richard Cuddy**, President of the MNO Credit River Métis Council

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen and classical vocalist Rebecca Cuddy will be training and performing in Europe this summer.

Cuddy, a third year student in the vocal performance program at Western University, auditioned with other vocal students and professionals from across Canada and Europe for a place in opera training programs and productions in Europe this summer.

As the successful candidate, this summer Cuddy will join the Yorkshire Opera Workshop in England where she will be performing the role of "Queen of the Fairies" in Gilbert and Sullivan's operetta *Iolanthe*. She will also

be attending the Accademia Europa Dell'Opera in Lucca, Italy, where she will be performing the role of "Sesto" in Handel's opera *Giulio Cesare*. Cuddy will also be participating in masters classes, vocal coaching and language instruction in England, Italy and Switzerland.

Well known in the Métis community, Cuddy performed at the 20th Anniversary Gala event during the MNO Annual General Assembly (AGA), many Louis Riel day events including at the Upper Canada Law Society, Toronto City Hall flag raising ceremony and events for several MNO community councils.

Cuddy and her family wish to thank the MNO for all of their kind support. ∞



▲ **Rebecca Cuddy**

Bowling her way to the world games

Submitted by: **Verna Ross**

Miranda Panas, granddaughter of Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizens Verna and Elmer Ross, is bowling her way to the world games.

 From March 21-23, Panas participated in the Canadian qualifier of the Qubica AMF Bowling World Cup. Panas had a strong qualifying round, bowling a 213 average through 18 games and earning the 2014 event's first perfect 300 game (game nine of the 18-game qualifying round).

 Panas has already compiled an impressive bowling resume, including representing Canada twice at the international level.

 In 2010, Panas was the youngest player to bowl a perfect game at the Youth Bowling National Championships. In 2012 she qualified for the Tournament of the Americas through her performance at the Canadian Tenpin Fed-

eration Nationals and placed third in the Junior Gold Championships.

 In 2013 alone, Panas won gold in the Youth Bowling National Championships, won the Carl Malcomson Scholarship Award for Intermediate Girl for her high average of 204, won bronze at the PABCON Youth Championships in Puerto Rico and received a plaque recognizing her high average of 202 in the 2013 Ontario season.

 A very accomplished bowler, it is no shock that this young woman is headed to the 2014 Youth Bowling Championships in May and will also be representing Team Canada this summer in Hong Kong at the World Youth Championships.

 Congratulations on all your achievements and best of luck! ∞

Miranda Panas ▶





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▲ Sgt. Robert Baskey (right) was presented with the Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal by OPP Deputy Commissioner Brad Blair (left) on December 23, 2013 alongside his (left to right) sister Tracy Quirt and wife Roseanne Amyot-Baskey.

MNO citizen honoured with Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal

On December 23, 2013, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen and Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) Sgt. Robert Baskey was presented with the Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal for his service in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan in 2012.

 The Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal acknowledges the unique contribution to peace that Canadian peacekeepers have made since 1947. The medal was presented to Sgt. Baskey by OPP Deputy Commissioner Brad Blair.

 This is yet another example of the valuable contributions made by Métis for the betterment of Canada. Congratulations on this great achievement. ∞



MNO veteran recognized with lifetime achievement award

Submitted by: **Greg Garratt**, MNO Veterans' Council Sgt-At-Arms

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Veterans' Council President Joseph Paquette has been honoured with a prestigious provincial award recognizing his more than 25 years of work preserving and teaching Métis traditions and culture.

On February 21, 2014, Paquette was presented with the 2013 Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Award for Lifetime Achievement at Queen's Park in Toronto. The award was presented by the Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario and recognizes Paquette's outstanding contributions to the identification, preservation, protection and promotion of Ontario's heritage.

The honour is awarded to volunteers who have made outstanding contributions to the preservation and promotion of Ontario's heritage over a period of 25 years or more.

"Each year, volunteers play an integral role in conserving the heritage of this province. I'm pleased to recognize the achievements of these dedicated individuals who have made outstanding contributions to keeping our history alive for the benefit of future generations," said The Honourable David C. Onley in a statement.

Paquette, who is a Métis knowledge holder and veteran, was nominated by the City of Mississauga for his work in preserving and promoting the traditions and teachings of Ontario Aboriginal ancestors. Paquette has taken a personal interest in cross-cultural education, providing

programming to make participants, young and old, aware of Aboriginal historical and community traditions using traditional storytelling to connect with audiences. Committed to education, he is a wealth of knowledge and his knowledge of Canadian history has made him a trusted resource. Paquette is a passionate leader who selflessly dedicates his time to planning events, ceremonies and celebrations with partnering groups.

"Joseph has attained a marker in life that few achieve and doing so has strengthened the pride of being Métis as an individual and the Métis as a collective," said MNO Veterans' Council Sgt-at-arms Greg Garratt. "Being a veteran means he has kept alive many memories and traditions and participated in keeping that part of our Métis history and nation building."

Paquette believes that this honour is recognition not just for him, but for all Métis veterans. He encourages people to see veterans as active members in their communities making a difference.

The MNO is proud to have Paquette as an active citizen and thanks him for all he has done for youth, veterans and the Métis community. Congratulations on this great achievement. ∞



▲ MNO Veterans' Council President Joseph Paquette (left) receiving the 2013 Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Award for Lifetime Achievement from the Honourable David C. Onley (right) at Queen's Park.
▼ Paquette with fellow recipients.



MNO youth member recognized for outstanding community commitment

Métis youth Melanie-Rose Frappier, a grade 11 student at École secondaire du Sacré-Cœur in Sudbury, was honoured at the 2014 Gathering Our Voices Aboriginal Youth Conference which took place March 18-21 in Vancouver.

Some 2,000 young people from 14 to 24 years from across the country gathered at the conference. Organized by the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC) and their Provincial Aboriginal Youth Council (BCAAFC - PAYC), the gathering was aimed to equip these young leaders and develop sharing and networking.

During the conference, Frappier was awarded the Aboriginal Youth Award in recognition of her outstanding commitment and community successes.

Frappier plays a leading role and strives to improve the lives of citizens through her multiple contributions. Smart

and articulate, she is very proud of her Métis and francophone culture.

Frappier is an active youth member of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and was one of the participants of the 2013 and the 2014 MNO Infinite Reach March Break camps. She also participates in various Aboriginal events such as Louis Riel Day and National Aboriginal Day in her Sudbury community.

This year, Frappier also joined the Conseil scolaire du Nouvel-Ontario (CSCNO) Aboriginal Education Program, which aims to engage young Aboriginal teens to learn more and make a positive difference in their lives.

Congratulations on this achievement! ∞



► Melanie-Rose Frappier at the 2014 Gathering Our Voices Aboriginal Youth Conference.

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