

MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

NOVEMBER 16 • LOUIS RIEL DAY

FULL COVERAGE ON PAGES 9-16, 32



▲ Executive members of the MNO Veterans' Council, (left to right) MNO Veteran Tim Majovsky, President Joseph Paquette and Senator Dr. Alis Kennedy lay wreaths at the "Northwest Rebellion" monument at the provincial Louis Riel Day ceremony at Queen's Park in Toronto.



MEETING WITH PREMIER

MNO-Ontario meeting advances Métis issues

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MATTAWA NIPISSING

Historic research report released on Ontario Métis community

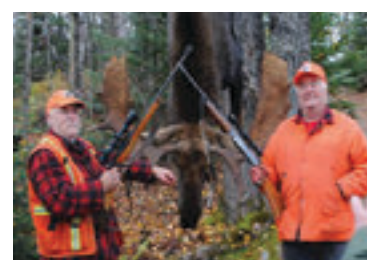
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Vigils in honour of missing and murdered Aboriginal women

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Stories about hunting the mighty moose

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THE MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

WINTER 2014, NO. 83

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Submission Policy:

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

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

2015

Submission deadlines:

January 23, 2015
March 13, 2015
May 15, 2015



FAMILY

Jennifer & David tie the knot!



▲ Jennifer Nicholson (Henry) and David Nicholson on their wedding day.

submitted by | Jennifer Nicholson
PCMNO Post-Secondary Representative

PCMNO Post-Secondary Representative Jennifer Nicholson (Henry) would like to announce her marriage to David Nicholson on September 30, 2014. They had a small ceremony in Whitby, Ontario in which family and friends attended.

David's parents and sister flew in all the way from England to be there for the ceremony. It was a beautiful day for all! Jennifer and David look forward to many happy years together! Congratulations! ∞

Danielle & Mark get hitched!



▲ Danielle Callander (Secord) and Mark Callander on their wedding day.

submitted by | Pauline Richardson
PCMNO Region 7 Councillor

We are pleased to announce that Danielle Callander (Secord), Youth Representative for the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Georgian Bay Métis Council, and Mark Cal-

lander, were married on November 1, 2014 at the Best Western Atrium in Midland. Congratulations to the happy couple! ∞

New addition to the Métis family



▲ Atlas Martin.

submitted by | Valerie Boose

We would like to welcome the newest addition to the Métis family, Atlas Martin. The proud Mom and Dad are Tracy and Roger, daughter and son-in-law

of Huguette and Douglas Boese, nephew to Kevin Boese and Barbara Bucko, and cousin to Aiden and Grayson. Congratulations! ∞



In memoriam



▲ Normand 'Norm' Guerin.

In loving memory of Normand "Norm" Guerin, it is with great sadness that the family announces his passing at the Toronto General Hospital on Thursday, October 2, 2014 at the age of 76 years. Beloved husband of Aline Guerin. Loving father of Douglas (Sue), Gay (Chris) and Ron (Cathy). Cherished grandfather to Kevin (Melissa) and Eric (Cassie). Dear brother to Gilles (Pauline), Donald, Denis (Helene), Noelline (Reginald), Luke

and Christina (Josh). Step grandfather of Tyler (Brooke), Dylan, Daniel, Amy, Mike and Laurie. Step great grandfather of Kaia. Predeceased by his parents Henri and Lilian Guerin.

Norm will be remembered for his sense of humour as well as his love and passion for living. He enjoyed travelling, spending time with his family and friends and living life to the fullest. A celebration of life was held in No-ellville on November 8, 2014. ∞

NATION

Meeting with the Premier

MNO-Ontario meeting advances Métis issues

by | MNO Staff

An MNO delegation led by President Gary Lipinski and including MNO Chair France Picotte and MNO Chief Operating Officer Doug Wilson met with Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne, Aboriginal Affairs Minister David Zimmer and Deputy Aboriginal Affairs Minister David DeLaunay on November 28 at Queen's Park in Toronto.

These annual MNO-Ontario meetings traditionally take place in November and provide both governments the opportunity to review past successes, ongoing cooperation and discuss upcoming areas of common interest. "The positive tone of this meeting, like those of the past, underscores the benefits of working together," commented President Lipinski.

Key discussion points included a review of the objectives of the *MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement* that had been renewed earlier this year for another five years. "The Framework Agreement," stated President Lipinski, "continues to be the foun-

"As these meetings take place at the highest level they provide the direction necessary to ensure continued progress on a whole range of issues."

— MNO President Gary Lipinski

dation of our strong relationship with Ontario. It outlines clearly where our two governments will collaborate for the benefit of Métis people, families and communities."

"As these meetings take place at the highest level," explained President Lipinski, "they provide the direction necessary to ensure continued progress on a whole range of issues important to Métis in this province. We are very pleased that Ontario continues to recognize the role of the MNO as representing Métis interests in this province." ∞



▲ (Left to right) MNO Chief Operating Officer Doug Wilson, MNO President Gary Lipinski, Premier Kathleen Wynne, MNO Chair France Picotte, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs David Zimmer and Deputy Minister of Aboriginal Affairs David DeLaunay.

■ MNO Program Delivery



MNO ASETS funding renewed for one year

by | MNO Staff

It was announced on November 17, 2014 that the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) will receive a one year extension of funding through the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) following the completion of its current five year ASETS agreement on March 31, 2015.

The five year agreement signed between the federal government and the MNO in November 2010 provided for 30.6 million dollars over the five years of the agreement. The ASETS program has helped the MNO to address Ontario's labour market shortages and industry demands by providing a wide range of skills development programs and employer focused training opportunities. "ASETS has

"This kind of support makes it possible for our Metis from across all regions of Ontario to reach their potential and become all they can be."

— MNO President Gary Lipinski

allowed the MNO to improve the well-being of countless Métis individuals and families who are now contributing to Canada's economic growth and success," stated MNO President Gary Lipinski.

The MNO had been receiving funding for programs through ASETS predecessor programs since 1996. "These are some of the most successful programs of their kind in Canada," explained President Lipinski, "we have been able to provide millions of dollars of training and financial support to Métis. This kind of support makes it possible

for our Métis from across all regions of Ontario to reach their potential and become all they can be."

The one year renewal will allow the MNO to continue operating its programs while discussions continue to sign another long term agreement with the federal government on Education and Training. "We are relieved," stated President Lipinski, "to be able to continue to provide quality services to Métis people in Ontario as we continue to work towards a renewed strategy." ∞

■ Métis Rights

MNO will intervene in Daniels case at the Supreme Court

In response to the announcement on November 20, 2014, which stipulated that the Supreme Court has granted leave to hear an appeal on *Daniels v. Canada*, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Gary Lipinski declared that the MNO would seek intervenor status during hearings for the case expected in 2015.

"We would have preferred if the Supreme Court had chosen to not hear the case," explained Lipinski, "as the Federal Court of Canada ruling earlier this year clarified all issues impacting Métis but since the case will go to the High Court, we will be intervening in order to urge the Justices to uphold the decision of the Federal Court."

The Federal Court decision on *Daniels v. Canada* released in April this year upheld key aspects of the rulings of lower courts that asserted that Métis are the responsibility of the federal government and should be defined as "Indians" under the Canadian Constitution and therefore should receive similar rights and benefits.

President Lipinski stated: "The message from lower courts was clear: the federal government cannot continue its complete exclusion of Métis from specific and comprehensive claims processes that are open to the two other constitutionally recognized Aboriginal



▲ The late Harry Daniels, who initiated *Daniels v. Canada*, is most widely known among Métis people as one of the individuals who negotiated the expressed inclusion of "Métis People" in the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

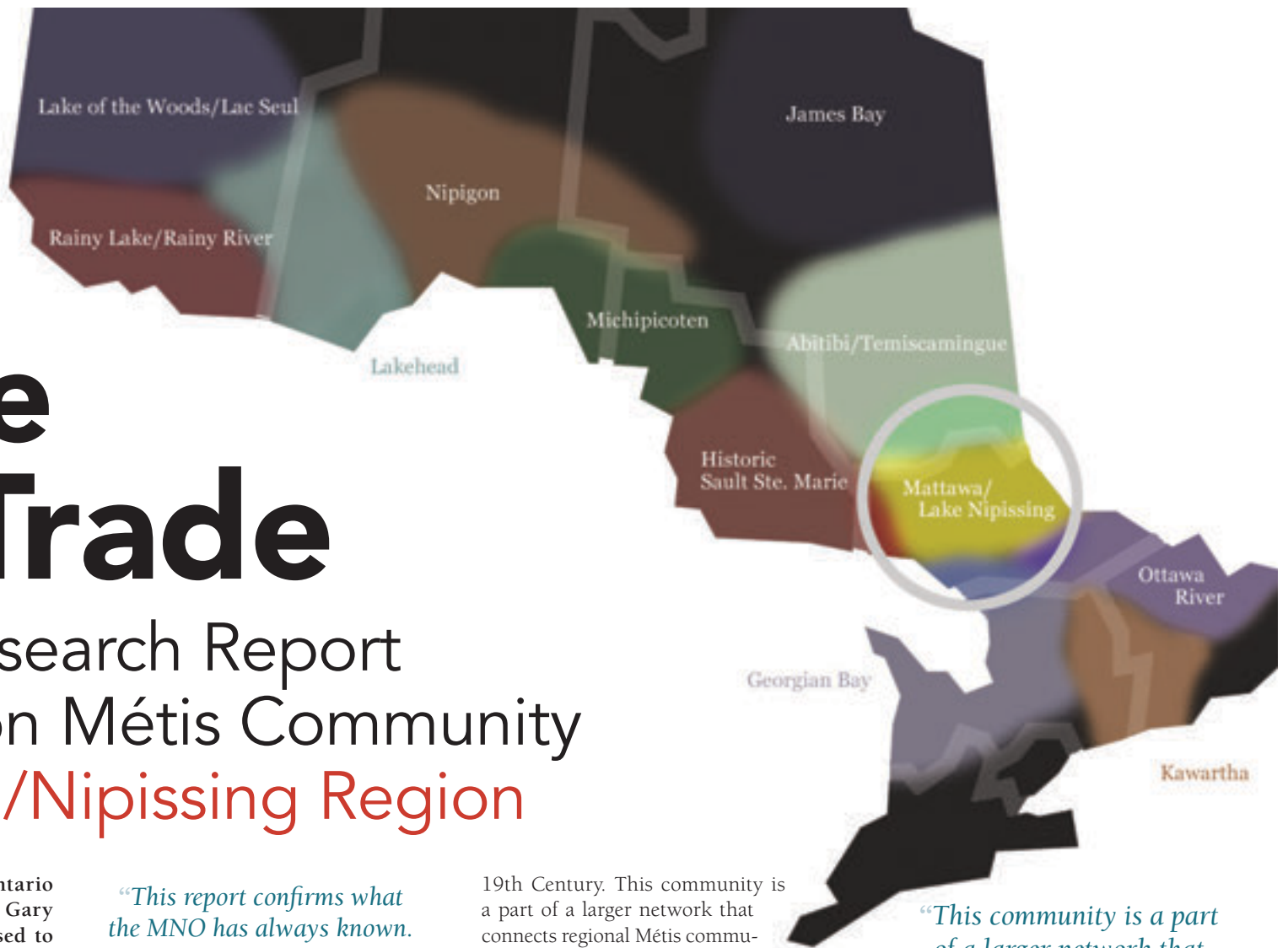
peoples. The jurisdictional football the Métis are subjected to with respect to their rights, claims and needs must end."

"It is unfortunate," President Lipinski added, "that the federal government chose to appeal the case to the Supreme Court rather than enter into negotiations with Métis governments. Now that the case is going to appeal, however, the MNO will intervene to ensure that the voice of Métis in Ontario is heard." ∞

■ Métis History in Ontario

Out of the Fur Trade

Historic Research Report Released on Métis Community in Mattawa/Nipissing Region



Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Gary Lipinski was pleased to announce the release of a historic report on the Métis in the Mattawa/Nipissing region on December 10, 2014. The report was prepared by two independent research companies: StoneCircle Consulting and Know History and is a result of a tripartite research initiative financially supported by the Ontario Government and the Government of Canada with equal participation of the MNO throughout.

After an extensive, independent review of both English and French historic records about the region, the researchers concluded that a distinct, inter-related Métis population emerged in the Mattawa/Nipissing study region in the early 1800s. Based on the history of the region, it is clear that this historic

“This report confirms what the MNO has always known. A significant, distinctive and interrelated Métis community emerged along the fur trade waterways in this region in the early 19th Century.”

— MNO President Gary Lipinski

Métis community meets the legal test set out by the Supreme Court of Canada in *R. v. Powley*, [2003] 2 SCR 207. Today, the MNO represents the descendants of this historic Métis community throughout the region.

MNO President Lipinski said, “This report confirms what the MNO has always known. A significant, distinctive and interrelated Métis community emerged along the fur trade waterways in this region in the early

19th Century. This community is a part of a larger network that connects regional Métis communities within Ontario as a part of the larger Métis Nation. Any uncertainty about the history and contemporary existence of this rights-bearing Métis community should now be a thing of the past.”

This research also fulfills a shared commitment of the MNO and the Ontario Government flowing from the 2004 MNO-Ontario *Harvesting Agreement* with respect to pursuing joint research on the MNO’s identified traditional territories (as set out in the MNO Harvesting Policy and the attached map). This harvesting agreement, which remains in place today, recognizes the MNO Harvesting Policy and MNO Harvesters Card system in those traditional territories.

“I want to thank both Ontario and Canada for their support of this research initia-

“This community is a part of a larger network that connects regional Métis communities within Ontario as a part of the larger Métis Nation.”

— MNO President Gary Lipinski

tive. This tripartite research demonstrates governments can work together to achieve results if there is political will and a sustained commitment. This report will also assist the MNO in moving forward in our rights-based agenda based on the facts of history and will ensure proper Crown consultation occurs with the Métis community in this region in the future,” concluded President Lipinski. ∞

KEY FINDING:

Links to HBC and NWC employees and First Nations

A mixed-ancestry [Métis] community existed in the Mattawa region that has links with “Countrymen” population of former NWC and HBC employees. This mixed-ancestry [Métis] population was present throughout the entire study area and is visible through its common kinship, economic and religious practices. This community lived alongside and interacted with First Nations communities. Although this research focuses on the settlement of Mattawa, the extended network of the mixed-ancestry community is clearly evident along the Ottawa River and its tributaries between 1850 and 1920.

KEY FINDING:

Métis were mobile and moved with the seasons

The settlement of Mattawa provided a focal point for this research. Situated at the eastern edge of the study area ... and at the confluence of the Mattawa and Ottawa Rivers, two historic fur trade routes, Mattawa is a complex geographical hub with an extensive network of historic canoe and portage trails, and eventually roads and rail-roads. Consequently, mixed-ancestry [Métis] populations in the study area were mobile and moved at different seasons and stages of life which affected their presence in the historical record and the artificial boundaries required by this study: a crude triangularly-shaped territory with its apex above Lake Timiskaming in the north, west on the Mattawa River as far as Lake Nipissing, and then east on the Ottawa as far as Fort William/Lac des Allumettes. The researchers recognize that many of the networks presented in this report, and those that are not, likely transcend these geographic limits.

KEY FINDING:

Creation of distinct social and cultural environment

The kinship links within this community are significant: 89.92%, or 1027 of the 1142 people studied were connected to each other via immediate kinship links. Marriages were either endogamous (between groups of a same cultural community) or exogamous (incorporating First Nation or Euro-Canadian persons into a mixed-ancestry framework, for example). We see common behaviour and association within the community based on the visual representation of immediate kinship relationships, occupational data, and religious relationships of baptism. While the social network analysis was also limited by the availability of sources, the findings demonstrate presence of a cluster of 200+ persons who strategically associated with one another through time and space, creating a distinct social and cultural environment for themselves.

A copy of the report is available at: www.metisnation.org/news-media/news/historic-research-report-on-metis-community-in-mattawanipissing-region-released.

■ Duty to Consult

MNO James Bay/Abitibi-Témiskamingue Consultation Committee tour mine

by | MNO Staff

On September 16, 2014, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) James Bay/Abitibi-Témiskamingue Consultation Committee as well as MNO staff were invited for a site visit to Detour Gold Mine, located roughly 250 kilometres from the town of Cochrane, Ontario.

For many committee members, it was a first time visit to this impressive remote mining camp. For others, it had been a number of years since visiting. All participants were impressed with all the mine had to offer.

The MNO has an Impact Benefit Agreement with Detour Gold that has yielded many positive outcomes for both parties. Through employment and training, the Detour Gold Agreement has offered financial contributions that will be used to enhance Métis presence within the mining industry. Also, negotiated funds have led to Traditional Knowledge projects that help enhance and deepen the story of Métis history and culture in this province.

One of the major topics of discussion was the environmental

“The MNO has an Impact Benefit Agreement with Detour Gold that has yielded many positive outcomes for both parties.”

impacts that Detour Gold has on the surrounding land as well as their reclamation process once the mine closes. Detour Gold demonstrated their commitment to keeping their environmental footprint small as well as follows all government regulations to insure the land and ecosystem can flourish post mining camp.

Leonard Rickard, Detour Gold Aboriginal Affairs Manager, led the tour. Region 3 PCMNO Representative Marcel Lafrance presented Rickard with a copy of the MNO *Values and Traditions of our Ancestors* publication. ∞



▲ MNO James Bay/Abitibi-Témiskamingue Consultation Committee and MNO staff during their site visit of the Detour Gold Mine near Cochrane, Ontario.

■ MNO Prosperity and Self-Sufficiency Law

MNO appoints Scott Patles-Richardson as CEO of Infinity Investments LP

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Gary Lipinski announced the appointment of Mr. Scott Patles-Richardson as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the MNO's newly created economic development and business arm called Infinity Investments LP on December 9, 2014.

In August 2013, the MNO Annual General Assembly unanimously passed the *MNO Prosperity and Self-Sufficiency Law*, which mandated the MNO to create Infinity Investments LP as an independent and arms-length corporate structure to pursue business and economic development opportunities on behalf of Ontario Métis at the provincial, regional and local levels. A copy of this MNO law is available at www.metisnation.org.

Infinity Investments LP (named after the well-known symbol on the Métis Nation's national flag) will consolidate all of the MNO's business operations and opportunities under one corporate structure. These MNO business ventures and opportunities already include over 50 rooftop and ground mounted solar projects throughout Ontario through MNO-Brightroof LP, impacts and benefits agreements with the Detour Gold and New Gold mines as well as several strategic joint ventures with industry partners.

After an extensive recruitment process, Mr. Patles-Richardson was selected by the MNO because he has the skills and expertise necessary to

build out and grow Infinity Investments LP. Scott is a seasoned senior executive with over 20 years experience in finance, corporate development and leadership roles gained from a career in corporate banking and executive positions in private companies such as Ishkonigan Consulting and Mediation and the Tribal Councils Investment Group of Manitoba Ltd. Scott is a citizen of the Pabineau Mi'gmaq Nation who has devoted his career to enhancing Indigenous opportunities through economic development. His passion involves building companies that create opportunities for Indigenous peoples in a manner that balances sustainability and wealth creation.

MNO President Lipinski said, “I am very pleased that Scott will be the CEO in charge of building out Infinity Investments LP consistent with the vision set out by our citizens in the MNO Economic Prosperity and Self-Sufficient Law. He is a tested corporate leader and has impeccable business credentials. I believe his skills, combined with the increasing economic opportunities available to Ontario Métis and our nation's well-known entrepreneurial drive, will be a recipe for success.”

“I am honoured to take on this exciting opportunity to advance business opportunities for Ontario Métis. I strongly believe in building companies that create opportunities for Indigenous peoples and communities in a manner that balances sustainable economic development and the bottom line. With



▲ Scott Patles-Richardson is the new Chief Executive Officer of the MNO's newly created economic development and business arm called Infinity Investments LP.

the MNO's support and credibility, I believe Infinity Investments LP will be able to do just that,” said Mr. Patles-Richardson.

It is expected that the official launch for Infinity Investment LP will be held in early 2015. Additional information will be provided at that time. Infinity Investments LP will complement the mandate and work of the MNO's other indepen-

dent and arms-length corporation called the Métis Voyager Development Fund (MVDF), which provides funding and support for resource or related sector Métis businesses. Additional information on MVDF is available at: www.mvdf.ca.

“With Infinity Investments LP, the Métis Voyager Development Fund and our positive relationships with both government and indus-

“In August 2013, the MNO Annual General Assembly unanimously passed the MNO Prosperity and Self-Sufficiency Law, which mandated the MNO to create Infinity Investments LP as an independent and arms-length corporate structure to pursue business and economic development opportunities on behalf of Ontario Métis at the provincial, regional and local levels.”

try, I believe the MNO is building a solid foundation that will enable our nation and communities to create wealth and become economically self-sustaining in the future. I look forward to Scott helping Ontario Métis in achieving that goal,” concluded President Lipinski. ∞

■ Métis and Urban Aboriginal Leadership Roundtable

Developing an Aboriginal Children and Youth Strategy

by | MNO Staff

On September 29, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) participated in a Métis and Urban Aboriginal Leadership Roundtable with the Honourable David Zimmer, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and the Honourable Tracy MacCharles, Minister of Children and Youth Services.

The MNO was represented by President Gary Lipinski, Chair France Picotte, Director of Healing and Wellness Wenda Watteyne and Manager of Operations Shelley Gonneville.

The meeting addressed the development of an Aboriginal Children and Youth Strategy and President Lipinski reported that the MNO had conducted Métis Youth Engagement sessions in 19 communities from June to August



▲ Participants of the Métis and Urban Aboriginal Leadership Roundtable held on September 29, 2014.

as part of MNO's work in developing the strategy.

Along with the MNO, Aboriginal partners represented were

the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres and the Ontario Native Women's Association. ∞

President Lipinski meets with Minister of Energy Chiarelli

by | MNO Staff

On October 27, 2014, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Gary Lipinski met with the Honourable Bob Chiarelli, Minister of Energy. Discussions focused on the Ministry's Aboriginal Loan Guarantee Program, which is a \$250 million initiative to support Aboriginal participation in new renewable green energy infrastructure like wind, solar and hydroelec-

tric. The program includes both energy generation and electricity transmission projects.

The inherent challenges of supporting smaller projects was a major element of their discussions with President Lipinski pressing the Minister for action to be taken through the Aboriginal Loan Guarantee Program in that regard sooner rather than later. ∞



◀ MNO President Gary Lipinski (right) met with the Honourable Bob Chiarelli, Minister of Energy (left) on October 27, 2014.

New Gold and MNO sign Agreement on Rainy River Mine Project

by | MNO Staff

The Sunset Country Métis Hall in Fort Frances was filled with guests and members who came out to witness a formal signing ceremony to finalize a Participation Agreement (the Agreement) between New Gold Inc. (New Gold) and the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) on November 6, 2014.

An opening prayer was led by John George, Senator, MNO Sunset Country Métis Community Council. Welcoming remarks were provided by Theresa Stenlund, Region 1 Councillor for MNO, Robert Gallagher, New Gold Chief Executive Officer, and MNO President Gary Lipinski.

"This Agreement could not have been achieved without the hard work and support of the Métis community and its elected leadership. I want to acknowledge their perseverance in achieving this Agreement—the 'first-of-its-kind' for the Métis community in this area. We look forward to continuing to work with New Gold for the benefit of our citizens and our young people," emphasized Stenlund.

Stenlund then introduced Gallagher who travelled from Vancouver to be at the historic event. "Developing mutually beneficial and cooperative relationships is key to the success of the Rainy River project. We are proud to enter into this Agreement with the MNO and look forward to working together in partnership," stated Gallagher. He also acknowledged the important role

of the Métis Nation as a people in Canada.

Gallagher stressed the fundamental values of New Gold citing commitment and integrity. "Integrity is the most important. It's doing the right thing. This agreement formalizes our commitment to local participation", noted Gallagher.

The Agreement includes provisions on how the local Métis community will benefit from the development of the Rainy River project and throughout the life of the mine, including employment and business opportunities, training and education initiatives and financial participation in the project. "The communities go beyond the life of the mine," noted Gallagher.

The forecast of the mine is currently 17 years although Gallagher conceded it will probably be longer. Gallagher reported that the project is scheduled to start construction early next year and is hopeful that permits will be in place by the end of the year. He also added that it will take two years to build with temporary construction workers.

"We have a commitment to employ Métis companies," he said.



▲ (Front row, left to right) Bob Gallagher, President and CEO of New Gold, Gary Lipinski, MNO President and Theresa Stenlund, PCMNO Region 1 Councillor. (Back row, left to right) Joel Henley, President of the MNO Kenora Métis Council, Marlene Davidson, President of the MNO Atikokan and Area Métis Council and Valorie Pelepetz and President of the MNO Sunset Country Métis Council.

"This is a great opportunity for all of you and your people and the generations ahead of you."

Gallagher noted that the environment is a very important aspect of The Agreement. He acknowledged the community for their openness around the issues. The Agreement incorporates processes that reflect the shared commitment of New Gold and MNO in protecting the environment and wildlife, and building a long term, mutually beneficial relationship. President Lipinski also acknowledged the importance of the environment and stated, "This is a high priority. The protection of waters and rivers, it is the fabric of who we are."

The Agreement also contains a communication protocol with mechanisms in place to keep dialogues going.

President Lipinski stated, "The MNO is proud of the positive relationship that has been built with New Gold that has led to this Agree-

"We are proud to enter into this Agreement with the MNO and look forward to working together in partnership."

— Bob Gallagher, President and CEO of New Gold

ment. We believe the Rainy River project will bring much needed economic opportunity to the region as a whole, while also respecting the Métis community's rights and interests. We see this as a 'win-win' for everyone."

President Lipinski cited the support provided for youth and children contained within the agreement as well as bursaries and educational enhancements. The Agreement establishes a Métis scholarship and bursary program at Lakehead University and Confederation College, which will enhance the MNO's existing educational supports at both schools.

After the formal signing of the Agreement and gift presentations, entertainment was provided by young fiddler, Katelyne Stenlund. Following her performance, a demonstration of jigs, reels and spoons was given by Métis members who invited guests from New Gold to join in the dance.

"It's not about how well we do it, it's about dancing together with respect and harmony," noted Wanda Botsford who gave the dance instructions.

After the dance, a traditional lunch of wild rice soup and bannock was served. ∞

■ National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women in Canada

Ending violence against women

by | Gary Lipinski, Métis Nation of Ontario, President

This message was issued on December 5, 2014.

Today I am writing you not only as the President of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) but also as a son, a husband, a father of a young woman and as a man who wants to end violence against women.

The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women in Canada commemorates one of the great tragedies in Canadian history. On December 6, 1989, 14 women at *L'École Polytechnique de Montréal* were murdered in cold blood for no other reason other than that they were women. Since then, December 6 has become a day that all Canadians can reflect on gender-based violence and ways that communities can take concrete actions to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls.

While gender-based violence affects everyone, part of the legacy of colonialism is the cycle of inter-generational trauma resulting from systemic abuse that has left generations of Aboriginal women particularly vulnerable to acts of violence and crime. Statistics clearly indicate that Aboriginal women are significantly over-represented as victims of assault, sexual assault, spousal abuse and homicide. Métis, First Nations

and Inuit women are three and a half times more likely to experience spousal violence than non-Aboriginal women. These are not numbers. These are our sisters, moms, grandmas, aunts, daughters and granddaughters.

In response to the ongoing tragedy of missing and murdered Aboriginal women, at its 21st Annual General Assembly (AGA) in Thunder Bay on August 25, the MNO unanimously passed a resolution calling on the federal government to hold national inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women and adopted a declaration to end violence against Aboriginal women. The resolution pointed out that Aboriginal women and girls suffer disproportionately high levels of violence in all its forms and that the results of violence negatively impact the wellbeing of families, communities and the whole nation. According to the RCMP, over 1,181 Aboriginal women have gone missing or have been murdered. Clearly these numbers are without precedent and only reflect RCMP records and not those of other police forces or those incidents that go unreported. There are underlying problems and contributing factors that need to be examined.

“At its 21st Annual General Assembly the MNO unanimously passed a resolution calling on the federal government to hold a national inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women...”



Why are Aboriginal women more vulnerable than main stream society? We absolutely have to do whatever we can do to turn this around and declare that by no means is this an acceptable norm.

The AGA also instructed me to personally write Prime Minister Harper to ask for the national inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women. We took this step because this is an issue that no one government, including the MNO or the police can fully address alone; it requires our collective commitment and actions. We will take a strong stance doing all we can as Métis and united with our First Nations and Inuit brothers and sisters but this is beyond a single community. We must declare collectively that violence against women is not to be tolerated in any form and it must end.

It is not enough however to wait for others to take action. The MNO has been working to address the issue of violence against Aboriginal women almost since its inception in 1993 and is a full partner in Ontario's Joint Working Group to End Violence Against Aboriginal Women and a signatory to the Framework to End Violence Against Aborigi-

nal Women. Through this Framework, the MNO, along with the Ontario Federation Indian Friendship Centres, Ontario Native Women's Association, Chiefs of Ontario, and Independent First Nations, have been part of the Joint Working Group to End Violence Against Aboriginal Women. Together we are committed to addressing the root causes of abuse within our Aboriginal communities.

The MNO has also, with funding from the Ministry of the Attorney General, initiated a Victim Services program. This program offers services at 20 MNO offices across Ontario and advocates for victims while also supporting and building violence-free communities. This year we also initiated programming to address sexual violence and the human trafficking of people with a focus on high-risk areas like Thunder Bay.

While ongoing programs and awareness will help, the responsibility for healing our communities from violence against women lies with all of us. On December 6, 2014, please take time to remember all the victims of gender-based violence and join us in working to end all forms of violence against women. ∞

■ MNO Victim Services

Engaging the Métis community on violence

by | MNO Staff

As reported in the last issue of the *Métis Voyageur*, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is delivering a project in Thunder Bay called the Aboriginal Sexual Violence Community Response Initiative (ASVCRI). The MNO ASVCRI is tasked with identifying and implementing safe, coordinated community approaches to ending sexual violence as well as educating the public and promoting recovery.

To aid in the delivery of this important work, ASVCRI Coordinator Valerie Stortini, has embraced the Faceless Dolls project as a way to engage the Thunder Bay community on a topic that is often surrounded by feelings of shame, anger and even denial. The Faceless Dolls project is a hands-on art project originally developed by the Native Women's Association of Canada and has been customized for the MNO to commemorate the lives of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls. Each felt doll represents the life of a woman, emphasizing that 'each statistic tells a story.' As a legacy to the original Faceless Dolls project, organizations are encouraged to take ownership of the issue and create their own dolls to meet the needs of their community.

The MNO ASVCRI proudly introduced the Faceless Dolls project at the 2014 MNO AGA in Thunder Bay. The activity was part of a Lead-

ership Engagement Day on Violence Against Aboriginal Women, hosted by the MNO. The workshop was introduced by the Manager of Strategic Initiatives, Jennifer Lord. The new and updated MNO version of the Faceless Dolls project was led by Valerie who opened the activity sharing that her hopes were that this MNO project would reflect the Métis Nation's deep respect for and commitment to our women.

What was created after an hour and a half of dedicated crafting, thoughtfulness, laughter and some tears was a beautiful homage to our ancestors and a true representation of the strength and beauty of the Métis Nation. For the first time, and through the spontaneous actions of several citizens, the MNO Faceless Dolls includes male dolls, placed alongside female dolls. Together, the display symbolizes our great strength as men and women to end violence in all of its forms together, as a united front.

Many participants donated their dolls back to the MNO and the entire collection will be used by the ASVCRI Coordinator as a traveling display

when presenting at schools and community organizations.

If you are interested in having the ASVCRI visit your school or association in Thunder Bay, please contact Valerie Stortini at 807-355-1349. ∞

▼ The Faceless Dolls project is a hands-on art project designed to commemorate the lives of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls



▲ MNO citizen Amanda Rheume and John MacDonald pose with the Aboriginal Songwriter of the Year award at 2014 Canadian Folk Music Awards. (Photo by Ottawa Citizen)

Métis singer-songwriter wins Canadian Folk Music Award

by | Lynn Saxberg

Adapted from an article in *The Ottawa Citizen*

On November 29, 2014, Métis Nation of Ontario citizen (MNO) Amanda Rheume was thrilled to join the winners' circle at the 10th-anniversary edition of the Canadian Folk Music Awards. The awards were handed out during a down-to-earth gala at Ottawa's Bronson Centre.

Rheume, was the hometown favourite in the Aboriginal category, even though her Juno-nominated album, *Keep a Fire*, faced tough competition from *Animism*, the Polaris-winning entry by Tanya Tagaq.

"I did not expect that, being

in the same category as so many amazing artists and friends," said a happy and surprised Rheume, who accepted the award with her songwriting partner, Ottawa musician John MacDonald. "This whole album was about looking back into my family's past and learning about where I came from, discovering and honouring my native roots. This is a true honour."

Rheume has been recently commissioned by the MNO to write a song called "We Aspire," which will be used to promote MNO programs and services starting in the spring of 2015. ∞

For more information about Amanda visit: amandarheume.com.



How the Métis confront the challenges of the Canadian legal system

by | **Chris Coppin**

Adapted from an article in *Canadian Lawyer Magazine*

Canadian Lawyer recently named Jason Madden to its list of Top 25 influential figures in Canadian law for his work on behalf of the Métis people. The Métis are a distinct cultural group of native peoples who are descendants of mixed First Nation and European heritage.

As the chief editor of the Conference of Western Attorneys General's American Indian Law Deskbook, I wanted to learn about the challenges the Métis faced in using the legal system in Canada to gain recognition and the differences between how the United States and Canadian governments treat indigenous peoples. I asked Madden to speak with me about his work on behalf of the Métis people, and he graciously agreed.

One challenge to gaining legal rights for the Métis was to have a legal definition of who is a Métis, according to Madden. In *R. v. Powley*, in which Madden was counsel for the interveners Métis National Council and the Métis Nation of Ontario, the Supreme Court of Canada described the term Métis as "distinctive peoples who, in addition to their mixed ancestry, developed their own customs, and recognizable group identity separate from their "Indian" or Inuit and European forebears. A Métis community is a group of Métis with a distinctive collective identity, living together in the same geographical area and sharing a common way of life."

Thus, Métis are not considered to be "Indians" (First Nations), but are a separate cultural group. One of the problems presented by this distinction, as described by Madden, is that the Métis people have found it difficult, if not impossible, to get the federal government or provincial governments to engage the Métis in negotiations to resolve Métis claims to lands, harvesting rights, self-governing rights and compensation for past wrongs.

It is clear under the Canadian Constitution that the federal government has authority to legislate regarding "Indians, and Lands reserved for Indians," as referenced under S.91(24) of the *British North America Act, 1867*. However, unlike in the United States where the federal government owns a majority of the lands in the west, the Canadian provinces were given owner-

ship of the public lands. Thus, the provinces are a necessary party in the negotiation of the land claims of Métis as well as other native groups. Madden explained that the federal government denies it has responsibility to address the Métis claims while, at the same time, the provinces also deny any responsibility. Thus, the Métis have been denied a place at the negotiation table to address their grievances.

That may all change with the case of *Daniels v. Canada*. In that case, where Madden represented the intervenor Manitoba Métis Federation, the plaintiffs did not challenge any laws or government action, but sought a resolution of the issue as to which government – federal or the provinces – has jurisdiction for the Métis people under the Constitution (i.e., are the Métis, who are culturally distinct from "Indians," still included within the meaning of Section 91(24) of the *British North America Act, 1867*?).

"Métis people have found it difficult, if not impossible, to get the federal government or provincial governments to engage the Métis in negotiations to resolve Métis claims to lands, harvesting rights, self-governing rights and compensation for past wrongs."

The Federal Court found that over the years, the federal government had a flexible policy toward the Métis that at times treated the Métis as under federal jurisdiction and at times not under federal jurisdiction. The Federal Court concluded that the Métis are included as a group under the term "Indians" as it is used in the *British North America Act, 1867*. The Federal Court of Appeal has upheld the Federal Court, and the federal government appealed the decision to the Supreme Court of Canada. A decision on whether the Supreme Court will hear this appeal is expected soon.

I found in speaking with Madden, who is Métis, that native peoples in both the United States and Canada face many of the same legal obstacles in dealing with their respective federal governments. Although the federal governments have enacted laws to recognize and restore native peoples' rights, it is through the courts that those rights are enforced. ∞

■ Métis Rights in the Courts

MNO Director named to the Aboriginal Justice Advisory Group

by | **MNO Staff**

Margaret Froh, the Métis Nation of Ontario's (MNO) Director of Strategic Policy, Law and Compliance has been appointed to a 12-member advisory group to examine important issues affecting Aboriginal Peoples in the justice system.

Co-chaired by Warren White, Grand Council Treaty #3 Ojichidaa (Grand Chief), and Murray Segal, former deputy attorney general of Ontario, the Aboriginal Justice Advisory Group will bring Aboriginal and justice sector leaders together to examine key challenges facing Aboriginal peoples in the justice system and provide advice to the government on ways to improve the system.

Members of the advisory group, all of whom are leaders in their communities and the justice sector, come from diverse backgrounds and offer a variety of perspectives on the justice system. The group includes current and former Aboriginal leaders, justice educators, legal administrators and agency executives. Besides Froh, the other members are: Elder Gilbert Smith of Naicatchewinin First Nation; Conrad Delaronde, former police chief, Grand Council Treaty #3; Patricia Faries, lawyer and former chief of Moose Cree First Nation; Robert Lapper, Q.C., CEO, Law Society of Upper Can-



▲ **Margaret Froh, MNO Director of Strategic Policy, Law and Compliance speaking at the MNO/Law Society of Upper Canada event during Riel Day 2013 in Toronto.**

ada and former head, Aboriginal Law Practice Group, Government of British Columbia; Peshaanakwut Jeff Kinew, youth executive council member, Grand Council Treaty #3; Chief Kelly LaRocca, Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation; Sylvia Maracle, executive director of the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres; David McKillop, vice-president of

policy, research and external relations for Legal Aid Ontario; Morris Zbar, former deputy minister of corrections for the Government of Ontario.

By improving the justice system for Aboriginal Peoples, the Ontario government is working with its partners to build a more inclusive, accessible and responsive justice system for all Ontarians. ∞

■ MNO Programs

Problem Gambling Prevention Program Update

by | **MNO Staff**

The past few years has found the MNO's Problem Gambling Prevention Program (PGPP) developing and offering a variety of interesting tools and resources that focus on awareness. These resource webpages are listed below. We encourage everyone to go online to check them out.

MNO Problem Gambling Homepage now has multiple pages with resource links:
www.metisnation.org/programs/health--wellness/problem-gambling-prevention-program

Métis Seniors and Gambling webpage:
Online DVD and new senior's pamphlet:
www.metisnation.org/programs/health--wellness/problem-gambling-prevention-program/gambling--seniors

Métis Youth and Gambling
Online DVD and resources:
www.metisnation.org/programs/health--wellness/problem-gambling-prevention-program/youth--internet-gambling

We have re-launched our Problem Gambling Prevention Facebook page, which will be providing family friendly contests, give-aways, MNO community PGPP event dates, interesting facts, and resources. Please join us now at www.facebook.com/MetisResponsibleGambling so you don't miss out!

NEW! 5-minute MNO Online Quiz #2 was featured at the 2014 AGA trade show:
www.metisresponsiblegambling.ca

NEW! Cost of Play resource: Find out how much you are spending or wasting. This webpage will link you to this interactive resource and a few others that you may find useful:
www.metisnation.org/programs/health--wellness/problem-gambling-prevention-program/cost-to-play-calculator

Problem Gambling and Problem Gambling Prevention Helpful Links and Contacts:
www.metisnation.org/programs/health--wellness/problem-gambling-prevention-program/helpful-links

For inquiries, comments, suggestions, requests for tools and resources regarding problem gambling prevention, or if you are in need of assistance, please contact Loma Rowlinson, Provincial Coordinator, who is now located at the MNO office in Sudbury. Loma can be reached by telephone at **705-671-9855** ext. **223** or by email at lomar@metisnation.org.



LOUIS RIEL DAY • NOVEMBER 16, 2014



We proudly wear our sash

▲ Senator Rene Gravelle (right), Senator Reta Gordon and PCMNO Councilor (Region 1) Cam Burgess are flanked by the colour guard during ceremonies at Queen's Park in Toronto marking Louis Riel Day on November 16, 2014.

Every year, Métis from across the Homeland honour the anniversary of the unjust execution of Louis Riel on November 16, 1885, by holding Louis Riel Day events. Although Louis Riel Day commemorates one of the great tragedies of Canadian history, it is also a day to celebrate Métis culture and the continuing progress of the Métis towards taking their rightful place within Confederation.

by | MNO Staff

Many Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) chartered community councils held flag raisings, feasts and cultural celebrations to recognize Louis Riel Day and, as in the past, provincial ceremonies were held at Queen's Park in Toronto. Provincial ceremonies take place at Queen's Park because the "Northwest Rebellion" monument and the Legislative Building are both located there. This year the provincial ceremony was held on Friday, November 14, rather than the traditional November 16, because the Legislative Building would not be open on the weekend and access to the Legislature is necessary to properly stage the ceremonies.

Ironically, the Legislature is where a price was put on Louis Riel's head and the monument recognizes the Canadian soldiers who fought in the Northwest Resistance against the Métis. During the Louis Riel Day ceremony, however, they are the focal points for honouring Riel and the monument is reverentially draped with Métis symbols including a portrait of Louis Riel.

This year's provincial ceremony fell on a



"What Louis Riel started we continue working for. Louis Riel gave his life so that out of the ashes something new could be born."

— MNO Chair France Picotte

brisk fall day with over 100 people in attendance from the Toronto area as well others from across the province, including some individuals who came from as far away as Thunder Bay, Fort Frances and Kenora. As in the past, events started with a flag raising ceremony in front of the Legislature. News reporters were on hand to witness MNO President Gary Lipinski, the Honourable David Zimmer, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, and MPPs Norm Miller and Lisa Gretzky raise the Métis flag while a crowd of MNO citizens, dignitaries and guests looked on and cheered enthusiastically.

Following the flag raising ceremony, the participants formed a procession led by members of the No. 10 Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion and accompanied by Métis fiddler Alicia Blore and her brother Liam on guitar. The No. 10 Legion Branch has been participating in Louis Riel Day ceremonies for 14 years and their dedication and service was greatly appreciated as always.

The procession made its way to the "Northwest Rebellion" monument where speakers addressed everyone assembled. PCMNO Senator Joseph Poitras provided a

Louis Riel Day Message from President Lipinski

Message issued on November 14, 2014

Louis Riel Day commemorates the anniversary of the execution of Louis Riel on November 16, 1885.

Riel made the ultimate sacrifice for defending Métis rights and although these events took place in the West, his resistance had repercussions for Métis in Ontario. We were labelled traitors and for generations our culture was forced underground. We became the "forgotten people."

Today, we are no longer the "forgotten people" because we assert our Métis rights, and by doing so, take up the mantle of Louis Riel. It is for this reason that Louis Riel Day is a cause for celebration in our communities across the homeland. It is a day to remember our past, live our culture and reaffirm our determination that our children will inherit all the rights Louis Riel fought so bravely to protect.

On November 16, I encourage you to join with your community and your Nation in Louis Riel Day events. It is a day to proclaim proudly: "We are Métis."

Marsi. Megwetch.

— Gary Lipinski
Métis Nation of Ontario, President

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LOUIS RIEL DAY • NOVEMBER 16, 2014



▲ Nicholas and Conlin Delbeare Sawchuk perform songs in honour of Louis Riel at the Law Society of Upper Canada.



▲ MNO President Gary Lipinski gives his Louis Riel Day address at Queen's Park in Toronto.



▲ Toronto City Councillor Mike Layton presents Toronto York Region Métis Council President Tera Beaulieu with a copy of the City of Toronto's Louis Riel Day Proclamation.



▲ (Left to right) Alex Young, Métis youth representative; Senator Rene Gravelle; Lisa Gretzky, NDP MPP; MNO Secretary-Treasurer Tim Pile; Jean Teillet, great niece of Louis Riel; PC MPP Norm Miller; Honourable David Zimmer, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs; Senator Reta Gordon; MNO President Gary Lipinski, Senator Verna Brunelle-Porter; MNO Chair France Picotte and MNO Vice-Chair Sharon McBride.



▲ Dignitaries raise the Métis flag at Queen's Park.

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beautiful opening prayer of thanksgiving for all the people who have worked for the Métis both past and present. (Senator Poitras's full prayer can be read on page 32.)

MNO Chair France Picotte emceed the ceremony and set a positive tone by welcoming everyone and acknowledging guests and dignitaries including the Deputy Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, David DeLaunay. "What Louis Riel started," she explained, "we continue working for. Louis Riel gave his life so that out of the ashes something new could be born. We [the Métis] have been here forever and we will always be here."

Chair Picotte also read a greeting from the Honourable Dave Levac, Speaker of the Ontario Legislature. Speaker Levac, who is the first Métis to serve as Speaker of the Ontario Legislature stated: "I, being of Métis descent, am always excited to have Métis heritage events here at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Each event furthers cultural knowledge of the Métis people in Ontario and continues to promote strong dialogue between the Métis Nation and First Nations people; and the Province of Ontario."

In her remarks, MNO Vice-chair Sharon McBride asked the audience to consider what their Métis ances-

tors were experiencing in 1885. She read from an 1885 Ontario newspaper article about the capture of Louis Riel that indicated there was "joy throughout Ontario." She then discussed how the work of Métis citizens making a difference in their communities across the province had changed the place of the Métis in Ontario from what it had been in 1885. "We have been building a future path for our young people," said Vice-chair McBride, "and their future looks so bright."

The improved relationship between Métis and the Ontario government was the focus of greetings from Aboriginal Affairs Minister David Zimmer. While the relationship between Métis and the Ontario government "... has not always been as it should have been, and there was a time when Métis were persecuted," he stated, "on a whole the relationship between the MNO and Ontario has been improving." Minister Zimmer cited the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement that had been renewed for another five years earlier this year, as the foundation for building a more collaborative relationship between the MNO and Ontario. He also discussed the Aboriginal Economic Development Fund, which can support eligible projects that are not covered by the

Métis Voyageur Development Fund. He stressed the importance of the MNO Infinity Property Services and Infinity Trust indicating: "These are just a few of the ways we are working together that will help Métis children, families and communities. [In this way we are continuing] the far-sighted vision of Louis Riel, which is reborn every year."

Norm Miller, the Progressive Conservative (PC) MPP for Parry Sound-Muskoka and Aboriginal Affairs Critic for the PC Party, spoke of how much he enjoys attending the famous MNO Moon River Métis Council fish fries. The fish fries have always been a great way for MPP Miller to learn about Métis heritage and culture and the fact that the food is always amazing does not hurt either. MPP Miller also said that it was impressive how much Louis Riel was able to accomplish in his short life and how important it is to continue his legacy today.

The New Democratic Party (NDP) was represented at the ceremony by MPP Lisa Gretzky who represents Windsor West in the Legislature. MPP Gretzky spoke about the strength of the MNO Windsor-Essex Métis Council and the important work being done by

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▲ The Todmorden Colour Guard and Métis veterans leads a march from the steps of the Legislative Building at Queen's Park to the Northwest Rebellion Monument on Louis Riel Day.



▲ PC MPP Norm Miller.



▲ Lisa Gretzky, NDP MMP.



▲ MNO Vice-Chair Sharon McBride.



▲ The Honourable David Zimmer, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and MNO Chair France Picotte.

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that council. She also congratulated the MNO on some of its successes including the renewal of the *MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement* and the recent participation agreement signed between the MNO and New Gold (see story on page 6). She indicated her support for a number of MNO goals including the call for a National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and for measures to help close gaps in education and employment for Aboriginal people.

Métis youth were well represented at the ceremony by Alex Young, the Region 9 Representative on the MNO Youth Council and the son of past MNO Hamilton-Wentworth Métis Council President Joanne Young (who was on hand to proudly see Representative Young give his address). Representative Young's address was very well received with President Lipinski later commenting that "I should hire this guy as my speech writer." Representative Young compared the current success of the MNO with the trouble the Métis experienced during the past, in particular during Riel's time. He spoke of his own grandfather who had had to keep his Métis heritage secret, but indicated triumphantly that after the 21 years that the MNO has existed,

"We proudly wear our sash!" (Read Representative Young's complete remarks on page 32.)

As in many past years, the MNO was honoured with the presence of Jean Teillet at the Queen's Park Ceremony. Ms. Teillet is the great grand-niece of Louis Riel and is the famous Métis rights lawyer who took the Powley case to the Supreme Court of Canada. Ms. Teillet reflected on the recent violence in Canada where two Canadian soldiers were murdered by extremists and explained that Louis Riel had done everything he could to prevent violence. She stated that we can "... move beyond violence if we put our hearts over our minds and return to the original intention of peaceful resolution that Riel started with."

The final speaker was MNO President Gary Lipinski. President Lipinski pulled together the theme of how much progress has been made since 1885 that figured prominently in many of this year's speeches. While progress is positive, he commented that: "[It seems to take a] long time to get things done. We seem to measure success in centuries and decades. Let's hope that we can start measuring success in shorter periods so that people who worked towards that

"[It seems to take a] long time to get things done. We seem to measure success in centuries and decades. Let's hope that we can start measuring success in shorter periods so that people who worked towards that success will still be around when it is achieved."

— MNO President
Gary Lipinski

success will still be around when it is achieved."

President Lipinski pointed out that while Métis have enjoyed many great successes, there is still much to be done in the area of Métis rights. "We need," he stated, "our rightful recognition as a people with historic rights acknowledged in our province and in our lands." He commented that although some people have argued that Métis rights conflict with First Nations rights – nothing could be further from the truth. "Absolutely First Nations rights need to be respected," explained President Lipinski, "but so do Métis rights need to be respected as one of the Aboriginal peoples of this country." President Lipinski concluded that Métis are always willing to negotiate and want to work collaboratively with the government and the opposition to secure "... our rightful place in this developing country."

The ceremony ended with the laying of wreaths of remembrance on the Northwest Rebellion monument. The wreaths were laid by executive members of the MNO Veterans' Council: President Joseph Paquette, Senator Dr. Alis Kennedy and by MNO Veteran Tim Majovsky. This part of the ceremony recognized the sacrifices and on-going

contributions of Métis veterans. The laying of the wreath at the monument by veterans is always a poignant moment.

MNO Chair Picotte wrapped up the ceremony on a thoughtful note by stating: "On each Riel Day, I ask those assembled to think back to the last Riel Day and remember what they have done to advance the Métis Nation in the last year; and to also think forward about what they will do in the upcoming year for the Métis people."

With the ceremony complete for another year, the participants then moved inside the Legislative building where they enjoyed a Métis feast. During the feast, President Lipinski and MNO Veterans' Council President Paquette presented MNO Veteran Tim Majovsky with the Louis Riel Medal and Certificate. These honours recognized that Mr. Majovsky is a verified MNO veteran and his distinguished military service.

MNO citizens and friends of the MNO enjoyed the delicious food at the feast and revelled in the comradeship of their Métis brothers and sisters making it the perfect end to another successful provincial Louis Riel Day ceremony. ∞

LOUIS RIEL DAY • 2014

The politics of identity

MNO and the Law Society of Upper Canada event explores Métis Law

As part of the annual provincial Louis Riel Day events, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and the Law Society of Upper Canada partnered in another Public Education Equity event focused on developments in Métis Law. This is the twelfth year for the event, which this time was entitled: **“What’s left in section 91(24)? Crown Responsibilities, Government Jurisdictions and Aboriginal Peoples.”**

Held the afternoon of November 14 at the Law Society building in Toronto, the program consisted of a panel discussion moderated by Grant Wedge of the Law Society, with prominent Métis lawyers, Jason Madden and Jean Teillet, and constitutional lawyer Andrew Lokan as panelists. It also included a reception emceed by MNO Chief Operating Officer Doug Wilson and featuring Conlin and Nicholas Delbaere-Sawhuck of the renowned Métis Fiddler Quartet performing *Songs of the Métis: An Ode to Louis Riel*.

The focus of the panel discussion was on Section 91 (24) of the Canadian Constitution called the *British North America (BNA) Act* (1867) which defines “Indians” as a federal government responsibility. The *Daniels v Canada* decision brought down by the Federal Court of Canada in April 2014 indicated that Métis are a Federal responsibility and should be defined as “Indians” under Section 91 (24) and should therefore be entitled to similar rights and benefits (see page 3 for more about *Daniels v Canada*). Ms. Teillet explained that

what *Daniels v Canada* boils down to is “identity politics” or, as some might prefer, “identity law.” She stated: “[The Daniels case] is about how you identify Aboriginal peoples in Canada.” She clarified that “Indian” is a legal term only because it appears in the Constitution and does not mean that Métis are culturally “Indians.” In his remarks, Mr. Lokan agreed and indicated that if the *BNA Act* had been written today instead of in 1867, the term Aboriginal would have been used instead of “Indian.” “The federal government,” he argued, “is exploiting the use of different terminology [“Indians” and Aboriginal] to confuse an issue that should actually be quite clear.”

In his remarks, Mr. Madden argued that 91(24) “...is a necessary corollary for the treaty making powers and responsibilities of the federal government,” and that the federal government has “... a positive obligation to set up treaties.” If *Daniels v. Canada* is upheld then Canada will have an obligation to enter into a process of treaty making with the Métis as they did with First Nations. All three lawyers predicted, cor-



▲ Prominent Métis lawyers, Jean Teillet (left) and Jason Madden (right), and constitutional lawyer Andrew Lokan at the annual Riel Day panel discussion of Métis rights at the Law Society of Upper Canada in Toronto.

rectly as it turned out, that the Supreme Court of Canada would grant leave for appeal of the Federal Court of Canada ruling on *Daniels v Canada* (see story on page 3).

Following the legal panel, the audience moved to the reception where they heard welcoming remarks from MNO President Gary Lipinski. President Lipinski commented on the high value the MNO places on holding this annual event with the Law Society. “This relationship has been tremendously bene-

“The federal government is exploiting the use of different terminology [“Indians” and Aboriginal] to confuse an issue that should actually be quite clear.”

— Grant Wedge
Law Society of Upper Canada

ficial to the Métis,” stated President Lipinski. The evening closed with Conlin and Nicholas performing several songs from the Métis Fiddler Quartet’s latest album. Recorded entirely in French, the album combines both historic songs, original songs and storytelling that describe the events that led to Louis Riel becoming the leader of the Métis in Canada, his struggle for Métis rights, and his persecution by the Canadian government. ∞

■ Grand River Métis Council



▲ MNO GRMC members and Mayor Cam Guthrie (fourth from right) at Guelph City Hall in honour of Louis Riel Day.

Métis flag raising in Guelph

Submitted by | Jennifer Parkinson
President, MNO Grand River Métis Council

On November 21, 2014, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Grand River Métis Council (GRMC) celebrated Louis Riel Day with their fifth annual Métis flag raising ceremony at Guelph City Hall. MNO citizens, City of Guelph staff, and community members attended the event. The celebration would not have been possible without the hard work of Paul Smith, MNO GRMC Councillor, who organized the entire event and served as the master of ceremonies.

Jennifer Parkinson, MNO GRMC President, opened the celebration by talking about the Métis people

and the contributions of Louis Riel. Barb Lair, MNO GRMC Chair, next recited a beautiful poem written by Louis Riel. Cam Guthrie, Mayor of Guelph, also shared a few words. President Parkinson thanked Mayor Guthrie for welcoming the council to City Hall and for his participation in the event and presented him with a book on Métis history and culture.

After the speeches, everyone proceeded outside to raise the Métis flag. The flag remained flying at the Guelph City Hall for one week.

The MNO GRMC would like to thank everyone who attended this important event. ∞

■ Georgian Bay Métis Council

Students learn the importance of Riel

by | MNO Staff

On November 14, 2014, to recognize Louis Riel Day, a presentation and celebration were held at *École publique Saint-Joseph* in Penetanguishene. The presentation was made by Rachelle Brunelle-McColl, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Employment Developer, the MNO office in Midland and by Anne Desroches,

the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Pedagogical Counsellor with the school. They presented information to the students on the influence and impact Louis Riel has had for Métis rights. Teachers and students enjoyed the interactive presentation and appreciated the items on display that described Métis history and culture. ∞



▲ Anne Desroches (far left) and Rachelle Brunelle-McColl stand with students at the Louis Riel Day presentation

■ London



Métis flag flies thanks to MNO Citizen

This year marks the eighth time the Métis flag has proudly flown in front of the London City Hall in recognition of Louis Riel Day. However, this tradition would not have begun had it not been for the dedication and pride displayed by Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen, Alvin McKay.

Starting in 2007, McKay has taken it upon himself every year to organize with the London City Hall to ensure that the Métis flag is flown for Louis Riel Day. In its eighth year, McKay was ecstatic to hear that City Hall received a few phone calls inquiring about the flag and its meaning.

McKay’s selfless gesture proves how one individual’s contribution can make a difference and can help the MNO in its efforts to spread the word on Louis Riel and the Métis people. ∞



LOUIS RIEL DAY • NOVEMBER 16, 2014

Halfbreed Hustle heats up Ottawa

Submitted by
Benny Michaud

MNO Ottawa Métis Council, President

On November 16, 2014, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Ottawa Métis Council (OMC) participated in Ottawa's Annual Halfbreed Hustle to commemorate the life and vision of Louis Riel. Benny Michaud, MNO OMC President, has been a part of the Halfbreed Hustle organizing committee for the past two years. Initiated by four Métis women from Ottawa, the Halfbreed Hustle took place for the first time last year at the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health (Wabano) and was an incredible success drawing over 100 people.

This year, the event was once again held in Wabano's cultural gathering space and saw approximately 200 people in attendance, making it the largest and fastest growing Métis event in the city!

The evening was filled with dancing and music provided by country music singer Kevin Schofield, fiddler Anthony Brascoupe, guitarist David Finkle, and jigger extraordinaire, Jaime Koebel. With a delicious selection of food and beverages catered by Wabano, and a plethora of vendors selling Métis and



First Nations artwork and crafts, there was no shortage of things to do when not on the dance floor.

In preparation of the event, MNO OMC members sold council tote bags and Halfbreed Hustle shirts to raise money. Vendors were also asked to donate an item to be raffled throughout the night. All of the proceeds raised will be put towards next year's Halfbreed Hustle.

"We intended the event to be one big Métis barn party," said President



Michaud. "We want to bring the community together to celebrate the vision that Louis Riel had for our people—the vision being that 130 years after Louis Riel's execution, we are able to come together on a night like tonight and celebrate the survival of our people and the beauty of Métis culture."

This past June at a strategic planning meeting, the MNO OMC identified 'engaging youth' as one of their essential mandates. The MNO OMC were therefore pleased to see so many



Métis youth present at the event. By supporting the Halfbreed Hustle, the MNO OMC have also seen an increase in the number of young people wanting to become involved in the Métis community.

One of the MNO OMC's goals is to promote awareness of Métis culture and to foster a greater sense of pride among our citizens. Planning has already begun for next year's event, which is sure to be a larger and even more successful! ∞

▲ (Left to right) **Musician Kevin Schofield; the Halfbreed Hustle turns the Wabano Centre into a dance hall; Jaime and Jacob Koebel put on a jiggering demonstration; members of the Halfbreed Hustle organizing committee.**

Credit River Métis Council



▲ MNO CRMC President Richard Cuddy (center) with Peel District School Board teachers.

Teaching the teachers about Louis Riel Day

Submitted by | **Richard Cuddy**, President, MNO Credit River Métis Council

On November 6, 2014, Richard Cuddy, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Credit River Métis Council (CRMC) President, was invited to the Peel District School Board (PDSB) to make a presentation detailing the significance of Louis Riel Day. President Cuddy had the opportunity to share Louis Riel's biography, history and accomplishments from a Métis perspective.

President Cuddy explained that Louis Riel was a great Métis leader executed by the Canadian government for leading the Northwest Resistance in defence of Métis rights and the Métis way of life. President Cuddy provided the teachers with a brief biography of Riel's birth, education, leadership and eventual execution on November 16, 1885.

Every year, Louis Riel Day is held on November 16 to remember what Riel sacrificed and renew the commitment to continuing his work. The MNO celebrates Louis Riel

Day to recognize the many contributions of the Métis to Canada and to highlight the struggles that the Métis continue to face.

Although some believe it is ironic that our communities gather and celebrate on the anniversary of Louis Riel's execution, what they fail to understand is that without this most selfless and ultimate sacrifice, the Métis people would not be who they are today. The Métis will never again be ignored, forced underground or forgotten and we celebrate that across the Homeland. By affirming our inherent rights as Métis, we honour Louis Riel and his legacy.

Throughout the presentation, President Cuddy answered many questions and explained the misrepresentations and misconceptions of Riel's work. The PDSB teachers were very open and respectful and were actively involved with the presentation. The MNO CRMC would like to recognize the PDSB staff as being a very progressive and inclusive



◀ MNO CRMC President Richard Cuddy explains the significance of Louis Riel Day to Peel District School Board teachers.

books, spoons, flags, furs, hide, beading, sashes, and tools. These materials encouraged further questions and discussions. Originally scheduled to be only two hours, the interest and enthusiasm of the PDSB teachers resulted in the presentation running 90 minutes longer.

On behalf of the MNO, the MNO CRMC and citizens, President Cuddy would like to thank the PDSB, participants and Ms. Krista Tucker Petrick, PDSB First Nations, Métis and Inuit/Equity Resource Teacher, for the opportunity to provide such critical information regarding our Métis history, culture and identity. ∞

school board in Ontario. It has always been a pleasure for the MNO CRMC to engage, partner or present to the PDSB.

After the presentation, PDSB staff viewed the Métis Education Kit and a display, put together by MNO CRMC Community Outreach Coordinator, consisting of several Métis

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Remembering Riel

by | **Steve Henschel**

Adapted from an article in *Niagara This Week*

On Friday, two days ahead of November 16—Louis Riel Day—Derrick Pont, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Niagara Region Métis Council (NRMC) President, members from the MNO NRMC, Paul Grenier, Welland City Councillor, Mark Carl, Deputy Mayor, and other representatives met in front of the Welland City Hall to raise the Métis flag. Councillor Grenier said the city is proud to be recognizing this special day for the fifth year running.

November 16 marks the day in 1885 when Louis Riel was executed by the Canadian government for treason for his role in the Northwest Resistance that took place that same year. Due to the Northwest Resistance as well as the earlier Métis resistance at the Red River in 1870,

Métis were widely considered traitors, especially in Ontario.

“Across Canada they scattered,” said Pont. “At that point every Métis became a criminal in the eyes of many.”

Pont explained that many Métis disappeared into large urban centres where they could deny or hide their heritage, or moved to remote areas to found small communities. “Most hid in plain sight,” said Pont.

Pont recalls that his grandmother would never admit her Métis heritage. “Even my parents wouldn’t talk about it,” said Pont, understanding now as an adult that there were clues to his hidden heritage. He remembers his father arguing with his mother because there was no milk in the fridge. Now that Pont knows about his heritage, he understands

its importance. At that time in the 1960s—the residential school era—government officials could make a case for the state taking guardianship over a Métis or First Nations child if there was not milk in the fridge.

“They called it the ‘60s scoops’,” said Pont, who would finally discover his heritage in the 1940s as he connected with cousins from Manitoba who informed him of his Métis roots. At first that discovery prompted excitement, then in some ways sadness, as Pont started to notice the stigma surrounding Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

Pont joined the MNO NRMC to start learning about his heritage; he stayed to start sharing it. “A lot of my own family’s history was lost,” said Pont, underlining the impact of the decades of stigma and hiding of the



▲ Participants join hands at the Louis Riel Day celebration in Welland.

Métis population. “Generations of our culture were lost,” he said.

Over the last 20 years, with the vindication of Riel and the recognition of the Métis as one of Canada’s three official Aboriginal groups, things are improving.

Pont noted that he visits schools to teach children about the role of the Métis in Canada’s history. His grandson—in contrast to his grandmother—is able to feel pride of his

Métis roots. “He’s going to grow up knowing his culture,” said Pont. “It makes me feel good about the whole thing...he doesn’t get ridiculed, he doesn’t have to worry about that.”

Pont explained that Louis Riel Day, which in some provinces is a statutory holiday, is a day to reflect on the journey of the Métis and remember the importance of the leader. “We look to Louis Riel for inspiration,” said Pont. ∞

Louis Riel Day across the province

The year 1885 was very difficult for Ontario Métis. During that year the Northwest Resistance took place where Métis took a stand and fought for Métis rights and the Métis way-of-life. The Canadian government suppressed the resistance and executed Métis leader Louis Riel for treason. Ontario Métis were also labeled as traitors and for generations the Métis in Ontario had to hide their culture and heritage. Despite this oppression the Métis in Ontario preserved our way-of-life and passed it on to current generations. Today the strength of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is a testament to the courage of our ancestors.

Louis Riel Day is held every year across the homeland on November 16, the anniversary of Riel’s execution in 1885. While Louis Riel Day marks one of the great tragedies of Canadian history its recognition demonstrates our continuing resilience and determination to regain our rights and preserve our way-of-life in Ontario and across the Homeland.

To commemorate Louis Riel Day, MNO citizens and communities held events across the province to recognize the many contributions of the Métis to Canada, to celebrate Métis culture and to highlight the struggles that Métis continue to face. ∞



◀ **OTTAWA:** Warren Cardinal-McTeague (second from right), University of Ottawa (uOttawa) MNO Infinite Reach Facilitator and participants at the uOttawa Riel Day celebration. Opening prayer was offered by Senator Lois McCallum (far left) and a jigging demonstration was provided by former uOttawa facilitator Brad Lafortune.



◀ **THUNDER BAY:** Lakehead University MNO Infinite Reach Facilitator, Lucy Fowler, hosted festivities including dot art, finger weaving and special guests in honour of Riel Day.



◀ **OTTAWA:** Jordyn Playne, Carleton University MNO Infinite Reach Facilitator, hosted a “rock the mocs” day and held a finger weaving demonstration at the Ojigwanong Aboriginal Student Centre.



▲ **PETERBOROUGH:** Daryl Bennett, Mayor of Peterborough, and participants gather around for a picture during the Louis Riel Day flag raising ceremony in Peterborough.



▲ **TECUMSEH:** The Métis flag proudly flies at École secondaire l’Essor in Tecumseh, Ontario for an entire week thanks to a student Matthew Bombardier.



▲ **TIMMINS:** Members of the Timmins’ Métis community gather at the Hollinger Park cenotaph to pay tribute to Louis Riel on Sunday, November 16, 2014. (Photo by *The Timmins Press*)



▲ **BARRIE:** Members of the Barrie Police Service take part in a flag raising ceremony at City Hall in Barrie, Ontario.



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▲ Métis fiddle duo, Rajan and Kim Anderson, perform.

A Louis Riel Celebration to Remember

Submitted by | **Richard Cuddy**
President, MNO Credit River Métis Council

November 16, 2014 marked the third consecutive year that the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Credit River Métis Council (CRMC) was host to a full afternoon gathering of almost 150 MNO citizens, family, friends and MNO CRMC partners to celebrate Louis Riel Day. It was clear that this year's celebration would be the best one yet!

MNO staff members were present with displays that informed guests on MNO healing and wellness, employment and training, and community services.

Participants were able to purchase 50-50 tickets at the MNO Veterans' booth, set up by Joe Paquette, President of the MNO Veterans' Council (VC), his wife Pam, and Senator Dr. Alis Kennedy.

Krista Tucker Petrick, the Peel District School Board's (PDSB) First Nations, Métis and Inuit/Equity Resource Teacher, organized a booth that explained the PDSB Voluntary, Confidential Self-Identification Policy for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students (Self-ID Policy). MNO CRMC representatives, Senator Ray Bergie, President Richard Cuddy, former Councillor Neville, and former MNO CRMC Chair Bill Morrison, have worked closely with Krista and the PDSB to create the Self-ID policy. A short promotional video has been created and is available on the PDSB website.

Jim Tolles, MNO CRMC Traditional Knowledge Resource, created an expansive traditional and cultural Métis display for participants to stop

in and view. Another booth was set up by Hydro One Brampton, which offered energy tips and conservation information. There was also a bake table and a crafts table.

Senator Bergie opened the afternoon festivities with a prayer. President Cuddy provided opening remarks explaining, "Some say it is ironic that our communities gather and celebrate on the anniversary of Louis Riel's execution on November 16, 1885. What they fail to understand is that without this most selfless, ultimate sacrifice, this gathering today would not be possible. The Métis will never again be ignored, forced underground or forgotten and we celebrate this across the homeland. By doing so, we honour Louis Riel and his legacy by affirming our inherit rights as Métis."

President Cuddy then called the MNO CRMC Councillors to the stage as well as Senator Bergie and former Councillor, David Neville. President Cuddy personally thanked the Councillors' families stating, "They bear the burden of our passion to serve our community and we would be nothing without their love, understanding and support."

President Cuddy then introduced MNO CRMC members: Women's Representative, Wendy Elliott; Youth Representative, Samantha Cuddy; Councillors, Karen Derocher, Jean-Marc Maheu and Dale Buisson; Traditional Knowledge Resource, Jim Tolles; and, Community Outreach Coordinator, Rochelle Ethier.

President Cuddy directed special attention to Ethier who was responsible for the planning, execution and success of the day's celebration. It was clear to all how hard she must have worked to put together the gathering. Rochelle was thanked with an enthusiastic round of applause.

The event could also not have been possible without the help of a large group of volunteers, including: former MNO CRMC Councillor Darlene Lent; MNO CRMC Women's Representative, Wendy Elliott; former Councillor, David Neville; Councillor Karen Derocher; Councillor Jean Marc Maheu; Youth Representative, Samantha Cuddy; Angela Cuddy; Helen Barron; Janice Graham; Shonna Ethier; Trevor McLellan; Charlene Hally; Michele Kwan; Karen Stewart; Jenna Topolie;



▲ Auriele Diotte gives a jigging demonstration to participants.

Katherine English; Lori Henderson; Brooke Henderson; and Amanda Lenneard. President Cuddy would like to give his apologies should anyone have been omitted. Everyone who helped to make the event a success should be commended for such a wonderful job.

Next were presentations for Senator Bergie and former Councillor, Neville, who unfortunately will not be part of the MNO CRMC starting in December 2014. Former Councillor Neville was always willing to lend a hand and even stepped up to the challenge of MNO CRMC Acting Chair while handling the Education portfolio. His work with the Halton School Board was instrumental in

having the Métis flag raised at Milton District High School on November 13, 2014. Former Councillor Neville's tireless contributions to the MNO CRMC will be sorely missed.

Senator Bergie has been our longest serving Councillor to date and has always guided the MNO CRMC with humour, integrity and dignity. President Cuddy acknowledged that this was his hardest presentation of the day, because "I'm not only saying goodbye to the only Senator I've ever served with, but to my highly respected colleague and friend whom I will dearly miss. Senator Bergie's departure will leave a hole

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continued from page 15

in our community and representation not easily filled.” President Cuddy continued, “We extend our best wishes for David and Ray for the future and sincerely thank them for performing above and beyond the call of duty as Councillors serving the MNO CRMC citizens.”

Joe Paquette, President of the MNO Veterans’ Council (VC), was next called to the stage. President

“Some say it is ironic that our communities gather and celebrate on the anniversary of Louis Riel’s execution on November 16, 1885. What they fail to understand is that without this most selfless, ultimate sacrifice, this gathering today would not be possible.”

— Richard Cuddy
President, Credit River Métis Council

Cuddy explained how “the MNO CRMC recognizes the importance of our Veteran’s not just in our community but to our Nation. Like Riel, their selfless sacrifices are a big part of why we are able to gather today. The MNO CRMC would like to take this opportunity to announce that the proceeds for today’s 50-50 draw will be donated to the MNO VC. When you purchase these tickets you are supporting our Veterans.”

Hydro One Brampton representatives, Karen McCarthy and Scott Miller, were next to the stage and presented a cheque for \$500 to the MNO CRMC as a donation of support for the Louis Riel Day Gathering. The cheque was graciously accepted by President Cuddy, who added, “The MNO CRMC are grateful for the support that helped to make this community gathering possible. We will continue to build a relationship beneficial to MNO CRMC citizens and Hydro One Brampton.”

Petrick presented a cheque for \$2000 to the MNO CRMC on behalf of the PDSB as a donation of support for the Louis Riel Day gathering. The cheque was accepted by President Cuddy on behalf of the MNO CRMC. President Cuddy

explained how “the MNO CRMC is extremely grateful for this donation. We recognize the PDSB as one of the most progressive school boards in Ontario. With successful projects such as the Self-ID policy as a foundation, our partnership will surely deliver more valuable projects and programs in the future that are advantageous not just to MNO students in the Peel District, but to all of the students and teachers in Peel.”

The last presentation on the

agenda was from the Ontario Trillium Fund (OTF). Jaz Singh, OTF volunteer, introduced local MPP-Brampton West, Vic Dhillon, to the stage who announced a \$102,000 grant to the MNO CRMC. MPP Dhillon spoke about the impacts from the recent OTF supported programs offered by the MNO CRMC. “The three-year grant was made in October 2013 and is being used to help with the salary for a part-time Community Outreach Worker who has created new training opportunities for volunteers, developed workshops and school presentations, and coordinated various events in the Orangeville, Halton, and Peel Regions. Funds from the grant are also being used to help with the costs for producing MNO Education Kits, promotions and office equipment.”

President Cuddy accepted the OTF plaque on behalf of the MNO CRMC. President Cuddy thanked MPP Dhillon and Singh by presenting them both with a copy of the MNO book entitled, *Values and Traditions of our Ancestors*.

This year’s festivities focused on entertainment and included the following lineup: a ladies drumming circle; Auriele Diotte from Oshawa who delivered an amazing jiggling

demonstration and a workshop that culminated in an impromptu performance by the workshop participants; and the Métis fiddle duo, Kim and Rajan Anderson—a crowd favourite who played fiddle music up to the traditional feast. Couples were on the dance floor in no time and youth and elders joined in on some of the songs with the spoons. All of the musicians put on a spectacular performance that continued through dinner and finished just in time for the announcement of raffles and draws.

President Cuddy concluded the afternoon by thanking all of the sponsors, partners and donors. Special mention was made to: Mississauga Halton Local Health Integration Network (LHIN), the Central West LHIN, the Peel District School Board, Hydro One Brampton, Conservation Halton Crawford Lake, MNO Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy, Fortino’s Community Room, MNO Women’s Council, MNO Veterans’ Council, ARAMARK HealthCare, the University of Western Ontario, the University of Toronto, E.D. Smith, Kraft, Cargill, Emre Farms, MNO VC President Joe Paquette, and MNO citizens.

No sooner had President Cuddy returned home, did the MNO CRMC begin to get feedback from the event. “Great Louis Riel Day celebration! Rochelle and colleagues did a super job” wrote Rob and Bon H.

Barb W. also wrote in and said, “Thank you so much for a great day at the Louis Riel celebration. The drumming, music, food, booths, draws—it was all really nice. [...] it is fantastic to know that you work closely with them [PDSB] and that you are spreading the word about Métis culture. The work that you and the MNO CRMC do is very important. Please let all of the volunteers, the MNO CRMC, Elders, Rochelle and the sponsors know that all of their work was really appreciated. Again, thank you.” ∞



▲ The women’s drum circle performs at the Louis Riel Day celebration.



▲ Community members enjoy a traditional feast at the Credit River Métis Council’s Riel Day celebration.

■ Sunset Country Métis Council

Louis Riel Day: cause for celebration

by | Duane Hicks

Adapted from a story in the *The Fort Frances Times*

Just as Louis Riel Day was marked across Canada on November 16, 2014, a celebration of the protector of Métis rights and one of the Fathers of Confederation was also held at the MNO Sunset Country Métis Hall in Fort Frances.

More than 120 people turned out to enjoy a buffet supper, including a moose roast, donated by Dean McMahon, Métis Nation of Ontario Captain of the Hunt, as well as to hear and dance to music performed by district entertainers. But amidst the merry-making, the importance of Riel as a Canadian historical figure also was highlighted.

“Louis Riel Day takes place on the anniversary of a great tragedy—the execution of Louis Riel on November 16, 1885,” read Theresa Sten-

lund, Region 1 PCMNO Councillor, who delivered a message on behalf of MNO President Gary Lipinski, who was attending Louis Riel Day celebrations in Toronto. “Riel’s only crime was that he defended the rights of his people, our people, the Métis,” Stenlund stressed. “Although he fought for the Métis rights in the west, his resistance had repercussions for Métis in Ontario, as well,” she noted. “We were labelled traitors and for generations our culture was forced underground. We became the forgotten people. Over the years, however, we began to assert ourselves and take up the mantle of Louis Riel,” Stenlund added.

“We founded the Métis Nation of Ontario, and with Steve Powley we asserted our Métis rights. Every day that we work together as MNO citi-



▲ MNO citizens at the Louis Riel Day celebration in Fort Frances.

zens, we are seeking the same rights that Louis Riel defended. Louis Riel’s battle did not end on November 16, 1885, because we are fighting it today,” Stenlund reasoned. “It is for that reason that Louis Riel Day—November 16—is a day that celebrates our resilience as a people. It is a day we remember what we have achieved so far, and it is a day we steel our resolve so Louis Riel’s dream can be a reality for our children.”

Clint Calder, MNO Sunset Country Métis Council (SCMC) President, said the message of Riel must be passed on to the youth. He

then passed the microphone over to Ericka Tymkin who delivered a speech on the history of Riel.

“It is still evident today,” Tymkin said. “Canada has the province of Manitoba. Also, the Métis have been recognized and have grown to be equal in Canadian society. He is definitely one of Canada’s most important figures, and he is unmistakably a hero,” she stressed.

On a lighter note, musical entertainment was provided by: Eric Fagerdahl; Ericka Tymkin; Abbey Calder; Intirely Mac; Wayne and Danette MacIntyre; the Sunset Country Chicks: Brittany Hayes, Charity

Rose, and Sandra Allan; and, the Distant Legacy Band: Justin Boshey, Mark Beachey, Brian Kabatay and Glen Tower. Justin Boshey, Elmer and Clifford Whitefish also played and even got some folks jiggling and square-dancing for several songs.

Special guest was John Bonin, Manager of Aboriginal Affairs for Union Gas (Ontario), which had sponsored the fall harvest fish fry held last month at the Métis Hall.

Bonin said he is always warmly welcomed by the Métis people and he always looks forward to coming to Métis events. ∞



Photo by Peter Beninger

▲ Santa Claus (also known as MNO citizen Raymond Tremblay) stands in front of his new ‘sleigh’.

Santa Claus is coming to town!

submitted by | **Raymond Tremblay,**
MNO Citizen

This Christmas Season, our Santa Claus, also known as MNO citizen Raymond Tremblay, finally earned his driver's licence and had access to a brand new sleigh. Thanks to his fast and furious ‘Ferrari’ wheels, Santa was able to make many more children happy this year!

Starting on November 15, Santa made six consecutive weekend appearances at the Rideau Centre in Ottawa. Photographer, Peter Beninger, was available to take pictures of the children with Santa.

On December 3, Santa accompanied Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson at the Southway Lighting of the South End—an annual event sponsored by

the Southway Hotel and Conference Centre in Ottawa.

On December 10, Santa attended the annual Christmas party for the Aboriginal Professional Network of Ottawa at the Heart & Crown restaurant in the Byward Market.

On December 12, Santa was at a fundraising event for Training in Pictures Educational Services (TIPES) at the Timothy's World Coffee on Laurier. TIPES is a non-profit educational and therapeutic service that provides support to children, teens and young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders and related/additional exceptionalities.

On December 14, Santa met with students from QuickStart—an

early intervention program for people with autism. This event will be held at the Rideau Centre in Ottawa.

And finally, on December 21, Santa attended the Malayali Association of Ottawa Christmas party.

Throughout the season, Santa also made additional impromptu visits to various other families and groups to spread joy and the spirit of Christmas.

But as we all know, Santa made one of the most important visits of all on Christmas Eve, so we hope that you did not to leave him a couple of your favorite cookies and a small glass of milk!

Merry Christmas to one and to all! Joyeux Noël à tous! ∞

It's never too early to celebrate Christmas

submitted by | **Yvonne Jensen,**
MNO North Channel Métis Council President

On November 23, 2014, the MNO North Channel Métis Council (NCMC) kicked off the holiday festivities by sharing in an early Christmas dinner in Iron Bridge. The MNO NCMC would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year in 2015! ∞



▲ The MNO North Channel Métis Council members smile for an early Christmas picture. Back Row: (L-R) Councillor Reg Bennett, Women's Representative June Fogen, Senator Blair Sterling, and Chair Stan McHale. Front Row: (L-R) Secretary/Treasurer Jennifer Jensen, President Yvonne Jensen, and Youth Representative Taylor McNally.



COUNCIL CORNER

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) benefits immensely from the dedicated volunteers who are members of its Chartered Community Councils. These hard-working individuals spend hundreds of hours building and strengthening their Métis communities. MNO councils are the cornerstone of a strong foundation for the MNO in its push toward its inherent right to self-government. MNO Councils are important communication hubs who play a significant role in fostering community empowerment and development for Métis citizens living within the geographic territory of that council.

MNO Community Council election results

Congratulations to the MNO Grand River, Northwest, Credit River, Sunset Country, and Kenora Métis Councils on their recent elections. Here is a list of the new and returning elected officials and their appointments:

MNO Grand River Métis Council	MNO Northwest Métis Council	MNO Credit River Métis Council	MNO Sunset Country Métis Council	MNO Kenora Métis Council
President Jennifer Parkinson	President Debbie Etherington	President Richard Cuddy	President Clint Calder	President Joel Henley
Chair Barbra Lair	Chair Ron Robinson	Women's Representative Wendy Elliott	Chair Rosalyn Calder	Chair Cynthia Laliberte
Senator Carol Levis	Senator Al Roussin	Youth Representative Samantha Cuddy	Senator John George	Senator Karen Cederwall
Secretary/Treasurer Leslie-Anne Muma	Councillor Armand Cimon	Councillor Karen Derocher	Women's Representative Lesley Grienke	Secretary Nina Henley
Women's Representative Bridget Brown	Councillor William Aho	Councillor Dale Buisson	Youth Representative Sarah Marusyk	Treasurer Sandra Triskle
Councillor Paul Smith	Councillor Allen Mireault	Councillor Jean-Marc Maheu	Councillor Karen Chowhan	Councillor Jordan Benoit
Councillor Donald Crawford			Councillor Wendy Kabel	
			Councillor Wade Nelson	

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

Employee Announcement

WELCOME TO OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS AND
CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR STAFF IN NEW POSITIONS



Mary Jessop

Mary Jessop joins the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) as Director of Finance out of the MNO office in Ottawa. Mary has enjoyed a distinguished career in financial management and accounting with over 40 years' experience working in the private, non-profit, political and public accounting sectors.

Mary comes to the MNO from the Liberal Party of Canada where she had been Director of Finance. In this position, she improved financial policies and accounting processes for both the National Party and 308 riding associations.

Prior to the Liberal Party, Mary worked for Nortel Networks where she held a number of financial positions with increasing responsibilities. In her last role at Nortel, she was the Finance Manager responsible for the Global Services line of busi-

ness which had an annual budget of 1.5 billion dollars. She was also a key player for outsourcing Nortel's Information Technology, which was a one billion dollar project.

Some of Mary's other career highlights include working for a major accounting firm for two years in England and building a respected private accounting and management consulting practice.

Mary is a graduate of Carleton University in Ottawa and received her Chartered Accountant designation in 1978.

Mary is married and is the mother of three grown children. In discussing her family Mary shared that: "The fact that I have been married 41 years suggests I am a stubborn woman although not patient. I also have the scars to prove that I raised three teenagers."

Mary is looking forward to working for the MNO and commented: "I think that my professional skills and my passion for social justice will make my new post at the MNO another very exciting chapter in my life."

— submitted by Doug Wilson,
Chief Operating Officer



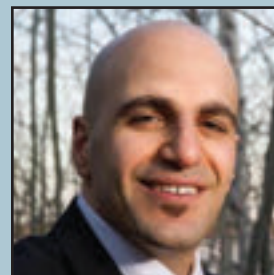
Brian Scime

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is pleased to announce that Brian Scime, who held the position of Human Resources (HR) Assistant, has moved to the Finance Branch in the position of Payroll Administrator. Brian continues to work out of the MNO office in Ottawa.

Prior to working at the MNO, Brian held an HR position at the Heritage Conservation Directorate. He also worked in HR contract positions in other federal government agencies and has done ongoing work with Value Village as a Halloween costume advisor; a job he excels in!

Brian holds a Master of Science degree in Psychology from McMaster University and a Certificate in Human Resource Management from Algonquin College in Ottawa.

— submitted by Mary Jessop,
Director of Finance



Shafic Khouri

Shafic Khouri joins the MNO as an Energy Resource Development Analyst in the MNO Lands, Resources and Consultations Branch out of the MNO Toronto office.

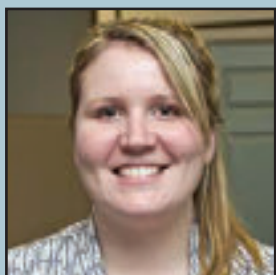
Shafic comes to the MNO with extensive and wide-ranging environment assessment (EA) and regulatory experience most recently gained through his work in the Northwest Territories as Project Assessment Analyst in the Department of Lands, Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. In this capacity, Shafic managed government intervention in the EA and regulatory review of large-scale industrial developments and oversaw, coordinated and provided advice to teams of biophysical and socio-economic experts and senior management

In his most recent position

with the GNWT, Shafic was responsible for developing government positions on EAs and the Crown's Duty to Consult Aboriginals, implementing environmental policies and procedures, creating technical and public reports and working with Aboriginal co-management boards.

Shafic graduated with a Masters in Political Science / Global Governance from the Faculty of Political Science at the University of Waterloo. He also has a First Class Honours Bachelor of Science degree in Biology with Distinction from Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

— submitted by Ali Alibhai,
Director of Lands, Resources & Consultations



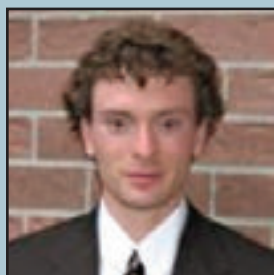
Jade Bourbonnière

We are pleased to welcome Jade Bourbonnière to the MNO in the position of Education and Training Branch Operations Coordinator. Jade will work out of the Ottawa MNO office. Jade self-identifies as Métis and joins the MNO after working at Carleton University as an Undergraduate Recruitment Officer, where she travelled across Ontario speaking about all aspects of the University to students, teachers, and parents.

Through this position and other previous experiences, Jade has developed strong organizational and administrative skills such as flexibility and time management. Jade has a strong passion for helping others succeed and achieve their life goals. During her third year in University, in her field practicum at the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre she assisted individuals in attaining their education and career goals while they served time inside the institution.

Jade graduated in April 2014 from Carleton University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Honours Criminology & Criminal Justice and Psychology.

— submitted by Jennifer St. Germain,
Director, Education & Training



Jesse Fieldwebster

The MNO is pleased to welcome Jesse Fieldwebster to its Midland office. Jesse joins the MNO in the position of Consultation Assessment Coordinator with the Lands, Resources and Consultation Branch.

Jesse comes to the MNO with ten years of interdisciplinary experience in the environmental field, which has included work with landowner outreach, environmental engineering and regulatory compliance. He previously worked for Magnetawan Watershed Land Trust where he consulted numerous landowners on a variety of disciplines, including environmental legislation. Jesse's career has focused on collaborative projects, including education programs and multi-institutional research groups. This involved coordinating between a number of different stakeholders for access to land, equipment and personnel.

Jesse holds a Master of Environmental Engineering degree from Griffith University, a Post Graduate Certificate in Environmental Engineering from Conestoga College as well as an Honours degree from the University of Guelph.

— submitted by Aly Alibhai,
Director of Lands, Resources & Consultations



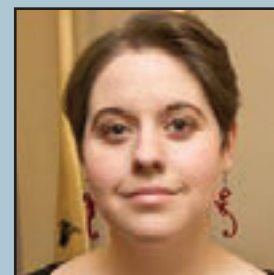
Sara Kelly

The MNO is pleased to announce that Sara Kelly, who held the position of Assistant Genealogist with the Registry Branch, has moved to the Communications Branch where she now holds the position of Communications Assistant. Sara continues to work out of the MNO office in Ottawa.

Prior to coming to the MNO, Sara, who is an MNO citizen, worked for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada where she served as a Web Communications Coordinator. She also held several other contract positions with the Federal government where she gained a strong background in communications and administrative work.

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

— submitted by Mike Fedyk,
Director of Communications



Julie Cruikshank

The MNO welcomes Julie Cruikshank as the new Communications Coordinator, working in the Communications Branch and based in the MNO Ottawa office.

Julie is a professional graphic designer and writer who comes to the MNO from *DailyXtra*, where she worked as a reporter. She has also worked as a freelance writer and designer, and has done communications work for the Music and Beyond Festival and the Chinatown Remixed Festival.

Julie holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick. She is looking forward to bringing her editorial and design skills to the MNO!

— submitted by Mike Fedyk,
Director of Communications

The MNO is pleased to welcome everyone to the team!

Métis Nation
of Ontario

COMMUNITY



Photo courtesy of the Ontario Native Women's Association

▲ Drummers at the October 4 vigil in Thunder Bay.

Remembering our missing sisters

Sisters in Spirit vigils honour missing and murdered aboriginal women

by | MNO Staff

October 4 is a day when we honour the lives of missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls and support families who have been tragically touched by the loss of a loved one to violence. The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) was an active participant in this movement for social change. On October 4, 2014, MNO offices all across Ontario helped organize Sisters in Spirit Vigils in honour of our sisters. These vigils of healing and hope were extremely popular with over 200 held nationwide and over 50 held in Ontario alone.



▲ Community members brave the rain in Bancroft.

Bancroft

The MNO Bancroft office, Maggie's Resource Centre, and the Tamarack Women's Centre worked in partnership to host the annual October 4 Sisters in Spirit vigil in Bancroft. The event opened with the prayer gifted from Senator Reta Gordon. The Strong Women song was then presented by Marsha Depotier, MNO Victim Services Coordinator.

Even with the rain, there were over 25 people in attendance for the vigil. Bernice Jenkins, Mayor of Bancroft, opened the vigil and addressed the need there is to support women living in violence and to help keep them from harm. Mayor Jenkins explained that there is also the need for men to go back to their original roles as protectors and providers for our families. Mayor Jenkins also spoke about the new community safety committee that is being developed

for Bancroft.

The next speaker was Heather Sararas from Maggie's Resource Centre who spoke about the need for a national inquiry into murdered and missing aboriginal women.

The final speaker was Bill Kilpatrick, Councillor for Dunganon Ward 2 and a coordinator for the John Howard Society. Kilpatrick spoke about his work with men and how there is the need for men to be able to show emotion and cry. Kilpatrick also spoke about how we need to heal our communities of past wounds and how we must continue to work in partnership in order to accomplish this task.

Depotier ended the vigil by giving each participant a balloon to release into the air to represent our lost women. Latex balloons are biodegradable as they are made of natural rubber. ∞



▲ MNO Victim Services Coordinator Marsha Depotier (left) is presented with a faceless doll by Heather Sararas from Maggie's Resource Centre at the vigil in Bancroft.



▲ Roses were laid in front of pictures of missing loved ones at the vigil in Brampton.

Brampton

In Brampton, the annual Sisters in Spirit vigil on October 4 was a collaborative event co-operatively organized by MNO staff in the Brampton office, the MNO Credit River Métis Council (CRMC), the Mississauga Halton and Central West Local Health Integration Networks, Family Services of Peel, the Peel Aboriginal Network, and the Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse. This was the third vigil to take place in Brampton, but the first time that the MNO staff and MNO CRMC have hosted the event with the Peel Aboriginal Network.

The vigil began with an opening prayer, drumming and a few words from Sharon McBride, PCMNO Vice-Chair, who served as the master of ceremonies. This was followed by a heart-felt prayer provided by MNO Senator Ray Bergie.

Many speakers attended the vigil to advocate for Aboriginal women and their struggles, including MPP Brampton-Springdale Harinder Malhi; Constable Carley Gervais, an MNO citizen; MPP Mississauga-Brampton South, Amrit Mandat; MP Mississauga-Streetsville, Brad Butt; and the Honourable David Zimmer, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

Others in attendance included Chief of Peel Police Jennifer Evans; Regional Councillor for the City of Brampton, John Sanders, and over 70 members of the Brampton, Mississauga, and Halton communities.

The missing or murdered Aboriginal women were honoured with traditional songs from Aqua and Talitha, the drumming of PAN, and fiddling from Alicia Blore. On display were 100 faceless dolls made by community volunteers to help bring attention to the need for a national public inquiry.

Life stories were read aloud, gifted by families who have a missing or murdered loved one. Some of these cases have been solved, while others remain a mystery. The families wanted to share the message that these missing women are still very much loved and that they want justice.

After each person spoke at the vigil, a single, red rose was placed beside a picture of each woman on the table. The roses represented love.

The vigil ended with final prayers, followed by members of the community lighting their candles and placing them with the victims' photos. ∞



▲ Participants at the Brampton Sisters in Spirit candlelight vigil hold up the Faceless Dolls blanket.



▲ MNO Head Office staff at the Ottawa vigil.

Ottawa

One of the largest Sisters in Spirit October 4 vigils took place in Ottawa on the steps of Parliament Hill. The vigil is traditionally hosted by the Native Women's Association of Canada.

This was the ninth Sisters in Spirit vigil in Ottawa and the strength and momentum gained at every vigil stands as proof that this annual event has become a movement for social change.

No other event in Canada brings so many Aboriginal communities and Canadian citizens together to celebrate, honour, and support Aboriginal women and girls.

Chief Gilbert Whiteduck opened the vigil by welcoming all participants to the Algonquin territory. Speeches were given by distinguished guests, including Liberal Leader, Justin Trudeau, and his wife, Sophie Grégoire; Liberal, Mem-

ber of Parliament (MP) Carolyn Bennett; and, New Democratic Party, MP, Paul Dewar.

Staff from the MNO Ottawa Head Office, including Jennifer Lord, Manager of Strategic Initiatives, and her two young daughters, and Sahra Maclean, MNO Education Officer, attended the vigil. They showed their solidarity by joining the nearly 150 people at Parliament Hill.

Leaders from the Assembly of First Nations and the Métis National Council rallied support for a national public inquiry and for the federal government to actively participant and address violence against Aboriginal women.

The vigil ended with organizers thanking all participants, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, for their support in this important cause. ∞

No other event in Canada brings so many Aboriginal communities and Canadian citizens together to celebrate, honour, and support Aboriginal women and girls.



▲ Olivia attends the Ottawa vigil.

Owen Sound

In Owen Sound on October 4. Roughly 120 people of all ages gathered together at the MNO Owen Sound office to honour the lives of the missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls across Canada. Eight other city organizations also helped sponsor the event.

The master of ceremonies was Jessica Rice, MNO Employment Developer. MNO Senator Roland St. Germain led a prayer of remembrance for the women and reminded everyone that these women are our mothers, daughters, sisters, aunties, and grandmothers.

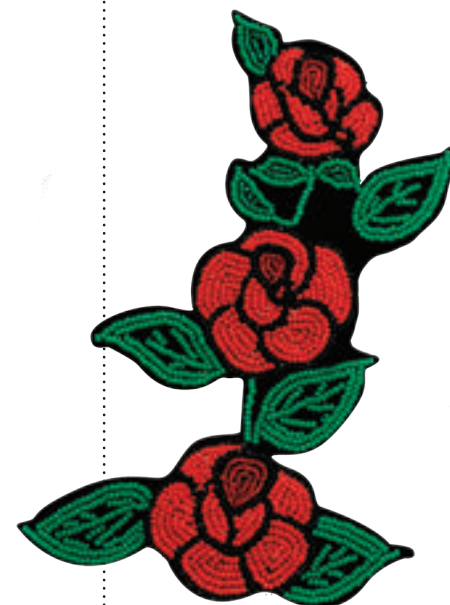
Participants enjoyed the sound of drumming and singing and viewed displays of the faceless doll projects and the Blanket of Love, Hope and Healing assembled for the families of Sisters in Spirit.

Guest speaker, Gladys Radek, co-founder of Tears4Justice, handed out images of women and girls to the crowd while sharing their stories of circumstance and the need for a national inquiry.

The Great Lakes Métis Council would like to thank everyone who helped make the event happen. Miigwech. ∞



▲ MNO Senator Roland St. Germain gives the opening prayer at the Owen Sound vigil.



Thunder Bay



▲ Valerie Stortini, MNO ASVCRI Coordinator, with the Métis Faceless Dolls display at the vigil in Thunder Bay.

The Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA) hosted the Sisters in Spirit vigil in Thunder Bay. Valerie Stortini, MNO Aboriginal Sexual Violence Community Response Initiative (ASVCRI) Coordinator, from the MNO Thunder Bay Office attended the vigil to demonstrate support and to display the Faceless Dolls blanket.

The ONWA vigil was held outdoors and involved participants forming a circle around a ceremonial fire. An opening prayer led to talking and sharing with Elders and participants in attendance. Several people shared their personal tragedy of having lost beloved family members to the void of the missing and murdered, including one woman who spoke of having lost three of her sisters this way.

This time of sharing was followed by a series of songs, drum-

ming and ceremonies. During one ceremony, participants chose one or two packets of tobacco with name tags of missing and murdered Aboriginal women. One after another, each participant entered the circle, approached the fire, and read the names on their tags. They then placed the packet into the fire, circled the fire, and then returned to their place.

The vigil continued with speakers, including ONWA's Executive Director, Erin Corston, who invited all participants inside for a feast of chili, salad and bannock. During the feast, the ASVCRI Coordinator set up the Faceless Dolls display and many staffers and vigil participants stopped by to look at the dolls and ask questions. The ASVCRI Coordinator handed out goods including MNO scarves and printed copies of a prayer read by Senator Reta Gordon at a previous MNO event. ∞

Windsor



▲ Amy Graf prepares to sing 'I Will Remember You' by Sarah McLachlan at the Windsor vigil.

Staff at the MNO Windsor office worked closely with the CanAm Indian Friendship Centre to make this year's vigil the most successful yet. The day before the vigil, MNO staff hosted a Faceless Dolls making workshop at the Friendship Centre, which were used as a display at the evening vigil.

This year's vigil was held at Dieppe Gardens. Over 65 people attended the event—making it the largest such event this community has had to date. Distinguished guests included MPP Windsor-Tecumseh Percy Hatfield and MPP Windsor West Lisa Gretzky.

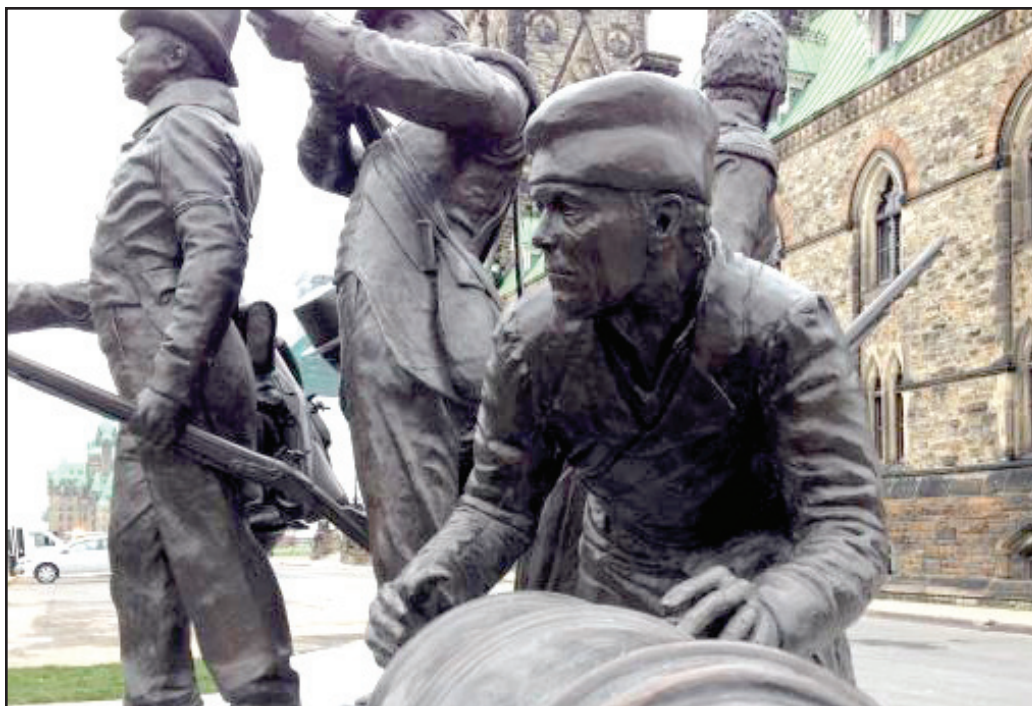
Before the vigil, MNO staff handed out MNO posters entitled Honouring Métis Women is Part

of Our Culture, and tea lights, which were put inside plastic wine glasses that had MNO stickers on them.

Staff from the MNO Windsor office began the vigil with A Prayer for our Sisters gifted by Senator Reta Gordon. Amy Graf, self-identified Métis community member, sang a beautiful rendition of *I Will Remember You* by Sarah McLachlan and then shared a personal story. Another young woman talked about her own life and the gratitude she has for not becoming one of the many victims.

The event closed with the captivating music of the Women's Hand Drum singers. ∞

Métis featured in new monument



▲ A Métis fighter firing a cannon is depicted in the new War of 1812 Monument on Parliament Hill in Ottawa

'Trial Through Diversity' memorializes War of 1812

by | Emily Chan

Reprinted from CTVNews.ca

On November 6, 2014, a new monument was unveiled on Parliament Hill, inspired by the War of 1812 more than 200 years after its last battle on Canadian soil.

The monument, designed by Toronto artist Adrienne Alison, is called "Trial through Diversity." It features seven bronze figures representing the people who fought for Canada during the war.

The figures include a Métis fighter, a Canadian militiaman, a member of the British Army and a woman bandaging a fighters' arm. All of the characters stand in a circle, facing outwards.

The figures stand on top of a rough granite base, which is meant to symbolize the "ruggedness" of the land in the 1800s. There are also two granite pieces on either side of the monument shaped like pieces of a boat. These are meant to represent naval warfare during the War of 1812. One of the figures, a Royal Navy sailor pulls a rope attached to the boat's base.

The texture and shape of the base are also meant to remind viewers of the rough cliff on which Parliament stands and the arches of the Parliament buildings.

The minister of Canadian heritage and official languages, Shelly Glover, unveiled the new monument Thursday morning to mark the 200th anniversary of

This new landmark on Parliament Hill will forever remind us of the courage and bravery of those who served."

- Shelly Glover, Minister of Canadian Heritage

the Battle of Malcolm's Mills.

"This new landmark on Parliament Hill will forever remind us of the courage and bravery of those who served and successfully defended their land in the fight for Canada more than 200 years ago," the minister said in a press release.

By lunchtime Thursday, the monument had drawn tourists and Ottawans on their lunch breaks to the Hill.

The monument "makes history come alive," Ottawa-based technical writer Don Douglas

said. "It's really well put together."

Janny Salis, a tourist from the Netherlands, said the statue is part of Canada's internationally recognized war history. In the Netherlands, she said, Canada is widely known for its role in the Second World War.

"It made a big impression," Salis said of the monument. "We must every year remember the wars."

The War of 1812 began in June 1812, when Canada was not yet its own independent country. During that time, American forces invaded what is now Canada in their fight against Great Britain.

Militia from Upper and Lower Canada joined Métis, Aboriginal, and British forces to fight back the invasion. The war officially ended when the Treaty of Ghent was ratified in 1815.

The government's commemorative website for the War of 1812 says Canada would not exist without the victories in the war. But the government was criticized in 2012 for dedicating \$28 million for the campaign to commemorate the war featuring festivals, re-enactments of historic battles, and commemorative coins and stamps. ∞

Many thanks to Father Dan and St. Dominic Parish

submitted by | Ken Simard,

MNO Region 2 Captain of the Hunt

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) would like to thank Fr. Dan Lapolla and St. Dominic Parish for their generous donation of school supplies. Ken Simard, MNO Region 2 Cap-

tain of the Hunt, and Métis citizens have passed on these wonderful gifts to Métis and First Nation children in the Thunder Bay region, including First Nation schools in the Greenstone area. ∞

Educating our youth

Students learn about the Métis way of life



▲ Students at the Peel District School Board in Mississauga participate in one of the workstations on Métis history and culture offered at their school.

submitted by | **Rochelle Ethier,**
MNO Credit River Metis Council

On October 29, 2014, MNO Credit River Métis Council (CRMC) visited Grade 3 students at the Peel District School Board in Mississauga to share Métis history and culture. The day began with MNO CRMC member Rochelle Ethier leading a discussion on what it means to be Métis, who Métis people are, and explaining the traditions of the Métis way of life. Students then rotated between four different workstations for a more interactive hands-on approach to Métis culture. The first workstation focused on Métis traditional music and included instruments such as the fiddle, wooden spoons and the Métis cultural dance—the jig! Jim Tolles, MNO CRMC Traditional Knowledge and Resource, led the second workstation, which involved a Métis cultural display of tools, furs, and various hides. Tolles also brought with him fire starting kits, which the students got to try out for themselves. The third workstation led by Sam Cuddy, MNO CRMC Youth Representative, involved teaching

the students how to finger weave bracelets. The final workstation, led by Rochelle Ethier, involved a discussion of topics such as: the meaning of the Métis flag; the traditional uses of the Métis sash; the purpose of hunting and trapping; and, the many roles of fire including warmth, lighting and cooking. Students also got an opportunity to touch and feel a real deer hide. All of the preparation and planning that went into this presentation resulted in it being a huge success. “Thanks again from all of the staff and students for a wonderful presentation,” said Grade 3 teacher Karen Palmer. “The kids really enjoyed the variety of hands-on activities available for them to learn about the Métis culture.” This presentation would not have been possible without the generosity of the MNO CRMC who donated: MNO coloring books, which tell the story of the Métis people; wooden spoons; and, embroidery thread for all 90 students to the complete finger weave bracelet. ∞

Métis youth fights stereotypes

‘Take a pause and think about who you’re talking to, and how you’re going to reach them.’



▲ Lucy Fowler in Métis traditional garb at Fort William for MNO culture training.

by | **Jody Porter**
Reprinted from CBC.ca

Lucy Fowler takes different approaches to combat stereotypes about her Métis heritage among the children and seniors she engages in her work. This summer, the 26-year-old worked for the Métis Nation of Ontario’s (MNO) summer youth cultural program, going out to schools, festivals and retirement homes to “speak to people about who Métis people are, what we look like, that we’re still around, that it’s not just a fictional, historical kind of presence.” Fowler said younger children aren’t shy about “spouting stereotypes” about Aboriginal people. “It can be difficult, but you just have to take a pause and think about who you’re talking

to and how you’re going to reach them,” Fowler said. “And try to

“It’s not really conducive to changing someone’s opinion if you jump down their throat and yell at them.”
- Lucy Fowler

keep your own feelings out of it, because it’s not really conducive to changing someone’s opinion if you jump down their throat and yell at them.” “Especially the little guys, they’re just saying what they

heard at home.” Fowler said kids are usually most receptive to learning through play and cultural activities, but the seniors she talks to often change their views after being presented with facts and legal decisions about Métis identity and rights. “A lot of the things [seniors] find acceptable to say or things that they’ve known through their lives are things that we don’t accept now as being true,” she said. “And then they’re a lot more set in those opinions...so that takes a lot more patience.” Fowler said it’s “really rewarding” to see her work is helping change people’s opinions, something she hopes will spread throughout the city. ∞



▲ Scott Berry (left), Manager of Public Affairs with Nuclear Waste Management, and Pauline Richardson, PCMNO Region 7 Councillor, during the Region 7 Meeting.

MNO Region 7 holds first annual meeting

submitted by | **Pauline Richardson,**
PCMNO Regional Councillor for Region 7

On October 4, the first Annual Regional Meeting for Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Region 7 was held in Collingwood, Ontario. Council members from the MNO Moon River, Georgian Bay and Great Lakes Métis Councils came together to discuss the business of the region. Sponsored through the Memorandum of Understanding with Ontario Power Generation (OPG), the meeting was a success in building a strong bond and collaborative efforts to work together as a region.

The annual meeting featured New Relationship Fund training and an OPG presentation on the Deep Geologic Repository Project by Scott Berry, Manager, Site Public Affairs Corporate Relations and Communications Nuclear Issues / Nuclear Waste Management / First Nations and Métis Relations. Council members also attended workshops to assist them in developing community goals and a communications plan. ∞

Remembrance Day in the Capital

Métis veteran joins Senator Reta Gordon for Ottawa wreath laying ceremonies

by | MNO Staff

Every year on November 11, Métis from across the homeland participate in Remembrance Day ceremonies. Being a part of these ceremonies is very important to Métis because we have contributed to the defense of Canada as far back as the War of 1812 as well as in both World Wars, the Korean Conflict, peacekeeping missions and most recently, in Afghanistan. Over the years, many Métis have served and many have made the ultimate sacrifice. By making the Métis presence felt at Remembrance Day services, we show our respect for all Veterans and we remind all Canadians of Métis service and sacrifices.

Since 2004, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) has laid a wreath at the National War Memorial in Ottawa during National Remembrance Day ceremonies. In most years, the wreath has been laid by MNO Executive Senator Reta Gordon and a Métis veteran. This important gesture on behalf of all MNO citizens is performed in good weather and bad because it is important to recognize our many Métis Veterans who gave and continue to give so much in securing and sustaining the rights and freedoms that we all enjoy. Recent tragic events including those at the National War Memorial itself, re-

minded all of us that members of our Armed Forces put themselves in harm's way every day to protect the lives and liberties of their fellow Canadians.

This year Senator Gordon was joined for the first time by Métis Veteran Rene Roland Joseph Leonard. Veteran Leonard was born in 1929 in St. Boniface, Manitoba. A descendent of Louis Riel, Veteran Leonard was always aware of his Métis identity and joined the MNO in 1993—the year the MNO was founded. Veteran Leonard served in the Royal Canadian Engineers from 1951 to 1980, including tours in both Cyprus and Germany. On November 5, 2014, he was presented with both the Louis Riel Medal and the Batoche Medal from the MNO Veterans Council.

Veteran Leonard's daughter, Catherine Vieau, says her father never imagined that he would be asked to honour his ancestors and brothers and sisters, both past and present, by representing the MNO at the National War Memorial. He considers it a privilege and was at a loss of words to express what it meant to him.

Following protocol on November 11, Veteran Leonard presented the MNO wreath to Senator Gordon, who then laid the wreath on the Memorial. Senator Gordon's



▲ Senator Reta Gordon and MNO Veteran Rene Leonard at the National War Memorial in Ottawa.

father and her nine uncles all participated in World War II. Then later in the 1950s, her four brothers also served in the military including MNO Senator George Kelly, who passed away in 2013. "It is good to let everyone know the Métis are here and that we support Remembrance Day," explained Senator Gordon.

Senator Gordon and Veteran Leonard also participated in a ceremony at the National Aboriginal Veterans Monument prior to the National Remembrance Day ceremony. The National Aboriginal Veterans Monument is located a short distance away from the National Cenotaph and is an important symbol of the contributions

of Métis and other Aboriginal veterans to Canada. MNO citizens, like Senator Gordon and Veteran Leonard, who participate in Remembrance Day events are continuing to keep an important tradition vital and alive. ∞

MNO Councils participate in Remembrance Day



▲ Yvonne Jensen (left), North Channel Métis Council President, and Senator Blair Sterling attend the cenotaph in Blind River.



▲ MNO Citizens Rick Meilleur (left) and Gail Charbonneau lay down a wreath on behalf of all MNO Veterans.



▲ Participants of the MNO Ottawa Region Métis Council Powley Day event at the University of Ottawa.

Powley Day in Ottawa

submitted by | A.G. Gauthier

This Powley Day, September 19, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Ottawa Region Métis Council and other members of the Métis community gathered to acknowledge Steve Powley, a leader among Ontario's Métis people.

Powley Day commemorates Steve Powley, a Métis hunter from the Sault Ste. Marie area, who in 1993 was charged for hunting without a license. The charges led to court battles for the right to harvest and eventually saw its way through to the Supreme Court of Canada, where it was affirmed that Métis

people indeed have the right to harvest foods in a means that is traditional to that of their ancestors. This decision is a significant milestone for Métis in Ontario and Canada.

Held at the University of Ottawa, the evening's celebrations included a heartfelt lecture from the MNO founding president and recent recipient of the Order of Canada, Tony Belcourt. Belcourt spoke to those gathered about the struggles encountered during the Powley case such as the lack of understanding of Métis culture and denial of the existence of Métis people in On-

tario, as well as the continued efforts that are needed to ensure that Métis harvesting rights are upheld in Ontario.

Among other guests were MNO Executive Senator Reta Gordon and Senator Lois McCallum.

Continuing on in the celebration was a light buffet style feast as well as a demonstration and lesson of Métis jigging by University of Ottawa graduate student Brad La Fortune.

The event was a great success and enjoyed by all. ∞



▲ The installation is displayed on the floor of the Thunder Bay Art Gallery.

Walking with our Sisters Exhibit in Thunder Bay

submitted by | **Valerie Stortini**,
ASVCRI Coordinator

As part of a 31-city North American tour over a six year period, the Walking with our Sisters (WWOS) exhibit stopped in Thunder Bay from September 19 to October 12, 2014. The exhibit was displayed at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery. The opening of the exhibit was a huge success attended by over 200 people and local media.

The WWOS is a commemorative installation of over 1,700 moccasin vamps that each symbolize a missing or murdered Aboriginal woman in Canada. The vamps were created and donated by over 1,300 people across the country. In concept and execution, WWOS was originated by Métis artist and MNO citizen, Christi Belcourt. This initiative focuses on sexual violence and how services can be improved in the area to meet the needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit women.

The tremendous amount of commitment and effort put into this event was most evident with the transformation of the room into a moving and colourful display. The exhibit room's floor was covered in red cloth, which held a turtle design and covered cedar branches. Traditional cedar was

also evident throughout. However, the power and energy of the exhibit was from the vast array of vamps on display. While designs varied from simple and straightforward to being much more complex, all of the vamps were made with the same spirit of hope and community. The atmosphere of the display area was one of power and hope.

The WWOS exhibit is not government funded and therefore relies on a host of volunteers required at each stop of the tour and in between. Volunteer opportunities range from helping with set-up and take-down to being involved on the organizing committees.

The WWOS exhibit in Thunder Bay would not have been such a success without the support of many different groups and individuals. The local WWOS organizing committee dedicated months of their time, love and effort into the planning of this major event. Throughout the planning process, they received input from Elders, local citizens and people from the national WWOS group as well as Christi Belcourt.

When it was announced that the exhibit would be coming to

Thunder Bay, the MNO Thunder Bay Community Office staff were eager to offer their support and time to the event. MNO Community Wellness Coordinator Joan Panizza was part of the WWOS Thunder Bay Planning Committee and was one of the many community members in particular that made this event such a success. In addition, many volunteers from all across Canada put in a lot of their time to create this truly beautiful and moving exhibit.

As a thank you to all of the volunteers who made the WWOS exhibit possible, the MNO's Aboriginal Sexual Violence Community Response Initiative (ASVCRI) contributed a luncheon during the set-up for all volunteers. Valerie Stortini, ASVCRI Coordinator, attended the luncheon and was also able to discuss her program with many of the volunteers.

The *Métis Voyageur* will continue to cover the WWOS exhibit. The exhibit will next be in an Ontario location from September 25 to October 16, 2015 when it comes to Ottawa. MNO Ottawa staff are committed to offering their time and support to this moving exhibit. ∞

Reconnecting youth with Métis traditions and culture through art

submitted by | **Susan Schank**,
Office Coordinator for the MNO Great Lakes Métis Council

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Great Lakes Métis Council (GLMC) has recently launched a new initiative to reconnect youth with their Métis traditions and culture—the Youth Art Program.

The Youth Art Program is designed to develop artistic talent and creativity and develop understanding and awareness of Aboriginal culture and tradition by providing theoretical knowledge as well as historical and cultural context of the subject being studied. It allows students to apply and develop the skills being taught through a variety of styles and subject matters and makes sure the student not only understands the work, but that they are connecting with their work and enjoying what they are doing.

The MNO GLMC arts program has four programs which follow the medicine wheel: four harvesting cycles, four stages of

life, four elements of life and four directions. Each program has three courses with roughly one course per month. Each course is structured to ensure the students grow and develop throughout the program.

The goal of the program is to reconnect youth with Métis traditions and culture through art. Each course will be taught by experienced teachers teaching contemplative arts—a way of being with spiritual tradition and way of life—and wisdom teachings with a goal of strengthening the student's leadership, respect, and discipline skills.

Each program starts the first month of that season: March 21, June 21, September 21 and December 21. Youth are from several communities including Grey, Bruce and the north end of Wellington counties.

Thank you to Bruce Power for their support. ∞



▲ A Métis youth takes part in the MNO Great Lakes Métis Council's Youth Art Program.



▲ Métis students and resource people who took part in the Infinite Reach Student Solidarity Network Facilitator orientation session. Back row (L-R): Jesse Donovan, Simon Bain, Gabriel Picard, Mitchell Huguenin, Lucy Fowler, Paul Robitaille, Melissa St Amant, Meghan Caveen, Sheila Grantham. Middle row (L-R): Mady Arkle, Senator St Germain, Elise St. Germain, Melissa Webster, Kailynn Wilson, Jordyn Playne, Alicia Bloor, Andrea Jibb, Katelyn LaCroix. Front row (L-R): Joanna Burt, Warren Cardinal McTeague, Sahra MacLean, Celeste Larocque, Heather Van Wyck, Helen Tracey, Marie-Louise Larivière, Wanda Botsford, Joseph Paquette.

Reaching out to Métis Students

by | MNO Staff

This October, Métis students from across Ontario gathered for the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Infinite Reach Student Solidarity Network Facilitator orientation session held in Waterloo, Ontario.

New and returning MNO Infinite Reach Facilitators (IRF) from 19 post-secondary institutions were given a two-day orientation session to familiarize themselves with the MNO, the Infinite Reach Student Solidarity Network, and to prepare for the upcoming year.

As part of the orientation, students were given tours of both Wilfred Laurier University and the University of Waterloo. IRF's from each institution gave a guided tour and shared the different ser-

vices provided to students on those campuses. The IRF's were welcomed and hosted by Aboriginal Support Staff Andre Moreau from the University of Waterloo and Melissa Ireland from Laurier University. The meeting was also attended and supported by the MNO Veterans' Council President Joseph Paquette and MNO Senators Roland St. Germain and Carol Levis.

This year's orientation included a presentation on the MNO Healing and Wellness Community Engagement toolkit, which supports community members in discussing the important issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls. The IRF's held a Faceless Dolls workshop and were joined by the Laurier Univer-

sity Change Project, which addresses issues of gender based violence on campus.

On the Saturday evening, cultural activities and a dinner were enjoyed by all. Some of the facilitators in attendance had participated in the MNO Summer Youth Cultural Program this past summer and shared their finger weaving knowledge as well as their overall experience of the program. This gathering was a great opportunity for new facilitators to meet and talk with senior facilitators and MNO Senators.

The MNO is very proud of our IRF's who volunteer their time to support the Métis community in their post-secondary institutions. ∞



▲ MNO Credit River Métis Council President Richard Cuddy (left) and Neil Switzer, Project Manager, Planning & Infrastructure Conservation Lands Services in front of the Deer Clan Longhouse.

Deer Clan Longhouse grand opening

submitted by **Richard Cuddy**,
MNO Credit River Métis Council President
Rochelle Ethier
MNO Great Lakes Métis Council

On September 14, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Credit River Métis Council President Richard Cuddy was invited to Crawford Lake Conservation area to celebrate the grand opening of the Deer Clan Longhouse.

A brief ceremony was held followed by a viewing of the premiere exhibit Exchange and Changes: Comprehensive Narratives by artists Alexandre Nahdee and Reagan Kennedy.

Sounds of music and dance filled the Iroquois Village throughout the rest of the day. This included performances by flutist and composer Barbara Croall; White Pine Dancers (Gonrah Desgowah); and The Six Nations Young Women's

Singers to sing the traditional Haudenosaunee.

Tastings of traditional foods were served by Chef Janace Henry, and followed up with Kevin Sandy from Iroquois Lacrosse to help the guests try out this exciting sport!

The day would not have been complete without Chief Top Leaf who welcomed all to "look, listen, and learn" and shared the traditional wisdom of the Haudenosaunee people through props and storytelling. With the addition of kids' crafts, a lakeside visit from the Mountsberg Raptor Centre, and a fire starting demonstrations, it was a full day of celebration. ∞

Fall Harvest Gathering in Thunder Bay



▲ MNO Senator Bob McKay leads an information session on commercial fishing at the Fall Harvest Gathering in Thunder Bay.

by | MNO Staff

The Eighth Annual Fall Harvest Gathering took place from September 23-25 in Thunder Bay and had over 800 visitors in attendance. The annual event, organized by Community Coalition Unified for the Protection of Children and Youth (CCUPCY), brings together First Nation and Métis knowledge holders whom share traditional lifestyle practises with their respective communities.

Every Fall Harvest Gathering includes hands-on, interactive work stations that are steeped in traditional knowledge. At this year's gathering, visitors learned about a variety of traditional Aboriginal practices, such as: wild rice preparation; hide prepara-

tion of wild game; information on traditional plants and medicines; corn soup, bannock, and jam making; moccasin sewing; various birch bark crafts; fish processing; drumming; snowshoe stories; jigging; and, commercial fishing practises.

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Senator Bob McKay shared in his traditional knowledge by leading a workshop on commercial fishing. MNO Senator McKay has been a part of these gatherings in Thunder Bay and Fort Frances since their inception.

MNO Community Wellness Coordinator Joan Panizza has also been a part of these gatherings for the past three years and

has provided games and jigging entertainment. This year, Joan brought along MNO Cultural Students, Lucy Fowler and Amy Slemko, to help facilitate the jigging station.

"It was an honour to be with Senator McKay and to listen to his many stories, which were delivered with the same energy and sense of fun from the first group to the last," Panizza said. "As many know, Senator McKay comes from a fishing family and has been fishing the north shore of Lake Superior for most of his life. His collection of nets, corks, and lines paired with his vibrant stories, held the fascination and intrigue of the students, parents and teachers." ∞

And the winners are...

by | MNO Staff

As part of the Métis Nation of Ontario's (MNO) work in developing an Aboriginal Children and Youth Strategy, the MNO conducted Métis Youth Engagement Sessions in 19 communities across the province from June to August 2014. These sessions were a huge success and attracted over 100 Métis youth participants. The sessions were an opportunity for Métis youth to

tell the MNO about their goals, aspirations and experiences with the aim to improve opportunities for them in the future.

At each session, participants could enter a draw for a chance to win one of three Dell tablets. We are happy to announce that the winners are: Emma Harrison (Allenford, Ontario), Gabriel Picard (Shuniah, Ontario) and Christina Hannah (Windsor, On-

tario). Congratulations! We hope you enjoy your new Dell tablets!

As the MNO strives to develop a strategy with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, the MNO is committed to making sure that its work on youth policy and programs represent the real needs and interests of Métis youth. We thank everyone for their active participation and insightful feedback. ∞



▲ Participants of the MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council Traditional Knowledge and craft weekend hold their handmade dream catchers.

Métis youth craft weekend

submitted by **Greg Garratt**,
MNO Region 7 Captain of the Hunt

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Georgian Bay Métis Council recently hosted a Traditional Knowledge and craft weekend for the Métis youth.

Organized by MNO Region 7 Captain of the Hunt Greg Garratt, youth ages 10-29 spent the weekend making a set of handmade moccasins, bone necklaces and dream-catchers. The weekend allowed these youth to experience a

part of their culture and connect to their roots. Along with the crafts, the youth were told anecdotal Aboriginal stories and participated, for many a first time, in a smudging ceremony.

Many elders and volunteers, including Ken Fraser, came and went over the weekend participating with the youth. Also in attendance was the Council Youth Representative Danielle Secord.

The moccasin instructors were very patient and helpful. Many thanks to Chris and Melissa Walser from Little Wolf Creations. Thanks also to Colleen Moreau for providing cedar tea and Heather and staff from Gidley's Galley Restaurant for providing meals and refreshments. The Council would also like to thank Bruce Power for sponsoring the event. ∞

Métis student demonstrates leadership at Toronto We Day

by | Paul de la Riva
Edited from an original story that appeared at theSudburyStar.com
Submitted by Huguette Trottier-Frappier



▲ Mélanie-Rose Frappier

Métis youth Mélanie-Rose Frappier, a grade 12 student at Sudbury's *École secondaire du Sacré-Cœur*, was one of the young leaders invited to share their passion and leadership at We Day in Toronto. During this national event that mobilized thousands of youths from across Canada at the Air Canada Centre on October 2, Mélanie participated in an Aboriginal Panel where she shared her pride in her Métis heritage.

We Day is a move-

ment that empowers a generation of young citizens to change the world and become socially responsible. The movement provides tools and skills to youngsters, helping to turn the inspiration of one day into sustained action. It brings the biggest and brightest philanthropic minds of our time together with some of the most important cultural influencers to inspire kids to change the world and their communities around them. We Day is a free event, for which tickets cannot be bought. Stu-

dents and their schools must earn their way into We Day through a year-long commitment to local and global actions.

Mélanie-Rose already has an impressive portfolio. Last year, she received the prestigious Canada's Top 20 Under 20 Award, which recognizes the exceptional leadership, innovation and achievements of 20 young people under the age of 20 from across the country.

Further, she is a recipient of the National Aboriginal Youth Achievement Award and the

Gathering Our Voices Aboriginal Youth Award both of which recognized her outstanding leadership qualities and her dedication to improving her community.

Mélanie-Rose's community involvement includes countless volunteer hours and youth leadership roles in a number of organizations. She has also been a participant of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Infinite Reach March Break Camp two years in a row. ∞

Heritage Discovery Centre opens



Photo by Christine Viens

▲ MNO Senator Brenda Powley speaking at the grand opening of the Heritage Discovery Centre at the Ermatinger Clergue National Historic Site on July 17.

by | MNO Staff

On July 17 2014, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Senator Brenda Powley spoke at the official grand opening of the \$4 million Heritage Discovery Centre at the Ermatinger Clergue National Historic Site, a new facility dedicated to showcasing Sault Ste. Marie's history and the role of the city's early founders in the War of 1812.

There was a strong Métis pres-

ence at the opening, including the MNO Canoe Expedition and MNO Summer Youth Cultural Program participants. A Métis sash was even used to symbolize the opening of the Centre's doors.

The new Heritage Discovery Centre features an exhibition gallery, a War of 1812 gallery, a multimedia theatre, expanded gift shop, and administrative spaces. The centre will provide students, local residents and visitors to the

city with additional opportunities to learn about Sault Ste. Marie's history through innovative, interactive demonstrations and programming.

The opening coincides with the 200th anniversary of completion of construction of the Old Stone House and the concluding year of the city's three-year bicentennial commemoration of the War of 1812. ∞



▲ Thanksgiving meals being prepared for delivery by MNO staff.

Midland Autumn Community Kitchen

by | MNO Staff

On October 8, 2014, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Community Wellness Coordinators from the Midland office, Tracy Bald and Kaitlyn Ouimette, prepared a Thanksgiving meal as part of their Autumn Community Kitchen event.

Meals were giving to our elderly and isolated clients who may have gone without a holiday meal this year. The meal included roasted turkey, stuffing, gravy, mashed potatoes, turnip, roasted butternut soup and some sweet

treats. Twenty four meals were given out.

Some of the feedback received included; "Thank you so much for thinking of me", "I no longer have family around to celebrate the holidays with. This was such a nice treat, thank you." And "I would like to say it was good and we enjoyed it."

Special thank you to Lorraine Mountney for assisting with preparing the meal and all the MNO Midland staff who were dedicated to quality control. ∞



▲ Katelene Stenlund plays fiddle during the MNO Community Information Session in Fort Francis.

MNO Fort Frances Information Session

by | MNO Staff

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) held a Community Information Session in Fort Frances on September 20, 2014 for citizens from across the region.

Métis lawyer Jason Madden provided updates on three major consultation projects in the region: New Gold Rainy River Project, Hammond Reef Project and Phoenix Project.

MNO Associate Director of Education and Way of Life, Brian Tucker provided a presentation on the New Gold Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Study.

The evening also featured a dinner with entertainment by MNO Regional Councillor for Region One, Theresa Stenlund's daughter Katelene who played a song on the fiddle. ∞

Métis Voyageur Games featured on Warrior Games

During the 2012 Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Annual General Assembly (AGA), a film crew from Aboriginal Peoples Television Network's (APTN) program Warrior Games covered the Métis Voyageur Games—a long established tradition at AGAs—to fea-

ture in an episode of the program.

The Warrior Games episode on the Voyageur Games was recently aired on APTN and made for an exciting and fun segment! The entire program can be viewed at aptn.ca.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Veterans Council President honoured

Joseph Paquette receives commendation from Minister of Veterans Affairs

by | MNO Staff
With files from veterans.gc.ca

The Métis Nation of Ontario is proud to announce that MNO Veterans Council President, Joseph Paquette, has received the prestigious Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation.

Since serving in uniform, many of Canada's Veterans continue to provide outstanding service to their country, their communities and their fellow Veterans. To formally recognize the contributions of these outstanding Canadians, the Governor General authorized the creation of the Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation.

The Commendation is awarded annually to individuals who have contributed in an exemplary manner to the care and well-being of Veterans or to the remembrance of the contributions, sacrifices and achievements of Veterans.

Mr. Paquette served with the Lincoln and Welland Regiment and the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada. From 2008 to 2010, he was a Councilor/Veteran with the Credit River Métis Council, striving to establish good relations with local heritage organizations and Aboriginal Veterans associations.

In 2009, Mr. Paquette became the secretary of the Métis Nation

of Ontario Veterans Council (MNOVC) and was instrumental in maintaining and updating the Veterans' registry, the Métis Veterans' Wreath and the Veterans' Community Charter.

In 2011, he created the MNOVC's website and currently serves as President. He also represented the Métis Nation of Ontario and the Métis National Council at a ceremony in Fort York, commemorating the War of 1812.

In October 2012, Mr. Paquette participated in a ceremony at Rideau Hall to recognize the contributions and participation of Aboriginal and Métis peoples during the War of 1812.

A member of the Aboriginal Veterans Autochtones, Mr. Paquette also continues to actively promote his Métis heritage and the contributions of his fellow Métis Veterans by participating in local, provincial and national commemorative events.

Mr. Paquette was awarded the Queens Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012 and the Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Award for Lifetime Achievement in 2014.

Congratulations to Mr. Paquette on all of his accomplishments. ∞



▲ The Honourable Julian Fantino, Minister of Veterans Affairs, presents the Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation to MNO Veterans Council President Joseph Paquette.

Timmins Council honours veterans

Citizens receive Louis Riel Veterans Medals

submitted by | Alain Lefebvre,
MNO Timmins Métis Council President

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Timmins Métis Council was proud to host a Veterans Ceremony for MNO citizens Robert Barrette, Vice President of the MNO Timmins Métis Council, and Dave Lalonde, Board Member of the MNO Timmins Métis Council. On September 10, 2014, both Barrette and Lalonde received the Louis Riel Veterans Medal and Certificate from the MNO Veterans' Council.

Surrounded by friends and family, Barrette, Unit 5e Régiment du génie de combat (5RGC), and Lalonde, 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI) were recognized, as veterans under the charter agreement of the MNO Veteran's

Council, for meritorious service in Canada's Armed Forces which included each completing a six month NATO tour of Yugoslavia in the late 1990's respectively.

On hand to present awards were MNO Chair France Picotte, with help from Jean Carrière, Director of Emergency Medical Services for Timmins and area.

On behalf of the Timmins City Council, Timmins City Councillor Mike Doody also attended to give a few words and congratulations.

The MNO Timmins Métis Council, MNO Veterans' Council and MNO citizens in the Timmins and surrounding area congratulate you on your dedication to the security of our country. ∞

The MNO Timmins Métis Council . . . congratulates you on your dedication to the security of our country.

- Alain Lefebvre



▲ (Left to right:) Mike Doody, Jean Carrière, MNO Chair France Picotte, h Dave Lalonde and Robert Barrette. Lalonde and Barette both received the Louis Riel Veterans Medal and Certificate.

Métis youth graduates with multiple honours

Chantel Pilon demonstrates academic and athletic excellence



▲ Chantel Pilon was recently honoured as an Athlete Inductee during a special presentation at the Quinte West YMCA.

submitted by | Robin Pilon

MNO citizen, Chantel Pilon, recently graduated from the University of Waterloo with a Bachelor of Arts Degree, Honours Recreation and Business–Co-operative Program. Chantel graduated on the Dean's Honour List, the President's Athlete Academic Honour Roll and the CIS Academic All-Canadian list.

Chantel is currently working on her Master's Degree in Recreation and Leisure at the University of Waterloo (UWaterloo) while also coaching the Waterloo Warrior's Track and Field Team.

Chantel was also recently inducted into the Quinte West Sports Wall of Fame for her athletic achievements. Chantel broke the women's pentathlon record three times, the record for women's 4 x 400m relay, won the gold medal in the pentathlon at the Ontario University Athletics (OUA)

Track and Field Championship at York University in Toronto and was named an OUA First Team All-Star. The gold won at OUA's was UWaterloo's first gold in track and field since 2003.

She also competed in the Canadian Interuniversity Sport Track and Field Championships in Edmonton with an overall fifth place finish in the women's pentathlon.

Chantel was captain of the Warriors team for three of her five years at Waterloo while at the same time studying Recreation and Business and working as a co-op student. She is also a three time UWaterloo Warrior MVP, a two time UWaterloo President's Athlete Academic Honour Roll recipient and a two time Academic All-Canadian.

Aside from her impressive athletic and academic success, Chantel also actively volunteers in the community for several

organizations.

Her proud parents, Jacques and Robin Pilon of Trenton, Ontario, sister Madelyn and the whole family would like to congratulate Chantel on her accomplishments and wish her all the best in her future endeavours. ∞



▲ Chantel Pilon graduated from the University of Waterloo, and was placed on the Dean's Honour List.



▲ Senator Reta Gordon (left) and MNO Founding President Tony Belcourt.

Gift of culture

submitted by | Reta Gordon,
MNO Executive Senator

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Executive Senator Reta Gordon recently presented the MNO *Values & Traditions of Our Ancestors* to MNO Founding President Tony Belcourt in honour of his recent investiture in the Order of Canada.

Created by the MNO, this beautifully illustrated book provides an engaging introduction to Métis people, history, culture and aspirations. ∞

Success Stories

Young Métis women celebrate accomplishments
.....



Melissa-Jane Pecman

Submitted by | Bobbi Aubin

Melissa-Jane Pecman, daughter of Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Bobbi Aubin, is a recent graduate of the four-year Geology Program at Laurentian University. In her fourth year, Melissa received funding through the MNO Métis Mining Strategy program.

Successful in finding employment in her field after graduation, Melissa is currently finishing up a three-week work stint in Nunavut with her employer ORIX Geoscience Inc., which works with a variety of exploration and mining companies focused on Canadian and international

base and precious metal projects.

Melissa grew up in Northern Ontario where hunting, fishing and camping was a passion she still enjoys today. Being an avid outdoorsperson mixes in well with her geological career.

Melissa spends her leisure time by working out, hiking, playing music, collecting rock samples, cooking and spending time with family.



Leah Belle

Submitted by | Richard Gravelle



At only 12 years of age, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen Leah Belle is quite the accomplished singer.

Not only was she crowned the 2014 Sudbury's N'Swakamok Aboriginal Idol this June, she was also recently hand-picked by music producer Jace Martin to perform at the Six Nation Reserve' Cure for a Cause Concert in Ohsweken, Ontario from August 15-17.

Having been in the music business for more than 20 years, Martin knows talent when he sees it. Martin discovered Belle when he judged the N'Swakamok Aboriginal Idol competition.

"He was so impressed that he invited her down to

perform," said the Grade 7 student's mom Gillyan Gravelle.

Taking the stage on the late Saturday afternoon, Belle, who has been singing since she was four, performed a couple country songs as well as a cover of a Journey song.

Soon audience will be able to listen to Belle's impressive voice from the comfort of their own homes as she is set to join Martin in Toronto to record her first record in studio.

An accomplished young girl, Belle is the second MNO citizen to win Sudbury's Aboriginal Idol challenge as the winner from 2013 was Michelle Prevost-Fortin.

.....

HARVESTING

The thrill of the hunt

submitted by | **Art Bennett,**
MNO Captain of the Hunt, Region 4

MNO Region 4 Captain of the Hunt Art Bennett provides the following first-hand account of a real moose hunt:

I had gone to the same spot where I harvested a young bull—a male moose—last year and even sat on the same stump. Upon my arrival, I gave one long cow call and sat down and waited. About ten minutes later, I heard a branch crack behind me and a rustling sound that I thought was pretty far away. Thinking that I had a bit more time, I slowly turned around and there was this big bull only about thirty feet from me standing with his head down watching me.

I immediately placed my rifle to my shoulder and took aim. As he turned sideways, I squeezed the trigger but nothing happened. Although it seemed like an eternity had passed, it had probably only been a matter of seconds before I realized what had gone wrong.

I had been so startled to see the

bull so close to me, that I had not put my safety lever all the way to the off position. By the time I realized my mistake, the moose had turned yet again and all I could see was his behind disappearing into the balsam and spruce. I did not want to just wound him, so I decided not to fire.

I could tell that the moose was heading for the beaver pond so I took off running and leapt over the dead falls like an Olympic hurdler. I thought I might be able to get a clear shot at him once he had made his way through the pond.

By the time I arrived, I could hear lots of splashing from the pond and I noticed that he was now with a smaller bull. I took a good look at them through my scope but did not relish the thought of wading in a cold stinking beaver pond, so

I decided to let them go. I knew that even if I had fired, I probably would have missed as I was still huffing and puffing from my Olympic sprint!

The next morning I went back to the same spot as I knew that quite often a bull will stick around if he thinks there is a cow, a female bull, in heat nearby. My intuition was right as I could hear him crashing around some trees. I tried to sneak up on him but he got wind of me and walked out to where my brother, Rick, was waiting. Rick took him with one clean shot right behind the ear. A quick clean kill meant that no meat was wasted and that our freezers are full!

I have realized that it doesn't matter how many animals one has harvested or how old you get, you still get excited! ∞



▲ Art Bennett, Region 4 Captain of the Hunt, at the harvesting meeting.

Harvesting Meeting

submitted by | **Yvonne Jensen,**
MNO Citizen and North Chanel Métis Council President

On November 9, 2014 the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) North Chanel Métis Council (NCMC) held a meeting on harvesting rights at their head office in Blind River, Ontario. MNO citizens from Elliot Lake and Blind River attended the meeting. The meeting began with Yvonne Jensen, MNO NCMC President, introducing Art Bennett, MNO Region 4 Captain of The Hunt, to the group.

Bennett assured the citizens that if he did not have the answer to any of their questions, he would get back to them. Questions asked during the meeting concerned Re-

gion 4 boundaries, acceptable hunting practices, and regulations about cutting wood. Throughout the afternoon, Bennett and some of the citizens shared entertaining and informative stories.

Bennett also signed harvesting applications and answered questions about the application process. Light refreshments were enjoyed by all.

President Jensen closed the meeting and thanked everyone for coming. She presented Bennett with a book called *Values and Traditions of our Ancestors*, which was very much appreciated. ∞



▲ Brothers Art (left) and Rick Bennett celebrate with their catch.



Métis Nation of Ontario Harvester cards get a new look

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Harvesters recently received brand new Harvester's Certificates in the mail. The new cards' beautiful design was created by Métis graphic design artist Marc St. Germain and will not only provide essential legal documentation to every MNO Harvester, but will also be a symbol of Métis pride.



▲ Jim Tolles completes a demonstration at the Trapping 101 workshop in Orangeville.

Trapping 101

submitted by | **Jim Tolles,**
MNO Credit River Métis Council

The beautiful island lake conservation area of Credit Valley in Orangeville brought fantastic weather for a trapping workshop this past October. Jim Tolles, MNO Credit River Métis Council (CRMC) Traditional Knowledge Resource, facilitated a workshop for 10 people, which covered the basics of trapping. Throughout the session Tolles explained the different types of traps that exist, the places they can be used, and the various animals that can be caught.

The workshop was very hands-on thanks to Tolles' incredibly interactive display complete with

traps and furs. The display also included various resources that have allowed Tolles to get a trapping license and be able to continue his journey of trapping.

The workshop also included many perks such as a draw for a door prize, donated by local outdoors and sports store Dufferin Outdoor Supply. It was won by Angela Hartley. Participants were also able to stay warm by the fire and enjoyed a meal at the end of the workshop, provided by the MNO CRMC. The workshop attracted a wide variety of participants including local citizens and MNO CRMC Councilor Jean-Marc Mahau.

MNO CRMC members were extremely pleased that the participants thoroughly enjoyed the event. "I just wanted to thank you for all of your hard work in coordinating the trapping workshop! Your organization skills are superb. We really appreciated the delicious pizza, coffee, hot chocolate and everything else you did to make us comfortable and so proud to be Métis," said participant Paulette Sirianni.

"I know you can say that this is just a part of your job, but people can truly tell when a job is done with lots of love and attention." ∞

The majestic moose

submitted by | **Joseph Paquette,**
MNO Veterans' Council President

Joseph Paquette, MNO Veterans' Council President, gives a first-hand account of his hunting trip:

The day started with a beautiful sunrise amidst a perfect blue sky. This was following two days of rain. Climbing hill after hill and calling every so often did not put me any closer to filling my moose tag.

I finally settled at the corner of three crossroads. It seemed like the ideal place with a great view in three directions. I stared at a dark brown spot in the woods. It looked very much like a tree stump. After a good twenty minutes of staring at this—it had not moved—I resigned myself to it being a tree stump.

I decided to take a short walk down one of the roads whilst checking the bush on both sides. After walking for about 100 yards, I came back to the original spot where I had been sitting. Once again I looked for the dark brown spot, and to my surprise, it was gone. I finally walked about 50 yards up the road, and turned around to come back. There in

the road, stood a beautiful, majestic moose. Because of the branches and brush, I could not see the antlers and therefore thought it was a female moose. Having decided that it was a moose cow, I figured if I walk towards her, she would probably be spooked and maybe reveal a small calf. She then walked towards me for about five steps. I decided to take a photo of her. Right as I was taking the photo, the moose walked about three steps, turned and, lo and behold, I saw the Panache.

I quickly placed my cell phone back in my pocket, pulled back the hammer and all I heard was click. The safety was on! I then took the safety off, and pulled back the hammer for the second time. During all this time, the moose did not move. I took the shot. He eventually staggered about 60 feet and then laid down.

What a great gift for my family and community. ∞



▲ Joseph Paquette shows off his harvest.



▲▲ The Whalen family after successfully harvesting a bull moose.

Two victories in one year for the Whalen family

submitted by | **Kevin Whalen,**
MNO Citizen

Kevin Whalen shares his first-hand account of a successful harvest below:

The Whalen family, as members of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Sault Ste. Marie Métis community, could not think of a better way to celebrate the 11th anniversary of the Powley Case other than calling out and harvesting an enormous bull moose on September 19, 2014.

The bull moose was taken by my son Collin and me, along with my other son Braedon's help who broke sticks from time to time to enhance the bull in showing himself at the beginning of the rut, as well as the help of my father's moose scouting skills.

Ten minutes seemed like an hour when the bull moose first responded back to my cow call by loudly thrashing in the bush to complete silence. I continued to call

on and off and we hid out of site while the moose circled around us as the wind was in his favor.

We could occasionally smell him and he would grunt and thrash in the dense forest every couple minutes. He was getting closer and louder until we saw the tag alders spread apart as he stepped out into opening for the shot. Let's just say there was excitement and high fives all around—we could begin to breathe again! There is a lot of work ahead, and a toast to honor the Powley Family. We will never forget this traditional hunting experience and the memories.

Our family struggled to verify our harvesting files but hard work and persistence paid off for the Whalens and it was worth the victory in the end. After receiving a let-

ter in 2013 requesting we turn in our harvesting cards, MNO President Gary Lipinski encouraged my family and I to work with MNO Registry staff to get the information they needed.

After working with my family members, the MNO Registry team, legal, Kim Powley, MNO Captain of the Hunt for Region 4 Art Bennett, and others for the past year and a half, we were notified this past July by the MNO Registry staff that we have successfully fulfilled the required documentation as required in the Powley Test, Supreme Court of Canada.

We were informed that Historic Sault Ste. Marie will be our harvesting territory. That's two victories in one year for the Whalen family! ∞

ACROSS THE HOMELAND

■ Alberta City of Edmonton recognizes Métis week

Source: The City of Edmonton

On November 10, 2014, the City of Edmonton and the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) came together to recognize the contributions of the Métis people to the establishment and development of Edmonton.

"Edmonton's Métis population is a valued part of our great city's historical and cultural legacy. Their pioneering spirit helped establish Edmonton as a cultural and economic gathering place, and their influence helps make Edmonton the vibrant, prosperous city it is today," said Councillor Tony Caterina.

Councillor Caterina proclaimed November 9 to 16, 2014, Métis Week in Edmonton. The Métis flag was raised outside of City Hall, presided over by a Métis Veterans Honour Guard, and flew for the entire week.

The celebration builds on the formal relationship between the City and the MNA. In September 2013, the City of Edmonton and the Métis Nation of Alberta entered into a Memorandum of Shared Recognition and Cooperation. Both parties pledged to work closer to-

gether to increase opportunities for positive social and economic outcomes for Aboriginal people living in Edmonton.

On Wednesday, November 12, the High Level Bridge was lit blue and white in honour of Edmonton's Métis population.

■ Manitoba The City of Winnipeg elects its first Métis Mayor

Source: The National Post

At a time of assaults against young Aboriginal women, Winnipeggers have elected its first Métis mayor. Brian Bowman, 42, was sworn in as Mayor on November 4, 2014.

"Just before I was sworn in," said Mayor Brian Bowman, 42, who got teary-eyed during the speech, "I was writing my speech and added in a recognition that we're in the heart of the Métis Nation. I was told that those words had never been uttered by a mayor in the chamber, so when I did the swearing and uttered those words, the weight of history was definitely not lost on me."

Mayor Bowman had an Ojibwa elder bless the swearing-in ceremony, and handed out gifts of tobacco to members of council as a

traditional Aboriginal gesture of goodwill.

"I just think of where this province has come from. This is the birthplace of Louis Riel. We have a growing indigenous community in Winnipeg; it's something I'm very proud of and more and more Winnipeggers are seeing that as a source of strength," said Mayor Bowman.

Mayor Bowman's victory is heralding a new wave of leadership by smart, young, ambitious Aboriginal people that has implications not only for Winnipeg but for other Canadian cities with growing indigenous populations.

■ Saskatchewan Métis artist, Andrea Menard, releases her fourth cd

Source: AndreaMenard.com

Andrea Menard is a well-known Métis singer/songwriter and actress and has created life-long fans with her songs, stories, and her message of hope.

Menard has just released her fourth CD, Lift, which is a collection of uplifting songs that motivate positive change and open the heart. Menard is collaborating once again with her long-time producer and co-writer, Robert Walsh.

A well-loved television actor,

Menard is also known for her performances in *Blackstone*, *Rabbit Fall*, *Hard Rock Medical*, and *Mocasin Flats*. Menard's one-woman musical stage play, *The Velvet Devil*, was made into an award-winning television movie for APTN and CBC's Opening Night. *Sparkle*, Menard's third album, is featured in a 70-minute, holiday special on APTN, called *Sparkle: An Evening with Andrea Menard*. Both shows garnered Gemini nominations for Menard's outstanding performance.

Andrea's new symphony show, *I Am Andrea Menard*, which debuted with the Regina Symphony Orchestra in May 2014, takes all the elements of her various talents—the jazz crooner, the traditional Métis singer, the actress, and the storyteller, and showcases a genuine personality.

■ British Columbia Métis Nation British Columbia's continues to work on consultation activities

Source: Métis Nation of British Columbia

Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC) is working on consultation activities for over 30 proposed projects around the province. By conducting stronger research, the MNBC hopes to raise the level

of consultation and accommodation required throughout BC.

The captains of the British Columbia Métis Assembly of Natural Resources and Natural Resources Canada staff have held numerous consultation sessions around the province on several projects including the proposed Kinder Morgan expansion. They have conducted numerous research projects around the province to document where and how Métis are exercising their inherent Aboriginal rights.

Most recently, this information was used in a 150-page report they submitted along with detailed maps to the Site C Federal Joint Review Panel assessing the proposed project. They were able to clearly demonstrate how the project will impact Métis who are using the area, and BC Hydro fully admitted that if the project were to go ahead it would have negative ramifications for MNBC citizens. This research has resulted in Métis being granted a medium duty to consult for the Site C project which is a first in BC.



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PCMNO Senator Joseph Poitras delivered the following prayer at the Louis Riel Day ceremony at Queen's Park on November 14, 2014

A Louis Riel Day Prayer

Eternal God, once again it is mid-November—our time to gather at this spot to say thank you in prayer for our Nation's many blessings, to recollect those who were in our history's spotlight and those who were in the shadows, those whose blood flows in our citizens, who are woven into our fabric, whose paths we walk.

Kohkome—grandmother who held us in the curve of her arms, who held the Métis Nation in the hollow of her hands, whose touch was the touch of life for our nation, whose knowledge of our homeland ensured our survival, whose bond with Mother Earth fed us, whose knowledge of medicinal plants healed us, who ensured that Grandfather would adapt and flourish in a land foreign to him.

Grandfather—the European, le coureur de bois, the voyageur, the fur trader, the adventurer in search of independence, who contributed much to the building of our homeland.

Our fore bearers who were instrumental in bringing the west into Canada. We remember especially our first leader, a man who lived his values, a man with a mission. We pray that one day he will be recognized by all as a father of confederation. In his memory, grant us the grace to be worthy representatives of our nation inspired to focus on our own missions. Those who have been in our recent history's spotlight, thank you for instilling in them an inner fire to get Métis recognized in our country's constitution.

Thank you for our founders, who built a solid foundation for our Métis Nation. For our current senior executives, whose leadership and wisdom have made our Nation the best Métis organization in our homeland. Thank you for our Legal Representatives, each of whom is one of us, who successfully carry us through our complex legal issues and trail blaze in our cases before the courts.

Thank you for our most valued resource—our community councils—our active citizens who never fail to be at the center of all that needs doing. Their contribution has woven our Nation into what we are—well knit, like our

sash. Solid active citizens, who never fail to open the good doors, that ensure our Nation will always be the best that we can be.

Thank you for our staff who make it all happen, who go beyond what is good and go far beyond any reasonable expectation of them, who somehow survive on a thank you.

Thank you for our future—our young people. Give our youth hope for the future and dreams that are bigger than they are. Give them the will to be all that you created them to be. Where there is a flicker of desire for knowledge, fan it to a flame.

Instill in us pride of heritage, pride of culture that our young may know and be proud of our ancestors' contribution to the development of our country—our home. We are grateful for the peace and security our country has been blessed with for these many years. Let us not be confined to one day in November to remember the sons and daughters of Canada who we call upon to protect us at home and around the world. Let us remember them each day and never take for granted the sacrifices they make to protect us.

Thank you for those who gather together in kinship on this spot each year: Métis, Métis by marriage, friends, supporters, our helpful partners, our elected representatives from our respective political parties who serve in our governments, who never fail to be with us here.

Thank you for our ancestors, who brought us to where we are now, for friends who accept us by choice, for strangers who welcome us into their midst, for children who lighten our moments with delight and offer us hope for the future.

We thank you especially for our deep satisfaction and fulfillment in having a sense of nation.

For these and all your blessings, compassionate Creator, hear our thanks.

We look to discover your presence in each person we meet today and in each event we encounter today. Take our hand as we walk our path in good way.

May your spirit be within us wherever we go, whatever we do.
Marsi, Migwich, Merci, Amen.

What Louis Riel means to me

Alex Young, MNO Youth Representative, Region 9, delivered the following address at the Louis Riel Day ceremony at Queen's Park on November 14, 2014

Today I was asked to talk about what Louis Riel means to me and while I assumed this would be a relatively easy task, it ended up being more difficult than I originally thought. But that isn't because I am unaware of what Riel did for the Métis people and the way his actions shaped our nation. As a Métis youth who grew up being proud and acutely aware of my culture, I've taken the time to learn what I could—be it from books, from our Senators or Elders, or from those who have dedicated their lives to continuing Riel's legacy by advocating for Métis rights across the province and country. What made this task inadvertently difficult was the reflection that came with it.

My unexpected reflection period started small and on a personal level as I considered my own involvement within the MNO and how it has changed during the last 22 years—from attending AGAs as child, to being involved on a council level in Hamilton, to the point where I am now a member of the MNO Youth Council. However, as I thought more on my own involvement, I started to think about the changes the MNO itself has gone through in that same time.

The MNO is in actuality one year my junior and although I think I've done alright for myself over the last two decades, it is absolutely incredible how much we have grown as a nation. Consider where we started—the MNO was formed in 1993 by a relatively small group of individuals who wanted to bring together Ontario Métis communities through a legitimate governance structure that could lobby on behalf of the Métis Nation of Ontario citizens. Before this, we were at best grouped with pan-Aboriginal organizations. We were not considered distinct, uniquely Aboriginal, or our own Nation. As MNO President Gary Lipinski said in his written address earlier this week, we were still thought of as a forgotten people. For generations we were considered traitors and our culture was forced underground. It was for that reason that my grandfather kept his heritage and language secret, speaking behind closed doors. However, in 21 short years—although I am sure



▲ Métis Youth Representative, Region 9, Alex Young speaks at Riel Day ceremonies in Toronto.

they have felt much longer—the Métis have come so far. Today we proudly wear our sash.

The MNO is now housed in the Canadian capital—Ottawa; it employs a large group of dedicated staff that work tirelessly for our benefit; it offers services through 21 offices supporting 29 communities; administers more than \$20 million dollars each year; and, represents more than 17,000 registered MNO Citizens across the province—a number that is continually growing. As a Nation, we now have strong partnerships with the provincial government. We are recognized on a national level and have won significant legal battles affirming our place as a distinct group of

Aboriginal people. We proudly wear our sash and celebrate our distinct culture and language. We have witnessed and have been a part of an incredible resurgence in Métis pride and identity and we haven't stopped. The MNO continues to work for our Nation and our people both on the ground and through legal and lobbying efforts. We are continuing to grow faster than ever and that is something that was driven home for me by reflecting on our past. We are not a forgotten people anymore.

The MNO Statement of Prime Purpose is the document that encapsulated the original and continued vision of the MNO. It contains, in particular, one line that resonates very strongly with me:

"These are our lands. They are Métis lands. They are the lands of our past which nurture us today and which we value as the precious foundation of our future."

On days like today, and indeed weeks like this week, where we are encouraged to pause and reflect on the events of the past, I think words like these are extremely important to keep in mind. We should never forget where we have come from or the sacrifices and struggles that others, like Louis Riel, went through to get us to where we are today. However, I would ask that you don't stop there. The events of the past have shaped where we now stand and it is up to us to use that knowledge to better our future as a Nation and as a people.

Marsi, Migwich, Merci, Amen. ∞

■ Cambrian College in Sudbury

Louis Riel Day marked at Cambrian College



▲ Participants at the Louis Riel Day celebration at Cambrian College.

Submitted by
Rick Meilleur
MNO Citizen

On November 20, 2014, a celebration in honour of Louis Riel Day was held at Cambrian College in Sudbury. There was a great turn out, which

included Cambrian College staff and students, staff from the MNO Sudbury office and MNO citizens.

Participants indulged in famous Métis desserts such as, *sucre à la crème*, *tarte au sucre*, *tarte aux œufs*, *pouding chômeur*, *pets de sœur*, molasses cookies and the famous *bouilli blanc*.

Participants were up and danc-

ing in no time thanks to the entertainment provided by Mr. Belanger on keyboard and Mr. Martel on fiddle.

Thank you goes out to Marie-Claire Vignola, Métis Elder at Cambrian College, for organizing the event and the chefs for preparing their famous 'Indian' tacos. ∞