

Higher Education, Higher Aspirations

This looks to be an important year for moving Métis post-secondary education issues ahead

With final exams upon us and students busily lining up for summer jobs or graduation, the MNO Education and Training staff is equally active. This looks to be an important year for moving Métis post-secondary education issues ahead. It all started March 2-3 when the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities hosted the first Aboriginal Post-secondary Education Gathering with the theme “Learning from Each Other”. The event brought together over 400 participants interested in talking about post-secondary education and a better place for Aboriginal students. The event facilitated a dialogue between participants regarding the barriers and possible solutions Métis and other students encounter when transitioning to higher education.

Throughout the event the Métis Nation of Ontario was well-represented. President Gary Lipinski was a keynote speaker and eloquently discussed the obstacles faced by Métis students who want to attend post-secondary schools. Raised in Fort Francis, Ontario, he shared his own journey to attend university which brought him from his small northern community to the urban centres of southern Ontario. President Lipinski currently holds degrees and certificates from Lakehead University, Queen’s University and the University of Western Ontario. In sharing his

“**THERE IS NO FEDERAL OR PROVINCIAL FUNDING FOR MÉTIS STUDENTS.**”

story he inspired those students in attendance to continue working towards achieving their academic goals.

In addition to encouraging meaningful dialogue between participants, the event also provided a venue for releasing the newly established Ontario Aboriginal Post-secondary Education Framework Policy. This framework was created by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities in collaboration with Aboriginal representatives, including MNO staff and community members. The framework is intended to inform policy development and program design within the Ministry as well as “initiate and enhance meaningful partnerships with Aboriginal leaders and communities”. President Lipinski, as well as other keynote speakers, made a point of challenging the Ministry to commit

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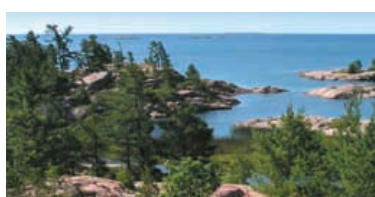
▲ MNO President Gary Lipinski participates in a panel discussion during the closing of the Aboriginal Post-secondary Education Conference.



MÉTIS COUNCILS

MNO Métis Community Councils' news and events.

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AGA 2011

The 18th Annual General Assembly of the MNO will take place in Parry Sound on August 20-22.

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MOCCASIN CAMP

Métis citizens learn about their heritage and history.

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HOUSING

The MNO Housing Branch assists low-income homeowners to rehabilitate their homes.

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Announcements

THE MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

SPRING 2011, No. 65

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**The next
Voyageur deadline:
May 21st, 2011**

PUBLICATION #:
PM 40025265



New Arrivals



No bouquet of flowers or box of chocolate could compare to the sweet, wonderful Valentine's gift Melissa Pilon and Joey Charron (former Youth representative for Region 3) received on Valentine's Day. Their first child was born. At approximately 5:30 P.M., **Joseph Charron Jr.** (the 4th) was born, weighing in at 7lb and 2 ounces. Proud parents are Nicole (Region 3, Employment & Training Officer) and Joe Charron; the proud grandparents are Jim and Cindy Pilon.



Leesa and Justin McCarville are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, **Grace Lucy McCarville**, born on December 1, 2010, at 1:00 P.M. weighing 7lbs 15oz and 22 inches long. God bless our precious little gem. Proud grandparents are Andy and Maureen Broder of Ottawa and Debbie and Dave McCarville of Thunder Bay. Special thanks for the wonderful care and support provided by Sandra, Alex and Nathalie of the Community Mid-Wives of Thunder Bay.

Justin McCarville is in the Building Systems Technical Advisor Internship Program (BSTAIP) in Thunder Bay.



Elliott McPhearson Banville was born on November 14th, 2010, and weighed 9 lbs. 6 oz. at birth. The parents are Derek and Allyson Banville.

Elliott is a proud Métis and attended his first Métis potluck (put on by the Oshtawa and Durham Region Métis Council [ODRMC]) with dad, mom, and grandma on January 8th, 2011. I am quite sure that at one point during the jigging Elliott kicked his foot out in an attempt to join in. We are now on the lookout for a Métis sash that will fit him. Thanks to ODRMC for making our son's first Métis experience a memorable one.

— *Derek and Allyson Banville*
Gores Landing, ON.

Anniversary



“What more could we ask for?”

Congratulations to **Bertha** (nee Vasseur) and **James Tolles** who celebrated their 57th wedding anniversary on February 20, 2011. I would like to acknowledge this milestone and congratulate them on having a wonderful and loving marriage for 57 years. I would also like to add how blessed we are as a family to have such role models and teachings that have shaped us into the adults we are.

My daughter asked them what their secret is for staying together for so long and their response was, “We never had much, so loving each other and working hard together is what gave us the strength and determination to make our marriage work. We have been very blessed with eight children, over 20 grandchildren and great-grandchildren. What more could we ask for?”

Congratulations mom and dad, we love you today and always. From Darlene (Don), Karen (Dave), Jim Jr. (Karen), John (Claudette), Tom (Mary), Ben (Bonnie), Julie (Dino), Joyce (Mike) and your many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Joyce Tolles is the treasurer of the Credit River Métis Interim Council.

Special Days



Christmas Remembered

Rollande Pilon of Sudbury created a Métis Christmas tree this past December. It was decorated with feathers, corn cobs, cookies, carrots, marshmallows and walnuts as well as strings of cranberries and popcorn. Red and white bows provided the final festive touch.



Congratulations to the family of Pauline Saulnier, PCMNO Region 7 Councillor and Volunteer of the Year 2010. Pauline is the proud grandmother of **Jolene Paula Saulnier**, born December 4th, 2010, and weighing in at 8 lbs 8 oz.

New Grad Nunavut-bound

By Chris Acton — Métis youth, Nicholas Dubuc-Lavallee, recently graduated from the Surface Diamond Drilling Assistant, Common Core program which was specifically for Aboriginal people, held at Northern College in Kirkland Lake. Nicholas is the son of Chris Lavallee and Diane Dubuc; he is the nephew of the late Senator Ernie Lavallee.

President of the Temiskaming Métis Council, Liliane Ethier, attended the graduation ceremony and addressed the graduating class.

Nicholas has been hired by Boart Longyear Drilling and will begin his career in Nunavut. Congratulations Nicholas, we are proud of you.

Chris Acton is a Councillor for the Temiskaming Métis Community Council and a Training Consultant at Northern College.



President of the Temiskaming Métis Council, Liliane Ethier and graduate Nicholas Dubuc-Lavallee.

MNO launches Direct Toll-free Number for Registry

As part of the continuing improvements to the Métis Nation of Ontario Registry, we now have a dedicated Registry phone line. The number for the line is:

1-855-798-1006 (toll free) or **613-798-1006** for local (Ottawa) calls

The advantage of using this line is that calls are not routed through the MNO reception desk but enter an automated system that enables callers to quickly and easily access the correct individual to assist them. The automated system provides three options:

Line 2	Line 3	Line 4
Citizenship applications or replacement card	Genealogy inquiries	Harvest applications or Harvest cards

In addition to improved access, calls to the Registry may now be monitored and recorded for training and quality assurance purposes.

OSHAWA & DURHAM REGION | Another Successful Holiday Gathering!

Métis fiddles & wild game

By **Robert Pilon**

Oshawa & Durham Region Métis Council

January 8th marked the Oshawa and Durham Region Métis Council's 6th Annual Holiday Gathering and Potluck with 300 people attending this important event. This year, we moved to a new venue, Sinclair School in Whitby, with an auditorium big enough to accommodate a growing number of participants. The hall was decorated with Métis flags; we had some great displays and vendors as well as our beautiful painted teepee and Marcel Labelle's birch-bark canoe--all of which contributed to a very festive atmosphere.

As with past gatherings, there was a wide array of delicious offerings: ranging from those foods more familiar to us, to wonderful wild meats and delicacies and traditional Métis fare like boulettes. People from all over the region as well as from other councils and communities joined in the feast to celebrate the season.

Aside from the unlimited choices of great food, the evening included a full suite of entertainment. The Oshawa Fiddlers--students who just started learning



▲ Joe Paquette and JJ Lavallee

late in 2010--braved the stage and played two tunes: "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" and "Mary Had a Little Lamb"--not exactly Métis music, but they're just learning! Young Rajan Anderson from the Grand River Council area played the fiddle, as did

Alisha Blore and Bob Didier. Michael Diotte entertained the crowd with his guitar and great voice, and the "All My Relations" group drummed for the audience. John Samosi brought want-to-be drummers on stage, testing them to see how

fast they could drum. The Olivine Bousquet Métis Dancers, led by Trina Lavallee, danced better than ever, impressing the crowd with their footwork. But the lead entertainer of the night was award-winning JJ Lavallee who wowed the crowd with great songs accompanied by his guitar, and topping off the night with his amazing fiddling--especially the Orange Blossom Special, a rendition that I'm sure none of us will forget!

As usual, the evening would not have been possible without a host of great volunteers. Everyone pitched in to make this a success, and I want to sincerely thank each and every one of you. Additionally, a big thank you to the donors who generously gave to our silent auction. Once again we were able to cover the costs of the entire event and continue this get-together as something that everyone can afford to attend--plus a lot of people went home with great prizes!

Overall the ODRMC is very proud that we've been able to maintain and grow this great Métis event for our community. For six years this has been an occasion for families to come together and celebrate our rich culture and traditions.

NEW MÉTIS COUNCIL!

MNO Council Charter signed in Atikokan

On Feb. 26, 2011, a Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Community Charter signing ceremony took place in Atikokan. The signing ceremony officially established the Atikokan and Surrounding Area Métis Council.

"Métis citizens are the heart and soul of the MNO," explained MNO President, Gary Lipinski, "and are represented at the local level through MNO Charter Community Councils. The councils are the cornerstone of a strong foundation for the MNO in its push toward its inherent right to self-government. The local councils are also an important communication hub for MNO and play a significant role in fostering community empowerment and development for Métis citizens living within the geographic territory of that council."

The *Charter Agreement* was signed by Marlene Davidson, President of the Atikokan Council, and by MNO President, Gary Lipinski, and MNO Chair, France Picotte. Around 50 people witnessed the ceremony. "We have worked hard," stated President Davidson, "to put this charter in place and we are looking forward to using it to build an even stronger Métis Nation Community Council here in Atikokan."

"I congratulate the Atikokan Métis Council for all their efforts and hard work in getting their Community Charter Agreement signed," commented President Lipinski. "The dedication that brought us here today is a demonstration of what can be achieved by working together to advance Métis rights and improve the social well-being of our Métis

citizens, families and communities. The Métis citizens in the Atikokan area will be well served by those who have stepped forward to advance issues important to the community."

Community councils operate in accordance with MNO Charter Agreements, like the one signed in Atikokan. These provide councils with the mandate to govern, while ensuring accountability, transparency, and consistency. The Charter Agreements along with the "Community Code" and "Community Electoral Code" are the governance and policy documents community councils refer to when conducting council business, and for ensuring accountability through good fiscal management and governance.



▲ left to right: **Kristy Cameron; Lorraine Gauthier Stromberg; Todd Desaulniers; Blaine Davidson; Don Foy; MNO Chair, France Picotte; Council member, Brian Gouliquer; Atikokan Métis Council President, Marlene Davidson; MNO President, Gary Lipinski; Council members: Bruce Foy and Shawn Veran, Federal Member of Parliament for Thunder Bay, John Rafferty.**

MÉTIS COUNCIL RETURNS!



▲ Back row, l to r: **Robert Bird, Chair; Jason Foster, Councillor; Christine Skura, Youth Rep; Marilyn J. Hew, Secretary/Treasurer.** Front Row, l to r: **Gary Lipinski, President MNO; Janet Foster, Councillor; Alis Kennedy, Senator; Donna Grenier, President; France Picotte, Chair MNO.**

GTA Métis

By **Marilyn Hew**

Toronto York Region Métis Council

After several years of silence, the Toronto and York Region Métis now have a voice and representation in Region 8.

The new Toronto and York Region Métis Council was elected on March 27, 2010. The council is made up of men and women who are dedicated to helping Métis in their region find their voice and access resources that are available to them through the MNO and other agencies.

The Council President, Donna Grenier, has a lifelong history of participation in Métis traditions to call upon to serve Region 8. Alis Kennedy is an experienced bilingual Senator and a veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces. Chairperson, Robert Bird, and Secretary/Treasurer, Marilyn Hew, are enjoying a growing aware-

ness of their Métis background. Youth Rep, Christine Skura's rich heritage has been passed from her grandmother, Senator Olive Tiedema. Councillor Janet (Asselin) Foster brings a rich knowledge of Métis history. Her son, Councillor Jason Foster contributes enthusiasm and dedication to round out our council.

We usually meet the second Sunday of each month from 1:00-3:00 P.M. at a recently acquired location--the Community Room at 31 Division of the Toronto Police Services. Located at 40 Norfinch Drive it is easily accessed from the Toronto Transit Commission and major roadways near its Finch Ave. and Hwy 400 site.

All Métis are invited to attend our meetings!

This elected council is dedicated to informing all Métis citizens of Toronto and York Region and advocating on their behalf.

torontoyorkregionmetis@hotmail.com

You can leave a voice message by calling **647-933-1885**.

Full circle success story at Ontario Power Generation

From **Kathleen Lannigan**
Employment & Training Coordinator
HAMILTON

Ontario Power Generation (OPG) is justifiably proud of Jason Prevost, a shy and remarkable young Métis man who has already racked up a number of successes in his fledgling career, with undoubtedly many more to come.

In 2006, Jason was a recipient of OPG's John Wesley Beaver Award, an award that fosters Native entry into post-secondary disciplines such as engineering and technology. The award recognizes Native engineer John Wesley Beaver's contributions and is administered by OPG's Native Circle, a support and mentoring network for Native employees. Every year, the award recipient receives an education bursary and a limited edition print by Native artist Rick Beaver (John Wesley Beaver's son).

Jason is particularly proud of this award because he feels that Jack Beaver, a WWII fighter pilot of Ojibway descent, who subsequently held many engineering and management positions at OPG's predecessor, Ontario Hydro, exemplified many of the personal and professional qualities he admires. Jason finds it reward-



▲ **Jason Prevost**

ing to know that what he and his department accomplish adds significant value to OPG as a whole. He has used the opportunities he's been given at OPG as building blocks, gaining him the business experience to help build a successful career.

Upon graduation in 2008 from Laurentian University with a Bachelor of Commerce degree and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Native Studies, Jason was hired as a Human Resources Intern by the Talent Management team at OPG's head office in Toronto, for a one-year contract. He hadn't worked in an office environment before and the experience was

valuable and advantageous. Just prior to completion of his contract, he was encouraged to apply to OPG's internal job postings. Successful with his application to a financial analyst position in taxation, he's been in the role for more than a year. At the department's request and with OPG's financial assistance, Jason is continuing his education by working toward his Certified Management Accountant designation. He wrote and passed the entrance exam in October 2010, and is well on his way. Although his days are busy, Jason still finds time to play on a baseball team in the summer and on a dart team in the winter.

I enjoy working in OPG's Tax Department. I am able to use my knowledge and skills. The department has provided me the opportunity and support to further develop my skills and achieve my professional goals in pursuing my CMA designation.



▲ **Jamie Triskle**

Métis Athlete Wins Gold

Jamie Triskle, a young Métis woman from Kenora, recently won the gold medal at the 2011 Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations' Nordic Skiing Championship.

Jamie is a grade 12 student at St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Kenora and is part of the Métis community in that area. Jamie's aunt, Sandy, is the Treasurer for the Kenora Métis Council and one of her cousins is Theresa Stenlund, the Regional Councillor on the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario for Region 1, which in-

cludes Kenora.

Jamie, who suffers from cerebral palsy, won gold in the Para Nordic Three kilometre free event at Ottawa's Nakkertok Cross-Country Ski Club. Her time of 4:58 was almost two minutes faster than her nearest competitor. She was among 11 athletes from her school, and among over 500 in total, to compete in the championship.

She is the first gold medalist in any para-athletic event for the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations and a great role model for young Métis.

Earn Your Degree *in a* Supportive Environment

Lakehead University is committed to helping Aboriginal people further their aspirations. Aboriginal programs at Lakehead offer academic, research, and cultural support services tailored to Aboriginal needs.

Office of Aboriginal Initiatives
aboriginalinitiatives.lakeheadu.ca
807-766-7219 or toll free 1-888-558-3388

Specialization & Access Programs

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Native Nurses Entry Program (NNEP)
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Aboriginal Education

Honours Bachelor of Education
(Aboriginal Education) (**HBE**)
Native Teacher Education Program (**NTEP**)
Native Language Instructors' Program (**NLIP**)

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Office of Aboriginal Initiatives (**AI**)
 Aboriginal Cultural & Support Services (**ACSS**)
 Lakehead University Native Student Assoc. (**LUNSA**)
 Nanabijou Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (**NAGE**)
 Lakehead University Aboriginal Alumni Chapter (**LUAAC**)
 Elders Program

Lakehead

UNIVERSITY

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Our Stories



Once again we have a contemporary story that shows that the voyageur spirit is alive and well. Many of us have been following the adventures of our Métis cyclists who are on route to Costa Rica in an effort to raise environmental awareness and help make the earth a brighter shade of green. (See Voyageur 63, pages 11 and 27, www.pedalacrosstheamericas.com). We now have a Métis mountain climber who is climbing for Big Brothers. Here is what he has to say...

Scaling Mt. Everest for a cause

By **Dan Nelles**

I'm preparing along with 40 other participants for an expedition up Mount Everest. The expedition will go to the first base camp and it will take over two weeks as participants hike to an elevation of almost 5.4 km or 17,600 feet. After that, four of us will climb another 2000 feet to Island Peak, which will take another five days. This will be more technical with crampons and ascenders. This climb will have a 50 degree snow covered slope. There will be others in the group proceeding to attempt the summit of Everest which will take more than 60 days.

While the cost and time is prohibitive to making a campaign for the peak of Everest, we will be dealing with a lot of tough conditions at the base camp. One major difficulty we will encounter is operating in an oxygen deprived environment. It's like walking around with a paper bag over your head. Hikers will be dealing with other difficulties too. We will need to purify all the water we drink, change our diets to include yak meat and may be hiking in areas during the rainy season. Like all participants in the expedition, we will be footing the cost of the expedition ourselves. The trek will likely cost between \$6000 and \$7,000. Our personal expenses could be quite a bit less if we dealt with a different trekking company. The organization that was chosen pays its porters and staff a fair wage and some of the money goes to building schools, hospitals and orphanages in Nepal and Africa. You may have heard of it before, it is called "Moving Mountains Trust Fund".

While participants are paying their own way up the mountain they are making the

trek to help raise money for the Sarnia-Lambton Big Brothers. Each member of the team is trying to raise a minimum of \$5000 for the organization.

For me, being raised by a single mother on a fixed income, the Big Brother cause is close to my heart. I understand the importance of a positive role model for young boys; it can make a real difference.

This is the second such event being held by the local Big Brother chapter. In February of 2008, an expedition of 23 people headed up Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. The event was a success and each participant raised around \$7000 for Big Brothers. Besides being a major fundraiser for the Big Brothers it also sets a positive message for the children they mentor.



FOR ME, BEING RAISED BY A SINGLE MOTHER ON A FIXED INCOME, THE BIG BROTHER CAUSE IS CLOSE TO MY HEART.



While organizers have high hopes for the Everest trek and its fundraising potential, every journey has to start with a first step. It is for this reason that participants in the climb are looking for donations, both private and corporate. All the monies raised through the campaign will go directly to providing services for the Sarnia-Lambton Big Brothers. Anyone interested in making a donation to my climb can pledge at www.EverestTrek.ca.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS



▲ Members of the Toronto and York Region Métis Council attend the Governance and Finance Course earlier this year.

Running Council

Governance and finance course supports MNO Community Councils in their Leadership Roles

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

Starting in November 2010, the MNO has been able to take advantage of funding through the *New Relationship Fund* to develop and deliver a "Governance and Finance Course" that helps community councils perform their important work. Offered at no cost to MNO Community Councils, the Governance and Finance Course is delivered by Glen Lipinski and Andy Lefebvre, the MNO's Consultation and Community Relation Coordinators. To date, courses have been offered in Atikokan, Toronto, Sudbury and Niagara and courses are scheduled soon for Peterborough, Grand River, Credit River

and Georgian Bay.

The course is a two-day seminar, usually offered on weekends, in a hotel or meeting hall in each council's community. The course explains where community councils fit into the MNO governance structure and their role as local government. The course covers everything from how to run effective meetings and engage citizens in council activities to budgeting and the various financial practices, regulations and legislation that community councils must follow.

Participants felt the course was very useful. Donna Grenier, the President of the Toronto and York Region Métis Council stated: "The Toronto and York Region Métis Council is new; without the guidance of the governance courses, we would have stumbled on more rocks along the path on our journey. The information we gained has helped to make for more productive council meetings." Stephen Quesnelle, the President

of the Niagara Region Métis Council, said: "I feel that the information that was given to us will enable us to manage council matters in a more efficient and proper manner. It would have been great if we could have had more time. It was a lot to absorb in just two days, but we have good written information and now it is up to us to read more to gain better understanding as we put into practice the valuable information that we have received."

"This course is for all our community councils," explained Glen Lipinski, "so, if a council is interested, we hope they will contact us. We would love to come to their community!"

If your community council is interested in accessing this excellent resource, please contact:

Glen Lipinski
glenl@metisnation.org
Andy Lefebvre
andyl@metisnation.org

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT



Moon River Needs You!

Do you have photos, memorabilia, cultural practices and/or stories that relate to your family and the Métis way of life?

If so, please contact Louise Goulding to express your interest in contributing to an upcoming oral history research project that the Moon River Métis Council is about to embark upon. Meetings and interviews will be carried out with Métis people from the historic Métis community of Penetanguishene and area starting in the spring of 2011 to capture the history of the area on tape, video and in photos.

The final result will be an oral history archive that is intended to be made into a com-

munity-celebration video and coffee table book that can be used as a fundraiser for the council in the future. This study is a follow-up to the written historical report completed in 2006 titled, *From the Straits of Mackinac to Georgian Bay: 300 years of Métis history*.

Your involvement-however big or small-is important and would be greatly appreciated. For more information and to express your interest in being involved contact Louise Goulding at: moonisland@hughes.net or 705-746-4974.

Timmins Métis Council receives Trillium funds for renovations

The Ontario Trillium Foundation recently announced a number of grants in north-eastern Ontario. One of the fortunate recipients was the Métis Nation of Ontario-Timmins Council who will receive \$77,500 over one year to renovate the community centre by installing new windows, siding and insulation in order to reduce energy consumption and create a more comfortable gathering place for members. Accessibility will also be enhanced with the construction of an accessible washroom and the installation of a ramp and automatic door opener at the main entrance.

"The McGuinty Government in partnership with the Ontario Trillium Foundation helps build healthy and vibrant communities across the province. The investments made through these community grants support local organizations working to enhance the well-being of all Ontarians including children, youth, parents and seniors alike," said Michael Chan, the Ontario Minister of Tourism and Culture.

NATIONAL NEWS

MANITOBA



Supreme Court to hear Métis Land Claim

The motion to file a lengthy memorandum of argument and the application for “leave of appeal” for the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) land claims case was granted by the Supreme Court of Canada.

In a brief statement MMF President, David Chartrand said, “this case has gone on for decades and has cost the Federation millions of dollars, but we are finally at a historic crossroad where our story of injustice will be heard by Canada’s highest court, and we are grateful for the opportunity to present our case.”

MMF lawyer, Thomas Berger, went on to say, “This is welcome news. The Métis claim is based on the promise made in 1870 by John A. Macdonald’s government to the provisional government at Red River headed by Louis Riel. The promise was that the 7000 children of the Métis (a majority of Red River’s population of 12,000 at the time) would receive 1.4 million acres of land in the new Province of Manitoba. The MMF will argue that the federal government had a fiduciary obligation—a fiduciary obligation entrenched in the Manitoba Act of 1870—to distribute the land promptly and fairly, so that the Métis and their children would constitute a thriving community at the heart of the new province. But the federal government was guilty of delay after delay, so that none of the children received deeds to their land for 10 years, some not for 15 and some never did receive any land. In the meantime, a great influx of settlers had entered the province. By this time, the Métis had become a marginalized minority. The Manitoba Government then passed a series of laws, which the MMF will argue were unconstitutional, designed to ensure the children’s grants were ineffective. The MMF will argue that the federal breach of fiduciary obligation and the province’s series of statutes raise constitutional issues, and the MMF will argue that there is no statute of limitations on unconstitutional action by government.”

The Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) is the official democratic and self-governing political representative for the Métis Nation’s Manitoba Métis community.

FEDERAL RELATIONS

Prime Minister opens dialogue with Métis Nation



In what has become an annual event, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has opened his door to National Aboriginal leaders to discuss economic development and other pressing matters. Métis National Council President, Clément Chartier, represented the Métis Nation at this year’s meeting held on Parliament Hill on February 16th.

He told the Prime Minister, “the Métis Nation Protocol signed in 2008 set the foundation for a solid relationship between the Government of Canada and the Métis Nation.” President Chartier added, “We are looking forward to working with your Ministers and we are open for business.”

President Chartier indicated that the Métis Nation has been fully engaged in the Federal Framework for Aboriginal Economic Development which fits into the Métis Nation business model. The model is based on solid, professional management through economic development

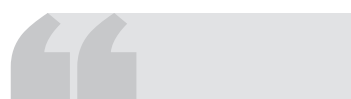


▲ Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Métis National Council President Clément Chartier. PHOTO: Jason Ransom, PMO photographer

institutions such as Métis capital corporations offering small business loans, venture capital corporations and education and training centres including the Gabriel Dumont Institution.

Federal Interlocutor for Métis, the Honourable John Duncan, and the Minister responsible for Human Resource Development, the Honourable Diane Finley, also attended the meeting which lasted about an hour in the Prime Minister’s office.

In January, Minister Duncan hosted a very successful Métis Economic Development Sympo-



I BELIEVE THE MÉTIS NATION PROTOCOL IS AN EFFECTIVE INSTRUMENT WHICH, FOR CANADA AND THE MÉTIS NATION, IS YIELDING GOOD DIVIDENDS.



sium (see page 7) to which he invited his provincial counterparts from the five western provinces, Métis Nation leaders and industry.

President Chartier explained: “the Métis Nation wants to bring the Symposium to the regional level to directly engage industry partners through round tables and trade shows. I believe the Métis Nation Protocol is an effective instrument which, for Canada and the Métis Nation, is yielding good dividends.”

The first regional round table was organized for March, 2011, in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

In addition to Métis Nation Economic Development projects, President Chartier also touched on certain employment and training matters, the outstanding Métis residential school issue, struggles with Health Canada and support for Métis veterans.

Prime Minister Harper listened closely to President Chartier’s words offering welcome comments that the Métis should not fall through the cracks. After President Chartier’s discussion with the Prime Minister, he came away confident the infrastructure projects raised during the last meeting with the Prime Minister will soon be announced.

Support for Métis infrastructure projects

The Honourable John Duncan, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, on behalf of the Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, announced March 25th that improvements to the Métis Skills and Employment Centre in Abbotsford, B.C. and the Métis Crossing Historic Site expansion near Smoky Lake, Alta., will be a priority for funding consideration by the Government of Canada.

The Government of Canada will consider investing up to 50 percent of their projects’ total eligible costs, to a maximum of \$1.45 million and \$3.5 million, respectively, conditional upon the projects meeting federal eligibility requirements with respect to the Building Canada Fund-Major Infrastructure Component as well as the signing of contribution agreements. The Métis Nations of British Columbia and Alberta must each demonstrate that they have secured the funds necessary to complete the projects. The total cost of the Métis Skills and Employment Centre is estimated at \$2.9 million, while the total cost of the Métis Crossing is estimated at \$7 million.

“These projects are priorities for the Métis Nations of British Columbia and Alberta,” said Minister Duncan. “Our government is proud to support infrastructure



THE MÉTIS NATION HAS WAITED MORE THAN TWO YEARS TO HEAR THESE ANNOUNCEMENTS, SO TODAY’S NEWS IS VERY WELCOME



projects that create jobs, stimulate the economy, and strengthen our communities.”

Métis National Council President, Clément Chartier, said: “The Métis Nation has waited more than two years to hear these announcements, so today’s news is very welcome—especially for our Métis citizens in B.C. and Alberta. I am especially pleased that Prime Minister Stephen Harper kept his promise made last month to ensure Métis do not fall through the cracks.”

The Métis Nation British Columbia will be using the \$1.45 million to improve its Métis Skills and Employment Centre in Abbotsford, B.C. This support will help to increase the number of Métis who will be able to learn a trade and join the workforce. Currently, MNBC provides training to more than 1,300 clients per year.

Meanwhile, the Métis Nation

of Alberta plans to direct its \$3.5 million to the construction of a cultural interpretive and gathering centre at Métis Crossing. This historic site located northeast of Edmonton, is quickly becoming one of Alberta’s top tourist attractions.

Absent from today’s announcement is a third stimulus flagship proposal from the Manitoba Métis Federation which aims to build a National Métis Museum to be located in the heart of the Métis Nation, at the Forks in Winnipeg.

President Chartier said: “This third stimulus project is important in that it will allow the Métis Nation to capture and display our history, culture, and language, and to show our pride. While the project has not been announced at this time, we will continue to pursue this cultural imperative. Now that an election appears imminent, we hope the government and in particular its Métis candidates, will be supportive as well as the opposition parties.”

Since the launch of the Economic Action Plan, Infrastructure Canada has committed over \$10.75 billion dollars toward more than 6,300 infrastructure projects. When combined with the contributions of funding partners, there is approximately \$31 billion dollars committed to infrastructure projects across the country.

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NATIONAL NEWS

ALBERTA



Métis launch Appeal in Harvesting Rights Case

On December 21, 2010, Alberta Métis filed an appeal in the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench against a decision from the Alberta Provincial Court rendered earlier that month, which convicted Métis harvester Garry Hirsekorn for hunting for food without a license near the Cypress Hills in southern Alberta.

"Our ancestors were here before Canada was Canada and Alberta was Alberta. Our people cannot accept the trial judge's conclusion that every other Aboriginal people on the prairies have constitutionally protected harvesting rights, but the Métis. We do not believe this result honours the promise of s. 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, to our people. That is why we are appealing the lower court's decision," said Métis Nation of Alberta President, Audrey Poitras.

The appeal was filed in Medicine Hat court by Métis lawyers Jean Teillet and Jason Madden on behalf of convicted Métis harvester Garry Hirsekorn. The appeal claims that the trial judge "erred in law and made errors of mixed fact and law, in his interpretation and application of the test for Métis harvesting rights set out by the Supreme Court of Canada in *R. v. Powley*, [2003] 2 S.C.R. 207 (the 'Powley test') to the appellant's [Mr. Hirsekorn] claim of being a member of a Métis community that holds an Aboriginal right to harvest for food."

Mr. Hirsekorn's lawyer, Jason Madden, said, "We always knew this case raised unique legal issues that would likely require appeal courts to consider how the Powley test should be applied in a purposive when considering the mobility of the Métis people on the southern prairies. This appeal will provide Alberta Métis as well as the entire Métis Nation an opportunity to have higher courts consider these important legal questions."

The trial for purposive began in May, 2009. It included 42 days of trial with over 35 community and expert witnesses from across Alberta and the Métis Nation. It represents the largest Métis harvesting rights trial ever completed in Canada.

MÉTIS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SYMPOSIUM

Developing a long-term Métis economic strategy

Métis participation in the Canadian economy received further impetus with the Métis Economic Development Symposium (MEDS), held the week of January 22, in Vancouver. Following two days of discussions involving Métis leaders, the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Aboriginal Affairs Ministers from the five western-most provinces, and their senior officials, agreement was reached to establish a working group toward the development of a long term Métis economic development strategy.

This strategy will consider areas such as: encouraging successful and sustainable Métis entrepreneurship; ways to engage with the private sector in economic development; and participation in the workforce. The working group will report back to the principals in 2013.

Métis National Council President, Clément Chartier says, "We've reached the point in our discussions that we are now ready to take the Métis Economic Development Strategy (MEDS) to the next level. MEDS has been a great opportunity to exchange views and build good will with our federal and provincial counterparts. Now it's time to get down to developing a long-term strategy, and for this we are keen on



▲ Front (l-r) **Gary Lipinski, President of the MNO; Denise White, with the Métis Settlements General Council; John Duncan, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-status Indians; Clément Chartier, President of the Métis National Council; Shelly Glover, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs; and Audrey Poitras, President of the Métis Nation of Alberta.** Back (l-r) **Lori Sterling, Ontario Deputy Minister of Aboriginal Affairs; Barry Penner, B.C. Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation; Bruce Dumont, President of the Métis Nation of B.C.; David Chartrand, President of the Manitoba Métis Federation; Ron Crowe, Saskatchewan Deputy Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations; Vic Toews, Federal Minister of Public Safety; Alan Morin, Vice-President of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan.**

engaging private industry."

The first Métis Economic Development Symposium was held in Calgary in December, 2009, to discuss ways to promote Métis-specific economic development initiatives at the policy and program levels. MEDS 2 in Vancouver reported on the progress made since then on successful approaches to economic development and expanded discussions to focus on strengthening entre-

preneurship among Métis women. Métis leaders are looking forward to forging long term partnerships with industry as an integral part of the Métis Economic Development work-plan during the next two years.

President Chartier adds: "Hearing the progress that has been experienced across our Homeland is very encouraging—such as the recent \$4 million investment by the federal govern-

ment and the Province of Manitoba in a fund to be operated by the investment management arm of the Manitoba Métis Federation. It's these kind of initiatives we need across the Métis Nation to aid our Métis-owned businesses increase their participation in the country's economy in areas such as the resource and energy sectors. We are definitely on the move."

IN THE COURTS

Métis Settlements case reaches Supreme Court

On December 17, 2010, lawyers for the Métis National Council and Métis Nation of Alberta went before the Supreme Court of Canada in Ottawa to intervene in *Cunningham v. Alberta* (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development).

At issue was whether sections 75 and 90 of *The Métis Settlements Act* (MSA) breached the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in prohibiting individuals, who voluntarily register under the *Indian Act* from maintaining or obtaining status as members on the Métis settlements.

The respondents (Cunningham et al.) who had been removed from the Métis settlements' registry, pursuant to Section 90, were granted a ruling by the Alberta Court of Appeal that sections 75 and 90 of the MSA were constitutionally invalid.

The Métis National Council intervened in the appeal. MNC lawyer, Jason Madden, argued that the Métis settlements are the only legislatively recognized Métis self-government arrangement and collectively-held Métis land base that exists in Canada so far. They represent the only concrete step the Government of

Canada took in the 20th century to recognize and protect a Métis land base and to provide a framework for the implementation of Métis self-government as a part of the reconciliation process between the Métis Nation and Canada.

He further argued that the membership scheme in the MSA reflects a negotiated agreement that appropriately provided for the Métis community to decide issues of membership on the settlements. Madden cautioned that removal of this authority from the Métis community could result in individual choice over-riding the

collective will of the people.

The Métis Nation of Alberta also intervened. MNA lawyer, Jean Teillet, argued that the statutory appeal process ought to have been engaged prior to a review of sections 75 and 90 by the courts. This misstep effectively circumvented the internal self-government process provided for in the legislation.

Teillet also argued that a "one-enrolment" policy (where a person cannot be registered under two Aboriginal registries at one time) similarly forms the basis of historic treaties, the Indian Act, Métis Nation registries and modern land claim and self-government agreements. Teillet submitted that the central issue in the case is whether Aboriginal peoples and/or government can legislate or negotiate schemes that include a policy prohibiting multiple concurrent enrolments. The Métis Nation of Alberta urged the court not to seek a legal remedy for the complex identity issue but rather grant a declaration, which prohibits removal from membership for improper purposes under section 90.

The Supreme Court of Canada reserved its decision.

“THE MÉTIS SETTLEMENTS ARE THE ONLY LEGISLATIVELY RECOGNIZED MÉTIS SELF-GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENT AND COLLECTIVELY-HELD MÉTIS LAND BASE THAT EXISTS IN CANADA SO FAR.”



Captains Corner

by Ken Simard

I was very pleased to represent the MNO at the North West Fur Trappers Association 2011 Convention by having a booth. My wife and I were able to collect data on Métis trappers and fishers for the MNO Lands Resources and Consultation Branch.

There were trappers in attendance from the United States, southern Ontario, and north-western Ontario.

It was interesting watching all the events from the Métis booth. Many people stopped by to pick up the Métis Voyageur and to ask questions about how they go about finding their Métis roots. Our local Healing and Wellness branch donated a few items with their logo on them to give out.



GEORGE MCGUIRE, 1925-2011

A founding elder of the MNO

George McGuire, age 85 years, passed away peacefully in Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre on January 26, 2011.

George was born on July 17, 1925, in Nipigon House on Lake Nipigon where his father was a Factor for the Hudson's Bay Company. He attended St. Joseph's Boarding School in Fort William. In January of 1942, George joined the Canadian Army (Canadian Forestry Corps) and in March of 1942 he left for England and then transferred to the Canadian Artillery in 1943. He served overseas in the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Germany and Holland before returning home in 1946.

Back in civilian life, George worked for mining companies in exploration. Later, in Beardmore, he worked for Brompton, St. Lawrence and Domtar as a "scaler" and eventually became Senior Supervisor. It was while he was in Beardmore that he met and married the love of his life, Lillian. They moved to Port Arthur in 1956 with their family; however he continued to travel back and

forth to work.

After being a mailman for a short time, George worked for a local cleaning company before becoming President of the Ontario Métis and Non-Status Indian Association for six years in the 1970s. He then worked for the federal government in Human Resources as an Employment Counsellor until retirement in 1990. Following his retirement, George became Program Manager for the Native Employment Opportunities Program for three years. George was also one of the founding members of the Métis Nation of Ontario and was an MNO Senator.

George's greatest joy was spending time with his great-granddaughters. He is survived by his daughter Maureen (Matti) Alanen; grandson Michael (Tammy); great-granddaughters Mikayla and Taylor; son Lawrence. Numerous nieces and nephews also survive. Always an animal lover, he will also be missed by his furry friends Teddy, Charlie and Barney.

George was predeceased by his wife Lillian on January 21, 2008



▲ George McGuire

and grandson Mark Alanen on November 27, 1986 as well as his parents, brothers, sisters and numerous nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held on January 31, 2011, in the Everest Funeral Chapel, with Fr. Richard Kowalchuk officiating. Interment took place at Sunset Memorial Gardens.

If friends so desire, in lieu of flowers, donations may be made in memory of George to the Canadian Cancer Society, Heart and Stroke Foundation or PAWS.

**SENATOR GEORGE MCGUIRE
PCMNO 1993-2002**

It is with great regret that we say "goodbye" to Senator George McGuire, one of the founding elders of the Métis Nation of Ontario. Senator George McGuire was a tireless worker for the Métis cause, and contributed immensely to the advancement of Métis rights in Ontario and across Canada. His dedication to the Métis pre-dated the formation of the Métis Nation of Ontario and went back as far as the 1970s. In 1993, he played a pivotal role in the early meetings that led to the creation of the MNO and served on the very first Provisional Council of the MNO as a Senator and Elder. He then went on to serve as a PCMNO Senator from 1994 to 2002, and continued to serve after that as an "Honourary Senator".

Senator George was instrumental in the development of the MNO Housing Branch. As Jean McIsaac recalls: "He was racing to get the Proposal to the CMHC office before 4:30 with only minutes to spare because that was the way

things got done in the beginning of the MNO. There were nil to very limited resources in the early days of MNO, so just getting a proposal prepared, signed by the President in Ottawa then back to Thunder Bay for photo copying and delivery on time was a major accomplishment, but just considered routine to our founders, first citizens and early staff!"

Former President, Tony Belcourt said: "My whole family was always so proud to know George McGuire....We will always remember those days, the family gatherings at the annual assemblies at White River, and the warmth and friendship that George brought to everyone."

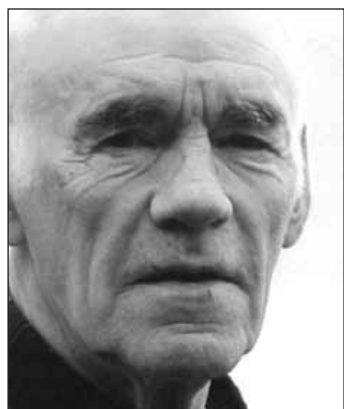
MNO President, Gary Lipinski, remembers: "Senator George was on the PCMNO when I first joined and I spent many years serving with him. It was a wonderful pleasure when Senator George joined other Métis citizens and leaders from across Ontario at the gala dinner during last year's Annual General Assembly."

GUY LEFEBVRE, 1930-2011

Métis rights fight loses a champion

The family announces with great sorrow his death on January 20, 2011, at the age of 80 years. Guy was predeceased by his wife Lucille Lefebvre (nee-Barbe) in 2009. He is survived by his children Jean-Paul (Diane) Lefebvre, Lise (Dennis) Lefebvre-Arcand, Suzanne (Brian) McLean all of Timmins and Michel (Jenn) Lefebvre of Sault-Ste-Marie; his grandchildren Tania Lefebvre (Jessie) of Timmins, Jennie Prepp (Brent) of Thunder Bay, Guy Arcand, Natalie Arcand, Carole McLean, Caissy McLean and Mathieu McLean all of Timmins, Olivia Lefebvre, Zoé Lefebvre, Brittney Redpath and Daven Redpath all of Sault-Ste-Marie; his great-grandchildren Ashley, Vito, Massimo, Peyton, Alexis, Nathan and Evan; his brothers Alexandre Lefebvre, Roger (Cathy) Lefebvre and Yves (Aline) Lefebvre all of Timmins. He was also predeceased by his parents Paul Lefebvre and Catherine Courchesne, his sister Georgette Bélair and by his brothers Raoul, Jean-Claude, Gilles and Léo Lefebvre.

The family wishes to thank the staff of the Third Floor at Timmins and District Hospital for their compassion and excellent care given to Guy and his family. Funeral mass was held on January 26, 2011, at Notre-Dame-de-la-Paix Church. Interment followed at Timmins Memorial Cemetery. Remembrance



▲ Guy Lefebvre

donations to the Timmins and District Hospital Foundation - Dialysis Department would be greatly appreciated. Donations or condolences can be made at www.lessardstephens.com.

**GUY LEFEBVRE
PCMNO 1998-2008**

It is with much sadness that we report the loss of one of the great champions of Métis rights in the Province of Ontario. Guy Lefebvre served as Region Three PCMNO Councillor from 1998 to 2008. He was deeply passionate about advancing Métis rights and attended the founding meeting of the Métis Nation of Ontario in 1993. Guy contributed immensely to the building of the MNO by serving in many capacities at the community and provincial level.

OBITUARIES

Lesley Jane Leroux

Lesley Jane Leroux, passed away on March 5th, 2011, at the age of 61 years. It is with profound sadness that I, Jacques Leroux, announce the passing of a

wonderful wife and loving partner of 30 years. She will be missed by many. She taught for the Algoma School Board for 32 years. She will be remembered

by her sister Lynn Colotelo in Edmonton, friends, students and teachers. We love you Jane.

A celebration of her life will be held in May.

Remmington William Goodchild

Remmington William Goodchild, of Webbwood passed away at the Espanola General Hospital on December 5, 2010, at the age of 88. Remmington was born May 15, 1922, in Birch Lake and raised in the Webbwood area.

He was the beloved husband of the late (1991) Olive (nee Rivers), dear son of the late William and Edith (Remmington) Goodchild, loving father of Rem-

mie (wife Helen), George (wife Joyce), Betty (husband Howard Fairbairn), Rose (husband Gerald Ritchie), Mary (husband Ron Finch), Geraldine, Anthony (partner Barb), Arnold (wife Sharon), Tim (wife Lynda) all of Webbwood, and the cherished grandfather of 26 grandchildren and many great and great-great grandchildren, predeceased by two grandchildren. Remmington was the dear brother of the late

Laura Hunt, Rose Goodchild, Millie Rollins, and Edie Worthington.

Funeral Services took place December 8, 2010, at the St. Lawrence Church in Webbwood with Fr. Lawrence Maduwesi officiating, followed by burial in the Webbwood Catholic Cemetery. If so desired, donations can be made to the charity of your choice.

Stephanie "Irene" Marie Beauchamp

Stephanie "Irene" Marie Beauchamp, (Nee Cadeau) passed away peacefully at home on February 13, 2011, in her 92nd year surrounded by family. Irene Beauchamp, of Victoria Harbour, was the beloved wife of the late Wilfred, loving mother of Pat of Barrie, Jean (late Buddy) of Waubushene, Elaine (Ross) Lavigne of Midland, Rose (Art) Henry of Oshawa, Bill (Dorothy) of Oshawa, Mary Coffin of Oshawa, Buddy (Joyce) of Little Britain, Betty of Victoria Harbour, Doug (Bonnie) of Cobourg, and Martha (Alan) Coghill of Oshawa.

She was the dear grand-



Irene Beauchamp

mother of 35, great grandmother of 42, and great-great grandmother of six. Irene is survived by her brother Donald Cadeau of Mississauga, and sis-

ter Yvonne Labatte of St. Catharines; predeceased by her son Bob, daughter Deanna Russell, and sisters Violet, Georgina, and Bernadine, and brothers Alfred, Sanford, and Bernard.

Family and friends were received at Carson Funeral Home in Midland. A funeral Mass was celebrated at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, Victoria Harbour, on February 17th 2011. Interment will be in the spring at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Cemetery.

OBITUARY | DR. OLIVE DICKASON, 1920 - 2011

Métis historian changed Canadian perspectives on Aboriginal Peoples

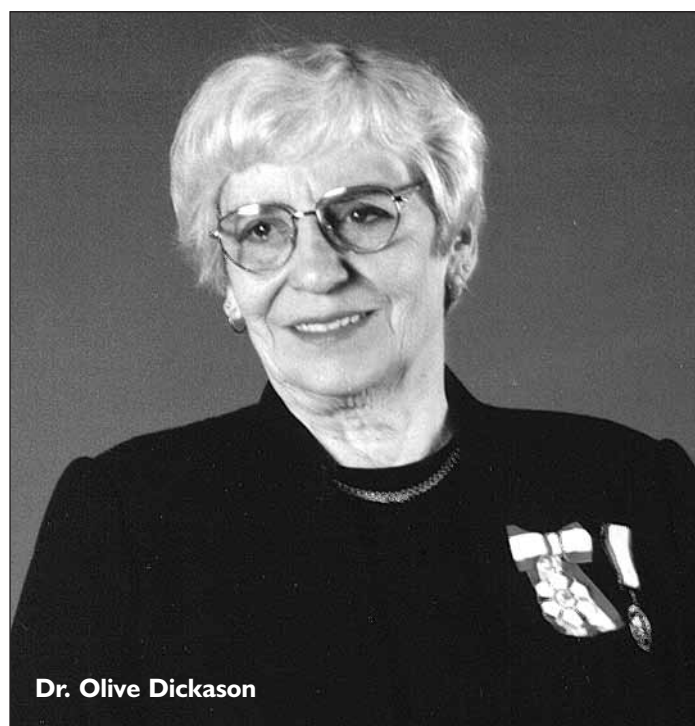
By Linda Lord

Dr. Olive Patricia Dickason, a renowned Métis historian and one of the original members of the Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission (MNOCC), passed away March 12th at the age of 91 from a heart attack.

When the MNO Cultural Commission was incorporated in 2000, Dr. Dickason was appointed by the Provisional Council of the MNO to serve as one of its original members. She served on the Commission until 2005. Olive's academic accomplishments made her a natural and prestigious choice for the Cultural Commission.

MNO President, Gary Lipinski, commented that, "Olive offers Métis people, especially our young people, a shining example of the kinds of achievements that are within our grasp. She changed the Canadian perspective on Aboriginal people and the MNO is proud of its association with Olive through our Cultural Commission."

Olive Dickason was born March 6, 1920, in Winnipeg, Manitoba, but when her family lost everything during the Great Depression they moved to the Interlake region. It was here at the age of 12, that Olive, her sister Alice, and her mother Phoebe resorted to trapping and fishing to provide food for the family. In later years, Dr. Dickason recalled this experience. "Living in the bush as I did during my adolescent years, I very soon learned that survival depended upon assessing each situation as it arose, which calls for common sense and realism," said Olive. "You neither give up nor play games."



Dr. Olive Dickason

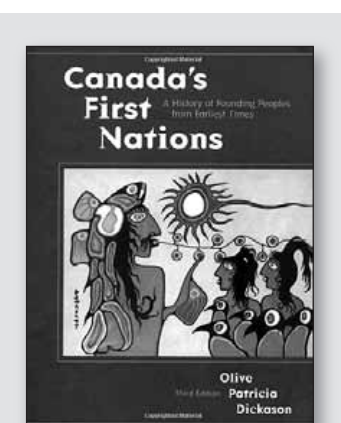
Dickason graduated high school by correspondence and learned Greek, Latin and philosophy from a Scottish immigrant who moved into the bush nearby. She went on to get her Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy and French from Notre Dame College, an affiliate of the University of Ottawa, in 1943.

Over the next 23 years Olive worked as a journalist with a variety of Canadian daily papers, including the Regina Leader - Post, the Winnipeg Free Press, the Montreal Gazette and the Toronto Globe and Mail. During this time she received many awards including the McLaren Award for typography and layout in both 1965 and 1967. She left the Globe and Mail in 1967 to become Chief of Information Services at the National Gallery.

At the age of 50 and with her children grown, Olive entered the

graduate program at the University of Ottawa where she received her MA in Canadian History in 1972. She then began work on her PhD. She started out with an interest in French colonial history but soon her own genetic heritage led her to European-Amerindian contact history. At that time, there had never been a doctoral dissertation based on the premise of First Nations' history, but Dickason was a trail-blazer and received her PhD in 1977.

Along the way, Dr. Dickason gathered Aboriginal peoples' oral histories and waded through volumes of texts in the archives of the erstwhile European colonizers. Her doctoral thesis, titled "The Myth of the Savage", was eventually published as were "Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from the Earliest Times" and "The Native Imprint: The Contribution of First



Dr. Olive Dickason's ground-breaking textbook, **A Concise History of Canada's First Nations**, became an essential contribution to history courses at the high-school level.

Peoples to Canada's Character -- Volume 1: to 1815 (1995)", which she edited. In addition she also wrote "Indian Arts in Canada", which won three awards for conception and design and co-authored "The Law of Nations and the New World". Her textbook, "A Concise History of Canada's First Nations", became an essential contribution to history courses at the high-school level.

Olive Dickason's breakthrough books were instrumental in researching and documenting the importance of Aboriginal participation at every stage of Canadian history. She believed that if Canadians knew and embraced this history it would constitute a major enrichment of the country's national identity.

Olive's career as a teacher began as a graduate student at the University of Ottawa, where she taught the History of New France,

and continued at the University of Alberta from 1976 to 1992.

Dr. Dickason received many awards and research grants over the years, including the Senior Rockefeller Fellowship in 1989; the Order of Canada; Métis woman of the Year Award; the Sir John A. Macdonald History Prize; the Aboriginal Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation; Ryerson Polytechnic University Fellowship, several honorary degrees and the title of "Professor Emerita" from the University of Alberta.

When Olive Dickason decided to study Aboriginal history over 30 years ago, the academic view was that no Aboriginal history existed. However, her pioneering research shattered the myth that Canadian history began with the arrival of the European explorers, and fostered the recognition of indigenous peoples as this country's founding civilization.

"Most of my adolescent and teen years I spent up north on the trap lines and you learn a view of life that you certainly don't get in the cities and in the schools. When I [was first introduced to] Canadian history, Aboriginal history was just dismissed," she once said of her motivation to pursue a new career setting the Canadian-history record straight.

"This country is deeply founded and deeply linked with Aboriginals. When I realized that the courses being taught didn't refer to this at all, I got very disturbed."

Dr. Dickason's deep passion for early Canadian history and her pride and interest in her own Métis heritage are reflected in her life's work—a work that literally changed history.

MÉTIS WOMEN

Strong Women Forum

"This event has been a long time coming," commented Sharon McBride, the spokesperson for the Women's Secretariat of the Métis Nation of Ontario (WSMNO), at the opening of the first WSMNO Strong Women Forum in Toronto on March 25-27.

The forum was hosted by the MNO Women's Secretariat with the objectives of empowering and inspiring MNO women through leadership training, team building and honouring the many strong Métis women heroes that have made the Nation strong. Participating were 40 MNO women, including a number of Métis youth, representing all nine regions within the MNO. Participants included teenagers, businesswomen,

community leaders, grandmothers and even great-grandmothers.

The first day started off with a welcome and message of support from MNO President, Gary Lipinski. This was followed by an inspiring address from Dr. Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux, holder of the Nexen Chair in Aboriginal Leadership at the Banff Centre in Alberta, who has dedicated herself to numerous causes including building bridges between people from diverse backgrounds, public education and youth engagement.

Participants worked hard through a jam-packed agenda that was facilitated by Dr. Kim Anderson, a Métis writer and educator who has published nu-

merous articles and books on Aboriginal women's health, leadership and motherhood. A prominent theme that emerged throughout the activities was the strength and leadership demonstrated by "ordinary" Métis women including mothers, grandmothers and friends. Their contribution to this generation of Métis leaders is far from "ordinary"; in fact, it is nothing short of "extraordinary".

MNO Chair, France Picotte, perhaps best expressed the feeling of many in attendance when she said: "When you walk in here, you can feel the energy. You can't explain it, but you can feel it!"



▲ A few of the delegates at the MNO Strong Women Forum.

◀ Sharon McBride, spokesperson for the MNO Women's Secretariat and Dr. Kim Anderson, the facilitator for the Strong Women Forum.

OUR STORIES

Carving out a dream in the Black Hills

Rick Lemieux designed and manufactured “the Drillmaster”, especially for the Crazy Horse Memorial. The rig is emblazoned with the motto, “Never Forget Your dreams”

By **Janice Landry**

From the mountain viewing area, visitors to the Crazy Horse Memorial in South Dakota are able to spot the bright yellow and blue of the RDH Drillmaster as it works to carve out the mountain. The Crazy Horse emblem affixed to the side of the Drillmaster reads, “Never Forget Your Dreams”, and is a longstanding appeal to supporters for help to speed the carving of the mountain.

The Crazy Horse Memorial is the world’s largest sculptural undertaking and was the dream of Sculptor Korczak Ziolkowski and Lakota Chief Henry Standing Bear. The carving was officially started on June 3, 1948, and the memorial’s mission is to honour the culture, tradition and living heritage of North America’s Aboriginal peoples.

RDH Mining Equipment, from Alban, Ontario, makes the Drillmaster. Owner, Rick Lemieux, met the Crazy Horse crew members at a mining equipment show, and the more they discussed the carving project, the more enthralled Rick became. Once he learned of the memorial’s mission, Rick wanted to help out with the project and the best way he knew to help was with drilling equipment. Rick would design and manufacture a drill rig, “the Drillmaster”, especially for the Crazy Horse Memorial.

United by a common purpose, the Crazy Horse team and the RDH team worked together to design the Drillmaster to suit the very specific needs of the project. With 320 degree drilling and automatic return capabilities, the Drillmaster provided the accuracy and speed that was needed to carve out the mountain. On June 30, 2005, the Drillmaster began work and joined the Crazy Horse team. To this day it is still carving out history, quite an achievement for a company from the small village of Alban, Ontario, and a very fulfilling personal accomplishment for Rick Lemieux.

As one pulls up to the wooded entrance of RDH Mining Equipment, it is hard to imagine that such a successful underground mobile mining equipment firm could be located there. Nestled within a maple sugar bush and on the land of his ancestors, Rick Lemieux has built up RDH Mining

Equipment from a small shop into a globally competitive mining equipment manufacturing firm. With such a distinguished and successful past, Rick decided the location would be ideal to establish RDH Mining Equipment. After all, for thousands of years, the French River, a major historical trade route, had been a place to meet and exchange trade goods. The French River was not only a historical trading area, it was also the territory of his ancestors and an integral part of his

Métis identity.

In 1950, Rick was born in the village of Alban, in the French River area. He was raised, along with his five brothers, in this small community by his parents, Emile and Yvette Lemieux. Hunting, fishing, and working on the family farm filled his days, but his nights were filled with music, for each member of the Lemieux family played a musical instrument, making evenings at home and social gatherings a musical treat.

Rick’s industrious nature and inventive spirit was evident very early in life. At the young age of eight, he began taking apart his father’s farm equipment to build buggies and other motorized contraptions. His first invention,

a motorized go-cart, with the exception of brakes and a clutch, was a roaring success. The go-cart was built from parts found around the farm and taken off his father’s roto-tiller. This early invention would foreshadow Rick’s future success in mining equipment design and would be the first of many prototypes.

Rick entered the workforce as a young man in the late 60’s. He worked for various mining companies, repairing and servicing equipment. He absorbed everything like a sponge, studying how each piece of equipment worked and always thinking of how he could make it better. The intrinsic inventiveness Rick had felt since he was a child and the inclination he felt to improve the function

and capabilities of equipment would be the driving force behind his deciding to forge his own path and, in 1985, he started his own mining equipment repair and rebuild shop in his home town of Alban.

Since 1985, Rick has fostered RDH Mining Equipment and it has grown from a small rebuild and repair shop to a global company, manufacturing underground mobile mining and tunnelling equipment for the world. In continuous operation since 1985, RDH now offers a wide range of mining equipment specifically suited to the harsh conditions of underground mining and tunnelling. The company offers a broad range of equipment which includes scissor-lifts, fuel/lube trucks, flat bed crane trucks, one to three boom drill jumbos and roof bolters, secondary drill rigs, four to thirty-five ton haul trucks, one to four yard LHD’s, fully battery powered LHD’s and trucks, concrete remixers, and AN-FO loaders. RDH equipment can be found working on nearly every continent, from beneath New York City’s Grand Central Station to the steppes of Siberia, from the mountains of Patagonia to the isolated coastline of the Arctic Ocean.

While RDH satisfied Rick’s mechanical inclinations he was still searching for an outlet to help him fulfill his spiritual and musical interests. In 2001, Rick and his wife, Daniele, set out on a business venture that would provide him with this opportunity. They purchased a rustic tourist lodge in the Monetville area and named it “Saenchiur Flechey Resort”, developing it into a world-class establishment. The name, “Saenchiur Flechey”, the Michif word for the traditional sash, was chosen because it symbolized the goals of the resort. Situated on the picturesque shoreline of the West Arm of Lake Nipissing, it was more than just a fishing lodge; it would offer the northern Ontario experience while promoting both ecological and cultural awareness. The resort allowed Rick to play music, guide pontoon boat tours, and impart Métis traditions and local legends to his guests. The resort continues to provide guests unique opportunities to learn about the local environment and cultures.

When asked what he owes his success to Rick recalls his experiences with Crazy Horse. “Like the motto of the Crazy Horse Memorial, I never forgot my dreams. I chose to do what I loved to do—what I was good at—that way, you do it with all your heart, and if you do something with all your heart, how can you fail?”



▲ Overlooking the Black Hills of South Dakota, the RDH Drillmaster makes progress on world’s largest sculpture.



▲ Saenchiur Flechey Resort on the West Bay of Lake Nipissing.



The RDH Drillmaster carving out history at the Crazy Horse Memorial in South Dakota.

Métis Senators

Do you see it? Can you smell it? Spring is in the air

Spring is the time of re-birth in the cycle of life; things start anew. We wonder: "Should we plant annuals or stick with perennials?" Sure, the annuals bring new colour and a short burst of splendour, but as people we have more in common with perennials--our roots run deep.

Our future grows from the deep roots of our past. Our garden has been pruned of some of our best and brightest flowers. However, their roots live on; in some cases a graft gives us another chance to reap the beauty of our fundamental traditions.

This past autumn and winter we were saddened by the passing



SENATORS' SPOTLIGHT

BY **RETA GORDON**
PCMNO SENATOR

of many of our Senators but their glory has not been extinguished. They will be remembered as the brightest flowers in the Métis garden, and from their extensive root system new branches are sprouting. We welcome the growth of the new, because we know where it came from, how it was nurtured, and where it will go.

We can expect the same enduring stock and bountiful harvest. We are comforted by the knowledge that we have established a secure foothold that is



OUR GARDEN HAS BEEN PRUNED OF SOME OF OUR BEST AND BRIGHTEST FLOWERS. HOWEVER, THEIR ROOTS LIVE ON...



and will continue to be based on tried and proven results of generations of our ancestors.

Our recently departed Senators and Elders have sprung from some of the heartiest rootstock; their traditions were strong and planted in our collective being. Unlike the annuals, their beauty was renewed over and over again. They didn't need the burst of colour to reap what really matters. It is our deeply rooted and firmly entrenched Senators and Elders, to whom we as a Nation must turn. Their steady and historic ways have cut a deep furrow for our people.

We can obviously stop to look

at the beauty of the annuals, but we must plant our own seeds, nourish them, and continue to grow the strong roots of the Métis people. Some would have us believe that we need that bright flash of glitter to get noticed, but when it comes to what matters in this harsh environment, we need to be well planted, well entrenched, and deeply rooted to blossom in the future. Our MNO garden can grow even more resplendent if we all work together to that end.

To our new council Senators, "welcome", to all our citizens, look to our past, be grounded in our present and bring forth the flowers of our future.

Ontario Métis veteran attends MNC AGM

by **Donald M. Fowler**

I want to offer my sincere thanks to Lynette Davis of the Métis National Council (MNC), and Monique Richard (MNO), for the helpfulness of the "run up" enabling me to attend the MNC Annual General Assembly and for all the excitement of the excellent week-end of the 12th December, 2010. (My, what a wonderful pre-yuletide time that was for us few veterans in attendance on that very important occasion.)

There were so many individual Métis citizens there to whom I

owe so much in gratitude, that I hesitate to name them, but Senator Reta Gordon stands out as one such person. She kindly took me by the hand from the very beginning of the AGA, and enabled me to get prepared for the events to follow. There was also dear Pamela who was very patient and gracious in seeing that we were well attended with refreshments, etc. (I learned a great deal on those two days, especially from the presentation by Jason Madden who was very insightful with his interesting and magnified legal deliberations.)

The RCAF Association building,



for the Saturday evening dinner was especially delightful and a very entertaining place, especially with Andrea Menard's lovely song, "Sparkle". (I told Andrea afterwards that it made me into a "sparkplug".) It was also an extremely emotional time for a cou-

ple of us because of the rush of memories and the intimacy of the presentations made to us personally by our genial president and his "aide de camp", David Chartrand, of Winnipeg--two very remarkable and energetic Métis men. I was much more than just enlightened by Clement Chartier's remarkable book: *Witness to Resistance: Under Fire in Nicaragua*, in which he so kindly inscribed a personal message to--and for--me, following our first meeting on Juno Beach in November, 2009.

After reading Clement's remarkable experiences, while he

was entrenched in Nicaragua, and then learning of that man's personal commendable and courageous exploits there, it is clear to me that he is a unique and special kind of world-class warrior, one who is well deserving of several special kinds of medals and commendations.

I am at a loss for words to say how very much I appreciate all that was given to me and how very deeply I am affected still, by the kindness and generosity of so many wonderful Métis men and women.

VETERANS

MNO Veteran awarded Medal from Aboriginal Veterans Association

On December 11, 2010, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen, Master Warrant Officer Chris Plummer, was presented with the Canadian Aboriginal War Veterans Millennium Medal during the Ontario Regiment (RCAC) Annual Barrack Room Dinner.

The medal was presented by Honorary Lieutenant Colonel J. Wright on behalf of the National Aboriginal Veterans Association (NAVA) of Ontario. This medal is presented to members in good standing of the Provincial Chapter or Affiliated Association and NAVA, as well as Aboriginal Serving Members in good standing, currently serving in the Canadian Forces, recipients of a Good Conduct Medal or other Canadian Forces merits service.

Chris Plumber has served in the Canadian Armed Forces since 1981 with the Ontario Regiment (RCAC). He has also received the Canadian Decoration (CD), recognizing 12 years of service in the Canadian Forces, along with the United Nations Protection Force Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal.

"I will wear it [the medal] with pride and honour," stated Plummer, "to show that as a member of the Métis Nation we are part of the fabric of the Canadian



▲ Left to Right: **Honourary Lt. Colonel J. Wright, Lt. Colonel P. Brunberg CD, Master Warrant Officer C.M. Plummer CD, Chief Warrant Officer D.J. Munroe CD.**

Forces. I take particular pride in carrying on the great tradition of our people who have served Canada both in times of war and peace. What I sincerely hope, is that my accomplishments are seen by our youth as an opportunity for betterment. I am truly touched with this honour that connects the past to the present, that to me was once lost over the generations within my family. This to me is a symbol of my heritage that I can pass to my children and their children's children so that the past can stay alive never to be forgotten again."

Everyone is invited to Join Métis, First Nations, Inuit Leaders & Celebrities at the beautiful MISSISSIPPI GOLF CLUB in Almonte, Ontario

1ST ANNUAL *Li Michif* CHARITY GOLF CLASSIC

FRIDAY, JUNE 17TH, 2011



It is with great pleasure that I send you this invitation to attend my 1st Annual LiMichif Charity Golf Classic. It takes place on June 17th at the beautiful Mississippi Golf Club, a short drive west of Ottawa on Hwy 17. We've got a great program of events that will be capped off with an evening banquet and loads of entertainment. Not only is this going to be a day of fun and camaraderie, it gives everyone the opportunity to join me in supporting two charities that I feel passionate about: the Wabano Mamawi Expansion Project and the Dr. Tony Belcourt Endowment for Métis in the Arts at Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD) University. Put a team together or come on your own and we'll slot you into a team that you will enjoy being with.

The endowment fund in my name granted to Ontario College of Art and Design University (OCADU) by the Métis Nation of Ontario is a great honour to me personally but it also gives me the opportunity to encourage Métis people to consider a career in the arts, something that I am passionate about. I am equally grateful to the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health for providing the quality health care and related special programs that are so greatly needed by our people. I am thankful to Wabano for the wonderful care and attention I receive for my own health needs and those of my family. I appreciate the chance to provide my support for both of these worthy endeavours. — Tony Belcourt

For more information call **613-656-5033** or visit **www.limichifgolf.org**



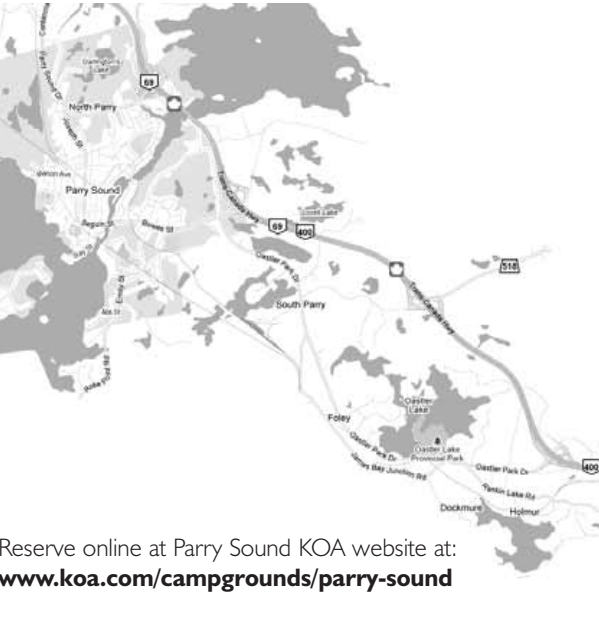
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Seventy-five acres of natural paradise awaits you less than two hours north of Toronto in the heart of Georgian Bay Country, the world's largest freshwater archipelago—home to 30,000 islands. Settle into a spacious open or wooded site among windswept pines and nature at its finest. Feel the sun tickle your face and warm your soul by day, then gather by the fire and marvel at the "Near North" starry skies by night. ATV and nature trails are accessed directly from your site. Enjoy the heated pool, trampoline, mini golf, gift boutique, wagon

rides, bingo, two nearby sandy beaches, playgrounds and more! Fishing and golfing are nearby. Keep in touch via free Wi-Fi. As August is a busy vacation time in Parry Sound we strongly encourage people that are planning on attending the MNO AGA to book their camping sites early. Come see how this KOA "rocks!" The distance between the Bobby Orr Community Centre and the KOA Campground is 15.9 kilometres or approximately 20 minutes.



PARRY SOUND KOA
276 Rankin Lake Road, RR2
Parry Sound Ontario
RESERVE **(800) 562-2681**
INFO **(705) 378-2721**
pskoa@vianet.ca

INFORMATION Daycare

If you have children that will be needing daycare accommodations during the business days only of the Annual General Assembly (Saturday from 7:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. and Sunday / Monday 8:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.), please complete and submit the following application on or before Friday, August 7th in order to assure your needs are met. Lynne

Picotte and Dale Xilon will be assisting with the organization of the daycare. If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact Lynne at lynnep@metisnation.org or Dale at dalex@metisnation.org. PLEASE NOTE: Only the parents or caregivers who have signed below will be able to drop off and pick up children at daycare.

NAME of PARENTS or CAREGIVER: _____
NUMBER OF CHILDREN ATTENDING DAYCARE: _____
NAME AND AGE OF CHILD/ CHILDREN: _____

Does your child have any allergies/special needs? YES ____ NO ____
If yes, please provide details: _____

Please note you must provide the daycare with where you can be located in case of emergency, and an emergency contact number (cell phone number, if you have one)

- I fully understand and agree that I will be responsible for the following:
- The actions/ behaviour of my children while in daycare
 - Provision diapers, wipes, bottles
 - Dropping off and picking up my children between 8:30 A.M. & 5:00 P.M. each day.

Parents/ Caregiver Print: _____ Date: _____
Parents/ Caregiver Signature: _____

The following story is reprinted with the generous permission of the Parry Sound North Star, Regional Managing Editor, Jack Tynan, and writer, John Macfie. The story was brought to our attention by Louise Goulding of Moon River.

Was this Parry Sound's first business establishment?

By **John Macfie**
Parry Sound North Star

This is a postscript to my previous column, which described how Florida resident Bill Arthur recently learned that his great-great-grandmother Elizabeth de LaRonde was born near Dillon, in Carling Township. In the process, Bill answered a question I'd wondered about for 50 years, ever since investigating the La Ronde trading post site at the mouth of the Shebeshekong River. On the chart that Lt. Henry Bayfield, R.N. made circa 1822, following his survey of the 30,000 Islands, the site is indicated with the words "Old Trading Post," suggesting it was already abandoned. Our exploratory dig revealed that the main building was destroyed by fire, and physical evidence coupled with historical and photographic records indicated that it burned no later than the mid-

19th century. But when was it built, this snug, hewn-log building in which Elizabeth de LaRonde presumably was born? Birth records provided by Bill note several children born to Charles de LaRonde and his wife, Magdeleine, at "Chebechkon in Lake Huron." The first of these was Michel Antoine, born there on January 1, 1798, which pushes the structure's apparent beginnings back into the 18th century. But this hinges on the assumption that "Chebechkon" is the place we know today as "Shebeshekong." The LaRonde family had long been engaged in the Upper Great Lakes fur trade (Charles's grandfather Louis Denys de LaRonde built a trading post on Lake Superior in 1733), and at the time of the American Revolution, Charles himself was trading on Drummond Island, near Sault Ste. Marie. When he found himself on the wrong side

of the International Boundary, he, like many other "voyageurs," moved south to Penetanguishene in order to remain in Canada. Just when Charles relocated in Georgian Bay is uncertain. Some sources suggest it was not until 1806 or later, when Chebechkon-born Michel Antoine would have been eight or more years old. Just possibly Charles called his Drummond Island post "Chebechkon," and simply transferred the title to the new location, thus giving the Shebeshekong River its name. But whatever the case, the trading post at Dillon still ranks as probably the first commercial establishment in the Parry Sound vicinity. Charles de LaRonde died in 1840. In his will he left his second wife (Magdeleine had predeceased him) the sum of 125 pounds and his children equal shares of the remainder of his estate. But there was a catch. The money in question existed in the form of an outstanding debt

owed to Charles by his brother Denis. Seemingly the estate never collected the debt (Denis predeceased Charles), leading to discontent among the heirs that would echo down the years. There was a lingering suspicion that Charles was worth more in money and property than that outstanding loan. In 1962, Jack Ramsay of Dillon, owner of the property adjoining the trading post site (the building stood on the Crown shoreline reservation) told me that "long ago" two boatloads of people from Penetanguishene visited the site, tearing down stone walls and shovelling over the ground in a futile search for money thought to have been "buried in cans." Jack, then in his '60s or '70s, spoke as if he had witnessed this personally, so it must have occurred in the 20th century. The few artefacts recovered in the 1961 dig were handed over to the Canadiana Department of the

Falling water levels:
A once-flourishing wild rice bed fronting the LaRonde trading post is now mostly bare ground, thanks to falling water levels in Georgian Bay. The latest official figures indicate still lower water to come. The cause might be complex, but the remedy is simple: a control structure at Sarnia–Port Huron to manage outflow from Lake Huron. The lowly beaver figured this out eons ago. We need a Canadian beaver on the international body dealing with management of the Great Lakes.



Royal Ontario Museum, together with a recommendation that the site be professionally investigated. This was never done, and eventually the collection was returned to Parry Sound and stored in the museum on Tower Hill. Around the 1970s, the Shebeshekong River shoreline encompassing the trading post location was subdivided into summer resort lots. I revisited the spot five or six years ago and found that a trace of the LaRonde post could still be seen in a cottager's front lawn, in the form of a token few rocks outlining the base of the former fireplace. *Editor's Note: The original story appeared February 2, 2011, and may be found on-line at www.cottagecountrynow.ca. In his first article, Mr. Macfie tells how he became interested in the LaRonde site and provides more details about the LaRonde family.*

RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM | SUCCESS STORIES

Housing Rehab to the rescue

By **Robynn Maluga**
Senior Housing Policy Analyst

The MNO Housing Branch provides property management services for the Thunder Bay Métis Community Centre and the Ministry of the Attorney General for the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee. In addition to providing these property management services,

MNO Housing is the delivery agent for several of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) assisted housing programs in the Thunder Bay, Kenora, Algoma and Cochrane Districts as well as the counties of Simcoe, Muskoka, Parry Sound and Nipissing.

- The Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program

(RRAP) assists eligible homeowners who occupy existing substandard housing, to repair or rehabilitate their dwellings to a minimum level of health and safety.

- The Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program for Persons with Disabilities (RRAP-D) assists eligible homeowners in the im-

provement or modification of existing housing to improve the accessibility of the dwelling for persons with disabilities.

- The Emergency Repair Program (ERP) assists eligible homeowners or occupiers in rural areas to undertake emergency repairs required for the continued safe occupancy of their houses. A sig-

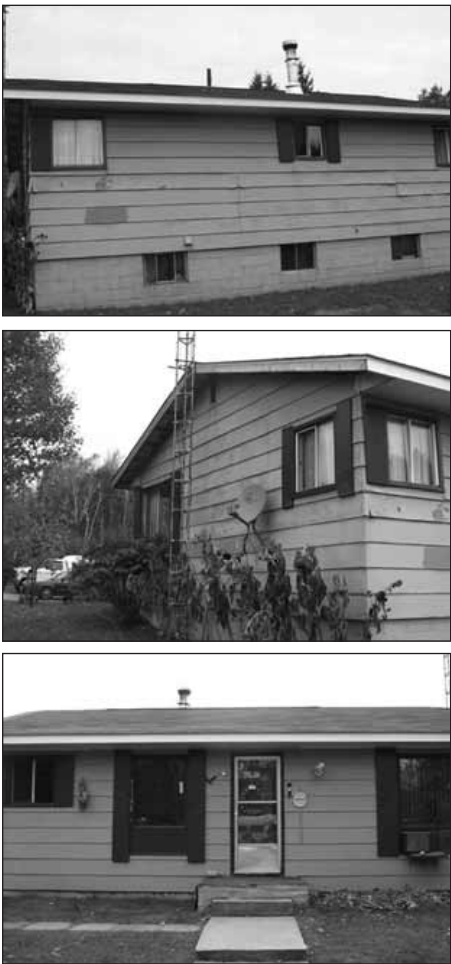
nificant portion of this program is directed to the Aboriginal people of Canada.

- The Home Adaptations for Seniors' Independence (HASI) assists low-income seniors over the age of 65 who are in need of adaptations to live in their homes independently.

The Housing Branch has been providing program delivery for CMHC since 1994 and has assisted over 2000 low-income homeowners to rehabilitate their homes. Here are two of their stories:

STORY 2 | SUNDRIDGE, ONTARIO

Before:



After:



Living with disability and maintaining an older house

The next story is about a couple in Sundridge, Ontario, who are both living with a disability and the hardships of maintaining their 35 year old house. This has become exhausting to the homeowners due to its deplorable condition. They were without an adequate septic system; their house was being exposed to the elements due to ineffective exterior finishes; their front landing was crumbling, and their window and door frames were rotting.

Again, this became a collaborative effort involving CMHC, MCSS and the Housing Branch to bring this home up to standards. Although these homeowners experienced some delays before pro-

ceeding with the projects due to a necessary change in contractors, they were still persistent in getting their home back.

Within seven months their home was given a new life and the transformation in their lives made it all worthwhile.

The Housing Branch would like to thank the homeowners who have allowed us to publish their stories and photographs. Merci & Meegwtich!

STORY 1 | SOUTH RIVER, ONTARIO

Before:



After:



South River home brought up to safety standards

The MNO Housing Branch's first story to share is from a non-status Aboriginal woman residing in South River, Ontario. This homeowner has been living in her house for well over 10 years and over the years has found it increasingly difficult to maintain her home. As a last effort she applied for CMHC's RRAP to bring her home up to a standard that would resolve her safety concerns and provide her with a healthy environment.

During the building inspection with the Housing Branch's Technical Advisor, Kirk Flood, it was clear this house was not up to CMHC standards. The homeowner's only means of egress was comprised of old cement blocks and pieced

together wooden crates. The house was without adequate heat and the roof was leaking at a rate where evidence of mould was clearly visible. The inspector identified ten mandatory repairs which were required to bring the dwelling up to a minimum level of health and safety standards and permit a further 15 years of useful life to the dwelling.

The homeowner, CMHC, the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) and the Housing Branch's RRAP administrative team worked together to make this story a success.

Within four months the repairs were completed. The homeowner is now confident in her surroundings and is enjoying her newly rehabilitated home.

Arts & Culture

Power and politics

Métis talent on-screen and behind scenes of APTN's new show *Blackstone*



Blackstone can be seen Tuesday's on APTN and Friday's on Showcase, check your local listings for time (It's 11:00 P.M. in southern Ontario).



▲ Award-winning Métis filmmaker Gil Cardinal wrote the *Blackstone* pilot.



Andrea Menard in APTN's *Blackstone*.

By LINDA LORD

If you're a bit of a night owl, you may have discovered APTN's new show, "Blackstone". Despite its First Nations' content, writer Gil Cardinal, is of Métis descent. This award-winning filmmaker wrote the pilot for *Blackstone* after gathering extensive research on the issues facing many Aboriginal communities.

The greater part of his work has related to an exploration of Aboriginal themes. With numerous credits as a director on *Moccasin Flats*, *Chiefs*, *Mentors*, and

North of 60, Gil also wrote and directed *Indian Summer: the Oka Crisis*; *Totem: the Return of the G'psgolox Pole*, and *Big Bear*. Gil believes *Blackstone* provides an opportunity for Aboriginal communities to intimately understand their own issues.

The Métis connection continues with Ron E Scott, *Blackstone's* producer-director-writer, who is also Métis and a citizen of the Métis Nation of Alberta. Under the banner of Prairie Dog Film + Television, he has written, produced and directed several diverse film and television productions. Besides *Blackstone*, his

credits include *Mixed Blessings*, *Cashing In*, *Hank Williams First Nation*, *Adventures of Artie the Ant* (animation), *Rubberman* and *Consequences*. His lifestyle credits include *My Green House*, *Cowboy Country*, *Code Green Canada*, *Young as You Look* and *Race and the River*. His television programs have aired on ACCESS, APTN, CBC, Citytv, CLT, CTV, Global, SCN, Vision TV, and in several international broadcast markets including the US, China, Hong Kong, eastern and western Europe and South Africa.

He considers *Blackstone* the pinnacle of his career.

MÉTIS ARTISTS



Exhibit celebrates Métis culture

On *Being Métis: Solo art exhibition* by **NATHALIE BERTIN**
Where: The Art Space, 2-58 Main St. East, Huntsville, ON
When: June 3 to July 3, 2011
Open daily from 1:00-4:00 P.M.

The exhibition is a personal celebration of Métis culture past and present. The show brings together contemporary artworks from Nathalie Bertin's

various series, presented in vignette format throughout the gallery. From images of traditional trades to political statements, tied together by designs inspired by the art of the "Flower Beadwork People", the exhibit honours the Métis tradition, recognizes the courage of early Canadian settlers, and acknowledges the debt we owe to our First Peoples.

For more information visit: www.nathaliebertin.com.

MEDIA



Missing Women coverage earns APTN Human Rights Award

Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) Wins Amnesty International Canada Human Rights Award

The Amnesty International Canada Media Awards recognize the efforts of journalists to help Canadians become aware of human rights issues within the mission of Amnesty International and for their vital importance in motivating the public to act and help force governments and opposi-

tion groups to change.

The award celebrates journalistic accomplishments in raising public awareness of human rights violations. The APTN Investigates episode, "Missing Women", is a powerful examination of the tragedy of missing Aboriginal women. Reporter Tina House referenced reports about the downtown eastside of Vancouver, the Walk for Justice, and even the tragic death of her own cousin.



POETRY

B'en Proud to be Un Métis

by Raymond D. Tremblay

I wasn't born d'en les plaines de l'west
But I'm b'en proud to be un Métis.

I never owned or rode un wild mustang
But I'm b'en proud to be un Métis.

I never fired une carabine 30-30 Winchester
But I'm b'en proud to be un Métis.

I never hunted le Roi de l'west: the buffalo
But I'm b'en proud to be un Métis.

I never ate du pemmican frais
But I'm b'en proud to be un Métis.

J'ai souvent hunté la partridge avec my dad
Et I'm b'en proud to be un Métis.

J'ai aussi souvent catché des hares avec lui
Et I'm b'en proud to be un Métis.

La pêche, j'en ai fait lots of time
Et I'm b'en proud to be un Métis.

Chez nous, nous avons beaucoup de parties
Et I'm b'en proud to be un Métis.

My mom jouait le fiddle; my dad tapait du pied
Et I'm b'en proud to be un Métis.

Each Sunday nous allions à la messe
Et I'm b'en proud to be un Métis.

We believed d'en le Grand Manitou
Et I'm b'en proud to be un Métis.

Mes parents worked very hard dans leurs vies
Et I'm b'en proud to be un Métis.

Nous sommes une very close-knit famille
Et I'm b'en proud to be un Métis.

Yes, I'm b'en fier de mes Métis ancestors
Grâce à eux, I'm b'en proud to be un Métis.

Healing and Wellness

Caught in the Web

There is an almost endless array of gambling sites available online and for every illegal gambling website that shuts down, it seems that three more open. These high-risk websites are persistent with their advertising, constant pop-ups, and banners on popular websites, not to mention the barrage of e-mails enticing us to play, offering free sign-up, starting bonuses and easy payment options. Using online gambling sites can not only compromise your computer system with viruses but can put you at risk for identity theft. This article will shed some light on three different types of cyber criminals.

Cybernomads

Cybernomads are individuals who work alone, often with an education in computers, specializing in software and programming. Their purpose is to steal, modify or manipulate gaming sites and software to collect personal information on you; then they sell your information on the black market. Considered the “Wal-Mart” of the black market, cybernomads can buy and sell bulk packages of players’ personal information such as social insurance numbers, credit card numbers, and banking information to these websites without your knowledge or permission.

You may think you are playing an honest game online but you may be playing against a cybernomad. These people use software tracking programs that memorize your style and betting patterns and calculate your odds of winning. This software then plays your cards for you to maximize your winnings. They also use programs that will record and analyze you and your opponents playing styles and hand history then give an analysis, thus giving them an advantage over honest players. Table scanner programs are also used to search and locate the easiest tables to play at to maximize winnings. Last, there are buddy list programs that allow you to add the weak poker players you come across then alert you whenever they sit down at a table to play.

Dot.Cons

Dot.con criminals are either “cybernomads” or “insiders”, staff members of the online casinos who come together to work on a specific project. These people commit fraud and theft by targeting online gaming websites which allow them access to all of the website’s users’ personal information. They install backdoor programs into the websites and when unsuspecting users download the program that allows them to play on the

website, the backdoor program gets downloaded onto the Dot. Con’s computer which then allows the Dot. Con to steal log-in and personal information.

Organized Crime

Members of online crime organizations are most commonly known for running cyber-extortion rings, phishing scams, and money laundering. Cyberextortion is perpetrated by members of the crime organization who hack into a gaming website, slow it down or completely shut it down. Then they demand that large sums of money be wired to offshore bank accounts to stop the attacks. If the owners refuse to pay, the attackers continue to shut down the website until the ransom is paid.

Phishing

Phishing scams work by creating identical websites to legitimate gaming websites but members of the online crime organization control and send out fraudulent e-mails to the unsuspecting users stating that if they click on the link and sign in, they could win a large bonus. Once the attackers have access to the user names and passwords, they can take over your account and steal your personal and financial information.

POKER, ROULETTE, SLOTS, BINGO and **SPORTS BETTING** are just a few of the various games available to play online, but you must be aware that there is great danger in providing your personal and banking information to these sites

What is the solution?

The only sure fire way to avoid identity and financial theft is to never give out personal or financial information to any online gaming site. There are plenty of websites that allow you to play casino games for free and don’t ask for your personal or financial information.



For further information contact the Provincial Aboriginal Responsible Gambling Coordinator at **613-798-1488 xt.150**.

Article Source: John L. McMullan, Department of Sociology and Criminology, Saint Mary's University; School of Criminal Justice, Rutgers University



RENFREW | VIOLENCE AND HEALING

A Healing Plan

Workshop develops healing plan for people exposed to violence

By **Shannon Davis**
Community Wellness Coordinator
RENFREW

On February 11, 2011, the Métis Nation of Ontario Health and Wellness Branch in Renfrew held a workshop on the prevention of violence and on the healing process. Eleven people participated in the workshop. A medicine wheel was used to generate answers on how violence impacts individuals, families and society as a whole. Participants discussed the emotional, physical, spiritual and mental consequences of violence on people. The participants shared their thoughts on what their community needs to help in the prevention of violence. The group made the following recommendations:

- build an emergency safety house in Renfrew, as the majority of the shelters are 45 minutes to 1 hour away;
- educate people on the resources available to the public that assist in the prevention of violence;
- hold weekly sharing circles for women and a separate one for men to help in alleviating stress;
- speak with local officials to facilitate the offering of anger management courses in Renfrew;
- speak to parents about the dangers of exposing their children to violence in the media and on video games;
- explain the importance of age appropriate games, movies and television shows to parents;
- develop a community safety plan so individuals have

guidelines they can follow to keep themselves safe and offer support to loved ones who are experiencing violence. The participants also developed a healing plan for people that have been exposed to violence. The healing plan included a weekly sharing circle, individual and family counselling and substance abuse counselling if needed. To maintain a positive outlook the healing plan also suggests healthy eating, participating in positive social relationships and taking part in positive leisure activities. The workshop was a success and organizers and participants would like to thank Monica Owl for making her green chilli dish.

OTTAWA | CANCER PREVENTION



▲ (left to right) **Robin Davey, Jo MacQuarrie, Carmen Pregent and Judy Simpson** (absent from photo: Melissa Pigeau, Kristina Jewel, Yvon Allard and Shannon Davis.)

Staff receives cancer prevention training

By **Melissa Pigeau**
Community Wellness Coordinator
OTTAWA

On March 9, some of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Health and Wellness staff from the Ottawa, Renfrew and Bancroft offices participated in a one day “train-the-trainer” workshop on colorectal cancer prevention. The workshop was presented by Cancer Care Ontario in coopera-

tion with the MNO. Jo MacQuarrie provided opening and closing prayers. The goal of the training was to provide staff with information and resources on colon cancer prevention and screening methods to bring back to their communities. The training was provided by Dr. Maureen Donohue. She had an excellent way with words and the presentation did not come across as too clinical.

DIABETES | NATIONAL CONFERENCE



MNO staff treks to Winnipeg for National Aboriginal Diabetes Conference

By **Lisa Scott**
Community Wellness Coordinator
HAMILTON

Eighteen MNO staff from across the province travelled to Winnipeg, Manitoba, during February to take part in the 6th National Conference on Diabetes and Aboriginal Peoples presented by the National Aboriginal Diabetes Association (NADA). The Métis Nation of Ontario sent representatives from several MNO programs, including Community Wellness, Long Term Care, Aging at Home and Chronic Disease Surveillance. There were many learning opportunities during the two day conference held at the Delta Hotel and the Winnipeg Convention Centre. Participants had the opportunity to take part in workshops that included: Healthy Food Preparation, Diabetes in Pregnancy, Promoting Healthy Lifestyles to Aboriginal Children and Families, Trends in Diabetes and many more. In true NADA style, attendees were encouraged to take part in the nutrition breaks and to engage in “Brain Dance” or “Cool Stretching” during an energy blast with Jennifer from Action Schools! BC. On the first night of the NADA Sharing and Learning Symposium, conference goers were treated to a banquet in honour of

community diabetes prevention workers. Guest speaker, Alex McComber, an adjunct professor with the Faculty of Education at McGill University, addressed the crowd. Alex brought with him a wealth of knowledge and experience gathered during his career. Mr. McComber has been a substance abuse coordinator, high school teacher and principal, a member of the Kahnawake Fire Brigade and a Kahnawake Baseball League coach. After enjoying an amazing meal and listening to an uplifting speech the crowd was awed by the Asham Stompers’ high energy jigging and square dancing. Well known Manitoba fiddler, Shawn Mousseau, accompanied the group. The mission of the Stompers is “to help recapture and preserve the history of the Métis people through the traditional dancing of the Red River Jig”. They combine the Red River Jig with the traditional square dance aptly called “the Red River Dance”. Formed in 2002, the Asham Stompers perform over 100 times a year. The crowd was wowed by the show and it was still the biggest topic of conversation at both the breakfast and lunch tables the next day. A big thank you goes out to NADA for making this conference such a wonderful experience!

The Benefits of Breakfast

By **Melissa Pigeau**
Community Wellness Coordinator
OTTAWA

“I’m on a diet.” “I don’t have time.” “I’m just not hungry in the morning.” How many times have you told yourself this? Eating a well-balanced, healthy breakfast lays the foundation for the busy day that is ahead for most of us. No more, “I’m on a diet” excuse! Eating breakfast every morning assists in maintaining a healthy weight. Those who

skip breakfast are prone to making less nutritious and unhealthy convenience food choices. Furthermore, many of us do not consume essential nutrients, such as vitamins and minerals needed daily. “I don’t have time,” is another excuse people who don’t eat breakfast use. If you are feeling rushed in the morning try healthy choices like a bowl of cereal, oatmeal or a hard-boiled egg; all take less than five minutes to prepare. Some people just aren’t

hungry when they wake up in the morning. To sneak in some essential vitamins, try a glass of 100% fruit juice, a smoothie or a glass of vegetable cocktail when you first wake up then later on in the morning have a piece of whole wheat toast or a boiled egg. Here is a quick and easy breakfast option that can be made ahead of time and stored in containers that are great to grab and go when you are in a hurry.

TROPICAL SUNRISE GRANOLA

- 1/3 cup honey
- 1/3 cup light brown sugar
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 4 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1/3 cup wheat germ
- 1/2 cup sweetened coconut
- 1/2 cup each of dried mango, dried pineapple, and toasted macadamia nuts, chopped



DIRECTIONS

1. Heat the oven to 300°. Line two cookie sheets with aluminum foil.
2. In a large bowl, combine the honey, brown sugar, butter, and salt. Add the oats and wheat germ, then, stir the mixture until it’s evenly blended.
3. Spread the granola on the prepared cookie sheets and bake for 20 minutes, stirring once halfway through to keep it from burning and encourage even baking.
4. Remove the pans from the oven and stir the granola again. Add the coconut, and then return the pans to the oven to bake 10 minutes more. Note: Keep an eye on the granola during this period and stir it occasionally so that it doesn’t burn.
5. Remove the granola from the oven and stir it one last time. Allow it to cool completely in the pans, about 15 minutes. When it has cooled, stir in the dried mango, the dried pineapple, and the toasted macadamia nuts, then, transfer the granola to an airtight container. The granola can be stored for up to four weeks. Makes about 7 cups.



OWEN SOUND | GREY-OWEN SOUND MÉTIS COUNCIL

The BIG Diabetes Day at the Mall

by **David Clark**
Community Wellness Worker
OWEN SOUND

It started innocently enough, a quick chat with a community agency about doing a joint diabetes workshop. As we chatted, Judy (Osteoporosis Canada) suggested we involve Lynda of the Grey Bruce Diabetes Program operating through the regional hospital. From there it grew into a large, all-day event at Heritage Place Mall, the only mall located in Owen Sound and Grey and Bruce Counties. Seven agencies, all with vested interests in diabetes (awareness, management, and prevention), partnered to present a one-stop source for diabetes information. We provided screening, foot care, and lots of information and expert advice. The function ran from 10:00 A.M.

to 7:00 P.M. on February 23rd. We tracked visitation using door prize ballots which included a “quickie survey” that asked about the value of the event, intention to attend next year, and source of information. Analysing the ballots generated the following: 1) 24% were male, 76% female; 2) 59% were from Owen Sound, 27% travelled 1-hour or more; 3) top three sources of information were newspaper (40%), radio (33%), and word-of-mouth (18%). On a 5-point scale (1 low, 5 high) asking about helpfulness of the presentation, the average rating was 4.3 with a mode of 5.0. Eighty-two (82) percent stated they would attend next year. Ballots totalled 133. The mall management generously donated the use of an empty store for the day, and loaned us tables and chairs. From



▲ The MNO Healing and Wellness Branch partnered with other agencies in an all-day diabetes awareness event at the Heritage Place Mall in Owen Sound

the moment we opened the doors, we had a steady stream of visitors, with two half-hour slow-downs around lunch and dinner. Screening was provided with about 40 people taking advantage, and almost 30 people pre-

booked and attended the foot care clinic. As we planned the event, it drove home the necessity for a holistic approach to health in general, but specifically regarding diabetes. Exhibitors included

Southern Ontario Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative (SOADI), Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), Canadian Diabetes Association, Grey Bruce Health Services, South West Self Management, MNO, and Osteoporosis Canada/Ontario Osteoporosis Strategy. The BIG approach to this function, we believe, made it more inviting for people to consider making the trip out to visit the event; also, invitations by attending agencies to each other for more partnering opportunities were discussed, with several new connections made. The presentation also generated attendance by staff from other agencies who were not a part of the event, achieving more networking. A total of 14 staff and volunteers hosted the information displays. Go BIG! Get BIG results!

TORONTO | DRUM-MAKING WORKSHOP



▲ Flo and Dave



Kate and her drum



Spencer and Claire.

Hide, Sinew and Spirit

MNO Healing and Wellness Branch staff in Toronto hosts a drum-making workshop for local Métis

by **Lianne Dumais**
Long Term Care Coordinator
GREATER TORONTO AREA

On January 21st, 2011, the Toronto Long Term Care Coordinator organized a drum making workshop. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank our facilitators Dave and Blanche White. I learned quickly that making a drum is far more than technique. There is

an important spiritual quality about it, choosing a frame, hide, and finally creating a drum beater to be used with the drum. It also requires a lot of strength; my hands sure felt it the next day.

There are several frame styles for hand drums; we chose the round drum as it was the most popular. Skill came into play when we were stretching the hide and tightening the sinew pieces. As the hide

and sinew dried, it tightened and gave the drum its resonance and depth of tone.

The group was left with an important message: There are many drums; there are many drummers. Each drummer must find their own heartbeat which leads to their own drum, which clarified that no two drums will sound the same; each has a unique tone. This brings me to the next point: each drum turned

out so different from the rest, reflecting the individuality and amazing presence of each drum-maker.

Because the workshop fell on a PD day, some children were able to share the experience with their parents. The clients have expressed their gratitude for giving them the opportunity to create their own drum. I hope everyone enjoys their drum and takes the time to play their own special creation.

WINDSOR

Valuable lessons at Anti-bullying luncheon in Windsor

By **October Fostey**
Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children Coordinator
WINDSOR

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children (AHBHC) staff in the Windsor MNO office held an Anti-bullying and Harvesting Luncheon on January 27. Participants not only learned how bullying impacts every age group but were also treated to a delicious hot lunch of Indian taco's and corn soup, thanks to one of the AHBHC volunteers who periodically cooks traditional foods for the Windsor office staff. Our big "thank you" goes to her for preparing and bringing all this food while it was still hot. It was very much enjoyed by all!

The AHBHC would also like to extend thanks to all our guest speakers who provided excellent information and facilitated dynamic group interaction by asking good questions and providing feedback. Even the youngest community member participating learned a valuable lesson as he helped his grandma put food on her plate (with a little bit of assistance from one of our staff).

Feedback from participants indicated that everyone enjoyed the day, so, until next year let's remember that bullying is a form of abuse that can cause long-term trauma and WE are the ones that can take control to stop it!

MÉTIS RESEARCH | CHRONIC DISEASE SURVEILLANCE PROJECT

First Population-based health studies about Métis in Ontario completed

By **Mario Gravelle**
Chronic Disease Surveillance Project
TORONTO

An article published last July in the *Métis Voyageur* outlined the work of the Métis Nation of Ontario's Healing and Wellness Branch, Chronic Disease Surveillance Project (CDSP). This item explained that the CDSP was undertaking population-based studies to determine the burden of diabetes, cancer, and cardiovascular disease in the Métis Nation of Ontario Citizens Registry. The Métis Nation of Ontario Healing and Wellness Branch is pleased to provide a follow-up progress report about these exciting research initiatives.

First, we gladly announce that the Métis-specific studies have been completed. Results were presented to the Provisional

Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario in the spring and then to MNO citizens at the Annual General Assembly (AGA) in Thunder Bay. Fact sheets circulated at the AGA provided information about the findings of these research projects. Second, "Clinical Significance Studies" are being done in partnership with leading experts from the respective chronic disease fields to interpret the study findings and to recommend the best use of the results. This process will allow the MNO to identify policy and programming options along with research priorities about diabetes, cancer, and cardiovascular disease. This activity should be finished in the summer.

The CDSP has developed a strategy to broadcast the results of the chronic disease studies as well as the Clinical Significance Studies. The MNO Healing and

Wellness Branch will present the findings in "Technical, Lay and Knowledge Translated" formats. Material will be available in English and French.

This dissemination strategy includes the following activities:

- Launch event in Ottawa and public release of materials to social media, Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, MNO website and publication in the *Métis Voyageur*, and press releases distributed to Ontario newspapers;
- Community information sessions (regional councils, community councils, and AGA in Parry Sound);
- Poster presentations at Healing and Wellness Branch sites across Ontario.

The CDSP is currently undertaking two other Métis-specific

chronic disease research projects. A respiratory disease study is underway while a mental health and addiction feasibility testing study is also in progress. The preliminary findings of both initiatives will be presented to the PCMN0 in July, 2011, and to the AGA later in the summer.

Please visit the MNO website for a link to the fact sheets about the diabetes, cancer, and cardiovascular disease studies. If you would like to have copies of this material sent to you, please contact:

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A New Year, a New You!

By **Melissa Pigeau**
OTTAWA

The staff at head office started the new year off with one goal in mind: "A New Year, A New You!" Over-indulgence and socializing, coincided with insufficient exercise throughout the Christmas season, so workers formed a healthy living/weight loss group that meets every Tuesday at lunch hour. With the support of others, their journey to healthy living is a path that does not need to be travelled alone.

On Tuesdays personnel come one by one to the community office where they begin by weighing-in, and every three weeks thereafter their body measurements are taken. These measurements are then charted using the website www.sparkpeople.com, which is a free healthy lifestyle website that tracks measurements and creates individualized meal and fitness plans.

During the lunch meetings, staff members discuss their successes and failures, the challenges they encountered, and share

THE STAFF AT HEAD OFFICE STARTED THE NEW YEAR OFF WITH ONE GOAL IN MIND...

ideas for the next session.

Using the "Wii" in the commu-

nity office, workers participate in physical activity challenges on their lunch hours. They may choose to do a personalized workout, or play against each other in weekly challenges with the "Biggest Loser" game.

With summer fast approaching, the group will take full advantage of the office's proximity to the Byward Market and Parliament Hill to increase cardiovascular exercise. These walking groups, highlighted with various exciting competitions, will stimulate personal motivation.

Métis on Ice



By **Brian Cockburn**
NORTH BAY

The start of 2011 saw the Métis Nation of Ontario program offices in a shambles, as the Education and Training section brushed on a fresh coat of paint—the first since they opened the doors at this location in 1998. Many cabinets, files, desks and computers found new locations, and not to be out done, Long Term Care, Healthy Babies, and Community Wellness also cleaned up old files or put a new look to their offices and the Greenwood Room.

Métis on Ice was a storm. February 19th the community gathered for a day of ice fishing, snowshoeing, and broom ball followed by an evening with dinner, music, cards, and a presentation on the North Bay Métis Council web page.

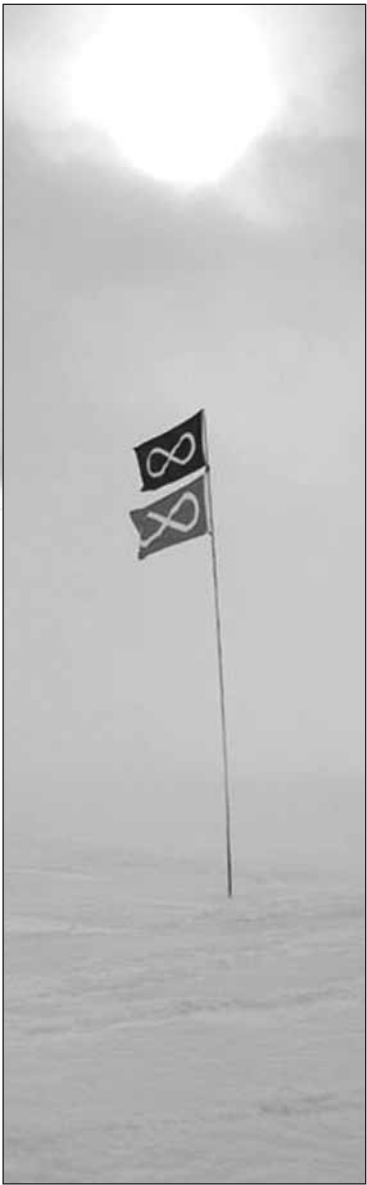
The morning started with a 30km wind blowing so hard that the city had to close the road to our location for ice fishing. President Walter Deering was the first

to drive around the barrier and by 8:30 A.M. he had the Métis flag flying out on Lake Nipissing.

Debbie Cronk arrived with the minnows; before you knew it 20 more Métis drove around the wooden horses in front of the railway tracks. Another Métis flag was soon flying on the back of one of the trucks, to let our members know we were still ice fishing.

As the morning drifted on, I watched a lot of the local vehicle traffic being turned around at the city's "Road is Closed" sign, while our flag proudly flew. One car that did stop was the local TV crew who had come to see the Métis blockade at the railway tracks along the water front.

Our blockade continued in good fun with a baker's dozen going out on the ice, even in the -30 wind-chill and blowing snow; many thanks to volunteers Gerry Greenwood, Pierre Malette and Marc Laurin who had brought their snow machines, ice augers, and wind barriers, and Jason Thibert for the first coffees. Lise



▲ **Métis flags fly on Lake Nipissing.**

Malette of Long Term Care made a hot chilli lunch for the gang that her grandson Patrick Landry "waitered" out onto the lake on a four-wheeler.

By 3:00 P.M. the fishermen were ready to join the events being put on by the Healing and Wellness Branch at Le Club Les Bon Amis, 327 Dudley St. in



▲ **Walter Deering, Gerry Greenwood and half-frozen Métis.**
▼ **David Potvin, Amanda Desbiens sitting, Mel Jamieson and Marc Laurin on machine.**



▲ **Gerry Greenwood on machine, Mel Jamieson, Walter Deering and Debbie Cronk.**

North Bay. The musicians, Tim and Larry Ellery, entertained the growing crowd as Amanda Desbiens and Stacey Rivet chopped the vegetables and Jason Jamieson stirred the moose stew. An introduction to the new website and a great dinner were soon served—a very enjoyable evening. The North Bay Métis Council an-

nounced it was election year, with the date being early June, 2011. Members were invited to run for the many positions on council.

If you would like to join in one of our family days there will be a large one planned by the Healing and Wellness Branch for July at the North Bay water front.

KENORA | DIABETES

MNO Healing and Wellness partners with regional health orgs

By **Judith Williams**
AHBHC Coordinator
KENORA & DRYDEN

Speaking of warming up—January was "hot" with new energy. LTC Coordinator Kathleen Tardi and I brain stormed our programs together as much as possible and networked with our community partners.

The first weeks of January, Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) attended committee meetings to share program information with other agencies planning 2011 events and welcoming new members to the Kenora Family Coalition (KFC) to which I have been a contributor. Discussion and involvement with KFC has enabled me to participate in future events and programs, as well as training seminars held in the Kenora area.

New Year's resolutions were the focus: Healthy Eating, Smoking Cessation (BCC), Healthy Environment for Children, Breast-feeding and Accreditation maternity ward for Lake of the Woods District Hospital, Community En-

gagement Committee, and the Kenora/Rainy River Communities Early Development Instrument Committee (EDI).

The Kenora Healing and Wellness Branch hosted the first quarterly diabetic clinic day, facilitating with the Kenora Area Health Access Centre (KAHAC). Diabetics were screened and consultations arranged for clients who expressed a desire for further direction in the care of their medical concerns associated with diabetes. Extending diabetic education and services, assessments of clients with "skin breakdown", and a foot care clinic were held February 28th, 2011. These specific clinics will repeat throughout the year. KAHAC has expressed their commitment and involvement with the MNO Healing and Wellness Branch. We also had unexpected media coverage by the *Kenora Daily Miner and News*.

Collaborating with other HBHC the Northwestern Health Unit and local dentists assisted in the 2011 Circle of Friends Day Care presentation to promote dental care.

VOLUNTEERS

MNO LTC program playing an important role in Timmins Métis Community

The MNO Healing and Wellness Branch's LTC Program in Timmins was very busy during the winter months with several community service events.

On February 24, the LTC program and the Youth Coordinator hosted a presentation by Mary Fortier. Mary is a survivor of the residential school system. She told her story of coping with her painful memories throughout her youth and adulthood. "I was amazed with Mary's quiet courage," stated Shirley Potvin, a member of the Timmins Métis Council, "while it was heartbreaking to hear her story, it is important for all of us that she tells it."

On March 3, twenty participants attended a workshop on Alzheimer's disease organized by the LTC. The workshop was provided by Graham Lee and included a movie about the impact of Alzheimer's disease. Following the workshop, council member, Regina Rosignol said, "It is a hard subject, but I really appreciated what Graham had to say and I think it helped us all understand Alzheimer's disease."

The LTC held an appreciation luncheon for volunteers on March 17 at a local restaurant. Each volunteer received a certificate acknowledging their dedicated service. Some volunteers had been supporting MNO Healing and Wellness programs for as long as 17 years. "Our program wouldn't be possible without our dedicated volunteers," said LTC Coordinator Louise Cloutier. "We are so grateful for everything they do to make our program a success."



▲ Top: **Timmins area volunteers with the MNO Healing and Wellness Branch's Long Term Care Program.**



▲ Bottom: **Mary Fortier with Youth Coordinator Cyndee Desrochers of the MNO-Timmins Council.**

New faces for T-Bay Healing and Wellness

By **Kerrie New**

CAP-C Coordinator, THUNDER BAY

Thunder Bay Healing and Wellness Branch has some fresh faces this year: Cherity Calder as Healthy Babies Healthy Children Co-ordinator, Kerrie New as Community Action Program for Children Co-ordinator, and Liisa Hylander as Pre/post Natal Nutrition Co-ordinator. They have jumped right into the community facilitating some wonderful family events and offering support.

Over 200 participants celebrated a community Christmas

party while feasting and listening to the delightful music of the Kam Valley Fiddlers. Families enjoyed a fun-filled day at Centennial Park with a horse drawn sleigh ride, snowshoeing, sledding and a hot lunch. Mothers celebrated with some henna, belly casting, sling making and baby quilts.

Our calendar is jam-packed for the spring so we look forward to continuing the positive adventure as part of the Thunder Bay Healing and Wellness Branch team.

CONTACT:

226 May St. S., Thunder Bay, ON
Tel: (807) 624-5012



(top) **Community Christmas party volunteer crew.** ▶
(bottom left) **Horse drawn sleigh-ride.** (middle) **Making baby quilts.** (right) **Kerrie New and Senator Bob.**

LIFE SKILLS



▲ **Staff members of the MNO Healing and Wellness Branch participate in Life Skills Training held in Toronto on Feb. 22-23, 2011.**

Life Skills Training will assist Healing and Wellness Branch staff in delivery of workshops

By **Shelley Gonneville**

Manager, Child and Family Initiatives
OTTAWA

and **Danielle Deneau**

Community Wellness Coordinator
WINDSOR

On February 22-25, 2011, The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Healing and Wellness Branch organized front-line training in Toronto for 43 of its staff members. Over three days, facilitators Tracy Bald, Community Wellness Coordinator, and Shelly Whitney, Long Term Care Coordinator, guided the group through Life Skills sessions. Tracy and Shelly had previously taken on the task of becoming Life Skills trainers and brought these skills back to the branch with a high standard of professionalism.

"Life Skills Training" involved

teaching participants to take common workshop topics such as budgeting, and incorporate methods and activities that would make it fun as well as real for people within their communities. Over time, standard presentation models don't always resonate with most people.

Hands-on, interactive activities and story sharing, on the other hand, give audiences the opportunity to better understand the topic, because in the end, they can relate it directly to their everyday lives, making it more likely they will make the changes needed to live healthier life-styles.

The MNO Healing and Wellness staff in the Windsor office wasted no time applying what they had learned in Toronto to one of their training sessions. On the afternoon of March 8, they

provided an anger management workshop in their community that incorporated some of the interactive ideas they had learned in Toronto. Participants talked about what anger looks like and how to react to it. It was the first time staff tried a more interactive workshop from the Life Skills Training in Toronto and it was a success! With lots of good laughs, but also a serious side, and with the help of a guest speaker from the John Howard Society, the participants learned about different types of anger; using anger in a positive way; when anger becomes a problem; the ABC's of anger, and much more.

The Healing and Wellness staff in Windsor would like to thank everyone who participated, including the guest speaker and all staff for a wonderful afternoon.

SUMMIT TO END VIOLENCE



▲ **Standing Senator Roland St. Germain (left), Mitch Case (right) and sitting, Josephine Mandamin.**

Protecting our children from violence

By **Shelley Gonneville**

Manager, Child and Family Initiatives
OTTAWA

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), along with the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, the Ontario Native Women's Associations and independent First Nations, organized this year's "Summit to End Violence Against Aboriginal Women" on February 28 to March 2 in Toronto. The Summit was sponsored by the Ministry of Child and Youth Services. Shelley Gonneville, the MNO Healing and Wellness Branch Manager of Child and Family Initiatives represented the MNO on the Summit steering committee.

The Summit theme was "Protecting our Children from Violence: Our Sacred Responsibility", which focused attention on

children and youth by delivering powerful messages and stories about those who lived--or continue to live--with the long-lasting effects of family violence. Speakers, including many youths, shared stories of resiliency and how their culture played a significant part in their healing processes. The MNO was well represented at the conference and MNO speakers included MNO Chief Operating Officer, Doug Wilson, MNO youth, Mitch Case and Senator Roland St. Germain who participated in opening and closing prayers. MNO Healing and Wellness Branch Managers, Lisa Pigeau and Shelley Gonneville, were among the facilitators of breakout sessions that provided further direction on how to move the issue of violence against Aboriginal women forward.

MOON RIVER



‘Round the campfire

by Verna Porter

As I listen to Métis citizens speak at round table discussions, around a camp fire, or at mocasin camp training, the same story seems to surface. Some found out they had “mixed blood”--that they were Métis people--but at a later age. Some were fortunate enough to grow up knowing their heritage and practicing their beliefs, a way of life, maybe a little different than their school peers. I was one who found out in my late 30’s that there was “mixed blood” in my family tree. It takes a lot of paper work, asking questions, digging and getting government papers in order, but the end result is very satisfying to know where you came from and the history that surrounds those findings.

I am from up north, and while moose hunting with my husband years back, I sat on my watch and was thinking of ancestors and what it would have been like to sit and wait for your moose to appear (if you were lucky enough). As these thoughts went through my head I wrote a little song. I sung it for some students during one of our Aboriginal Days and felt maybe I should share it with you as well.

Verna Porter is the Senator of the Moon River Métis Council.

Proud To Be Metis

This is a song about me and you
How I found out I was Métis too
It was a secret in most our families
Pride and shame, but who’s to blame

My great-grandfather James Miller
From Orkney Island was his birth
To be a factor for the Hudson’s Bay Co.
At the great Matagami trading post

He met his love an Ojibwa maiden
Settled down and raised a family
Generations have all come and gone
Our legends told in verse and song

Our elders our only bond
Memories faded but the spirit is strong
But united we must stand
A circle all holding hands

I grew up in a society
That wasn’t ready for the Métis
Our families were not to blame
It’s really sad and what a shame

I’m young and proud to be a Métis
I’ll keep searching for more history
I hope and pray that generations to come
Will gain their pride and stand as one

HEALING AND WELLNESS

HAMILTON | DIABETES AND FOOT CARE

Healthy feet for life

By Lisa Scott
Community Wellness Coordinator
HAMILTON

On March 10th, 2011, the banquet hall of the Ukrainian Cultural Centre in Hamilton was alive with the sounds of community. The Métis Nation of Ontario, along with Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children, Ontario Native Women’s Association and the Southern Ontario Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative (SOADI), held the 6th Annual Hamilton Aboriginal Diabetes Awareness Day and Foot Care Clinic.

Fifty-three community members were treated to a day of learning, self-care and a wonderful lunch. The day began with a moving prayer and welcome from Elder Renee Thomas Hill, who had us all thinking of the importance of the health of our feet and laughing at her wonderful account of her childhood antics.



Over the course of the day we had the pleasure of hearing from many voices, including Rebecca Truscott from Cancer Care Ontario, Gordon Gong from Hamilton Executive Directors’ Aboriginal Coalition Inc., and Bob Fenton from Ontario Native Women’s Association.

During the morning Crystal Macdonald provided a presentation on reading food labels and Kathleen LaForme taught us how to create the “ribbon of life” while the crowd was entertained

by a performance of traditional singing and drumming.

The Southern Ontario Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-term Care, which provides financial assistance for the development, and enhancement of programs and services focusing on the education, prevention, and management of diabetes in Aboriginal communities, both on and off-reserve. The high prevalence of diabetes in Aboriginal society has placed it among the top health priorities.

Who is a candidate for SOADI Foot Care Subsidies?

Aboriginal, Métis, and Inuit people that are living with diabetes, have current foot concerns, are high risk under LEAP ranking, and elders who do not qualify for any other funding resources are SOADI’s main priority.

This part of the program is de-

signed for people to independently go to the chiropodist’s office for treatments. Some participants for various reasons are house-bound and have mobility issues; in this case, in home foot care is possible.

Various foot care supplies (such as diabetic socks, support hose, orthotics, orthopaedic shoes etc) may be subsidized. Nike shoes can be subsidized to SOADI subsidy clients, through SOADI Foot Care Subsidy Program. For more information contact the Foot Care Coordinator. Nike N7 shoes are available to try on by appointment at our head office. Contact the foot care program to make an appointment.

Our feet are very important to our daily lives and we must take care of them. Feet are a part of us for life. However, amputations are becoming the leading complication of diabetes. Let’s walk together to help prevent more losses.

SUDBURY | COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Scenes from Sudbury Fun Day

By Dale Xilon
AHBHC Coordinator
SUDBURY

On February 12, 2011, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Healing and Wellness Branch in Sudbury hosted a Family Fun Day.

The day included three mini-workshops and presentations: winter skin care by Dr. Lyne Giroux, dermatologist; obtaining and maintaining healthy family weight by Lorna Fryer, Area Manager at Weight Watchers; and, the link between childhood and responsible gambling by the Métis Nation of Ontario’s own Loma Rowlinson, Provincial Aboriginal Responsible Gambling Coordinator.

Loma’s heart-felt presentation shared a personal story



from her experiences as a parent. She was supported by interactive activities facilitated by Brent Xilon. These activities

demonstrated that gaming can be approached in a fun, healthy and safe way and were featured in a responsible gaming area

where fun was had by everyone. In one activity, children cheered on their favourite race horse and in another they bet suckers as part of a “Let’s Make a Deal” round. This area turned out to be by far the loudest and most popular area during the Family Fun Day.

With the children in mind, Rainbow Bear from Rainbow Cinema stopped in for a visit, handing out free movie vouchers and taking pictures with both the children and the young at heart.

Nancy Martel, MNO Long Term Care Coordinator, recognized and publicly thanked the volunteers who made the event possible.

KENORA | DIABETES CLINIC

Good food makes healthy bodies

By Lisa Scott
Community Wellness Coordinator
KENORA

The Métis Nation of Ontario Healing and Wellness Branch launched 2011 with a diabetes clinic at the Kenora Métis Centre on January 24th.

“Our goal as a health branch is to get out there and provide community workshops with learning or educational aspects to them,” said Long-term Care Coordinator Kathleen Tardi. “We’re targeting the community at large, not just Métis people.”

Judith Williams, the branch’s Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children Coordinator helps with family planning needs as well as with such parenting elements as

teething, breastfeeding, signs and symptoms of illness, and general maternal health.

Philina Sky, the branch’s diabetes nurse educator, works with Wassay Gezhig Na Nahn Dah We Igamig (Kenora Area Health Access Centre). Her team travels to 13 regional First Nations communities to provide services including blood sugar and healthy lifestyle management, nutrition and even mental health, within a holistic framework.

“Traditionally and historically, our people were very active. They needed to be physically active in order to survive. They ate what was available from the land and they moved around a lot according to the seasons--wherever the food was. In the past 50

or 60 years, that has changed drastically. Our people are no longer active in order to survive. New technology such as cars, even shopping for food doesn’t expend a lot of energy so we’re finding our people are more

“
TRADITIONALLY AND HISTORICALLY, OUR PEOPLE WERE VERY ACTIVE. THEY NEEDED TO BY PHYSICALLY ACTIVE IN ORDER TO SURVIVE.
”

sedentary than ever before. This creates higher risk because they may be overweight and they’re not eating the proper traditional foods they used to eat.”

Sky acknowledged there’s a “challenging” job ahead, as poverty plays a pivotal role in available food options but through education and engagement in programs such as the “Healthy Food Box”, she is spreading the message that cost saving measures and planning can create a healthy diet within a tight budget.

“Our services are holistic-based,” she said. “We have a balance of traditional services and mental health services to help our clients to be able to take care of themselves wholeheartedly.”

Find the Voyageur within

By Charmaine Langlais

Students of Our Lady of the Way School in Stratton participated in Voyageur Day on March 4, 2011, when a celebration of Aboriginal, French and Métis heritage was in full swing. The student body divided into six teams and fulfilled the task of creating a team name, a tune and a flag that proudly decorated the gymnasium walls. Together “The Mighty Métis” team chanted:

*We're tough, we're buff
We're the mighty Métis!
The mighty Métis!
We're half 'n half,
We hunt 'n we trap!
We honour our parents' past.
We're the mighty Métis
The mighty Métis!
Ya! Ya! Ya!
The MIGHTY MÉTIS!*

To provide students with a glimpse of the voyageur world, teams participated in outdoor games mimicking those of earlier days but with a contemporary twist. Students learned that effective teamwork takes a great deal of hard work and compromise. Older students welcomed a leadership role by setting a good example and promoting morale and communication. “Snowshoeing”, “Hike through the Woods” and



▲ Left to right: Gavin Brumwell, Avery Kreger, Paige Anderson and Destiny Copenace.

“Dog Sled Race” were just a few of the games. I helped with dog sled race, a timed event in which all team members worked together to manoeuvre voyageur like equipment (toboggans, rope, snowshoes, bags, wood) through the course. The lighter kids were able to walk on the top layer of the snow but for the rest of us,

breaking through the snow proved an exhausting task.

Voyageur inspired games were followed by a pot luck lunch with many parents in attendance and dishes to share. The Healing and Wellness Branch offered a display of beading and other Métis symbols for the school to admire. Following lunch, students made

their own dot painting masterpiece by dipping the end of a paintbrush into paint and pressing it onto canvas. The end result was the effect of hundreds of raised dots that simulated floral beadwork.

Just like the real clothing that voyageurs wore, students sported their best voyageur costume. Two

“TO PROVIDE A GLIMPSE OF THE VOYAGEUR WORLD, TEAMS PARTICIPATED IN OUTDOOR GAMES MIMICKING THOSE OF EARLIER DAYS BUT WITH A CONTEMPORARY TWIST.”

primary and two junior students were selected as the “voyageurs of the year”. Sunset Country Métis Healing and Wellness staff presented each of them with a distinctive red Métis sash.

To complete the day, teams were judged on tunes and flags combined with points from the voyageur games. First, second and third place received voyageur ribbons and Métis Nation of Ontario Healing and Wellness water bottles.

We want to thank the students and staff of Our Lady of the Way School for their invitation to be part of Voyageur Day and their ambition as modern voyageurs to preserve our cultural heritage.

Charmaine Langlais is the MNO's Community Wellness Worker in Fort Frances.

BANCROFT | COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Basic Jigging

Event brings together school community through laughter, physical fitness, socializing and culture

By **Tracey Dale**
Community Wellness Coordinator
& **Tammy Hoover**
Aboriginal Healthy Babies/Children
BANCROFT

On February 9th, 2011, the children from Bird's Creek Public School in Bancroft were able to experience and learn basic jigging.

Métis jigging is a unique dance developed by the Métis people. It combines the intricate footwork of Native dancing with the instruments and form of European music.

Throughout the day 116 students participated in a fun inter-

active learning experience that showcased Métis culture and community cohesiveness.

Each class was brought together to learn four individual jigging steps that when combined with fiddle music, completed a full dance. By the end of each class the children were keen on performing with their peers and teachers.

This event brought together the school community through laughter, physical fitness, socializing and culture.

It was an honour to be invited to share Métis traditions with the children of our community.

NORTH BAY | COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The best part of winter

Healing and Wellness Branch plans snowshoe outing in North Bay

By **Amanda Desbiens**
Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy
Children Program Coordinator
NORTH BAY

Normally I'm not a winter fan; I don't like to be outside in the cold or dressed up in all that winter gear that makes it hard to move. I do have to admit that I love snowshoeing! The best part for me is taking a hike in the snowshoes down some trail when the sun is blazing through the trees. I feel so connected with Mother Nature and a higher power when I'm out in the middle of the forest walking around breathing in the cold air through my lungs and listening to the birds chirp and the wind slowly blow the snow off the trees.

As the AHBHC program coordinator in North Bay I get the privilege of doing some physical activity workshops that I normally save for the winter so I can take participants out snowshoeing. This year we borrowed snowshoes from the MNO Timmins Council and went to École publique Jeunesse-Active in Sturgeon Falls for their winter carnival.

Our Community Wellness Coordinator, Stacey Rivet, and our second year Social Service Worker program student, Debbie Cronk from Canadore College, assisted with snowshoe soccer



▲ North Bay, Aboriginal Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Program Coordinator, Amanda Desbiens, introduces snowshoeing to students at École publique Jeunesse-Active in Sturgeon Falls during their winter carnival. photo by Chantal Rainville

“THE BEST PART FOR ME IS TAKING A HIKE IN THE SNOWSHOES DOWN SOME TRAIL WHEN THE SUN IS BLAZING THROUGH THE TREES”

for all the students in the school on February 10, 2011. We played boys against girls in every grade and it was a blast!

We didn't think the snowshoes would fit the kindergartners but they were anxious to get them on, so we gave it a go. They put those snowshoes on and walked around like champs. They did an amazing job, although we were really tired from running after them putting their snowshoes back on and picking them up when they fell in the snow. It was an awesome morning with a great bunch of kids!

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Moccasin Camp

The MNO's Education and Training branch holds a **Moccasin Camp** a meaningful and useful experience for Métis citizens

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Education and Training Branch has recently started offering Métis "boot camps" to provide training on presenting about Métis history, culture and issues in Ontario to MNO citizens. The participants at a recent boot camp in Midland were an enthusiastic and engaged group who quickly adopted a suggestion from Senator Roland St. Germain that these events would be more appropriately called "moccasin camps". So, from now on, these training events shall be known as "moccasin camps"!

Moccasin camps address the increasing demand from schools, governments and the general public for information about the Métis. As well, the camps assist Métis by increasing awareness and pride about Métis identity, which leads us all to want to learn more about Métis history and culture. In response to this growing demand, moccasin camps provide Métis educators and community leaders, including senators, elders, youth, community councilors and other activists, with training on effective ways of making presentations to different audiences and how to use various presentation tools to explain Métis heritage and current issues.

During the weekend of January 29-30 over 30 MNO citizens from the Moon River, Toronto-York, Georgian Bay, Credit River and Midland Community Councils gathered in Midland for a moccasin camp. The group in-



I learned something new about my Métis heritage and gained more confidence in my public speaking ability. This type of education is very important because it helps people get a better understanding of Métis history and culture.

cluded Senators Audrey Vallee, Roland St. Germain, Cecile Wagar, Alis Kennedy, Andre Bosse and Verna Porter, as well as MNO Chair, France Picotte. MNO Education and Training staff members, Chris Paci, Bonny Cann, Scott Carpenter, Chris McLeod and Guylaine Morin-Cleroux led sessions on such topics as public speaking skills, presenting Métis material culture, and how to promote Métis culture. The participants were also provided with a power point presentation called "Métis 201", which they can adapt for their own presentations.

Highlights for many participants included Scott Carpenter's beautiful display of Métis artefacts and a similar impressive display brought by Jim Tolles of the Credit River Métis Council. Reaction from the participants was very positive. "The moccasin

▲ During the Midland Moccasin Camp, Scott Carpenter of the MNO Education and Training Branch, speaks about the significance of the sash to Métis culture.

camp was great," stated Larry Duval, the President of the Moon River Métis Council. "I learned something new about my Métis heritage and gained more confidence in my public speaking ability. This type of education is very important because it helps people get a better understanding of Métis history and culture."

Kathy Morgan, an MNO citizen from the Toronto area, commented: "I loved the moccasin camp! I hadn't had the chance to expose myself to this kind of learning before and it was really quite wonderful." During discussion about how to tell the Métis epic, Kathy shared the story of her own family, which everyone felt

was quite moving. Kathy is a descendant of Louis Riel's grandparents, Jean Baptiste Lagimodière and Marie-Anne Gaboury. She explained that as a teenager she had resisted learning about her Métis heritage, a time when she could have learned from her mother and other elders. However, now that her mother has passed she is actively trying to re-connect with her Métis identity. It was a powerful story with which many at the camp could identify.

After the completion of the camp, Chair Picotte presented each participant with a certificate recognizing that they had completed the camp.

STUDENT BURSARIES | SENECA COLLEGE

MNO establishes award for Métis at Seneca College

On April 8, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) announced that it had pledged \$20,000 to provide financial assistance to Seneca College's Métis students. These funds will be matched by the Ontario Trust for Student Support.

The new MNO award is intended to encourage Métis individuals within Ontario to pursue post-secondary studies specific to careers leading to employment. "Métis students face a number of unique cultural, geographic and social challenges when attending a post-secondary institution," explained MNO President Gary Lipinski. "The financial assistance we are providing will help to address some of these issues." The new award is part of the ongoing work

taking place in Ontario flowing from the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the MNO and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, which was signed last year. "The MOU is part of our overall Framework Agreement with the Ontario Government," stated Lipinski, "and the award is another example of the progress being made in implementing the Framework Agreement."

"We are pleased to have the Métis Nation of Ontario invest in the success of Seneca students," said Seneca College President, David Agnew. "By working together, Seneca and the Métis Nation of Ontario can provide more access to education to help stu-

dents develop the skills and expertise necessary for today's careers."

In order to be eligible for the award, students must show academic promise and have a demonstrated financial need. In addition, applicants are encouraged to provide information about their active role in the Métis community and any humanitarian or volunteer efforts.

"Four per cent of Seneca's full-time student population is Aboriginal," said Mark Solomon, Manager Student Development. "This new award acknowledges the unique needs of Métis students and will help them to achieve their academic and career goals."

"Over the years, the MNO has



▲ Seneca College President, David Agnew, presents MNO President, Gary Lipinski, with a hand-made drum painted by Aboriginal artist Jay Bell Redbird.

provided assistance to Métis students attending Seneca through our employment and training programs," stated Jennifer St. Germain, MNO Director of Education and Training. "Last year we were able to fund seven students pursuing studies in Golf-Course Technician, Registered Practical Nursing, Pharmaceutical Regulatory Af-

fairs and Quality Operations, Computer Networking and Technical Support, Early Childhood Education - Apprenticeship Program, Law Enforcement and Investigations and Tourism and Travel. This new award is an important step forward to create more opportunities for Métis people to attend Seneca College."

STUDENTS' SUCCESS | READY TO WORK PROGRAM

Ready-to-Work first graduates

On December 3, 2010, students from Sault Ste. Marie in the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Ready-to-Work (RTW) program were in the mood to celebrate as were students in Ottawa and Midland in the same program on December 17. On each of these days, students held graduation parties to recognize their achievements in completing the program.

The Ready-to-Work program is a partnership between the MNO and the Ontario Tourism Education Corporation (OTEC). Its purpose is to provide tourism and hospitality training for Aboriginal people. Graduates receive essential skills development through "emerit" Tourism Essentials (TOE), Service Excellence and Canadian Workplace Essentials (CWE)

training to help them successfully transition into the tourism and hospitality workforce. Participants also received the core industry certifications needed to get a job in tourism and begin working toward their emerit National Tourism Certified Professional (TCP) designation in any of 21 recognized tourism occupations.

"Ready-to-Work really built up my confidence," explained RTW graduate Sarah Hamill: "I feel very prepared and excited to launch my new career." At least 28 individuals graduated from the RTW program in December, 2010. These most recent graduates are part of over 60 people who have successfully completed the program, most of whom are already employed in the tourism and hospitality industry.



▲ **Ottawa Graduates:** (Back row, left to right) **Gilbert McGillivray, Charleen Kakek-agumick, April Guanish, Darlene Gear-White, Vanessa Petawabano.** (Front row, left to right) **Christine King; Chantal Lemire, MNO Job Developer; Tanya Sadler, OTEC Facilitator.** (Monica Ethier and Mervin Leclair are absent.)



▲ **Midland Ready-to-Work graduates:** (Back row, left to right) **Nicole Williams; Naomi LeCamp; Cortney Lottermose; Kristen Stewart, MNO Job Developer; Brenda McCue and Ken Laycock.** (Front row, left to right) **Ashley LeCamp; Jem St. Germaine; Sheila Kidd; Sue Tait, OTEC Facilitator; Cathie Williams; Jenne Finley and Darlene Desroches.**



▲ **Sault Ste. Marie graduates:** (Back row, l to r) **Jenilee Neveau, Marshal Agawa, Ashley Tanner, Loretta Nolan, Sheila Pitawanakwat and Lisa Bonin.** (Front row, l to r) **Becky Rogers, MNO Job Developer; Scott Wilkins; Marie Murphy-Foran, MNO Facilitator; Cyndi Boston Cloutier, MNO Project Coordinator; Kyle Russell; Sarah Shawanda, and Dominic Migwans-Desjardine.**

EDUCATION POLICY

Canada's Ministers of Education urged to endorse a Métis-specific forum on Education and Training

by **Chris Paci**
Manager, MNOET

At a meeting with National Aboriginal leaders and Canada's provincial and territorial Ministers of Education (CMEC) on February 24th, Métis National Council Minister of Education, Robert Doucette, called for Métis-specific solutions to educational challenges.

He explained education funding should be responsive to the specific needs of Métis people and with 52% of the Métis population below 19 years of age, it's time for Canada's governments to take action to ensure Métis don't continue to fall through the cracks. Doucette informed CMEC that the Métis National Council recently received support from the Honourable John Duncan, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Minister responsible for Métis and Non-Status Indians, that if the provinces are willing to talk about a Métis-specific process then he's willing to be engaged in those discussions.

National Aboriginal leaders and CMEC all agree that the federal government must be at the

FUNDING SHOULD BE RESPONSIVE TO THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF MÉTIS PEOPLE ... TO ENSURE MÉTIS DON'T CONTINUE TO FALL THROUGH THE CRACKS.

table to address the need to increase education funding for Aboriginal students—First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

Minister Doucette says: "I'm encouraged that CMEC delegates have listened and that they are going to take our message forward to Minister Duncan. The Ministers asked questions specific to Métis education and I believe they are sincere in their advocacy in wanting to ensure a huge segment of the Canadian population within their provincial jurisdictions are dealt with in an equitable manner."

Currently, there is an enormous gap between the number of

non-Aboriginal people and Métis that attend post-secondary education—18% versus 7%. Doucette says our economy stands to make great gains if we can increase those numbers.

"Minister Duncan is aware of our issues, and now we all need to sit down at the table to ensure we're able to come up with solutions to educate our Métis population youth and how it engages them in the labour force moving forward in the 21st century," says Doucette. "The fact of the matter is this country will prosper when Métis people prosper and I'm confident that message will be resonated loud and clear by the First Ministers to Minister Duncan."

A Métis-specific forum on education would address the need to revamp the K-12 system, examine ways of improving access to post-secondary education and look at providing support for adult learners among other things. Doucette says all Métis Nation governments need to be at the table including the Métis Nation of Ontario, Manitoba Métis Federation, Métis Nation - Saskatchewan, Métis Nation of Alberta and the Métis Nation British Columbia.

STUDENT SUCCESS | UNIVERSITY OF SUDBURY

Métis student receives honour

Melanie Smits is a self-identifying Métis woman who has worked for the Métis Nation of Ontario as a summer student and who attended the 2010 MNO Annual General Assembly as part of the youth contingent. She recently received the Sword of Loyola, the most prestigious award offered by the University of Sudbury. Melanie is the first Métis student to receive this honour.

A bilingual honour student, she is currently completing a degree with double specializations in Native Studies and Religious Studies—Religious Studies in French and Native Studies in English.

In addition to her academic studies, Ms. Smits is the Aboriginal representative on the board of the Association des étudiants francophones (l'AEF); a representative of the Métis students on the Board of the Indigenous Students Circle; a member of the Undergraduate Program Review Team for the Department of Native Studies and a member of the Department of Religious Studies search committee.

Off campus, Melanie is a volunteer coordinator of the Niwawapeten Npeten Aboriginal Youth



Mentorship Circle, where she helps train Aboriginal youth to do presentations in the community schools on Aboriginal history, health and leadership. After graduation, she intends to attend either teachers' college or pursue an M.A. degree in the Humanities.

The Sword of Loyola was established in 1966 by the Board of Regents to recognize the graduating student who has proven to be the most outstanding example of the university's ideal in scholarship, leadership qualities, and concern for others. The award is inspired by the life of Ignatius of Loyola, a Spanish Knight who converted to Christianity in 1521 and founded the Jesuit order.

BUILDING SYSTEMS TECHNICAL ADVISOR INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Housing expert provides BSTAIP training

The week of December 6-10, 2010, was a big one for the students enrolled in the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Building Systems Technical Advisor Internship Program (BSTAIP).

The BSTAIP students participated in a one week seminar led by Gail Lawlor, the President of Energy Matters. Gail is a leading consultant in making homes more energy efficient. Based in Thunder Bay, the purpose of BSTAIP is to develop a Métis workforce of highly skilled building inspection and energy conservation advisors, who are knowledgeable on current housing trends, so, Gail's expertise was very valuable to the students.

Gail's training was part of the BSTAIP Building Science class and focused on the concept of the "House as a System." Topics covered during the week included air



▲ BSTAIP students listen as Energy Matters President, Gail Lawlor, describes the working of a Heat Recovery Ventilation (HRV) system.

leakage, moisture control, heat flow, mechanical systems, air and ventilation sizing, thermal comfort and indoor air quality. Gail took a practical approach to teaching with assignments that

required research and class presentations and concluded with a field trip to inspect the Heat Recovery Ventilator (HRV) system in one of the Rural and Native Housing units. "The week-long semi-

nar was very informative and interactive," commented BSTAIP student Peter Ducharme. "We all learned a great deal from Gail that we will be able to use when we enter the labour market."

BUILDING SYSTEMS TECHNICAL ADVISOR INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Many challenges met by first-year BSTAIP Interns

by **Peter X. Ducharme**

The MNO Building Systems Technical Advisor Internship Program (BSTAIP) pilot project is a partnership between the Métis Nation of Ontario, the Métis Nation of Ontario Education and Training (MNOET) Branch, the Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS), the Ontario Power Authority (OPA), Confederation College and the Government of Canada's Aboriginal Skills and Training Strategic Investment Fund (ASTSIF) and runs out of the MNO Housing Investments Inc. Branch located in Thunder Bay, Ontario. It is a two year internship with in-class learning and on-site training with applied learning in shops, labs and the workplace.

Since our last report in November, 2010, the interns have completed the first academic year for the BSTAIP with great success. This winter, the interns attended several workshops and seminars, and finished several accredited courses.

Patrick Larocque, Senior Technical Officer for the CMHC was invited to the BSTAIP class to discuss the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) that CMHC administers. Patrick gave a Power Point presentation followed by a question and answer period where students had an opportunity to ask questions pertinent to their own experiences in the inspection field.

Jean McIsaac-Wiitala, Executive Director of MNO Housing Investments Inc., and Terry Desaulniers CET, Senior Technical Advisor and BSTAIP Coordinator, as part of "Achieve Global", gave the interns



▲ Building Systems Technical Advisor Internship Program (BSTAIP) Interns at the Canadian Aboriginal Festival in Hamilton.

a basic leadership seminar to help in the understanding of what it takes to be a leader and develop teamwork qualities.

Sheena Owen, from Confederation College, presented business communication information on e-mail, letter, report, and briefing note writing. The presentation also included information on oral and multimedia presentations.

Kevin Conner, of Milestone Construction Solutions, started the Construction Materials course. It gave the interns a brief overview of the various construction materials being used in today's market.

Bob Hookham, from Confederation College, introduced the class to the basics of heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. He gave several

on-line assignments and concluded the course with a field trip to a local fish hatchery to inspect the mechanicals of the building. Terry Desaulniers, BSTAIP Coordinator, gave the interns a 10 lesson, self study program.

One of the big highlights this year was the Buildings Science Class. Gail Lawlor, President of Energy Matters, was brought in for a week-long insight into the science behind "House as a System". Gail touched base on several topics throughout the week. It was a participatory seminar as Gail gave out assignments for everyone to research and present in front of the class. The week ended with a field trip to inspect an HRV system in one of MNO's Housing Branch rentals.

The second highlight for the BSTAIP interns was attending the Canadian Aboriginal Festival at the Copps Coliseum in Hamilton, ON. At the trade show, the interns set-up a display table to promote the Building Systems Technical Advisor Internship Program and also attended the cultural events of the festival.

Finally, Dale Kauzlarick, from Confederation College, instructed the interns on contracts, laws and ethics. Dale taught the basics of laws and legalities as they pertain to the construction field.

The new class started in early April, 2011. The BSTAIP interns have completed their first year. During this time, both the interns and BSTAIP Coordinators met many challenges.

Peter X. Ducharme is the Housing Inspector Intern for the MNO's Housing Investment Inc. He can be contacted at (807) 626-9876.



Empowering Aboriginal youth to work for change

Aboriginal Youth Program goes national in 2011

In the short year since the Jane Goodall Institute (JGI) of Canada launched a pilot project to introduce the global youth action program, "Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots", to Canada's First Nations youth, communities across the country have embraced the program as a way to empower Aboriginal youth to work for positive change in their communities--for people, animals and the environment--while also reconnecting with their traditions. More First Nations, Métis and Inuit youth are now encouraged to make their ideas heard by joining Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots for Aboriginal Youth Program as JGI expands the youth-driven network in 2011.

"Roots & Shoots is a global network of young people working for positive change in their communities and beyond and Canada's Aboriginal youth bring a unique perspective. Our youth have tremendous energy, innovation and ideas. By tapping into this spirit through the Roots & Shoots program, everyone benefits," explains Abner Lico, National Program Manager, at the Jane Goodall Institute of Canada.

There are currently tens of thousands of Jane Goodall's Roots and Shoots members in more than 120 countries. Canada's Roots & Shoots program has 400 member groups including several new Aboriginal communities.

Aboriginal communities from Yellowknife, Calgary, and Sudbury--to name just a few--are already active in hands-on projects that include: planting and nurturing of community gardens, assisting elders with daily tasks, community recycling programs and the creation of a "community narrative" video that addresses issues important to them.

This pilot program is made possible with the financial support of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

To learn more, please visit www.rootsandshoots.org or call JGI's Aboriginal Program Coordinator, Tanya at (416) 978-3565.

The Jane Goodall Institute is a global non-profit organization that supports wildlife research, conservation and education. Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots is dedicated to inspiring, training and supporting tomorrow's leaders today. For more information, visit www.janegoodall.ca.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Plans for Post-secondary Métis Mentor program generate excitement

Eleven enthusiastic Métis students from nine different Ontario post-secondary institutions gathered in Toronto on Saturday, March 26 to start the process of developing a Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) program to provide role models and mentors for Métis post-secondary students. The post-secondary institutions represented were University of Toronto, Sault College, Cambrian College, University of Sudbury, Sutherland-Chan School of Massage Therapy, Athabasca University, Carleton University, McMaster University and Laurentian University.

The students were brought together by Benny Michaud, MNO Post-secondary Education Analyst with the Education and Training Branch, as a focus group to help the MNO develop a new program to assist Métis students attending post-secondary institutions.

"We had two major purposes for our focus group," explained Michaud. "First, we wanted to identify obstacles facing Métis post-secondary students as well as discuss solutions to these obstacles. Second, we wanted their ideas on how to effectively implement a role model and mentoring program in Ontario post-secondary institutions."

MNO President, Gary Lipinski, MNO Chair, France Picotte, and Senator Roland St. Germain all took the time to attend parts of the focus group meeting and provided the students with inspiration and encouragement.

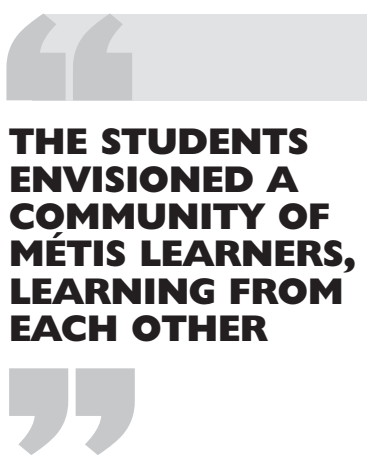
"Encourage the Métis people you know," President Lipinski told the students, "and make them aware of what they can be. In that way we can all be role models." He also told the students: "Tell us what the Métis Nation can do to help you in your post-secondary education. We are behind you! Let us know what the MNO can do to help."

The students identified a number of difficulties that Métis students commonly face during their post-secondary education. Issues surrounding funding and poverty often create difficulties as do concerns related to feeling isolated because Métis students often are far from their families and there are no visible Métis communities on many university and college campuses. In addition, because they are frequently the first person in their family to attend a post-secondary institution, relating their experiences to their family is sometimes challenging. For these and other reasons, the students felt that the MNO mentorship and role model program would function best as a network.

"The students envisioned a community of Métis learners, learning from each other," explained Michaud, who was impressed by the students' ideas. "The approach they are suggesting would impact more people than we initially thought," she said, "and will expand the boundaries of the project. I'm excited and can't wait to start implementing this program."



▲ Participants and facilitators at the MNO Métis Students' Post-secondary Focus Group sessions on March 26 in Toronto. Back row (l-r) Nick Callaghan (Youth Representative on the PCMNO), Andrea Park, Stephanie Humphries, Annette Laprise, Benny Michaud (MNO Post-secondary Analyst), Melody Chislett, Senator Roland St. Germain. Front Row (l-r) Conlin Sawchuck, Ginny Gonneau, Sylvie Forest, Crystal Audette, Sheila Grantham and Jasmine Kondracki.



▲ President Gary Lipinski (standing) and Chair France Picotte (on his right) meeting with the Focus Group Students.

EDUCATION SUMMIT

Learning from Each Other

MNO promotes Métis Education agenda at Post-secondary Gathering

On March 5-6, 2011, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities organized the first Aboriginal Post-secondary Education Gathering in Toronto. The event brought together over 300 education leaders, faculty, practitioners, administrators, learners, elders, senators, and youth to share the common goals of improving the educational achievements of Aboriginal people, and closing the educational attainment gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learners in Ontario, and to "Learn from Each Other"--the theme of the gathering.

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President, Gary Lipinski, was one of the dignitaries who provided opening remarks and he was also a member of a panel that closed the event. In his comments, President Lipinski recalled some of the challenges and obstacles Aboriginal students have that he had observed while teaching, and also the challenges he had faced as a university student. "Compared to other Ontarians,

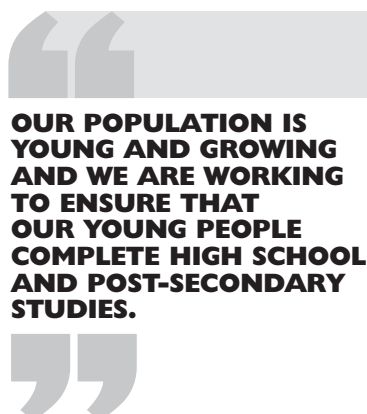
Métis people still face considerable socio-economic challenges including lower income and education rates," explained President Lipinski, "but our population is young and growing and we are working to ensure that our young people complete high school and post-secondary studies."

The gathering provided the MNO the opportunity to showcase the considerable success of its education and training programs:

- MNO Director of Education and Training, Jennifer St. Germain, explained how MNO programs prepare Aboriginal students for the labour market and a successful transition to post-secondary education;
- Robert Karklins, Manager of the MNO Aboriginal Apprenticeship Centre at Sault College, presented factors that assist Aboriginal learners transition into the labour force;
- MNO Post-secondary Analyst, Benny Michaud, and MNO youth, Ginny Gonneau, discussed the success of the IS-



▲ (Left to right) MNO President Gary Lipinski and Bonnie Patterson, President and CEO of the Council of Ontario Universities.



PAYIN program in engaging Aboriginal young people;

- As part of a student panel, Janine Landry, Thunder Bay Council, Youth Representative, described her experiences attending Lakehead University. Janine expressed her gratitude to the MNO for the support she had received from its programs;
- Senator Alis Kennedy shared her perspective on the Elders

and Senators panel;

- Dr. Brenda Macdougall, Chair of Métis Studies at the University of Ottawa, explored different approaches and concepts of learner success. The session was moderated by Dr. Chris Paci, the MNO Manager of Education and Training. Dr. Paci was also a member of the organizing and steering committee for the gathering.

In addition to these speakers, on the second day, MNO Chair, France Picotte, joined the Honourable Chris Bentley, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs; the Honourable John Milloy, the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities; and, Ontario Regional Chief, Angus Toulouse, in providing opening remarks when the Ontario Government released its "Aboriginal Post-secondary Education and Training Policy Framework". Senator Roland St. Germain provided the opening and closing prayers.

Further information about the conference, including copies of presentations and speeches, can be found on the Aboriginal Post-secondary Education Gathering website.

MANITOBA

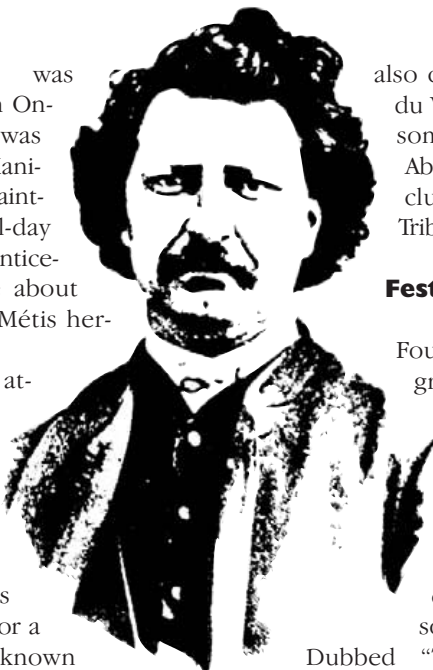
Métis and non-Métis mark Louis Riel Day in Manitoba

February 21st was “Family Day” in Ontario, but it was “Louis Riel Day” in Manitoba. The Musée de Saint-Boniface offered all-day free admission as an enticement to learn more about Riel and Manitoba’s Métis heritage.

Among those in attendance were NDP MP, Pat Martin, and St. Boniface Tory MP, Shelly Glover. Martin was there to perfect his knowledge of Riel’s story in preparation for a debate against well-known conservative political scientist, Tom Flanagan, in May. The two will go head-to-head on the question of whether Riel was a traitor who deserved to hang. Martin has drafted a private member’s bill asking Parliament to exonerate Riel.

Museum director, Philippe Mailhot, said dedicating a provincial holiday to Riel has generated new interest in the story of Manitoba’s founder. He noted that in the last census almost double the number of people identified themselves as “Métis”, meaning the old stigma is starting to fade.

Events marking Louis Riel Day were held all over St. Boniface, with afternoon entertainment, tours through historic St. Boniface and a Métis lunch. The holiday



also coincided with Festival du Voyageur, which hosted some of Manitoba’s top Aboriginal performers, including Tracy Bone and Tribe of One.

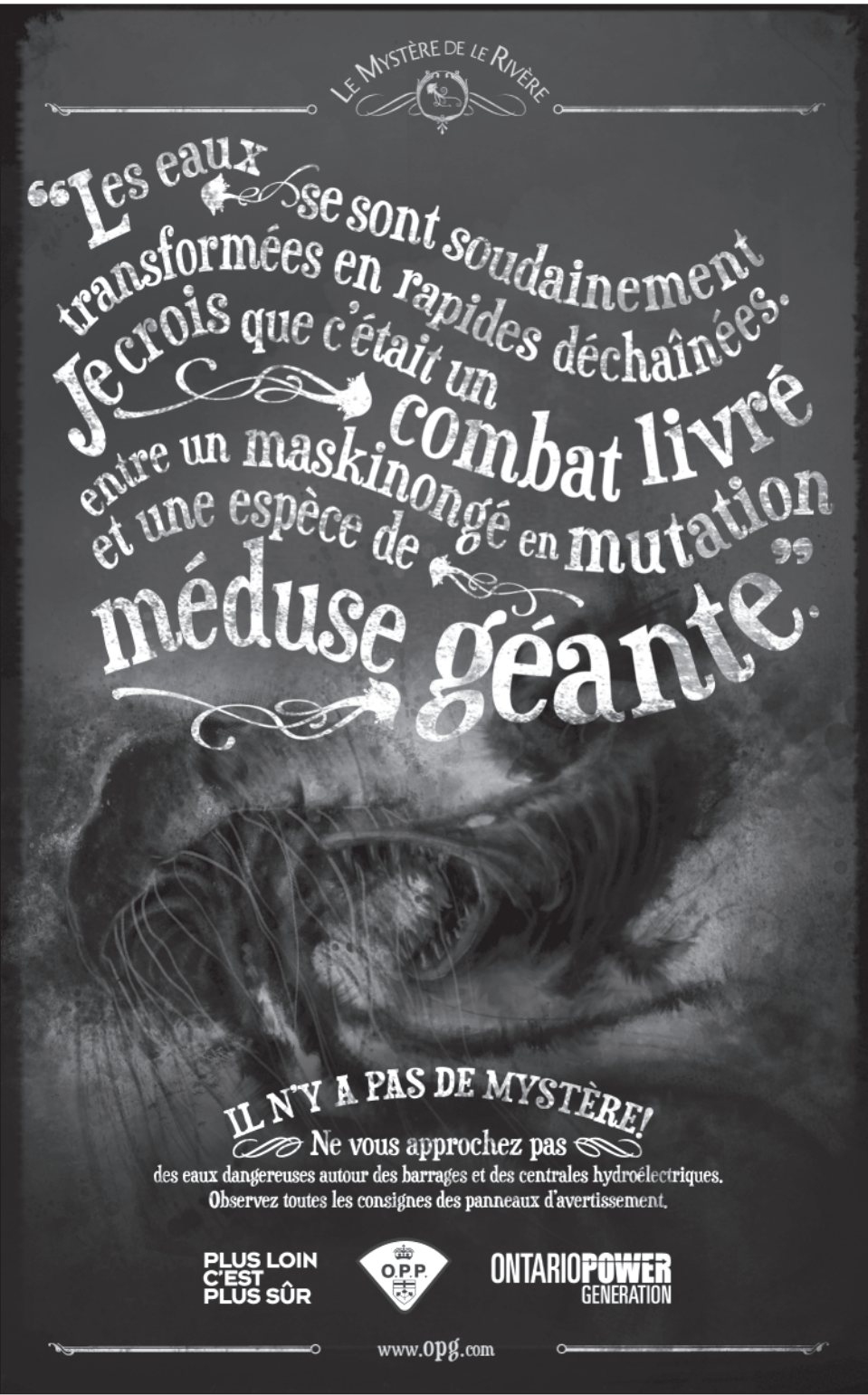
Festival du Voyageur

Founded in 1969 by a group of Saint-Boniface entrepreneurs, this once three-day event, held in Winnipeg’s French Quarter, has evolved into a 10-day province-wide celebration of sights, sounds, snow and spirit.

Dubbed “The World’s Largest Kitchen Party”, Festival du Voyageur celebrates the joie de vivre of the fur traders, who established the Red River Colony and the ever-growing French-Canadian community in western Canada. The spirit and culture of the voyageur is present in the vibrant community that comes together to celebrate its history through this event every February.

In honour of the voyageur spirit, the Festival du Voyageur’s emphasis is on the beauty of winter, with numerous historical, educational and entertaining activities—truly something for every age and every taste!

Visit: info@festivalvoyageur.mb.ca



MNC announces Decade of the Métis Nation



Last year, 2010, was declared “the Year of the Métis Nation”. Now, the Métis Nation has announced that 2011 to 2020 will be “the Decade of the Métis Nation”. The theme for this year, 2011, is “Paying Tribute to Our Métis Veterans.”

Métis National Council President, Clé-

ment Chartier, began a “President’s Tour” on March 21st at the University of Alberta to discuss the significance of the declaration.

President Chartier says: “We are making progress in getting our message out as Métis people about our history, culture

and language, and our continuing struggle as rights bearing people. We hope to use the decade as an avenue to promote our issues, whether it’s our push for a land base for our peoples, securing harvesting rights, or recognition for Métis veterans.”

The tour included visits to the University of Saskatchewan on March 22nd and the University of Winnipeg on March 23rd.

President Chartier used this opportunity to introduce his book, “Witness to Resistance”, which outlines his experiences as the former President of the World

Council of Indigenous Peoples during which time he was asked to witness peace talks in Nicaragua.

President Chartier was joined by Brooklyn Rivera from the Indigenous peoples of the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua and leader of the Yatama political movement. Mr. Rivera discussed the progress the Indigenous peoples of Nicaragua have achieved with respect to land rights and self-government. He also outlined the challenges his people continue to face.

MÉTIS EDUCATION

Higher education, higher aspirations

continued from page 1

fully to the goals outlined in the framework in order to ensure that Aboriginal students have equal access to post-secondary education.

According to Statistics Canada only 9% of Métis people have achieved a university degree, as compared with 23% of the non-Aboriginal population. This disparity points to the need for increased support for Métis who want to attend post-secondary institutions. At a Métis Post-secondary Education Focus Group facilitated by the MNO Education and Training Branch in March, Métis students identified a variety of factors impacting access to higher education. Some of the barriers identified during the course of the discussion in-

cluded: lack of funding for post-secondary education, persistent poverty, discrimination, lack of student support specific to Métis, and a lack of awareness by other students and faculty about who Métis people are in Ontario.

Recently, President Gary Lipinski appeared on the TVO program, *The Agenda* with Steve Paikin, as part of a panel discussing Aboriginal post-secondary education. President Lipinski was quick to address the common misconception that Métis students get a free ride for their education: “There is no federal or provincial funding for Métis students for post-secondary education except for whatever their parents might save or whatever they can get through scholarships.” President Lipinski also noted that the Métis Nation of



Ontario is working with post-secondary institutions to create support for Métis students. “I have found educational institutions are very willing to partner with the Métis Nation of Ontario and I certainly think that’s an important step in moving forward.”

Continuing to look for ways to assist Métis students and their

families, the MNO has partnered with various post-secondary institutions across the province and currently has signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with the University of Ottawa, University of Sudbury, Laurentian University, Collège Boréal, Confederation College, Georgian College, and Sault College. These MOU represent a shared commitment by post-secondary institutions and the Métis Nation of Ontario to find ways to support Métis learners. In order to assist students in covering the rising costs of education, the MNO continues to invest in bursary endowments at some 33 colleges and universities throughout the province.

In January, a new Post-secondary Education Officer position was created through an agreement with the Ministry of Train-

ing, Colleges and Universities. Benny Michaud is on board in this role and is currently working with post-secondary institutions to increase recruitment and retention of Métis students. Ms. Michaud will also be implementing a unique mentorship and role model program set to be launched at various schools in September. If you have questions regarding post-secondary education initiatives please contact her at 1-800-263-4889 extension 137.

By **Jennifer St. Germain**
Director, MNOET

and **Chris Paci**
Manager, MNOET

and **Benny Michaud**
Post-Secondary Analyst

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION



▲ Dr. Dwayne Donald, University of Alberta, speaking on Aboriginal-Canadian relations as an educational priority.

Breakfast at Centre Block

Now is the time for Canada to step up and do more to make real structural changes to include Aboriginal peoples in education

By **Chris Paci**
Manager, MNOET
OTTAWA

On Thursday, March 10, 2011, 7:30 A.M., The Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, in cooperation with the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, hosted a breakfast talk by Dr. Dwayne Donald, University of Alberta, Faculty of Education, titled, "On What Terms Can We Speak?" His talk focused on Aboriginal-Canadian relations as an educational priority. As I passed through Parliament's visitor entrance, I was a little nervous. This same house three times denied the rights of Manitoba's first elected Member of Parliament, Louis Riel, and twenty years later condemned him to death after an unjust trial. I breathed deeply and besides taking off my belt and emptying my pockets at security, was admitted without fuss.

Aboriginal education is increasingly a hot national issue. Last June, National Chief Shawn Atleo made a passionate plea to all levels of government to support the Assembly of First Nations' vision of creating a strong educational foundation for First Nations students. At the February 2011 Council of Education Ministers meeting in Toronto, Métis National Council's Minister of Education, Robert Doucette, called for Métis-specific solutions to education challenges.

Aboriginal governments and the provinces are developing emerging educational initiatives aimed at engaging and retaining Aboriginal youth in the school and post-secondary education systems. During his presentation Dwayne Donald argued that much of the research informing these initiatives focused on identifying culturally-relevant educational approaches that foster higher rates of Aboriginal student success. He says these are important, but the focus implies only a concern for Aboriginal students, their families, and their teachers. Dr. Donald proposes that the priority should be placed on helping all students and educators better understand the historic and current character of Aboriginal-Canadian relations. Such a shift in educational priorities would enhance chances to repair and renew Aboriginal-Canadian relations on more ethical terms, fostering decolonization, and sparking imagination for generations to come.

Donald argued for a clear understanding of "Treaty", and this is one of the shortcomings of his presentation. *Treaty* as the basis for better understanding the relationship between Canadian-Aboriginal relations leaves Métis and Inuit out. If the terms "Aboriginal" and "Indigenous" are to include Métis and Inuit, then we need to go beyond *Treaty*. This is problematic for First Nations because their argument for education funding is tied to the *Treaties*.

Here in Ontario, the approach MNO is advancing with the Ministry of Education is respect for Aboriginal rights. In 2007, the Ontario Government adopted the *First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* as a result. This framework was crafted with input from First Nations, Inuit and Métis. While still in its early days of change, and far from perfect, the policy marks the beginning of the inclusion of First Nations, Métis and Inuit in crafting curriculum, teacher training, resources, and the like.

Another good example of change is Pearson Good Minds' new texts for Native Studies 10 and 11 that provide students with more of a reflection of Aboriginal cultures, histories, and a sense of place in Ontario.

Métis are not pushing for separate schools in the same way that some First Nations do, and there is no rally cry like "Indian Control of Indian Education". The history of Métis relations in Ontario is marked by Métis exclusion from *Treaties* which resulted in 160 years of quiet resistance. The MNO approach is simply to ensure Métis relevance and content for all students at all levels and for all subject areas, and in this regard we agree with Dr. Donald. The Ontario Government's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy supports the MNO approach, but it is not a replacement for the importance of Aboriginal education for all students.

Sadly, constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and *Treaty* Rights, in 1982, has not been matched by a sustained effort by the federal government to decolonize Aboriginal education. Certainly we have not seen Canada make the same efforts they have on bilingualism, or trade, or even the development of national parks. The next twenty years will be an opportunity for Canada to step up and do more than apologize, but rather to make real structural changes to include Aboriginal peoples in education.

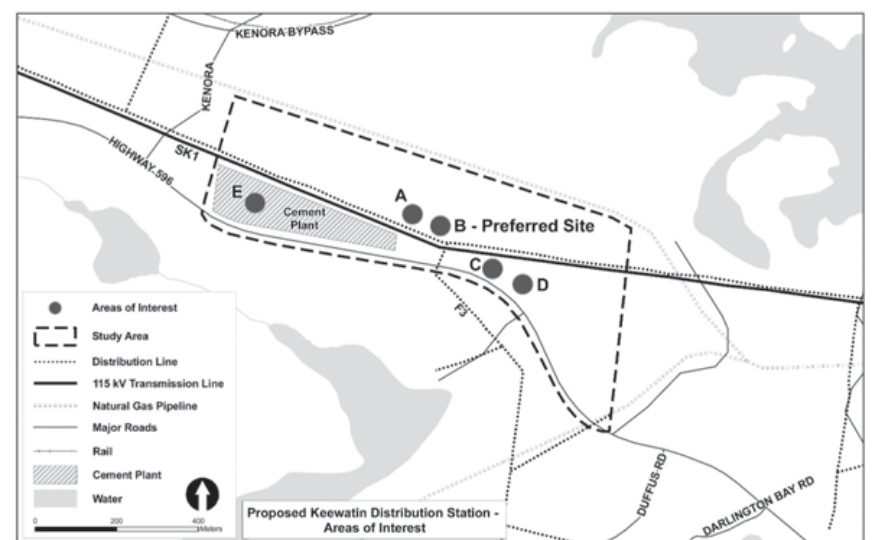
NOTICE OF COMMENCEMENT AND PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE

Keewatin Distribution Station Class Environmental Assessment (EA)

Hydro One Networks Inc. (Hydro One) is undertaking a Class Environmental Assessment for a new distribution station (DS) to be built near Keewatin in the City of Kenora. The proposed Keewatin DS is required to ensure an adequate and reliable supply of power to meet growing electricity needs in the Lake of the Woods area. You are invited to a Public Information Centre to review the process used to identify a preferred location for this proposed station.

Hydro One established a study area for the project based on a set of criteria including proximity to customer demand and existing transmission and distribution lines, and limiting environmental and social effects and technical constraints.

Five alternative sites were identified and evaluated based on these criteria, and site B (see map) was chosen as the preferred location. The proposed Keewatin DS would be approximately 42m x 48m in area and consist of one transformer connected to the existing 115 kilovolt transmission line and local distribution line.



The project is subject to the *Class Environmental Assessment for Minor Transmission Facilities* in accordance with Ontario's *Environmental Assessment Act*. Pending the necessary approvals, construction is expected to begin in spring 2012 with the new facility in-service by December 2012.

Public Information Centre (PIC)

Hydro One is committed to consulting with First Nations and Métis communities, the public and interested stakeholders. At the PIC, you will have an opportunity to view detailed maps and information panels and provide your comments to our project team. **Please join us on:**

Thursday, May 12, 2011
4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Keewatin Memorial Arena
930 Front Street, Keewatin

For More Information

If you have any questions or wish to be added to the project mailing list, please contact:

Alexandra Stadnyk
Hydro One Community Relations
Tel: 1-877-345-6799
Email: Community.Relations@HydroOne.com

Visit the project website at:
www.HydroOne.com/projects



Partners in Powerful Communities

Volunteers

THE SUZANNE ROCHON-BURNETT

VOLUNTEER of the Year Award • 2011

Pauline Saulnier is a courageous Métis woman who is dedicated to promoting and preserving her culture. She gives freely of her time to ensure that others experience and get to know more about the rich traditions and colourful culture of the Métis. For that reason Pauline was chosen the “2010 Volunteer of the Year”. Like the woman for whom the Volunteer of the Year Award is named, “Suzanne Rochon-Burnett”, Pauline exemplifies the definition of “volunteer”. If you know or work with someone who, like Pauline, deserves recognition as the *Volunteer of the Year*, the time to nominate them has arrived.

The objective of the *Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award* is to recognize individuals who contribute as a volunteer to the Métis Nation of Ontario year round and have done so for a number of years. Each year a volunteer meeting the criteria is named as the recipient of the *Suzanne-Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year* by a selection committee of the Métis Nation of Ontario. So, if you are fortunate enough to have a person in your life who, like Pauline, and previous winners Suzanne Rochon-Burnett, Richard Sarrazin, Senator Reta Gordon or



2010
Pauline SAULNIER
Penetanguishene



2009
Louise GOULDING
Midland



2008
Richard SARRAZIN
Sudbury



2007
Reta GORDON
Ottawa

Louise Goulding, deserves recognition as the MNO Volunteer of the Year, please nominate them for this prestigious award. The 2011 *Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year* winner will be announced at the 2011 MNO Annual General Assembly in Parry Sound, August 20-22, 2011.

The attributes that earned Pauline the 2010 award include working hard for the community, respect for others and giving more than she takes. Louise Goulding, 2009’s winner, has been with the Métis Nation of Ontario since 1996 and it is through efforts like hers and those of other dedicated volunteers

that the Métis in Ontario continue to earn the recognition they deserve as a distinct Aboriginal people in Canada. One of the greatest strengths of the Métis Nation of Ontario is that there are many, many volunteers within the organization who demonstrate qualities like these on a daily basis.

Any MNO citizen can nominate a volunteer for the award by completing a nomination form and sending it to: *Volunteer of the Year* Selection Committee, Métis Nation of Ontario, 500 Old St. Patrick Street, Ottawa, ON K1N 9G4. The deadline for nominations is July 2, 2011.

OBJECTIVE: The objective of the *Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award* is to recognize individuals who contribute as a volunteer to the Métis Nation of Ontario year round and have done so for a number of years. Each year a volunteer meeting the criteria is named as the recipient of the Suzanne-Rochon Volunteer of the Year Award by a selection committee of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

PROCESS: Any MNO citizen can nominate a volunteer for the award by completing a nomination form and sending it to: **Volunteer of the Year Selection Committee, Métis Nation of Ontario, 500 Old St. Patrick Street, Ottawa, ON K1N 9G4**

The deadline for nominations is July 2, 2011.

CRITERIA: The individuals nominated must exemplify the kind of volunteer contribution demonstrated by Suzanne Rochon-Burnett. They will have given generously of their time and effort; be strong advocates of the Métis Nation and their record of selfless commitment will be firmly established. They will be seen as caring, giving individuals that others look up to and admire. The candidates will have provided an extended period of service as a volunteer.



DR. SUZANNE ROCHON-BURNETT was a founding member of the Métis Nation of Ontario. Named to the Order of Canada and the Order of Ontario, Suzanne was a member of the Canada Council and was awarded an Honourary Doctorate by Brock University where she served on the Board of Trustees. She was a recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation and the first woman inducted into the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame. Suzanne passed away in 2006. To honour her memory and recognize her outstanding service as a volunteer, in 2006, the Métis Nation of Ontario named Suzanne as the first recipient of the inaugural *Volunteer of the Year Award* which now bears her name.

PAULINE SAULNIER | VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR, 2010

My passion for volunteering

By Pauline Saulnier

Receiving the Métis Nation of Ontario *Suzanne Rochon Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award* in the year of the Métis, 2010, is not done alone but rather with a lot of support from your family and friends. Participating in Métis events as a volunteer, for me, is like spending time at my Memere’s house. You have lots of family with various tastes and wants. You all enjoy being together; you know where all the good food is, and you spend time laughing until you cry. Other times you are crying until you laugh, but you still have time for little disagreements from time to time. You need to push and be loud if you truly believe in your cause; otherwise it may be lost forever. In time of crisis, everyone has your back and no matter what, the pride and the love of the Métis people are truly there. I remember in 1996, when I first investigated the fact that I could become a proud citizen of

the Métis Nation of Ontario and received my card signed by past President, Dr Tony Belcourt, I asked my late husband Todd what this meant. Instantly, the forces that be must have been in play, as I opened the local newspaper and the ad read: “Wanted, a Métis person to sit on the Métis Child and Family Committee”. I went and volunteered to assist on that board and this is where my volunteer journey began. At the Annual General Assembly in Penetanguishene, Senator Helen Bradley, OMC, volunteered me to be doing all sorts of activities to assist the local council at the time. Little did I realize that this was just the first connection to more continuous learning within the Métis Nation. I joined the Georgian Bay Métis Council, first as the secretary and proceeded to become the President of Georgian Bay Métis Council. Volunteering for the Métis meant just that, more hard work and more learning experiences, such as proposal writing; sitting

“
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”

on various committees to do a volunteer board manual; to open the Métis Shoppe; to assist with the Youth drumming group; to place floats in community parades; run garage sales; to work as a team with such great Métis citizens who were as proud as I was to volunteer for the good of the cause. After having done the “president” role for a few years, I took a short break and returned to be elected as Provisional Councillor

for the Métis Nation of Ontario for Region 7. This role has provided me with many opportunities to see many social changes for our Métis way of life. Every day I have the privilege to walk the volunteer pride road for the rights of Métis people in Ontario and across our Métis homeland. I have been one of the founding members of the Region 7 Rendezvous Committee which permitted me the opportunity to embrace my culture and all it has to offer. I volunteer as Chair of the Georgian Bay Traditional Territory Consultation Committee with other presidents who support our full region with ensuring that our environment and our traditional knowledge is preserved and/or accommodated. Learning about all sorts of proponents’ projects has offered me so many opportunities to understand more economic opportunities. I volunteer on the Métis Nation of Ontario Finance Committee, which in my eyes is the brain of the Métis Nation that allows us to continue to function. It is the

gateway to permit our Nation to strive. I have been working for the Ministry of Community of Social and Services since May, 1987. I currently work for the Ontario Disability Support Program in Orillia. I have volunteered since 2008, as Vice Chair and since 2010, as Chair on the Ontario Public Servant Employee Union Aboriginal Circle which gives the Métis citizens of Ontario yet another voice to educate and promote, “Who are the Métis?” I am also the “Equity vice Chair for OPSEU Equity Committee” and part of the social mapping committee. I often attend various Métis functions, such as Educational Boot Camp in December 2009; the Métis Economic & Development Strategy II; meetings for the Women of the Métis Nation, just to name a few. Thank you so much to all those who supported me and who nominated me for this award, I proudly stand tall with my prior award winners in this place of honour. Marci!