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AT THE RACES

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NEW LEADERSHIP, NEW ENERGY, NEW DIRECTION:

PRESIDENT LIPINSKI

"It is with a deep sense of humility and high resolve that I accept the responsibility with which you have entrusted me as the new President of the Métis Nation of Ontario." – **President Gary Lipinski's Presidential Address May 6, 2008**

by **Katelin Peltier**

Our new president is not a new face to the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO). Gary Lipinski, has been a tireless champion of the Métis in Ontario since he was first elected as a councillor for the Sunset Country Métis in 1994. Next, Gary became Region 1 Councillor on the PCMNO and subsequently, Chair of the Métis Nation of Ontario, a post he held for the next nine years. In May of 2008, Gary was acclaimed as President of the MNO.

President Lipinski's first order of business was to deliver his presidential address to the people of this province. This address outlined his personal goals for his term of office. As well, he reflected on all the hard work that has been undertaken in the past 15 years by past President, Tony Belcourt. Looking forward, Lipinski stated, "It is a time to take stock, to consolidate and build on our many gains, to seize on the opportunities that are all around us, and to place the MNO on a firm financial footing so that we can achieve our collective goals. To do this, we must develop a new plan which focusses on developing stronger citizens, families and communities."

"...Stronger citizens, families and communities", this one statement sums up President Lipinski's focus for his term

"I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH ALL MEMBERS OF THE PCMNO AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS TO ESTABLISH OUR DIRECTION FOR THIS NEXT TERM."

nicely. Within his address, and repeatedly throughout various meetings and discussions, Gary talked about the amazing things that are being done at the local and regional levels to empower Métis people and to promote the Métis nation, all with little or no capacity or financial support. "The dedication and 'can-do' attitude of our citizens and leaders, whether a senator, a community council president or a regional councillor is exemplary. Too often, other Aboriginal peoples are funded and have staff to participate in important initiatives, while our people are left to participate as 'volun-

teers' relying solely on the goodness of their hearts and their commitment to their nation. This must change!"

As you may recall, in April of 2008, the MNO met with the Hon. Michael Bryant, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs for Ontario, and jointly announced that work is being undertaken to develop a new Framework Agreement between the Government of Ontario and the MNO, an agreement which will improve the quality of life for Métis people in Ontario. President Lipinski has outlined that "...the capacity needs of community councils will be a key part of the discussion with the Ontario Government in negotiating a framework agreement and community capacity will be a priority for the MNO in its discussions with the Ontario Government."

The new president hit the ground running. Two days after taking office President Lipinski had an opportunity to move forward on one area that he spoke of in his acceptance speech, his desire "to enhance MNO's ability to further assist Métis people..." in several areas including education. It is no surprise that his first meeting was with the Honourable John Milloy, Ontario Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Here, President Lipinski focussed on the need to improve Métis educational outcomes and to address the labour market and skills training needs of Métis people as essential to improving the quality of life of Métis children, families and communities in the province.

One week later, President Lipinski joined Minister Bryant and Ontario Regional Chief, Angus Toulouse, at Queen's Park to announce the creation of a "New Relationship Fund"

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Gary Lipinski Biography

Gary Lipinski was born in Fort Frances, an area where his mother's family has lived since pre-treaty as commercial fishermen and trappers. Located in north-western Ontario along the Ontario/Minnesota border about half way between Thunder Bay and Winnipeg, Fort Frances is on the old voyageur trade route and at one time was a trading fort. Situated in the Rainy Lake/Rainy River area, the area has an adhesion to Treaty #3 in which Métis were given lands and said to have the same rights as First Nations.



MÉTIS COMMUNITY NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

THE
MÉTIS
VOYAGEUR

editor

Linda Lord

design & production

Marc St. Germain

contributors

Anne-Marie Armstrong
Scott Carpenter
Reta Gordon
Bernard Leroux
Glen Lipinski
Rob Pilon
Stephen Quesnelle
Chelsey Quirk
Ruth Wagner-Millington
Sabrina Stoessinger
Leora Wilson
Rebekah Wilson
Jeff Wilson
Barbara White
Barbaranne Wright

contact

Linda Lord, editor
RR1 Hartington, ON K0H 1W0
Ph/Fx: 613-374-3430
llord@kingston.net

If undeliverable return to:
Métis Nation of Ontario
500 Old St. Patrick St, Unit D
Ottawa, ON K1N 9G4
PH: 613-798-1488
marcs@metisnation.org
www.metisnation.org

deadline:	date of events:
January 1st	15 Feb–15 Apr
March 1st	15 Apr–15 Jun
May 1st	15 Jun–15 Oct
September 1st	15 Oct–15 Dec
November 1st	15 Dec–15 Feb

Congrats!

The MNO recently posted the position of Métis Housing Policy Analyst, reporting to the Director Housing Branch and located in the Thunder Bay office. We are very pleased to advise that **Leafy Shaw** has accepted the offer to serve in this new exciting position.

Way to go!

Mary Beth Brooks received funding through the MNO Training branch to acquire her teaching certification at the University of Western Ontario. After much work she achieved her career goal.

Mary Beth has been accepted for a teaching position with the French Government in France. She has been offered a one year contract and will soon be going overseas. How very exciting!

Katleen Lannigan is the Regional Employment & Training Co-ordinator in Region 9.

Well done!

Karen Drake, a Métis Nation of Ontario citizen from Thunder Bay, recently completed her articles at a Toronto law firm and has accepted a clerkship at the Ontario Court of Appeal. Karen will soon become one of the Métis Nation's next generation of lawyers. Congratulations!



Future youth leader of the Windsor/Essex Métis Council

By Marie Carew

Lynne Rhody and Dennis Knapp are proud to announce the birth of their son, fourth generation Métis, Andrew William Knapp. Andrew was born November 5, 2007, at Metropolitan Hospital, weighing

in at 8lbs 2oz and 20" in length. He is welcomed into the family by proud great-grandparents, Mel and Marie Carew, grandparents Bill and Charlene Rhody and aunt Wendy.

Marie Carew is a Councillor on the Windsor/Essex/Kent Métis Council.

WELCOME,
BABY
BROOKE!

Katelin and Alex Peltier welcomed a beautiful baby girl into the world on June 12th, 2008 at 7:16am. Brooke weighed in at 7 lbs. 13 oz.

A New Arrival

Cole Eldovic Goulding was born on February 6th, 2008. Cole weighed in at 6 lbs 12 oz. Cole's proud parents are Shawn Goulding and Cathy LeBlanc, grandparents are Louise and Chris Goulding and Deborah LeBlanc and big brother is Aaron.



OBITUARIES

Brian J. Donahue

It is with great sadness that the family of Brian J. Donahue, shares the news of his passing on April 10, 2008, in Philadelphia, Pa. at the age of 52. He was the loving son of Jerry and Claudette Donahue of Nepean; dear brother of Patrick, Catherine and Margaret. The memories created with Brian will remain fondly and forever with his many aunts, uncles, cousins, friends and colleagues. Brian was a graduate of Carleton University in Civil Engineering and most recently was Senior Principal Consultant for Oracle Corporation.

Brian was an avid traveller and as recently as March, 2008,

enjoyed a cruise with his sisters and cousins. He often contributed to the family web site, briefing everyone of his travels and posting pictures of places he had worked and visited.

Days before his passing, with the assistance of his sister Marg, Brian completed and proudly submitted his documentation for citizenship with the Métis Nation of Ontario.

You will remain in our hearts forever, Brian. So long for now, dear cousin. We know one day we will meet again to continue the travels.

— Carol, Linda and Lisa

OBITUARIES

Raymond Tucker

21 Nov., 1935 - 25 Nov., 2007

Sunset Country Métis is sad to announce the passing of Raymond Tucker on November 25th, 2007, in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Raymond was born November 21st, 1935. He was an active Métis citizen and a well-known commercial fisherman, logger and trapper in the Fort Frances area.

He leaves behind his beloved wife of 50 years, Carol, and his sons Blaine (Janice), Tim (Cathy) Ray Jr., and daughter Julie (Rick). He also leaves behind numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren and two sisters, Elsie Taylor, and Loretta (Karl) Lipinski.

Funeral services were held on Nov. 29, 2007, in Fort Frances with Reverend Georgina Connor officiating. The pallbearers were Raymond's children, grandchildren and friends Leonard Noonan and Don Easton.



Jerry Bellaire

24 March, 1950 - 20 March, 2008

Bellaire, Jerry (Gerald) passed away, suddenly at home, Thursday, March 20, 2008, at the age of 57. Jerry was the beloved husband of Doreen Bellaire (née Stevens) and loved father of Jennifer Valley (Cliff), Jody Cotter (Jim) and Buck Bellaire.

He will be lovingly remembered by his four grandchildren, Jonah and Sabrina Valley and Jack and Maddison Cotter. He was dear brother of Réjeanne Fauvel (André), Jocelyne Birtch (Ron), Pauline Daley (René), Aurel, Paul (Pauline-deceased), Yvon (Romona), Richard (Chris), Ron (Christine), Don (Denise), Ernest (Dawn), Albert (Eleanor) and Hector (Janet-deceased); predeceased by his parents, Blanche (née Boyer) and Ernest Bellaire.

He will be remembered by his hunting buddies, Bill, Steve and Mario. Jerry was a plant service manager with Northeast Mental Health Centre. He loved fishing, hunting, travelling, carpentry and shopping. He was a citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

There was a four day sacred fire at Jerry's home from March 21st to March 24th, 2008. Funeral mass was celebrated at Paroisse St-Vincent-de-Paul. As expressions of sympathy, donations to Heart and Stroke Foundation or Canadian Cancer Society would be gratefully appreciated by the family.

Mr. Bellaire was a citizen of Region 5, North Bay, and will be missed by all who knew him.



Roland "Ted" Grouette

17 April, 1948 - 24 March, 2008

Born and raised in the Dryden area, Ted was the middle child of five born to Margaret and August Grouette. A graduate of Dryden High School, Ted attended Lakehead University in the School of Forestry. Ted worked as the first

aerial fire detection observer for the Ministry of Natural Resources.

In 1973, Ted became a police officer with the Dryden Police Force, where he remained until his retirement in 2002.

In 1970, Ted met Doreen, who in 1972 became his wife. They were blessed with two children: Trevor, born in 1973, and Tija, born in 1975.

Ted had a passion for the outdoors that included prospecting as well as hunting and fishing. After his retirement, Ted began his singing career. Many afternoons were spent in Moody's garage jamming with Kenby's Jammers. He also sang at local concerts, fairs and family gatherings.

In 2007, Ted became a grandpa, and even when he was very ill, his granddaughter, Hannah, could bring a smile to his face and a twinkle to his eye. They loved to watch Treehouse together.

Ted is lovingly remembered by his wife of 36 years, Doreen; his son Trevor and daughter-in-law Nadine; daughter Tija and son-in-law Shane; granddaughter, Hannah; mother, Margaret; brothers, Robert, Roger and Paul; sister Sue (John) Gamble; mother-in-law Amy Rollins; brothers-in-law Jim (Jean) Walker and Dale (Crystal) Rollins, as well as numerous cousins, nieces, nephews and friends. Ted was pre-deceased by his father, August and father-in-law, Stan.

Funeral services were held March 29th with interment at the Dryden Cemetery. Donations were directed to the CT Scan Fund and Cancer Care Manitoba through the Moffat Funeral Home, P.O. Box 412, Dryden, ON. Condolences may be e-mailed to symapathycard@shaw.ca (subject, Ted)



Mona "Mons" Kudryk

Mona "Mons" Beatrice Irene Kudryk, nee Bressette, in her 87th year, recently passed away. Born in Waubashene, Ontario, she was the aunt of Harvey Horlock and the daughter of the late Maxine and Myrtle Bressette of Port Severn.

Harvey says: "The Creator must have wanted someone wonderful. My grandfather's last battle in WWI was the Battle of Mons and this is where she got her name. She will be missed by all who knew her. May her crossing be quick as there will be many waiting for her on the other side of the river. The fiddles, guitars and pianos—and lots of good old Métis dancing—await her."

CORRECTION

Please note that in the last *Voyageur* on page 2, "Welcome Aboard", an error was made and is corrected below: The MNO and the Métis *Voyageur* join the new North Shore Métis Council in welcoming their Secretary/Treasurer, Blair Sterling.

New Leadership, New Energy, New Direction:

In a bold and difficult decision, the newly elected Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO), unanimously endorsed delaying the Métis Nation of Ontario Annual General Assembly (MNO AGA) until the fall of 2008.

The decision, based on several important factors and developments, was made at the first meeting of the PCMNO, held via conference call. A leading factor in the decision was the desire of the new leadership of the MNO to increase the participation of the MNO's Community Councils and all segments of the Métis Nation within the MNO's overall governance structure and decision-making processes.

"In my acceptance speech, I committed that the new leadership of the MNO was going to make it a priority to increase support to and empowerment of the MNO Chartered Community Councils. Based on this priority, since being elected, we have pursued discussions with governments to support bringing together our community councils, Senators, veterans, women's council and youth to discuss important issues such as developing an MNO strategic plan;

NEW LEADERSHIP ENDORSES POSTPONING MNO ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN MNO AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING AND MÉTIS GOVERNANCE

Ontario's new Relationship Fund, and the Crown's *duty to consult and accommodate*," said Gary Lipinski, MNO President.

Lipinski added: "Our discussions with government have been successful. However, it is simply not possible to adequately prepare for such an important meeting and ensure funding is in place by July. It made logistical and fiscal sense to consolidate this meeting with the MNO AGA and holding them both in the fall of 2008."

France Picotte, MNO Chair, stated: "Postponing the MNO AGA to the fall will also give the new leadership of the MNO the opportunity to begin to put into place its new agenda and better prepare for an effective and productive MNO AGA. The newly elected PCMNO will only be having its first face-to-face meeting at the end of May. We have a new senior management team in place. We are just starting to meet with ministers from both

levels of government. Simply put, the MNO's new team needs more than 60 days to prepare for the MNO AGA."

Tim Pile, MNO Secretary-Treasurer added: "This decision is also fiscally prudent for the MNO. Historically, we have never received funding payments from government by July of each year, which creates severe cash flow challenges for the MNO in holding such a significant event in the summer, without first having received actual payments from funders.

"Further, at all previous MNO AGAs, we have never been able to present audited financial statements to Métis citizens for the previous fiscal year because our annual audits cannot be completed by July because of the MNO's extensive size of operations. With the MNO's new leadership being committed to fiscal

responsibility, transparency and accountability, we want to be in a position to present a clear picture of the MNO's finances at the end of the 2007/08 fiscal year to our citizens at the next MNO AGA," concluded Pile.

"I want MNO citizens to know, their new leadership did not make this decision lightly. We recognise that the MNO AGA in July is an important tradition and cultural event for MNO citizens..."

Sharon McBride, MNO Vice-Chair stated: "I fully endorse this decision and I am extremely encouraged that this decision will result in increasing the participation of Métis women, Métis youth, Senators and veterans in the Métis nation's governance structures. I believe we build a strong Métis nation by building an inclusive Métis nation."

President Lipinski added: "I want MNO citizens to know, their new leadership did not make this decision lightly. We recognise that the MNO AGA in July is an important tradition and cultural event for MNO citizens, with many planning their summer vacations around this gathering. However, in considering the logistical, administrative and fiscal challenges holding the MNO AGA in July would create this year, we believe this new direction for this year is the right decision for the Métis nation. Further, as a part of the transparent, frank and two-way dialogue I want to continue to reassure MNO citizens that we will consult with them over the next year on how they would like to proceed with respect to future MNO AGAs."

Lipinski concluded: "The MNO's new leadership is committed to a 'new way of doing business' in the MNO: increased community participation; improved financial management and accountability, and fiscal prudence and responsibility are essential in building a stronger MNO."



Métis flags fly at the MNO's 2001 Annual General Assembly in Penetang, Ontario.

MNO 2008 PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS:



Tony Belcourt congratulates new Métis Nation of Ontario President Gary Lipinski

Outgoing Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President, Tony Belcourt, extends his sincere congratulations to Gary Lipinski on his election by acclamation to the position of President of the MNO. Mr. Belcourt also offered congratulations to France Picotte, acclaimed as MNO Chair and Tim Pile, acclaimed as MNO Secretary Treasurer, and to all acclaimed councillors of the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

"I am extremely pleased to know that the future of the MNO

will be led by individuals that I know to be dedicated to the vision and purpose of the Métis Nation. Gary, France, Tim and I have worked closely over the past few years and have been very instrumental in bringing about our achievements. I have every confidence Gary and the other leaders of the MNO will build upon our successes of the past and move our agenda to another level. Their election today is a proud moment for all Métis", Belcourt said.

Gary Lipinski honoured to be elected MNO President

FROM FRONT PAGE

to respond to one of the key recommendations from the Ipperwash Inquiry Report, which stressed the need for the Ontario Government to strengthen its relationship with First Nations and Métis people in the province. President Lipinski said in the news release that "The Métis Nation looks forward to this fund being used to build and enhance the capacity of the MNO and our communities in order to more effectively engage and work with the Ontario Government and industry. By working together, we can create a stronger and more prosperous Ontario, which benefits the Métis people and all Ontarians."

Then came the announcement that shocked many people--the postponement until the fall of the MNO's Annual General Assembly by the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO). However, when you stop and think about it, the postponement makes a lot of sense. Since the election, MNO leadership has sought sup-

port from government to bring all levels of the MNO's governance structure--including community councils, senators, veterans, women's council and youth--together to discuss important issues such as developing an MNO strategic plan, Ontario's new Relationship Fund, and, the Crown's *duty to consult and accommodate*.

"Our discussions with government have been successful. However, it is simply not possible to adequately prepare for such an important meeting and ensure funding is in place by July....It made logistical and fiscal sense to consolidate this meeting with the MNO AGA and to hold them both in the fall of 2008," said President Lipinski.

"This decision was not made lightly. The new leadership recognised that the MNO AGA in July is an important tradition and cultural event for MNO citizens, with many planning their summer vacations around this gathering. However, in considering the logistical, administrative and fiscal challenges holding the MNO AGA

in July would create this year, the PCMNO believed this new direction for this year is the right decision for the Métis nation."

Over the next few months, the MNO will be consulting with Métis citizens on how to improve future MNO AGAs.

Lipinski concluded: "The MNO's new leadership is committed to a 'new way of doing business' in the MNO: increased community participation, improved financial management and accountability, and fiscal prudence and responsibility are essential in building a stronger MNO."

Key to the MNO's new leader are such words as "benefits the Métis people"; "improving the quality of life of Métis"; "engagement of citizens". Our newly elected leadership is focussed on engaging our citizens and our communities to work together as a collective to move the Métis Nation of Ontario's agenda forward. The next few years look to be exciting and full of challenges; however, with the strong leadership that the Métis of Ontario has elected, it can be achieved.

GOVERNMENT HAS "DUTY TO CONSULT" ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

Wheels Are Turning

By Chelsey Quirk

From the moment the doors opened, the registration table was busy as people made their way into the community consultation meeting room. Métis citizens and guests eagerly engaged in the first round of information sessions which connected community councils from Port Elgin, Owen Sound, Midland, Toronto, Oshawa, Credit River, Northumberland, Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie.

Former PCMNO Chair, now President, Gary Lipinski, got the meeting underway with an overview of MNO initiatives and the evolving relationships with the federal and provincial governments. This prompted constructive discussion between the audience and the speakers. Guests expressed particular interest in harvesting rights, industry partnerships, registry updates and many other topics. As the meeting progressed, it was evident to all that the communities have a dedicated interest in Métis rights not only in their own back yard, but across the Homeland as well.

France Picotte, former PCMNO Vice-chair, now Chair, and Provincial Secretary for Health, opened up the floor for questions after speaking about the importance of finding innovative ways to continue with successful health programs within the MNO. Ms. Picotte also stressed the importance of researching Métis history and language in order to understand and preserve the proud Métis culture, which prompted plenty of interest and dialogue from the audience as people shared their personal experiences, and those of their elders.

In true Métis fashion, before the meetings got too serious, guests were invited to enjoy



“When looking at consultation, Métis people do not want to halt industry and development, they just want to make sure that it moves forward in a way that is the least destructive to Métis people and their land.”

snacks and beverages, but most important, candid, meaningful conversation with their community members. This seemed to be the time when Métis history and culture were at their finest—not much can top oral history.

The most excited discussion centred on creating an Ontario Métis Framework Agreement on the government's *duty to consult and accommodate*. Combining their knowledge, Jason Madden, MNO Legal Counsel; Pierre Lefebvre, former MNO Executive Director and Gary Lipinski presented the sit-

uation in Ontario that has led to the need for this agreement.

As the presenters dove into the many reasons why Métis people need to be consulted by government and industry, heads were nodding in the audience, making it apparent that more than one person had had a negative experience in this area.

After explaining exactly what “duty to consult” means, and who is required to do so, a wave of relief and understanding swept through the room. Gary said that when looking at consultation, Métis people do not want to halt industry and development, they just want to make sure that it moves forward in a way that is the least destructive to Métis people and their land. There is no reason why development cannot result in a win/win situation. The MNO is on-board to ensure that this happens.

As if a switch had been thrown, hands rose and questions came forward—everything from people seeking clarification of developments in their areas to how they could get involved, to how the MNO sees this framework moving forward. It was easy to tell that the wheels were turning and probably had been for some time before the meeting even started.

Each meeting had a unique tone, but it is safe to say that they shared one commonality: guests left with a deeper understanding of what “consultation and accommodation” means, and who is required to do it. If you have any questions or comments on this topic that you would like to share, please phone, fax or email them.

Tel: 613-798-1488.
Fx: 613-725-4225
info@metisnation.org



Senator Greenwood carries the colours

During the winter the North Bay Métis attended a powwow at Nipissing University where six drums were represented.

Senator Marlene Greenwood, assisted by her nephew Rocky Alves of the Credit River Métis, carried the flag for the Grand Entry. The flag was proudly displayed with the others for the rest of the day until that evening, when, after a final dance, the colours were trooped off. The event was well attended by the public.

The North Bay Métis Council has completed the work related to awarding bursaries and is pleased to report that there are seven student recipients at Canadore College and seven more in Sudbury.

Bancroft & Maynooth Offices Join Together

After all the plans were finalised, and weeks of prep work and packing, the Maynooth office has re-located to Bancroft.

Maynooth workers **Judy Simpson** (Long Term Care) and **Robin Davy** (Healthy Babies Healthy Children and Long Term Care) have joined the team in Bancroft consisting of **Tammy Hoover** (Healthy Babies Healthy Children), **Amanda Cox** (CAP-C) and **Tracey Dale** (Community Wellness Worker).

The Maynooth community can be assured that even though the staff has moved, you will still receive the same great service as always.

A big “thank-you” goes out to all the volunteers who made this move go smoothly and very quickly. Watch for up-coming programs and services and please feel free to drop in at our new location.

CONTACT:
91 Chemaushgon Road
Bancroft, ON
Tel: (613) 332-2575

NIAGARA REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL NEWS:

Council signs Charter

by A.T. Henry

The Niagara Region Métis Council ratified its new charter this spring. Special guest speaker, and now MNO President, Gary Lipinski said: “These meetings are extremely important because they bring the Métis community together and bring issues forward.”

During the two-hour meeting, Gary spoke with about 40 members of the former Welland Métis Council, which has become the “Niagara Regional Métis Council” in order to better recognise the 2,000-strong Métis community in the Niagara area. The name change was made official by the signing of the new charter.

“Our meeting was excellent, couldn't have went better,” said Stephen Quesnelle, a Welland resident and Senator for the new council. Chair, Rick Paquette echoed the sentiment. “It is important to reconstruct and resign the charter recognising the name change,” he said. In addition to the signing, the meeting focussed on the local Métis community's relationship with the Ontario Government, which Paquette described as “strong”.

Senator Quesnelle stressed



the fact that the newly chartered council was devoted to the entire Niagara region, not just one city. “We would like to keep you up to date with events happening with the council, and the Métis Nation of Ontario. We can only do this if we have your current address and phone number or your e-mail address.

“If you would like to receive information on upcoming events, please call us at 905-714-

9756 or e-mail us at niagararegionmetis council@gmail.com and I will personally contact you. Remember, the council is here to help our citizens.”

Senator Stephen Quesnelle
Niagara Region Métis Council
20 Division Street
Welland On. L3B 3Z6
Tel: 905-714-9756
TF: 866-826-2116
quesnelles@cogeco.ca



Seeking Métis Arts/Crafts

This is an invitation to all craftsmen, craftswomen and artisans of all kinds, such as basket makers or moose tufters; artists in different media, such as photography, painting, and sculpting, as well as musicians, storytellers, and traditional hunters and gatherers. You are being called upon to include your name on a contact list for the Ottawa Regional Métis Council.

We want to give you the opportunity to have your work exhibited or sold, as well as the possibility of demonstrating and teaching your technique at special events.

If you are interested or you know of someone who fits the listing above please contact:

Louise Vien
Traditional Arts Committee
Ottawa Regional Métis Council
Ph: 613-446-0148
medwheel@sympatico.ca



Métis Council News

NORTH SHORE MÉTIS COUNCIL

R.R. 2 Thessalon, ON
Ph: 705-842-3063
c.l.witty@sympatico.ca

GRAND RIVER COMMUNITY MÉTIS COUNCIL

Kitchener-Waterloo, ON
Ph: 519-648-3548
e: ruthrobbins@metisnation.org

The Perfect Gift

COUNCIL RECEIVES A GIFT CUSTOM-MADE FOR MÉTIS PEOPLE

by Barbara White

Interim Women's Representative
Grand River Community MC

Once upon a time--no, this is no fairy tale, but rather a great truth I share with you today.

I was introduced, first via email, to a man named Marcel Labelle, who wanted to meet our Interim Council members. When I emailed him back, little did I know, I would find a connection with a gentleman, who is himself on an amazing journey.

I knew I needed to meet with this man; it was actually rather compelling that I do so. After going back and forth, Mahigan (his Aboriginal name given to him by Elders, which means "wolf") and I decided to get together.

We met at a Tim Horton's in Elmira, and there was an instant connection. When I told him that I was "different" from most people--meaning that I knew that there was so much more I needed to learn about my heritage--Mahigan said, "you just gave me chills". Mahigan felt that he was "different" too. How do you explain to people the feelings you have that are compelling you to start your own journey? Well, talk to someone who has been in that same boat, and you will realise you have already begun.

Now, speaking of boats, I

take you back in time to a conversation about canoes. Marcel was recently featured (January 5th) on *Fish Out of Water* on APTN. I had watched this show prior to meeting Marcel. The amount and type of work (600 hours!) that go into building one of Marcel's birch bark canoes is incredible. Marcel has also been featured on *Breakfast Television* from the SkyDome. His canoes have been deemed "Aboriginal artwork". It's no wonder; a piece of Marcel goes into the building of each one of these amazing canoes. Oh, the journeys these canoes get to take! My mind wanders just thinking about it. Being one of approximately 20 people in Canada who crafts these traditional canoes is something to be tremendously proud of, and we are fortunate to have this artistic Métis in our area.

Marcel Labelle, a GRCCMC citizen comes from a long line of trappers in the Mattawa area. I shared the following conversation with him, which was so much more than just an experience.

Barbara: "Marcel, tell me more about your Aboriginal roots, and your canoes."

Marcel: "My great grandfather was disenfranchised. In other words, he had to give up his Aboriginal rights in order to get an education. He and my great grandmother were no longer allowed to speak the Algonquin language, but that didn't stop them from speaking the culture. It was this culture that became their new language. They continued to make canoes, and to trap. I too became a trapper, and followed in my family's traditional language. When trapping was taken away from me due to the wearing [of] fur being unacceptable, I almost died, literally. It was my language, and it was taken from me.

"I became ill, and saw traditional doctors, who thought that perhaps there was something wrong with my heart. There was, but not in the medical sense; I was suffering from a broken heart. It was then that I set out on a journey, and

received a spark to transfer my language skills when the right deer gave itself to me. That transfer of skills was into the new language of traditional canoe building. It is how I continue in my cultural language.

"Over 400 years ago when my Aboriginal ancestors met with my European ancestors, the birch bark canoe was the means of transportation they shared. Neither of these two well meaning cultures knew anything about one other.

"Today, we have more receptive people, who are interested in learning more about our Aboriginal roots. And the canoe remains to be one of the best means of cultural transportation. Going far beyond the traditional meaning of transportation, it is the way to transport our teachings.

"After 400 hundred years of exchange, I figure that maybe now is the right time to start that voyage again."

That brings me to the amazing offer we have received. In further sharing with Marcel about our GRCCMC, and how we are progressing in this area, I mentioned that we would soon need to commence our fund raising efforts in the area--funds that are to be used in the commencement of bringing Métis programs to this area for our citizens.

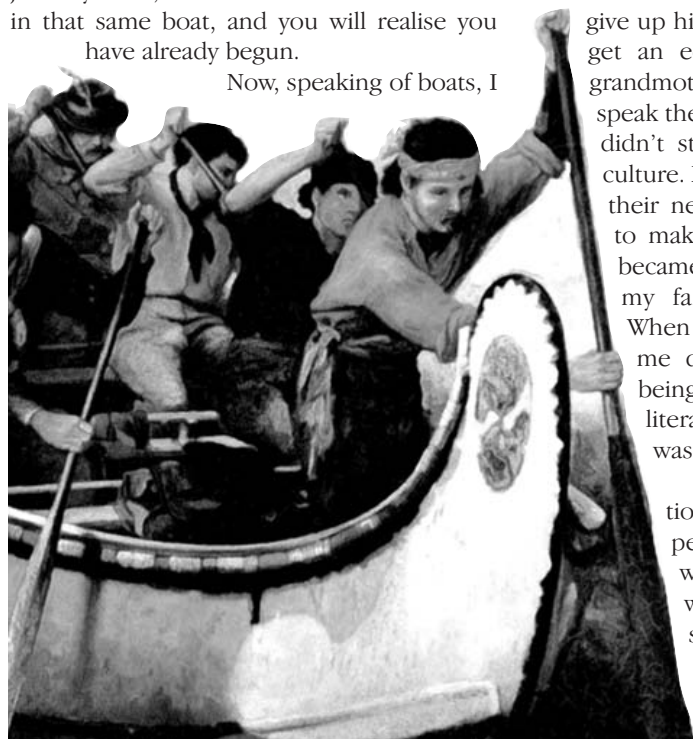
His amazing offer is this: Marcel is going to construct one of his birch bark canoes, and donate it to the GRCCMC to raffle off and raise funds for our area.

We are looking for a venue to construct this canoe, and we are looking for volunteers who would like to have a hand in the building of this canoe. It is sure to be an amazing learning experience for all. Please let us know if anyone has space available.

In closing, the GRCCMC wishes to thank Marcel Labelle for his incredible generosity. We are grateful to have such an esteemed Métis citizen in our area--a citizen who is giving back to his community with his unique skills.

For more information about this generous offer, how you can be a part of this historic event contact the GRCCMC:

Tel: 519-648-3548
e: ruthrobbins@metisnation.org



The Voyageur encourages respectful sharing of experiences and opinions. Letters to the Editor should be sent to llord@kingston.net



The MNO booth with Glen Lipinski, Addictions Wellness Coordinator and Barbaranne Wright, President Niagara Region MC.

Niagara Métis reach out to community

The Niagara Region Métis Council recently attended a Native Culture Education Day hosted by Family and Children's Services Niagara (FACS) and the local Aboriginal community at the Niagara Regional Native Centre in Niagara On The Lake.

FACS is striving to listen to the Aboriginal community in order to

better understand Indigenous culture and people. This is an important component of the FACS goal of establishing a more collaborative approach.

Stephen Quesnelle
Senator, Niagara Region
Tel: 905-788-9641
quesnelles@cogeco.ca



NORTH SHORE MÉTIS COUNCIL NEWS

Senator Jack Leroux of the newly formed North Shore Métis Council putting on a Métis Beading Workshop at the Bundle-up Bruce Mines Copper Snowfest this winter. PHOTO: LORY PATTEN

THE POWER OF VOLUNTEERS

A Friend & a True Volunteer

By Richard Paquette

I wanted to write to you about our Senator and my friend, Stephen Quesnelle. I only met Steve in October, 2007, and we have already formed a wonderful bond of friendship. I have been a volunteer with a few organisations and inevitably I run into people who are looking to receive something or are trying to get noticed. I am quite sure you have come across some of these people.

Steve is just the opposite. He is a true and dedicated volunteer. His goals are many, his energy is endless, and he is self sacrificing. Steve is a little shy in large groups but he is great in smaller groups and one on one. Steve is prepared to do whatever it takes to get the job done. His only concerns are for the citizens and the council. Steve is my definition of a "true volunteer". He spends endless hours working on behalf of the council, but doesn't want any attention for himself. We have a good team here, but Steve is the real reason we are making progress.

I have spent many hours working with him either at the council office or on the phone. Steve and I have also attended a *Duty to Consult* meeting in Midland and an Aboriginal health conference at Six Nations.

Steve was able to fit in nicely at both events and made many contacts. I also know that Steve has contributed his time and efforts to helping the MNO staff in Welland. Steve has attended conferences and workshops with Glen Lipinski and Tammy Wintle. They have both told me many times when I have been in the office what a great help Steve has been.

Steve is the type of person who works hard, but is very modest and he will never blow his own horn. The MNO is very lucky to have someone like Steve. I'm quite sure that some of you have already figured this



out from your dealings with him. I just wanted to confirm this as someone who works with him on a regular basis. We are working very hard here, but it always feels like fun. I am proud to call Steve my friend.

Richard Paquette is Chair of Niagara Region Métis Council.

PROVISIONAL COUNCIL OF THE MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO: PROFILES



Reta Gordon
EXECUTIVE SENATOR

I am the second oldest of 10 children. My father was Algonquin and Irish and my mom was French Canadian. Born and raised in Ottawa, I am retired from Bell Canada where I worked as a sales representative in the Yellow Pages Department. I have been on pension since 1977

and I am so grateful for the good health the Creator has blessed me with for all of these years. I was first a council Senator in 1999, PCMNO Senator since 2002, and Executive Senator since 2003. My passion in life is working for the Métis Nation of Ontario since 1993, helping out mostly in the Registry branch, and representing the Métis nation at so very many federal government functions and meetings. I am known to many

many government departments as “the Métis Elder”. I am proud to meet and enlighten people on the fact that the Métis nation is here and is one of the three Aboriginal peoples of Canada. In my private life I have been married to my husband Ronald for 44 years and am the proud mother of my son, William. Although I am not blessed with any grandchildren, I am known to

many Métis children as “Gramma Gordon”. Another area I take pride in, is the honour I have in representing and helping the Métis Senators. I feel the councils would not have come these many miles without what I consider “the backbone of the Métis nation”, our Senators. ∞

RETA GORDON CONTACT: TEL 613-798-1488 OR 1-800-263-4889 RETAG@METISNATION.ORG



Pauline Saulnier
COUNCILLOR • REG. 7

Pauline Saulnier (née Desroches) is a passionate proud Métis woman who has Métis ancestry on all sides of her family tree. Pauline has been married to her husband, Todd Saulnier, since July 14, 1984, and is the mother of three wonderful children, Ben-

jamin, Ashley and Justin Saulnier. Pauline has worked for the Ontario Government since May 11, 1987. Currently she works as the Bilingual Client Service Representative in the Ontario Disability Support Program in Orillia. Pauline joined the MNO in 1996, and immediately began volunteering as a steering committee member for Métis Child and Family Services. In 1998, Pauline ran for the position of Secretary of the Georgian Bay Métis Coun-

cil (GBMC). From 1999 to 2003, Pauline was the President of the Georgian Bay Métis Council. Under her presidential guidance the GBMC was able to obtain funding to open the “Métis Shoppe”; funding to celebrate Aboriginal Day; funding to create a board manual; to do fundraising, and have council meetings and cultural awareness events, such as floats, dances, etc. For the past three years, as Region 7 Councillor, Pauline has

always tried to keep the lines of communication open by providing the reports of events and discussions at PCMNO meetings. Pauline sits on the *Rendezvous* committee, where she has assisted with fundraising for this event by organising the barbecue, doing the 50/50 draw, obtaining outside funds from companies and individual donations for three years. Pauline holds the portfolio for Art and Culture, Sports and Recreation, and is Associate Provincial

PAULINE SAULNIER CONTACT: TEL 705-549-4410 PAULINES@METISNATION.ORG

Secretary, Child and Family Services. She attended the Michif conference in Winnipeg in 2007 as part of *Culture*, and is currently the Chair for Culture of the Annual Assembly committee for 2008. In 2007, Pauline attended the Women of the Métis Nation conference in Vancouver as part of Child and Family Services and the 2008 Women’s Secretariat of the Métis Nation of Ontario conference in Toronto where she assisted by doing a greeting workshop

and taking notes. Through articles in the *Métis Voyageur* and reports at the Annual General Assembly, Pauline has been able to give voice to the role of a regional councillor; to express her opinion on what is happening during a given year, and contribute to the growth of the Métis Nation of Ontario through the written word. “I am honoured to be part of such a culture and the people continuously amaze me.” ∞



Anita Tucker
POST-SCEONDARY REP

I was born in Fort Frances, ON, which is located in north-western Ontario between Winnipeg and Thunder Bay, just south of Dryden and Kenora along the US border. I grew up 25 miles from town on Rainy Lake, on a commercial fishery which my father and his family have had in the family for generations. We spent our summers fishing and our winters on the trap-line, working together as one large extended family. Like most other Métis I have a very strong connection with the land and to the lake. Although, I’ve moved to southern Ontario to go to university, my father and his wife continue to live this traditional lifestyle. I came to the University of Guelph and got my BSc Honours in Wildlife Biology, but didn’t feel

ANITA TUCKER CONTACT: tel 519-824-4120 xt.56226 anitat@metisnation.org

like I was finished with my education yet, so, I did my MSc in Wildlife Nutrition. By this time, I knew for sure that I was destined to be a researcher and went on to do my PhD in Animal Behaviour and Physiology. I will complete this final degree next spring and I’m eager to get a post-doctoral position afterwards. However, I want to get back to my cultural roots and for this next step in my life, I want to work on issues that are relevant to the MNO.

I have one brother, Brian Charles, who is married and living in Fort Frances. He is also currently doing his PhD through the University of Alberta, working on mathematical modelling of plant systems. We are all very close and have learned much about traditional plant use and Aboriginal traditional knowledge in general, from our mother, Judy, who is a scholar in her own right. I am very happy to be the

Post-Secondary Representative for the Métis Nation of Ontario again! I see such a wonderful and bright future for our people and I’m eager to work to make this a reality. I believe strongly in our education and training and know that we, the Métis people, have a strong group of leaders to guide us in the right direction. I look forward to meeting everyone at the Assembly! ∞



Cam Burgess
COUNCILLOR • REG. 2

The Councillor for Region 2 for the past six years, grew up in Longlac, unaware of his Métis heritage. A cousin working on the family tree unearthed the Métis connection. Given the large number of Métis people in the area, it’s not too surprising. Métis communities have existed

CONTACT: tel 807-624-5018 cameronb@metisnation.org

ed in Ontario since the early days of the fur trade, growing up along trade routes and near First Nations communities. The traditional water routes from the Ottawa Valley north to James Bay miandered through the Nipissing and French River area, the Great Lakes, north of Lake Superior and west to Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods. Once Cam became aware of his heritage, he embraced it with both arms actively representing

the MNO and Métis citizens on various boards and committees: Confederation College; Divarsity of Thunder Bay; Grey Wolf Teaching Lodge; Youth Justice Group; Place of Safety; Fort William Historical Park. Cam looks forward to the next four year mandate, to moving our nation forward and bringing even greater awareness of the MNO to those living in Region 2. ∞



Charlie Fife
COUNCILLOR • REG. 8

I was born--one of six children--in the foothills of Alberta. Music and dance were a part of our daily lives growing up. I spent a good deal of my life living in Banff National Park, before moving to Ontario in early 1998. I have made a living as a professional performer on and off

since childhood (I was a regular on “The Calgary Safety Round-up” in my pre-teen years.). Last year I performed at the AGA and *Building Bridges Festival* in Thunder Bay and met many of you there! I am the proud father of two daughters, Tiffany and Nicole, and I and my wife Maggie have been raising my grandson Jayden for the past two years, and on April 10th of this year our son Sage was born!

CHARLIE FIFE CONTACT: tel 905-763-9840 charlifefe@rogers.com

My hobbies include archery and camping. I am also a carpenter and co-owner of “Westerby Contracting” in Toronto. From 1998 until 2002 I worked in Canada’s film and television industry as a union official. I was President of P.A.C.T National Performers Union 1998-2002. During this time I also held the position of Vice-president of Canadian Media Guild, 1999-2002 (union representing CBC employees). I have been researching my

Métis ancestry for about 30 years and have become quite the Métis historian in the process. My Métis culture is my passion, and I and my family are immersed in our culture, participating at every opportunity. I have been involved with the Oshawa Métis Council for about a year now and perform regularly at their events. I look forward to this new opportunity to serve my community. ∞



Tim Pile
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Tim was born in the gold mining town of Geraldton in north western Ontario. He was raised to have strong family values and a love of the outdoors. He has developed an appreciation and respect for our environment and prioritises this value when developing business initiatives. Tim is happily married

to Cheryl, his wife of 25 years, and the proud father of three children: Kristin 24, Kurtis 21, and Kaitlyn 20. Tim’s connection to his Métis ancestry comes from his father, Herb Pile’s side of the family. His Aboriginal family roots come from Peace River Alberta, where his great grandmother, Ida Cameron, was raised. Requirements for verification before the

MORE ON PAGE 17

TIM PILE CONTACT: tel 807-476-4779 timp@metisnation.org



PCMNO News



back row left to right: **Councillor Region 2, Cameron Burgess; Councillor Region 6, Jo-Ann Wass; Post-Secondary Representative, Anita Tucker; Councillor Region 5, Maurice Sarrazin; Councillor Region 8, Charlie Fife; Senator Roland St.Germain; Councillor Region 3, Marcel Lafrance; Councillor Region 9, Peter Rivers; Councillor Region 1, Theresa Stenlund; Councillor Region 4, Anne Trudel; Councillor Region 7, Pauline Saulnier.** front row left to right: **Senator Reta Gordon; Vice-Chair, Sharon McBride; Senator Gerry Bedford; President Gary Lipinski; Chair France Picotte; Senator Audrey Vallee; Secretary-Treasurer Tim Pile.**

An Enthusiastic Team

Newly elected Provisional Council of the MNO holds inaugural meeting

On May 29th the newly elected Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) came together in Toronto for their inaugural meeting.

The meeting was a two-day orientation, training and team building session. Agenda items included: a presentation on the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), the Métis nation's achievements over the last 15 years, and, a review of the MNO's current operations. In addition, the meeting provided the PCMNO members with training on the *Métis Nation Rules of Order*, their roles and responsibilities, and, how to read and understand financial statements.

The session also provided the newly elected PCMNO an opportunity to meet with the MNO's Directors, identify priorities for future MNO work, and network with fellow Métis leaders from across the province. Positive energy, plentiful discussion and fresh ideas surrounded the meet-

ing and attendees.

"I am excited to have such an enthusiastic team who are ready to work together to move the Métis Nation's agenda forward," said Gary Lipinski, MNO President. "I believe this meeting was an important start to building a stronger, more focussed, and more accountable MNO."

The PCMNO also set the dates for the MNO's Annual General Assembly (AGA) along with a special meeting of the presidents of the MNO's Chartered Community Councils. The presidents' meeting will be held on November 14th and 15th in Toronto. On November 16th, the MNO will hold its annual memorial to Louis Riel at Queen's Park. The AGA will be held November 17th and 18th in Toronto. (See page 3) Additional details on the AGA, the presidents' meeting and the Riel ceremonies will be posted in

the *Métis Voyageur* and on the MNO's web site in the upcoming months.

"The MNO's leadership is following through on its commitment to ensure MNO Chartered Community Councils are more

"We leave this meeting united and committed to a 'new way of doing business' in the MNO."

—MNO President Gary Lipinski

effectively engaged and supported within our nation. We believe holding the special presidents' meeting in advance of the AGA will allow more members from our councils to participate in the AGA," said President Lipinski.

France Picotte, MNO Chair, added: "We also look forward to holding what will likely be the largest Louis Riel memorial the

MNO has ever held. It will truly be a historic event to have so many Métis citizens from throughout the province honour Riel in front of the Ontario Legislature."

The PCMNO also appointed new directors to both the Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission (MNOCC) and the Métis Nation of Ontario Development Corporation (MNODC) in order to revitalise the cultural and economic development arms of the MNO. (See below)

"The MNOCC and MNODC are two important governance institutions for the MNO. They are pivotal to the Métis nation's aspirations of preserving and protecting Métis culture and history for generations to come, as well as building a strong economic base and self-sufficiency within the Métis nation. Appointing new boards to these bodies will re-

talise the roles of the MNOCC and the MNODC in the Métis nation," said Tim Pile, MNO Secretary Treasurer.

In his closing remarks, President Lipinski said, "It has been a great two days! The passion, commitment and calibre of all of the members of the PCMNO is truly impressive. By working together-hand in hand-with our citizens and community councils, I am confident that we will take the MNO to the next level, and that the next four years will be some of the most successful and productive years the Métis nation has ever had."

"We leave this meeting united and committed to a 'new way of doing business' in the MNO. Increasing the participation of our citizens and communities in the nation, strengthening our transparency, financial management, accountability and working together will be the key to our success," concluded Lipinski.

...

Métis Nation of Ontario

CULTURAL COMMISSION (MNOCC)

The MNOCC is a not-for-profit corporation that secured charity status in the fall of 2002. This nine-member Board of Directors manages the MNOCC and is appointed to a two-year term by the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

Mission: To preserve and promote Métis history, values, traditions and pride in Métis arts and culture.

Board of Directors:

GARY LIPINSKI
FRANCE PICOTTE

Senator-Director:
ROLAND ST. GERMAIN

DIRECTOR: SHARON MCBRIDE
DIRECTOR: BOB MCKAY
DIRECTOR: NATALIE DUROCHER
DIRECTOR: RICHARD SARRAZIN
DIRECTOR: CHARLIE FIFE
DIRECTOR: TIM PILE

EX-OFFICIO:
DOUG WILSON
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Métis Nation of Ontario

DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (MNODC)

The MNODC is incorporated in the Province of Ontario as a "for profit" corporation. The Métis Nation of Ontario is the only shareholder in the MNODC.

The MNODC was created in order to pursue economic opportunities that will benefit all MNO citizens and is uniquely positioned to develop opportunities that reflect the MNO's philosophy of environmentally sound projects.

The MNODC owns shares in Superior Thermowood, a private company that has built a prototype in Thunder Bay, for the non-chemical preservation of wood products.

Board of Directors:

PRESIDENT: GARY LIPINSKI
VICE-PRESIDENT: FRANCE PICOTTE

SECRETARY: PAULINE SAULNIER
TREASURER: CAMERON BURGESS

EX-OFFICIO:
DOUG WILSON
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Senator-Director: GERRY BEDFORD



NATION IN MOTION

“Nation in Motion” will launch in July as a weekly event. Check with your local AHWS Coordinator for updates on the types of events being held in your community. We hope you will join the rest of the nation as we make great efforts to improve our overall health.

This year, during our Annual General Assembly the AHWS Health Team plans to host a “Nation in Motion” event. There will be first, second and third prizes for the top three winners.

Hope to see you there.

— Ashley Moreau,
Community Wellness Coordinator
Thunder Bay

PERCEPTIONS
IMAGE CONSULTING
presents

**Dress for Success
on a
Limited Budget**

Sept. 24 & 25, (9am-5pm)
MNO Office, 355 Cranston Cres.
Midland, Ontario

Contact Scott Or Jo-Anne
@ 527-1228

Learn how to dress for your next interview! Learn your seasonal colours! Receive an interview outfit at no cost to you! Learn the importance of a great first impression!

EDUCATION & TRAINING BRANCH WELCOMES NEW EMPLOYEE

The Métis Nation of Ontario is pleased to announce that **Leslie Krieger** has accepted the position of Regional Employment and Training Coordinator at our office in Thunder Bay, commencing June 4, 2008.

Leslie will be a definite asset

to the Education and Training Branch. She has been working with the Métis Nation of Ontario in Community Action Programme for Children (CAP-C) in Thunder Bay and brings with her excellent communication and organizational skills.

Leslie shared with us: “As a coordinator for CAP-C, my experiences working with families and children have exposed me to new and challenging situations. My work experiences have been very rewarding, and have offered a great deal of awareness about the development of children and the diversity of families. With all this experience, I

have felt the need to utilize the knowledge and skills that I have acquired while working with families in various situations.”

Leslie has achieved her Early Childhood Education diploma from Confederation College, Bachelor of Education, Bachelor of Arts with focus on psychology, and is currently working on her Master’s of Education at Lakehead University.

CONTACT:
**226 May Street South
Thunder Bay, ON**
Tel: 807-624-5014
or 800-256-2595 (toll free)
Em: lesliek@metisnation.org

SUMMER MENTORSHIPS

Program gives high schoolers a glimpse of world of post-secondary education

The Summer Mentorship Program (SMP) is geared towards senior high school students from under-represented groups. Each applicant applies to a single area of interest. Students must be at least 16 years old and returning to high school next year.

SMP is a small program, held in Toronto every summer. This year it will run for four weeks. It provides students with a chance to explore the University of Toronto and career options including medicine, law, social work, education, commerce, health professions, environmental studies, science technology,

engineering and math.

Not only do students get to explore university and professional career options, they *earn high school credit* towards their OSSD, and they come into contact with mentors, and obtain hands-on experience through lectures and workshops.

There is NO TUITION cost for students to participate. However, there are costs associated with accommodations, meals and transportation for students who do not live in Toronto. First Nations House works to support all Aboriginal students interested in the program.

The official deadline has passed late applications may still be considered. Visit: www.students.utoronto.ca/Summer_Mentorship_Program.htm or call Rochelle Allan at **416-946-3570** or toll free at **1-800-810-8069**.

Grey-Owen Sound Métis Council News:



Celebrating Métis Roots

by Leora Wilson



The Grey-Owen Sound Métis community is continually exploring and confirming the contribution of the Métis people to the history of the Grey

Bruce area, as well as demonstrating our positive involvement in the community of today.

The present council is currently involved in “Duty to Consult” issues (e.g.: Province of Ontario Clean Water act, the concern over heavy water storage at Bruce Power Plant and new power line placement). Our council has representatives who sit on the Bluewater District Board of Education’s Aboriginal Advisory Committee, where we propose to introduce Métis history to the Bluewater District school curricula.

Citizens are involved in a community gardening project. Our outreach includes many organizations of community aid, directing people in need of assistance to the proper services.

Our local citizens include the multiplicity of traditional hunters and gatherers to fishermen, artists, musicians, business men, health care employees, industrial

workforce, government staff, as well as numerous careers in many varied fields.

We are involved in many other ways in the community as a whole. We are proud of our heritage and our diverse culture. We strive to become more visible to the local society and to share our rich culture and heritage by encouraging our citizens to be available for participation in area projects.

This year we are proud to be partnering with Grey Roots Museum and Archives near Owen Sound, where we held our Aboriginal Day Gathering.

In our area, we have a young doctor-to-be and several young people involved in the health care field. We are proud to have a young journalist-in-training who plans to do a feature story to offer to the local newspaper along with pictures and interviews etc. We have young people involved in and excelling in sports in and around our area. Some of the younger boys are very adept at master of ceremony duties, providing name tags to the guests, looking after the sign-in register, etc.

Our mandate is to provide lots of interesting and entertaining activities to the Métis community and the community at large.

CAMPAIGN TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT SIGNS OF WOMAN ABUSE

Learning the signs

by Donna St. Jules

Sault Ste. Marie was recently chosen as one of only 10 communities across the province to receive training in how to present this information to groups throughout the District of Algoma. This free training took place on June 17 & 18.

Kanawayhitowin, a Cree word meaning taking care of each other’s spirit, is an Aboriginal campaign designed to raise awareness about the signs of woman abuse in our communities so that people who are close to at-risk women or abusive men can provide support.

This campaign has been

adapted from the *Neighbours, Friends and Family* initiative to reflect a traditional and cultural approach to community healing and wellness.

Everyone in the community has a role to play in helping to prevent woman abuse. Kanawayhitowin uses the medicine wheel to help understand the issue of woman abuse and to support an holistic framework of healing to address the serious issue at a community level. You can LEARN THE SIGNS and TAKE THEM SERIOUSLY.

Visit the Kanawayhitowin web site at www.kanawayhitowin.ca to understand woman abuse from an historical per-

spective and learn more about traditional women’s roles and cultural approaches to healing. Information on how you can identify and help women at risk of abuse, safety planning for women who are abused and traditional approaches to working with Aboriginal men who are abusive and much, much more is also available.

For more information about Kanawayhitowin, contact Donna at the Sault Ste. Marie office at (705) 254-1768.

Donna St. Jules is the Community Wellness Worker for the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council.

the Métis Nation of Ontario

Métis Day
Bo'jou Neejee

Saturday August 9
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

 **DISCOVERY HARBOUR**
Penetanguishene 

Celebrate the dynamic heritage and culture of the Métis People, and learn the compelling story of the relocation of Métis and British Forces from Drummond Island on Lake Huron to today's Discovery Harbour.

Music, demonstrations of traditional Métis crafts and trades, and more!

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



Bison Burgers & Boulettes



By Bernard Leroux

The 4th Annual Cannington Dog Sled Race and Winter Carnival took place on February 22, 23 & 24 in the northern region of the Oshawa Métis Council's territory of Durham Region. It was a colourful affair that attracted over 6000 people to this small town on a beautiful sunny weekend.

Organisers of the event, the Cannington Business Association (CBA), have long recognised the significant connection between dog sledding and the Métis way of life in Canadian history and have shown their recognition and appreciation by inviting the Oshawa Métis Council (OMC) to be an important part of the event since its inception four years ago.

This year however, both Ben Deith (festival lead-organizer of the CBA) and the Oshawa Council took it up a notch, to say the least. As the Heritage Co-ordinator of the event for the CBA, my first action was to invite the Oshawa Council to set up vending of traditional foods at the site, which turned out to be a great success. Bill Norris and his committee at the Oshawa Métis Council have done an excellent job in organising and executing a quality addition to this growing event. Everyone agreed that their involvement was a huge and delicious success. The council served up bison burgers and boulettes (Métis meatball stew) as part of the menu. The food was a big hit with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal visitors alike. Even the Métis Mayor of Cannington, Larry O'Connor, got into the act by

cooking up bison burgers for the hungry crowd!

As in the past four years, the Oshawa Council conducted the smudging ceremony at the beginning of each day's race. This has always been a particularly poignant moment of the event for us as the interest and genuine support of the community comes together at that moment on the start line.

There was an encampment set up on the grounds including a tipi brought in by Bob Stevenson and a circa 1812 Mohawk winter camp set up by the British Native Allies, a professional re-enactment group based in Six Nations

“THE COUNCIL SERVED UP BISON BURGERS AND BOULETTES (MÉTIS MEATBALL STEW) AS PART OF THE MENU. THE FOOD WAS A BIG HIT...”

Ontario. Visitors enjoyed fireside storytelling, demonstrations and artefacts displays in a festive atmosphere around their Aboriginal village.

The event took place in Holmes Park and the surrounding farm area, which served as a wintery race-course for the dogsleds. A \$10,000.00 purse was put up for the race, that drew in competitive dog sled teams from all over Ontario and the U.S.

Downtown, in the village of Cannington, there was a bandstand set up where visitors could hear continuous live music and take in the ice sculpture contest which was judged by world-renowned Inuit sculptor David Ruben.

The Métis highlight of this three-day event included an historic background talk by Virginia Barter, that helped the local folks

to learn more about Métis history, followed by rousing musical interludes by Nicolas Delbaere-Sawchuck on the fiddle and Charlie Fife performing a traditional Michif song. The main stage event wrapped-up with a traditional story by Elder Joe Paquette as I stood by proudly displaying the Eagle Staff, which he had brought to the event. The whole crowd then posed for a group photo and proceeded back up to the park in a grand procession of almost 100 people led by Elders Olive Tiedema, André Bosse, Joseph Poitras and a Métis flag party.

The President of the OMC, Robert Pilon, and Vice-president, Art Henry, agreed that this was a proud moment for all Métis in attendance and that we would all work together to build this annual event into a major attraction for the entire Aboriginal community to participate in.

I thank everyone who contributed to making this such a success and putting Cannington on the map for the Aboriginal community. As Heritage Co-ordinator, my proudest moment came with the realisation that this event was bringing together Métis, First Nations and Inuit people in an atmosphere of unity, and that we stood together to celebrate and educate the public on our cultures.

The Cannington Business Association looks forward to building on this success and invites all of the MNO to come join us next year for this exciting event. Watch for details at: www.mycannington.com. ∞



PHOTOS: Bernard Leroux



left: Senator Olivine Tiedema.



right: Ewen Moreau at the cash box for the Oshawa Council



Oshawa Métis Council's Bison Burger concession

Farewell, Ms. Joie de Vivre

by Karole Dumont-Beckett
Director of MNO Registry

The Registry team sadly bid farewell to Claudette Gingras, Assistant Registrar on Friday June 6th. Claudette has accepted a position with the MNC where she will continue working for the Métis people.

The Registry and the MNO give heartfelt thanks to Claudette for the amazing work she has done these past years. Her enthusiasm, contagious "joie de vivre" and true dedication to the nation, played an important role in the success of the MNO's registry.

While Claudette will be sadly missed by her colleagues and friends, our citizens and our applicants, there is no doubt in my mind that she will not forget



Claudette Gingras

us--as we will not forget her. We look forward to welcoming her at our AGAs and at our council activities as a valued MNO citizen.

Wishing you the best of luck Claudette!

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE SEPT. 26-27, 2008 CONNECTING & INSPIRING WOMEN

(SAULT STE. MARIE) As women around the globe gathered to celebrate International Women's Day on March 8th, Jody Rebek-DiCerbo invited last year's participants to pre-register for the 2008 Women's Leadership Conference: Elevate Success.

"Both the Women's Leadership Conference (WLC) and International Women's Day have similar goals: to connect women, and inspire them to achieve their full potential," commented Rebek-DiCerbo about the synchronicity between the events. "It is only fitting to announce the event on Women's Day."

Managing Director, Rebek-DiCerbo, and the WLC conference organising team, have already begun securing speakers, sponsors, and volunteers, who promise another "life-changing", innovative conference, this year at Searchmont Resort, on September 26-27, 2008.

The 2008 Women's Leadership Conference will continue its focus on women's leadership: in the workforce, at home, and in the community. Offering a similar format to previous events with improved features, Rebek-DiCerbo is finalising an agenda with a "blend of activities for the mind, body, and spirit--to get to know yourself better as a leader, learn new skills and connect with other powerful women."

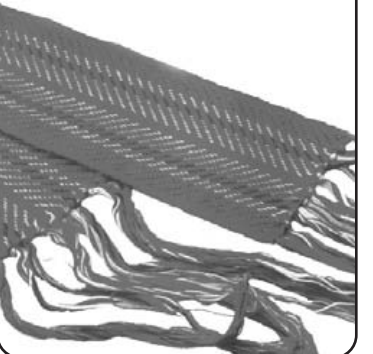
Registration officially began on May 7th and this year's conference will be capped at 65 participants. For more information, registration, or sponsorship opportunities, contact Jody Rebek DiCerbo by email at info@elevatesuccess.com.

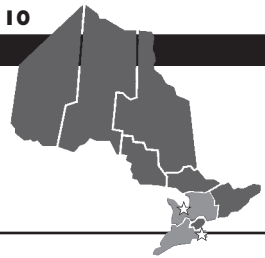
Last year's event web site is still available at www.elevatesuccess.com and will be updated shortly.

ATTENTION MÉTIS BUSINESS OWNERS

If you are Métis and own a business in Ontario, we are looking for your assistance in creating a Métis business directory. Send your contact information and a brief description of products/services to:

Natasha Lefebvre
Economic Development
347 Spruce St. South, Timmins, ON
tel: 705-264-3939 or
1-888-497-3939 (toll free)
E: natashal@metisnation.org





GREY-OWEN SOUND MÉTIS COUNCIL

Owen Sound, ON
Ph: 519-923-9160
jeffw@bmts.com

NIAGARA REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL

20 Division Street, Welland, ON L3B 3Z6
Ph: 905-714-9756
nrnc@metisnation.org

Niagara Métis hold harvest celebration on an unconventional date

THE SPRING HARVEST?

by Stephen Quesnelle

As you are aware, the Harvesting Dinner is normally held in the fall, but this past fall the Niagara Region Métis Council was in the process of re-organising and forming the new council, so we held ours in the spring.

Tammy Wintle and Rebecca Vander Sanden arranged the dinner and invited the new council to join in and help with the celebration. Glen Lipinski, had a table set up with books and brochures on gambling addictions to distribute to those interested, all of which were well received.

Our feast consisted of deer, moose and beef pies, roast moose, venison, goose stew, wild rice, turkey, bannock and many other dishes brought in by our Métis citizens.

There were 50 plus in attendance along with Peter Kormos our MPP, Deputy Mayor of Welland, Mark Dzigan and his lovely wife, and Welland Councilor Sandy O'Dell. Our very special guests were two sisters believed to be the oldest Métis citizens in the Niagara Region,



(left) **Rick Paquette, Chair; Rebecca Vander Sanden, Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Co-ordinator; Stephen Quesnelle, Senator; Barbaranne Wright, President; Peter Kormos, MPP (Welland) and Tammy Wintle, Long Term Care Co-ordinator at the Niagara Region Métis Council's Harvest Dinner on March 14th.** (inset) **Niagara Region's eldest Métis citizen; Rachel Gendron is 93 years young.**

Rachel, 93 years young and Marie, who turned 90 on April 5th.

We are looking forward to

celebrating the Harvesting Dinner this fall with greater numbers of the Niagara Region Métis citizens in attendance.

Thanks Tammy and Becky and everyone who helped to make this a wonderful event.

∞

GREY-OWEN SOUND MÉTIS COUNCIL UPDATE:

PICNIC, MURAL PROJECT

By Leora Wilson



The Grey-Owen Sound Métis Council (GOSMC) has been asked by the Bluewater District Board of Education to send representatives to sit on the Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee. The mandate for this advisory committee is to expand the awareness of effective programs for the educational needs of Aboriginal students. GOSMC President, Malcolm Dixon, and Senator Leora Wilson represented the GOSMC at the first meeting in December. There were also representatives from Saugeen Métis Council, Saugeen First Nation, Cape Croker First Nation, as well as M'Wikwedong Native Cultural

Resource Centre and various principals, teachers and trustees from area schools and school boards. This 25 member committee hopes to include an Aboriginal student in its discussions. The first meeting was mainly introductory. The Métis representatives are actively lobbying for more local Métis history to be taught in the school system. We will keep you abreast of the progress of this newly formed committee.

YOUTH MURAL PROJECT by Rebekah Wilson



The Grey-Owen Sound Métis have been invited to participate in a project run by the United

Way to involve youth in the creation of storytelling murals. The project, funded by an Ontario Arts Council grant, has offered up two storeys of wall space to be painted by youth during the summer months.

The six to eight week project will involve approximately eight youths who will be paid for their work. Beginning in June/July, participants will be instructed by poets, artists, musicians and dramatists to create a depiction of an inspirational story on the walls, and also to dramatise their ideas through songs and plays.

Should the project end earlier than expected, participants will complete a first aid training course and be offered a chance to participate in other projects

such as Aboriginal Day, powwows, etc.

Any youths interested in participating in this creative project can contact Diane at the GOSMC office for more information.

CONTACTS:

Jeff Wilson
Ph: 519-923-9160
jeffw@bmts.com

Leora Wilson
Ph: 519-986-2746
leoraw@bmts.com

Diane Owen
Ph: 519-370-0435
dianeo@metisnation.org

Shortage of labour worsens in Ontario: Government needs to fix training rules says CFIB

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) is renewing its call for Ontario to overhaul its apprenticeship programs in light of new research showing record levels of concern over the shortage of qualified labour.

CFIB's latest Help Wanted report showed that the national

long-term vacancy rate rose to 4.4% in 2007 from 3.6% the previous year, meaning 309,000 jobs went unfilled.

Ontario's rate jumped to 3.5% from 2.6%. Long-term vacancies (four months or more) increased in every sector in Ontario, with the greatest need being seen in construction, hospitality and pri-

mary industries.

The problem is greatest for smaller businesses. "The shortage of labour is a complex issue, but one part of the solution is getting people trained to meet the needs of the marketplace," CFIB's Ontario Director, Satinder Chera, said. "Business owners and young people tell us the rigid journey-person/apprentice ratios fixed by the government limit or prevent companies from taking on apprentices."

Ontario's regulations require employers in certain trades to employ a number of journey-per-

sons before they can qualify to train apprentices. The ratio can be as high as seven journey-persons to one apprentice. CFIB's research shows close to a third of Ontario small businesses find these ratios are a major obstacle to apprenticeship training, which makes it even harder to address shortage of labour challenges.

"Other provinces are moving ahead of Ontario in addressing the shortage of qualified labour," Chera said. "It's time for this province to step up to the plate and help young people get the training they need for the jobs

that are going unfilled."

Help Wanted is available online at www.cfib.ca.

CONTACT: Judy Langford or Gisele Lumsden at 416-222-8022.

CFIB is Canada's largest association of small and medium-sized businesses, including 42,000 in Ontario. Encouraging the development of good public policy at the federal, provincial and municipal levels, CFIB represents more than 105,000 business owners, who collectively employ 1.25 million Canadians and account for \$75 billion in GDP.



O Creator,

As we stand before you, Great Spirit, help us to do our best to become what you wish us to be. Let us learn to take each day as it comes and to treasure each day as though it were our last.

We are the keepers of this most intricate instrument that You have created. You have given us eyes to gaze on the beauty or the awfulness of this world. You have lent us ears that hear the beautiful sounds of the birds or sweet music, and yet they still let us hear the sorrowful cries of the down-trodden. You gave us feet that carry us as quickly or as slowly as we want, where we want or need to go. These hands that we take for granted can sense the softness of a baby's skin, yet can be callused with hard work. Our heart beats in time with the heartbeat of the world. You have designed organs that do their own thinking, continually, as long as we are in these bodies. Our innate intelligence works every hour of the day to keep our bodies running smoothly. You gave us a mind to reason with, to feel and to think good or bad thoughts. We were given our free will to make choices in our lives. Let us make choices that reflect Your plan for us.

We are beautiful works of symmetry. You have made each of us alike yet different--miracles of creation. O Great Spirit, we ask you to remind us that we must treasure each of these parts of our beings.

This is the time of year for renewal and new beginnings. This is the time to take stock of the past and look forward to the future. Give us insight to see your great works.

We ask your blessing on those who are less fortunate than us. We ask your comfort for those who are ill or who grieve.

We thank you for the time that we have here on this earth, and we ask your guidance as we live humbly from day to day.

Migwetch, Marci, Thank you.

By Leora Wilson, Senator for the Grey-Owen Sound MC

CONSULTATION INFORMATION FOR MÉTIS CITIZENS

The Duty to Consult

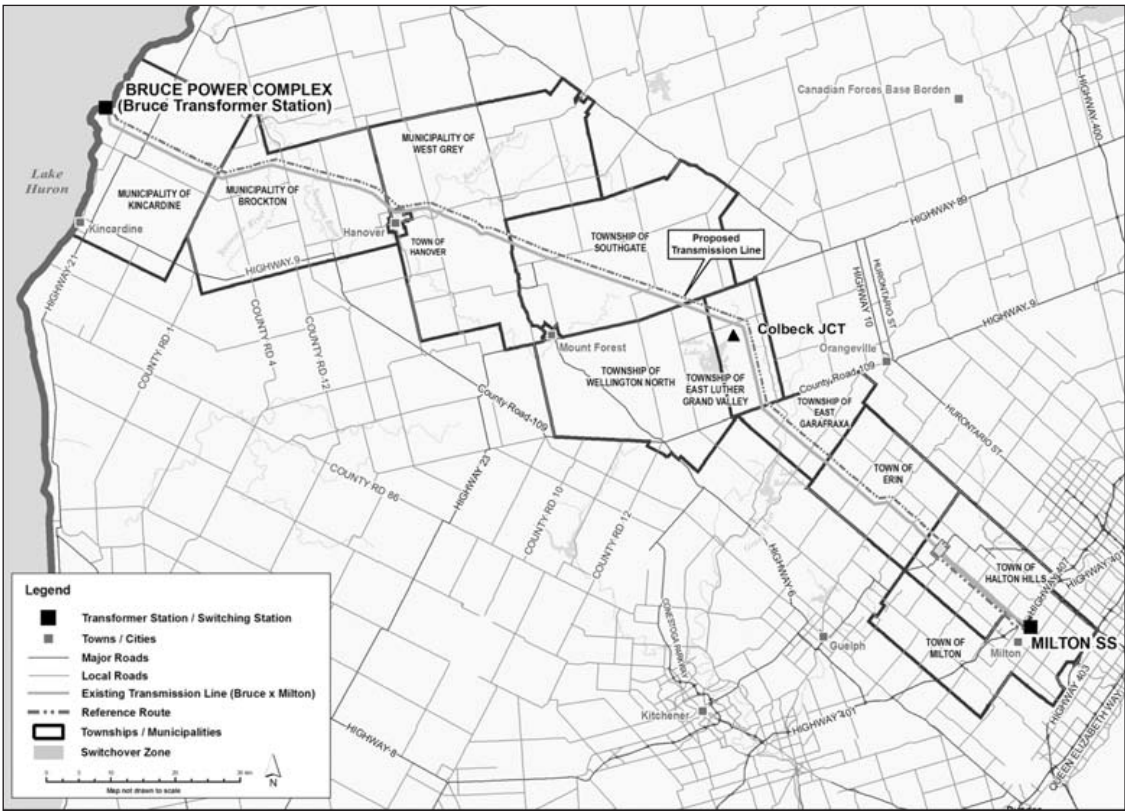
MNO consults citizens on proposed Bruce to Milton Reinforcement Corridor

Hydro One Networks Inc. (Hydro One) is proposing to construct a 180 kilometre double-circuit 500 kilovolt electricity transmission line adjacent to the existing transmission corridor, extending from the Bruce Power Facility in Kincardine to *Hydro One's* Milton Switching Station in the Town of Milton. (See accompanying map.)

Currently, *Hydro One* is seeking approval from the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) for the project. In order to receive approval from the OEB, *Hydro One* must establish the need for the project. As well, an Environmental Assessment (EA) will be conducted on the project based on terms of reference that have been approved by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment.

An EA reviews the environmental effects of the project on health and socio-economic conditions, archaeology, wildlife, ecosystems, etc.. As a part of the EA process, the impact of the project on Aboriginal land use, way of life and traditional knowledge, are also reviewed. Métis Nation of Ontario citizens who are interested in more information on the project, can visit www.hydroonenetworks.com/brucetomilton. This web site contains information, updates and documents on both the OEB and EA processes.

As part of both the OEB and EA processes, the Crown is obligated to ensure that appropriate consultation and accommodation occurs with the potentially



Route of transmission corridor from Bruce Power Complex to Town of Milton

affected Aboriginal peoples. As can be seen in the map, the proposed project passes through the Georgian Bay traditional Métis harvesting territory, which has been recognised and accommodated by the Ontario Government as a part of the MNO's harvesting agreement with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

Because the project does not fall solely within the geographic scope of one MNO chartered community council and Métis right-holders throughout the entire Georgian Bay traditional

harvesting territory may be affected, the MNO has taken the lead on ensuring all potentially affected MNO citizens are informed about the project in order to make sure Métis rights, interests and way of life are considered and respected by the Ontario Government as well as *Hydro One*.

To ensure that Métis rights, interests and claims are being considered and respected, the MNO is also participating as an intervener in the OEB's review of *Hydro One's* application and intends to participate in the EA

process to ensure that these same interests are recognised and respected.

To find out whether Métis harvesting practices, land use, sacred places, cultural interests, and way of life in the region will be affected by the project, the MNO has been engaged in discussions with *Hydro One*.

Based on these discussions and working co-operatively with *Hydro One*, the MNO will be doing the following:

- conducting a preliminary survey of holders of valid MNO

- Harvesters Cards for the Georgian Bay territory in order to identify the number of Métis who actively harvest in and around the proposed location of the project;
- sending a mail-out to MNO citizens living in and around the project to provide them with more information on the project and an opportunity to bring any questions or concerns forward;
- providing information on the project to all potentially affected MNO citizens through the Métis Voyageur, MNO's web site, etc.; and,
- encouraging all potentially affected MNO citizens who have concerns or would like more information about the project to contact the MNO (contact information provided below).

As new information about the project and the MNO's work becomes available, the MNO will ensure affected MNO citizens and chartered community councils are made aware. In the meantime, if you would like additional information about the project or if you would like the MNO to be made aware of, or address specific issues or concerns related to the project, please contact:

Hank Rowlinson
Senior Policy Advisor
Community Development
Toll Free Ph: 1-800-263-4889
Fax: 613-725-4225
hankr@metisnation.org



Métis dance instructor Yvonne Chartrand guides members of the newly formed Olivine Bousquet Dancers.

2-Steps, Jigs & Reels

by Cecile Wagar

Throughout the weekend of April 17th-18th, our Creator shone down on the Oshawa Métis Council's newly formed Olivine Bousquet Dancers as they learned traditional Métis dances.

Multi-jig contest winner and jig instructor Yvonne Chartrand of Vancouver guided the more than sixteen dancers aged 6 to 58 through the steps and patterns of the Red River Jig, the Seven Step, the Heel Toe Polka, the Reel of Four, the Reel of eight, and so many more.

The event could not have run more smoothly. Our setting was the serene grounds of Boy Scouts of Canada's Camp Samac of Oshawa. While the warm spring breeze drifted in from the open doors to the large high ceilinged room of the main log cabin, no one could stop smiling as Yvonne had us stepping ever higher and ever faster. Our breaks were energising as we were able to walk to a dam close by to watch

the trout jump the little waterfall created by the dam's spill water, then head upstream to spawn, or we could just lean over the railing of the balcony to watch the scene, or sit on the steps to talk and soak up the sun's warmth. Some of us even eased away the pains in our feet and legs by walking in the warm mud and ice cold waters of the stream. It was nature's reward for the efforts and concentration we all put into our immersion into the Métis culture.

The fiddle music and dancing was only the beginning of our absorption of our Métis heritage. Yvonne showed us her traditional costume including the beaded velvet cummerbund and leggings. Through a series of posters depicting Métis dress and bead work, as well as throughout her instructions and talks, Yvonne was able to convey to us, and even transfer to us, her pride in being Métis. We learned to respect our space and each other through our daily smudging, and opening and closing circles.



Senator Olivine Tiedema and Métis author Maria Campbell.

It was an honour to have Yvonne's mentor and friend, Maria Campbell, attend our first session. "Trapper Bob" Stevenson dropped in on several of our dance sessions then gave us his "Métis in the Schools" presentation complete with furs, hides, and birch bark moose call. Even the adults were impressed and happy to have learned more about their Métis heritage.

It was exciting, on our last day,



The Olivine Bousquet Dancers spent the weekend of April 17-18 learning some new steps at Camp Samac near Oshawa.

to hold our first jigging contest and to present our dances to our friends, family, and the Oshawa Métis Council. Many thanks go to Robert Pilon, Oshawa Métis Council President, who envisioned bringing the culture back to the people and who has worked for several years in order to get a traditional Métis dance instructor of Yvonne Chartrand's calibre to come to our community to teach our young people. We

are now ready to carry on the tradition!

Our first public presentation was at the Oshawa Métis Council's Second Annual Métis Heritage Celebration, June 28 and 29, 2008, at Memorial Park, Oshawa.

Please check out our web site: www.oshawametiscouncil.piczo.com.

Read more about this initiative on page 14.

Music, dance & Métis life

by Melissa Huttmann & Brittney Williams

The Métis culture can't be taught through books and speeches, making dance and music a much needed part of Métis life. With help from the members of the Métis council executive, a dance instructor (Yvonne Chartrand) from Canada's west coast was invited to teach a group of youth and adults--now known as the Olive Bousquet Dance Troupe--how to dance traditional Métis dances.

As we started out our long weekend of dance lessons, Yvonne Chartrand our dance instructor would start the dance lesson by doing a smudge around the room and then as a group. This introduced smudging to many of our dancers. After the smudge we would sit in a circle and pass around a stone. When

you received the stone you said whatever was on your mind, and then you would say "All my relations" which is respecting all of your ancestors. Then we started to dance. Yvonne Chartrand started by asking us if we new the Red River Jig and when the majority of the class said "no" she gave a demonstration. Then we got right into dancing; Yvonne Chartrand was very patient with us and was able to break down the steps so that everyone could pick it up. By the end of the day almost everyone in the class had picked up every step that she had shown us that day, about five to six steps. Everyone in the class was very tired after the long night of dancing, but excited for the next day to arrive.

During the weekend we learned more about our culture than just jigging. Yvonne Chartrand showed us traditional



The Olivine Bousquet Dancers practice the broom dance.

dresses, cummerbunds and leggings that our ancestors used to wear. Bob Stevenson also did a presentation on Métis culture and surviving in nature. Bob Stevenson made the presenta-

tion incredibly interesting by having many artefacts and adding a sense of humour.

Our favourite dance was the belt dance, which is danced to the Red River Jig. We would do

the dance by taking two belts or sashes to make an X on the ground. As the music was playing we would dance around the belts doing the basic step, then as the music would change we would step in the X and do our fancy steps. It was so much fun and a great work out!

By the end of the weekend everyone was sore and very thankful for all the amazing dances and steps that we had learned. So thanks again to Robert Pilon, President of the Oshawa Métis Council, the Oshawa Métis Council and Yvonne Chartrand for making the weekend extra special. Something special that we both will never forget was when we were saying goodbye to Yvonne Chartrand and she told us "not to say goodbye but rather say 'see you soon'."

Provincial Relations

FUND RESPONDS TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF IPPERWASH INQUIRY REPORT:

Improving Relations Between Crown and Métis Nation

MNO President Lipinski Joins Minister of Aboriginal Affairs to Announce 'New Relationship Fund'

On May 15th, 2008, Gary Lipinski, the newly elected President of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) joined the Honourable Michael Bryant, Ontario's Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, and Ontario Regional Chief, Angus Toulouse, at Queen's Park to announce the creation of a new "Relationship Fund".

The announcement of the *Fund* responds to one of the key recommendations from the *Ipperwash Inquiry Report*, which stressed the need for the Ontario Government to strengthen its relationship with First Nations and the Métis people in the province. As well, the *Fund* will focus on strengthening the capacity of First Nation and Métis communities to fully participate and benefit from Ontario's economy through meaningful consultation and participation in land, resources and development initiatives throughout the province.

MNO President Lipinski said: "The Métis Nation looks forward to this *Fund* being used to build and enhance the capacity of the Métis Nation of Ontario and our communities in order to more effectively engage and work with the Ontario Government and industry. By working together, we can create a stronger and more prosperous Ontario, which benefits the Métis people and all Ontarians."

President Lipinski also highlighted the significance of the *Fund* for MNO Chartered Community Councils. "The MNO's new leadership has made increasing support to and enhancing the capacity of the MNO's Chartered Community Councils a priority. As a part of our ongoing discus-

sions with the Ontario Government we have stressed the need for the *Fund* to have a Métis-specific allocation and to be community-based in order to ensure our communities can more effectively engage with government and industry on important land, resources and development initiatives that have the potential to affect Métis rights, interests and way of life.

"I am pleased to see that today's announcement reflects the MNO's priorities. I am also pleased to see that the *Fund's* consultation and accommodation focus will only be accessible to rights-bearing Aboriginal communities, namely, First Nations and Métis communities. This will ensure that the democratic and legitimate representatives of the Aboriginal peoples in Ontario will benefit from the *Fund's* investment toward meaningful consultation."

Over the next few months, the MNO and the Ontario Government will continue to meet at the political and technical levels to finalise the terms of the *Fund*. As well, the MNO will continue to consult Métis citizens on the terms of the *Fund* and will be holding a special meeting to discuss the *Fund* in the fall of 2008, which will

bring together representatives from all of the MNO Chartered Community Councils as well as Senators, Métis Women, Veterans and Métis Youth. This special meeting will be held in conjunction with the MNO Annual General Assembly, which was recently postponed until the fall of 2008.

France Picotte, MNO Chair, added: "The second purpose of the *Fund*: to enhance Aboriginal skills development and business



PHOTOS: Courtesy of CP Images, Derek Oliver

above: Hon. Michael Bryant and MNO President Lipinski at May 15th, 2008 media conference.
below: Ontario Regional Chief Angus Toulouse, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs the Hon. Michael Bryant and MNO President Gary Lipinski take a moment for the cameras.



partnerships will also benefit our citizens, Métis businesses and our communities. A priority for the MNO will be to increase the number of Métis students pursuing careers in the energy and mining sectors in Ontario as well as ensure Métis businesses and communities fully benefit from growing sectors in Ontario's

economy."

President Lipinski concluded: "Today's announcement only strengthens the extremely positive relationship that continues to grow between the MNO and the McGuinty government, through the hard work and efforts of Minister Bryant. The *Fund* builds on the MNO's ongoing

work on the Crown's duty to consult and accommodate Métis rights as well as the recently announced negotiations between the MNO and Ontario Government on arriving at an Ontario-Métis Nation Framework. On behalf of the Métis Nation, I am proud to be a part of today's announcement."

MÉTIS YOUTH NEED YOUR HELP TO KEEP MÉTIS DANCE GROUP JIGGING:

So You Think You Can Jig?

Tansi! I would like to tell you about a new project that the Oshawa Métis Council is undertaking and, at the same time, offer you the opportunity to participate in this very exciting initiative. – **by Rob Pilon**

The members of our council have always supported various cultural activities, and we've come a long way in the last couple years in terms of building a better understanding and pride in our history and heritage. One of the things missing--and something that I've always felt personally was very important--was teaching the traditional Métis dances to our young people. This is something you see with so many other ethnic groups, and with the fantastic dances that we have within our own culture it was long overdue that we put the wheels in motion to bring this to life.

To get us started we found an amazing Métis dance teacher, Yvonne Chartrand whom we contracted to come out to the Durham region and spend four concentrated days teaching interested people Métis dances. We had seen her in action with a group of young people out west and the results were incredible! From jigging to the seven step to the heel and toe polka, the people she taught put on a wonderful show that had everyone tap-

ping their feet! At the same time, we found more than a dozen Métis people who were excited to learn! By the time you read this, our dancers will have performed at our second annual "Métis Heritage Celebration". Once the word is out that Oshawa has a dance troupe, there will undoubtedly be many opportunities for these people to travel, perform and represent the Métis people. The troupe is called the **Olive Bousquet (Tiede-**

ma) Métis Dance Troupe in honour of our very special Elder who has done so much to start and sustain the Oshawa Métis Council for the Durham region. With a troupe of dancers and a teacher ready and waiting, the only thing missing was the funding to make this all happen, so we appealed to our people. Although we can still use your support, we would definitely like



above: **Young people hoping to become Métis dancers.**
left: **Award-winning dance instructor Yvonne Chartrand**

to take this opportunity to thank those who have already generously contributed to the Olivine Bousquet Dancers (see list of donors below), and encourage anyone else who is interested in donating \$100 towards this very worthwhile cause to do so. The funds we receive are being used to pay for the teaching, travel expenses, the facilities, etc. It's a small price to pay to get a dance troupe going to represent our culture and the Oshawa council.

The thanks you will receive will be on the faces of the young people who are reconnected with their heritage and gain a sense of pride and accomplishment as they watch and learn the dance

steps of their ancestors. Donors will also be recognised on the new Oshawa Métis Council web site. I strongly encourage you to join in supporting this very exciting venture. It's an important way to continue to build a growing appreciation of our culture within our community, in particular with the younger generation. For a donation of \$100 you can help to make a real difference. Simply send a cheque payable to the Oshawa Métis Council to the address below.

If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to email or call me. Thank you very much for your consideration.

CONTACT

Oshawa Métis Council
Ph: 905-725-1635
1288 Ritson Rd. North, Ste 356, Oshawa, ON L1G 8B2
<http://oshawameticouncil.piczo.com>

THE OSHAWA MÉTIS COUNCIL WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING DONORS:

Janet & Roger Huttman
Patrice Joly
Stephanie Forster
Claire Kearns
Tedine & Art Henry
Bill Norris

Lucille & Hubert Brownrigg
Gary Lipinski
Archie Martin
Carol Holland
Elsa & Joseph Poitras
Tony Belcourt

Wendy & Rob Pilon
Denise & Ed Strong Prezzyello
Virginia & Steven Skura
Lajimodiare Family
Kelly & Gary Semjan
Marie Thompson & Bob Stevenson

Diane Vezina
Cecile & Keith Wagar
Treena & Ron Harris
Linda & Joe Harrington
Sharon & Robert McDonald
Pat Morgan & Gregory Skura

MÉTIS NATION TURNS A NEW PAGE IN ITS HISTORY:

THE END OF AN ERA

Prior to the election of the President of the Métis National Council, our president announced to the PCMNO that he would not be seeking re-election within the MNO. Having been at the founding meeting of the MNO and deeply involved in the workings of our nation since that time, it was hard to imagine the Métis Nation of Ontario without Tony at the helm.

The Métis Nation of Ontario has come a long way since the founding meeting; our growth is staggering and our sense of community and nationhood is well entrenched. It is my belief that the MNO would not be in such a sound position if it had not been for Tony's leadership. There is no question that Tony put us on the map of Ontario and Canada, for this we owe him our heart-felt thanks.

As an Aboriginal people, our people pre-exist our sisters and brothers of the Red River. We are of a slightly different cloth, but we are all Métis. Tony has

always maintained that our nation spans the area from Cornwall in the south-east to Kenora in the north-west. We are a mixture of those with ties to the Red River and those with ties to Fort Detroit (the Great Lakes) and those along the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers. Our citizens had ancestors with the Sioux Trading Company; the North West Company; the XY Company, and the Hudson's Bay Company, or amongst the free traders. We may be a mixture of First Nations and Europeans, but we are 100% Métis. Being 100% Métis does not

mean we all see or think the same way; does not means we all follow the same spiritual paths; does not mean that we all look or act the same. However, one vital part of who we are is that we all self-identify as Métis. We see ourselves as "a people", a nation within Canada, proud of our heritage and our ancestors, who contribute so much to our communities and to Canada.

We have a history, a past; we are firmly established in the present, and we have a future—a great one. I know that our new leadership will ensure that

future and I am so pleased that we have such able people as Gary, France, Tim and Sharon to lead our nation forward.

I have already announced that I will be seeking another term as Executive Senator. This election will be held at the AGA.

I want to take this opportunity to wish Tony Belcourt the best of luck in his future endeavours; the best of health, and joy in the knowledge that he contributed so much to our people, our nation and our future.



SENATORS' SPOTLIGHT

BY **RETA GORDON**
PCMNO SENATOR

OUR STORIES:



Barbaranne Wright and her horse Jazzbeau.

To know where we come from, is to know who we are

by **Barbaranne Wright**

My ancestry is from a young man, Jacques Hartell of Le Havre, France and his Mohawk "princess". They met in the wilds of Manhattan in the early 1600's when Samuel D. Champlain dropped Hartell off in a village of Indians in New Amsterdam. He was to spend six months there to learn the language and culture. Living with this clan he was privy to the community and enjoyed his time there. Retrieved by Champlain, they then made a voyage down the St. Lawrence mapping the area where Hartell had the advantage of knowing the people and how they conducted their visits. Being accepted in this manner helped Champlain in his explorations.

When he left, Hartell had not known that the Mohawk girl was with child. The child was named "Osh Toche" and was brought up by her Mohawk, Turtle Clan. Later, she married a young Dutch settler with the surname Van Slyke. The Natives of the area trusted Osh Toche who helped them trade their animal pelts with the white men. Osh Toche and Van Slyke had a number of children and together resettled further up the Hudson River in Schenectady, New York, where one of Osh Toche's daughters translated the Christian Bible into her native tongue. Jacques Hartell eventually became one of the first settlers of Three Rivers, Quebec, where he married a French girl and had 14 children. Most of this information comes from the Schenectady Historical Society, who had noted that the Indians in Manhattan were originally from French Canada.

Their story buried and lost for seven generations, my family did not know of this lineage. I now understand why my Loyalist ancestors were listed in the British military records as "Indian interpreters". However, they maintained a knowledge of their Native heritage for only a few generations before it was lost, and being white in the British society of Upper Canada was more acceptable.

I have been blessed by my lineage and I am happy to have such a rich history to share. I am proud of my Métis heritage.

Barbaranne Wright, U.E., is the Interim President of the Niagara Region Métis Council.

Métis Health

Substance Abuse & the teenager

many of us have a teenager in the family and may at some point be required to deal with a drug or alcohol related situation arising from any one of a variety of causes. Experimentation, peer pressure, stress or depression are some of the reasons why you may be encountering alcohol or drug use with your teenager. The following article will familiarise you with teen substance abuse and offer some useful information to help you deal with it. • **by Glen Lipinski**

What is teen substance abuse?

Many teens try alcohol, tobacco, or drugs, but using these substances is not safe or legal. Some teens try these substances only a few times and stop. Others can't control their cravings for them. This is substance abuse.

Teens may try a number of substances, including cigarettes, alcohol, household chemicals (inhalants), prescription or over the counter medicines, and illegal drugs. Marijuana is the illegal drug that teens use most often.

Why do teens abuse drugs and alcohol?

Teens use alcohol and drugs for many reasons. They may do it because they want to fit in with friends or certain groups. They may also take a drug or drink alcohol because they like the way it makes them feel, or they may believe that it makes them more grown up. Teens tend to try new things and take risks, and they may take drugs or drink alcohol because it seems exciting. Some of us only need to think back on our own teenage years and ask ourselves, "why did I do some of the things I did?"

Teens with family members who have problems with alcohol or other drugs are more likely to have serious substance abuse problems. As well, teens who feel that they are not connected to, or valued by their parents are at greater risk. Teens with poor self-esteem, emotional or mental health problems, such as depression, also are at increased risk.

Reality for teenagers today is a little different than what we faced a few or not so few years ago. Today, teens have "raves" on top of school dances. The rave parties have their own drug culture, including some drugs with which we may not be familiar. Drugs such as "Special K" (no not the breakfast cereal), "E" (ecstasy), and others with cute names are aimed at the youth rave scene. Ask your teen questions, and give them information. Tell them not to leave their drink unattended. Due to the rise of date rape drugs, the predators don't wait for the girl (mainly) to get drunk and pass out. Today, a drug that is odourless, tasteless and undetectable to the naked eye is slipped into the drink and, within a half hour or less, the target has passed out and will have no memory afterwards.

What problems can teen substance abuse cause?

Substance abuse can lead to serious problems such as poor school work, loss of friends, problems at home, and lasting legal problems. Alcohol and drug abuse is a leading cause of teen death or injury related to car accidents, suicides, violence, and drowning. Substance abuse can increase the risk of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV, because of unprotected sex.

Even casual use of certain drugs can cause severe medical problems, such as an overdose or brain damage. Many illegal drugs are made in home labs, so they can vary greatly in strength. These drugs also may contain bacteria, dangerous chemicals, and other unsafe substances.

What are the signs of substance abuse?

It's important to be aware of the signs. These include:

- Red eyes and health complaints, such as being overly tired (If your teen often uses over-the-counter eye drops, he or she may be trying to cover up red eyes caused by smoking marijuana.);
- Less interest in school, a drop in grades, and skipping classes or school altogether;
- New friends who have little interest in their families or school activities;
- Chemical-soaked rags or papers can mean that your teen is inhaling vapours, called "huffing". Another sign of using inhalants is paint or other stains on your teen's clothing, hands, or face. A huffing technique at raves involves balloons and little silver canisters. Keep an eye out for these when doing the laundry.

What should you do if you find out that your teen is abusing substances?

If your teen is using alcohol, tobacco, or drugs, take it seriously. One of the most important things you can do is to talk openly with your teen about the problem. Urge him or her to do the same. Try not to use harsh, judgmental words. Be as supportive as you can during this time. In most cases, a hostile, angry face-to-face meeting pushes your teen away from the family and puts up walls that can be difficult to get through.

The type of treatment your teen needs depends on the level of substance abuse. For example, if a teen has tried drugs or alcohol only a few times, talking openly may be all that you need to do to help your teen stop. However, if your teen is addicted to a drug or alcohol, he or she may need to have a structured treatment program, which could be either in-patient or out-patient. If the issue is really serious or you are uncertain of what to do, contact the MNO Health Branch and a worker can help connect you to resources in your area and if there are none they will look at what resources we can get via the Tele-medicine Program.

Returning to substance abuse, called "relapse", is common after treatment. It is not a failure on the part of your teen or the treatment program. Recovery from addic-

hard and takes time. Know that there may be setbacks that your teen will need to overcome one step at a time. Think of it in the context of how many times you have tried to do something like lose weight or quit smoking. It is good for the family to meet with a counsellor as well, in order to better understand how they can help their family member whom they love.

How can teen substance abuse be prevented?

Talking openly and honestly with your teen and keeping a healthy home life may prevent your teen from trying alcohol and drugs.

You can help prevent substance use by using these tips:

- Talk to your child early about what you expect of his or her behaviour toward alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. If your teen thinks that you will allow substance use, he or she is more likely to try drugs or alcohol.
- Keep your teen busy with meaningful activities, such as sports, cultural activities, church programs, or other groups.
- Expect your teen to follow the household rules. Set reasonable consequences for bad behaviour, and consistently carry them out.
- Keep talking with your teen. Praise your teen for even the little things he or she does well.
- Know your child's friends. Having friends who avoid cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs may be your teen's best protection from substance abuse.
- The BEST way to prevent is by modelling responsible attitudes and behaviours towards alcohol, tobacco, prescription drugs and substances. From a young age our children watch us. If you have a problem the best thing you can do is to model humility and get help for yourself to help you live a healthier lifestyle.

For assistance with a substance abuse problem with your teenager you can contact any one of your local Métis Nation of Ontario Health Branch Offices or the MNO office in Ottawa at 1-800-263-4889 and ask for Health Services.



This is a new drug known as "Strawberry Quick"

by *Shelley Gonneville*

Something very scary is happening in the schools right now that we all need to be aware of. There is a type of crystal meth going around that looks like strawberry pop rocks--the candy that sizzles and 'pops' in your mouth. It smells like strawberry and it is being handed out to kids in school yards. They are calling it 'strawberry meth' or 'strawberry quick'.

Kids are ingesting this thinking that it is candy and being rushed off to the hospital in dire condition. It also comes in chocolate, peanut butter, cola, cherry, grape and orange.

Please instruct your children not to accept candy from strangers or even from friends who may have been given it and believe it is candy. Tell them to take any that they may have to a teacher, principal, or parent immediately. Help raise awareness and prevent tragedies by sharing this information.

Shelley Gonneville is the Health Branch Services Community Development Support Worker and Aboriginal Healing and Wellness (AHWS) Supervisor.

Health Career Support Program on hold pending funding confirmation

Be advised that the **Health Careers Support Program** is still on hold pending confirmation of funding from Health Canada. We are not accepting applications at this time. The original deadline of June 2, 2008, for student applications is also being delayed until further notice. With confirmation from our funder, an advisory will be circulated via email; the MNO's web site; posters at all MNO offices and (pending date of printing) an announcement provided in the *Métis Voyageur*. Again, this program is NOT cancelled but only on hold as we anticipate positive news in the near future.

Thank you for your time and understanding.

Loma Lynn Rowlinson,
Métis Human Health Resources
Tel: 613-798-1488 xt.113

Is a Big Fat Diet the key to diabetes?

PLEASE NOTE: The research in this study is still being evaluated. Anyone taking medication for diabetes or high blood pressure should consult their doctor before starting a low-carb diet.

By Linda Lord

“The Aboriginal diabetes epidemic is the biggest, most serious health issue that confronts Aboriginal communities across the whole country,” says Dr. Jay Wortman.

Before 1945, diabetes was almost unknown among Canada’s native population. About that time people who had lived on a low-carbohydrate diet of caribou, seal, fish, shell fish and berries switched to refined carbohydrates. Obesity and type 2 diabetes followed. Why do Aboriginal people have three to five times the rate of the general population and why are native children developing a disease that normally hits adults?

Wortman says: “In evolutionary terms, it's a blink of an eye....And [in] that very small period of time, there's no possible way their physiology could evolve to cope with such a big

“I'M MÉTIS FROM NORTHERN ALBERTA, BOTH MY GRANDPARENTS, MY MOTHER'S PARENTS AND MOTHER HAS DIABETES. SOME OF HER SIBLINGS HAVE DIABETES, AND ABOUT 14 MONTHS AGO, I REALISED THAT I HAD DIABETES.”

change in something like diet.”
“I'm Métis from northern Alberta, and both my grandparents, my mother's parents had diabetes. My mother has diabetes. Some of her siblings have diabetes, and about 14 months ago, I realised that I had diabetes,” he says.

“Because I have a knowledge of diabetes....I basically right away eliminated carbohydrates from my diet....In four weeks, I lost 18 pounds. My blood sugars normalised, my blood pressure became normal, and I felt much better,” Wortman says. “I don't know if you're ever not diabetic, but I think for me, I've been able to reverse the effects of diabetes through diet.”

Wortman says nutritionists don't like his advocacy of what is very close to the Atkins Diet, so he and some colleagues are designing a study. They want to put a First Nations community on a traditional diet and check the results. Personally, he has no doubts: Aboriginal people are designed to eat the way their ancestors did.

The study diet is based on a traditional diet of such foods as wild salmon and oolichan grease, but also includes modern market foods—even bacon and eggs—foods that have protein and fat but no starch or sugar. Pasta, rice, potatoes, bread and sugar are not permitted. For more information visit: www.drjaywortman.com

DR. JAY WORTMAN is a Métis physician from northern Alberta. After working in construction for ten years he returned to school to obtain a BSc in Biology and Chemistry at the University of Alberta, an MD from the University of Calgary and Family Medicine training at the University of British Columbia. After working in general practice he shifted to public health where he became the Associate Director of Sexually Transmitted Disease at the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control.



OOLICHAN: The Saviour Fish

Oolichan were the 'saviour fish' for many north coast First Nations. They were the first fresh food source to return to the communities after the long winter. Because they were so highly coveted as a food source and as a trade item, oolichan were preserved in many ways.

After catching the oolichan, the fish are eaten fresh (by boiling, baking or frying) or they are preserved to be eaten throughout the year. Preserving methods include sun-drying and smoking the fish or rendering the oolichan to collect the grease or oil.

Rendered Oolichan grease was used for medicinal purposes in earlier times. For example, a cupful of grease would cure a stomach ache or a cold. It also eased aching muscles and was rubbed on a mother after childbirth. (Harrington, 1953). The grease was used in many kinds of food preparation, and was a key trade item for the Nisga'a and other coastal First Nations.

Grease making was a key component of preserving oolichan. The grease was collected by boiling vast quantities of oolichan in giant pots and then filtering the grease that rose to the top of the pots.

Hawaiian Banana Popsicles

A HEALTHY SUMMER TREAT

Ingredients:

- 1 large banana
- 1 container low-fat caramel yogurt
- 1 pineapple ring
- 1 cherry pitted
- Dash of shredded coconut
- 5 chocolate chips
- 2 small marshmallows
- 1 Popsicle stick

Peel banana and dip in caramel yogurt covering all the banana. Place pineapple ring over tip of banana and place half of the way down to make a sombrero brim. Cover banana above brim with shredded coconut.

Place marshmallows for eyes, cherry for nose and chocolate chips for mouth. Stick goes in the cut end of banana. Freeze for 2 hours.

Eat frozen to avoid losing eyes, mouth and nose.

Recipe by Tera Lynn Copegog, AHWS Coordinator; Port McNicoll submitted by Tracy Bald.

MNO Education and Training Branch Seeks Interested Candidates For REGIONAL APPROVAL AND MÉTIS AWARD COMMITTEES Across Ontario

Regional Approval Committees (RAC) are responsible for reviewing and recommending training and employment funding requests.

TIME COMMITMENT: Although requests are made throughout the year, reviews can be completed via fax and /or email. The number of requests varies depending on client case load and budget availability

EXPENSE: Costs associated with the review and recommendation of requests are covered by the MNO

APPLICANT MUST BE MÉTIS. An understanding of labour market issues and employment and training services is an asset.a

These committees play a crucial role in the delivery of programs and services to Métis people across Ontario. If interested please forward your resume to gylainec@metisnation.org or via fax at 613-722-4225.

Reading the Signs of Substance Abuse

By Ernest Matton

Addiction Behavioural Specialist

How many times have you heard stories about youth and substance use or abuse, maladaptive behaviour, and so on? Now, how many times have you heard friends, family, or neighbours say, “not my kids”? Let me give you a scenario.

It's four in the morning and your teenager is still not home. As parents, you are paralysed with anxiety and fear. You have called every possible friend with no success. You wait by the phone for what seems like an eternity.

When your 16 year old finally arrives, you recognise the red-dened eyes and the odour of alcohol and marijuana. You have been increasingly suspicious of substance use, but when you

confront your teen you are greeted with anger and defensiveness.

As parents, you begin to reflect on the changes that you see in your child. You remember a time when your teen was an “A” student who was actively involved in sports and extracurricular activities. Now you are getting frequent calls from school indicating that s/he is skipping classes, and there has been a drop in grades. The school complains of disrespect and defiance towards teachers and regulations. There have been frequent suspensions and expulsions.

You realise that s/he has begun to associate with different people and shows little interest in old friends. You recognise that your child has become more secretive and withdrawn from the family and increasingly vague about the company s/he keeps,

“YOU REMEMBER A TIME WHEN YOUR TEEN WAS AN “A” STUDENT WHO WAS ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN SPORTS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.”

and where s/he spends time.

S/he seems to have money but no job, and you have been suspicious that s/he has stolen money or possessions from family members. This has gotten to the point where you keep your valuables locked-up at all times, and you are concerned that trouble with the law may be next.

You have found drugs and drug paraphernalia, but s/he has blamed others or gotten very defensive. You have seen changes in eating and sleeping patterns which can go from one extreme to the other.

You desperately search for answers to help you explain where things went wrong, but confrontations often result in arguments. As parents you begin to blame one another. In the end, you feel more frustrated and helpless. Your family life has become an emotional roller coaster. The atmosphere seems to revolve around your child and there is one crisis after another.

You recognise that your other children are suffering because all of the emotional energy is focussed on the problem child. It seems you are always have a knot of fear in your stomach. You have

become frightened of how your child will react, as s/he becomes increasingly irritable. Everybody walks around on eggshells.

As parents, you have tried everything from grounding to keeping him/her from friends, but the situation seems to be out of control. If the above scenario is familiar, take heart, you are truly not alone.

In up-coming articles I will talk about how to build and maintain healthy relationships; anger release; signs of addictions, as well as specific workshops that I will be conducting in the near future.

For more information, or to book an appointment please call (705) 533-1579.

Ernest Matton, ICADC, EFAP, is an Addictions Behavioural Specialist and an EFT Practitioner.

Talking Aboriginal Health

HAMILTON AND WELLAND MÉTIS ATTEND HEALTH CONFERENCE AT SIX NATIONS

by Glen Lipinski

On February 29, March 1st and 2nd, 2008, approximately 80 invited Métis and First Nations people came together from across the Hamilton, Niagara, Haldimand, Brant (HNHB) LHIN to participate in a weekend (three-day) Aboriginal Health Search Conference at the Six Nations Reserve in the Grand River Territory. (30 minutes west of Hamilton)

Representing the Métis were Steve Quesnelle, Rick Paquette, Tammy Wintle, Rebecca Vander Sanden, Doris Lanigan, Kathleen Lannigan, Glen Lipinski, Natalie Lloyd, Judy Trott, Marcel Labelle and Ed McCarten.

The conference was organised by members of the "Health Opportunities for Aboriginal People" (HOAP) committee. Glen Lipinski sits on the committee representing the Métis Nation of



Ontario. HOAP committee members decided to host the conference using the "conference search" method. A conference search is "a participative planning event that enables people to create a plan for the most desirable future of their community or organization".

The HOAP committee developed a search question that would open doors to local Aboriginal health planning. The ques-

tion the committee chose was "What should the health care experience be for Aboriginal people?"

The conference began on the Friday evening with registration and opening ceremonies. Welcoming remarks were presented by elected Chief Bill Montour and hereditary Chief Arnold General.

Participants were asked to draw on their personal and family experiences concerning the

health care system through comments on "Our Shared History". Throughout the weekend there was a common desire to focus on health promotion and prevention.

"Recent Trends" influencing Aboriginal health care were explored, such as mental health, care for the elderly, and health of children/youth. Participants also took part in a visioning exercise, imagining 10 years into the

future. What would health care look like? Who did you work with to get there? What major barriers were overcome? What programs policies or structures exist in this future? Each group presented their vision of the future.

On Saturday evening there was a social event featuring Iroquois singers, a youth drum group and Métis fiddlers. It was a very diverse group of Aboriginal talent that was much appreciated by those attending the social.

The conference was very interactive with a lot of ideas and knowledge flowing throughout the weekend. People were extremely friendly and helpful. Everyone felt comfortable and welcome.

This very successful conference was only the first step in a process that will eventually maximise collaboration and understanding of Aboriginal health care in the HBHN LHIN.

PCMNO PROFILES:

TIM PILE, SECRETARY-TREASURER

Continued from page 6

2005 election lead to research at the archives in Ottawa. The necessity to complete the verification process had to connect his family to the historic Métis community of Peace River. While at the archives in Ottawa researching information to confirm his application for Métis citizenship with the new requirements, Tim became fascinated with the lives of his ancestors. Such books as "Peace River Remembers" and the diary of Ida Cameron enthralled him.

In 2005 Tim and his two daughters were able to travel to Peace River where there were many honorariums to Ida. She was an example to strive to live up to. Knowing the hardships that his ancestors overcame with willpower and perseverance has strongly influenced Tim to stewardship of the Métis culture and traditions. The trip included a visit to the historic community of Batoche which cannot be viewed without recognising the atrocity of the famous battle. The true history of the Métis is a shame to the Canadian government. On a lighter, but physically taxing note, Tim and the girls also canoed (upwind) for 10 kilometres on the Peace River.

Tim Pile graduated with a BA of Technology Photographic Arts from Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, Toronto, Ontario, in May 1981. Since 2001, Tim has been the Secretary Treasurer of the Métis Nation of Ontario and the Provisional Council Métis Nation of Ontario. His main responsibilities as Secretary Treasurer are to ensure the smooth running of administration and operations with an annual budget exceeding \$14 million. Tim holds the portfolios for Housing and Non Nuclear

Power Development for the Métis Nation of Ontario. Tim is also involved in a local Thunder Bay company (Superior Thermowood) that promotes environmentally responsible added value wood products for North America. Prior to this work, Tim was a marketing representative for a Fortune 500 Company. In Thunder Bay and surrounding communities, he worked directly with decision-makers in small businesses and large corporations. Tim is also a professional and hobby photographer as any attendee of our AGAs will attest to. Tim uses all his life experiences to advance the agenda of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

In addition to this work, Tim represents the Métis Nation of Ontario chairing the MNO Finance Committee and Lakehead University Aboriginal Management Council. Tim represents the Métis Nation of Ontario as a member of the Aboriginal Reference Group for the Northern Ontario School of Medicine at Lakehead University West Campus. Tim has served as a Lakehead University Board of Governor member for four years actively participating on a number of committees. He has been an active volunteer within his community at the Lakeview Presbyterian Church and Thunder Bay Shelter House. The mandate of the MNO has become a lifestyle for Tim. Accountability of government, educating the population about Métis issues, seeking to advance awareness of Métis history, and building a strong nation through community councils with access to health, education and housing are what he will be striving towards.

T: 807-476-4779

E: timp@metisnation.org

MNO HEALTH SITE NEWS: **RENFREW**

Balancing on our toes

by **Linda Thibodeau**

Community Wellness Worker

It looks like the sun has decided to shine upon us. What a welcoming sight after a long, long, long winter! (Did I forget to say LONG?) LOL!

I had a Foot Care Clinic booked for March 5th with the wonderful girls from the Southern Ontario Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative (SOADI) and the capable hands of reflexologist, Denyse Joly-MacLean and chiropodist, Kim Grout. Well, that day arrived like the roar of an angry lion; the snow was flying every which way in the howling winds and the visibility was next to nil. The weather man's outlook for the rest of the day was not promising--freezing rain, sleet, more snow and so forth.

I started to fret. These poor girls had travelled from so far to put this clinic on. What would we do? Surely no one would come out in this weather. After all, the school buses were cancelled; the taxis were cancelled, and more and more events were being cancelled as the minutes went by.

But our eternal optimist continued to prepare for the clinic. The clock kept ticking away and I kept helping and wondering if all this was in vain. My mind was going crazy thinking about all the "what ifs" then, oh my goodness, I remembered, I had called the newspaper to do a story for promotional purposes. What would happen if no one was here? Blast that weather! Is this what they call Murphy's Law?

At 10:15 AM the door opened; our first person for foot care service was here, followed by a steady stream of people from that point on. While some were getting their feet done others were enjoying a healthy lunch and hav-



CONTACT

LINDA THIBODEAU

Community Wellness Coordinator

236 Stewart St., Suite 102

Renfrew, ON K7V 1X7

tel: 613-432-6499

fx: 613-432-8009

E: lindat@metisnation.org

ing their questions related to diabetes nutrition and exercise answered by the knowledgeable SOADI worker, Carol Loft.

By day's end, I realised that despite the fact that the buses were cancelled and taxis were not running due to the storm, 23 people managed to find their way to this foot care clinic in a raging storm. When people press through this type of weather to get to a clinic I think it's a pretty clear indication of a need in a community. Needless to say I was and still am impressed by the

SOADI girls' optimism while they prepared for the clinic and by the clients who persevered through the storm.

On May 7, we held a Mother's Day tea followed by a relaxing foot soak. Carol Loft joined us again to share her knowledge and to provide basic Diabetes 101 education sessions.

These appendages we have attached at the end of our legs, called "feet" often get neglected and need to be given much more care and consideration. We take them for granted; use and abuse them; wear inadequate foot wear for the sake of fashion and we expect them to carry on with their duties without complaint like good little soldiers. We assume that they will always be there, healthy and strong to carry us about from day to day.

We now know that for some of us who have neglected to care for our feet--be it through lack of knowledge or lack of resources--the cost of this neglect can be high in more ways than one. Some have had limbs amputated and some live in constant pain. I recently had the opportunity to speak with a lady who had two toes amputated. She told me she never would have imagined that two small toes off one foot could cause such imbalance. She feels like she is always leaning forward or always going to fall.

The Creator made everything about us in a certain way for a reason. He created us perfectly balanced. If we take any of that balance away, no matter how small, we will feel it.

Thank the Creator for every good thing He has given you, for the balance in your life. Never take any thing for granted and take GOOD care of what He has given you.

What Are Your Health Priorities

MNO HEALTH BRANCH IS HERE TO HELP

by Jason Jamieson



The current climate of uncertainty regarding the renewal of the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy (AHWS) and its MNO programming across the province has prompted reflection upon many important questions for Métis people. The questions that come to mind for each of us are important ones, and they are as diverse in their nature as our Nation is in citizenship. I have spoken with many people in the Métis nation over the years and have come to understand that "health" is not a static term for us, but rather an insufficient name given to a primary and continuously evolving element of our nature.

The idea of a holistic model for health is an effective theory in that it helps us begin to understand that our wellness cannot exist in isolation—neither from ourselves nor from others. What this means in simple terms is that each part of our existence—whether it is physical, mental, emotional or spiritual—continually impacts the other elements of our being. The bind between our quadrants of existence has been presented to our Health Branch workers in many ways such as the tendency to numb the body with drugs or alcohol to reduce the emotional pain of past sexual abuse, or in a noted reduction in depression once spiritual activities have been introduced to a family. Whatever the relationship between quadrants looks like, health and wellness matters affect the entire spectrum of our being.

Further, our interactions with others on personal, community or national levels also produce effects. If we model positive behaviours in our community, it becomes easier for those around us to adopt similar values. If we choose to support one another, it becomes easier for our culture to thrive within mainstream society. If we lobby to promote values, services and practices that are important to us, it becomes easier to access support and opportunities that will be relevant to our own heritage and sense of identity.

This line of thought brings me once again to a question that has haunted me for a decade: What is important to us? For that matter, what is health? To reach our potential we need to give serious thought to the matter. You could ask these questions to 10 different people and receive 10 answers that may be similar, but

continued next column ...



Three letters that change your life

by Chelsey Quirk

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), sometimes called "Lou Gehrig's Disease", is a devastating and fatal disease described by the degeneration of a select group of nerve cells and pathways in the brain and spinal cord.

ALS is normally noticed in the legs, arms, throat, or the upper chest area. Those affected may begin to trip and fall. Some may notice muscle loss in their hands and arms and some find it hard to swallow and may begin to slur their speech.

The effects of ALS usually strike before a positive diagnosis can be made, debilitating patients before they have a chance to understand the severity of the disease.

It is difficult to diagnose because there is no specific test to positively confirm or deny ALS. It

is usually done through a 'diagnosis of exclusions'. A number of neurological tests are done to rule out diseases with similar symptoms. As the symptoms worsen, ALS is often the reason.

There is no cure for ALS, but there is a way to help.

The ALS Society of Ontario is excited to announce this year's *WALK for ALS* to be held in 25 communities across Ontario including: Alliston, Almonte, Barrie, Belleville, Brampton, Cobourg, Cornwall, Durham, Halton, Hamilton, Kingston, Kitchener/Waterloo, London, Newmarket, Niagara Falls, Mississauga, Ottawa, Parry Sound, Smiths Falls, Stratford, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Timmins, Toronto and Wingham.

The *WALK for ALS* is designed to increase awareness of ALS and raise money for equipment and support services for people living with ALS, as well as research to find a cure.

TEN FACTS ABOUT ALS

#1 ALS MAY ALSO BE CALLED

- Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis;
- Sclérose latérale amyotrophique (SLA);
- Lou Gehrig's Disease;
- Motor Neuron Disease (MND);
- Maladie de Charcot.

#2 ALS IS A PROGRESSIVE NEUROMUSCULAR DISEASE

- Nerve cells continue to die.
- Voluntary muscles become paralyzed.
- The senses are unimpaired and the intellect may remain unaffected.

#3 ALS CAN STRIKE ANYONE

- Male or female;
- Any ethnic origin;
- At any age.
- Some have been diagnosed as teens.
- Usual onset is in middle age.

#4 90% DIE WITHIN THREE TO FIVE YEARS OF DIAGNOSIS

- Some will die within a few short months;
- Some will live longer than five years.

#5 SOME CASES ARE HEREDITARY.

- Less than 10% are familial ALS;
- ALS is not contagious.

#6 APPROXIMATELY 3,000 CANADIANS CURRENTLY LIVE WITH ALS

#7 EVERY DAY TWO OR THREE CANADIANS DIE OF ALS

- ALS is the most common cause of neurological death in Canada.

#8 ALS AFFECTS THE WHOLE FAMILY.

- 90% of care is shouldered by family caregivers.
- ALS is a costly disease—emotionally, physically and financially.

#9 TEN PROVINCIAL ALS SOCIETIES PROVIDE QUALITY CARE TO THOSE AFFECTED BY ALS:

- Information and referrals;
- Support for persons with ALS and their family;
- Equipment;
- Advocacy.

#10 THE ALS SOCIETY OF CANADA

- FUNDS research for a cure;
- SUPPORTS Provincial Societies to serve immediate needs;
- PROVIDES information to build awareness.
- www.als.ca

For more information, please visit www.alsont.ca

from first column ...

will also have very different elements unique to the experiences and values of the people you are speaking with. I believe that it is these differences that are most important to us.

Certainly there are many collective health and wellness priorities that could be agreed upon by the masses: clean air, clean water, access to food and shelter, hospitals, police, etc. But beyond the basics, how do we continue to expand our understanding of health? Is education more important than religion? Should a strong economy be valued above the environment? How much physical exercise is enough? Do we need different laws to protect our children? Should we spend our money on crisis workers or on mental health workers? Is a mainstream service effective enough to address the needs presented by culture and heritage?

The only thing clear to me is that finding a definition of health is a difficult undertaking with no guarantee of consensus. Having acknowledged this challenge, however, there are a few principles that each of us can observe towards empowering ourselves to healthier lives.

1. Seek balance in your life.

If you are focussed on only some of the quadrants of your being, the others will suffer. If one area suffers, eventually the others will as well. On the positive side, if you make improvements in one area, it will be easier to make improvements in the others.

2. Be aware of your values.

Explore the things that are important to you, and be honest with yourself about your feelings. Honesty is an important part of learning about who you are.

3. Make informed decisions.

You owe it to yourself to ask questions, gather information and think about something before you make a decision. You are the only person living your life, so it is up to you to ensure that the choices you make will be in line with your needs, values, best interest and your resources and/or limitations.

“What is important to us? For that matter, what is health? To reach our potential we need to give serious thought to the matter.”

It is my hope that you will reflect on who you are as a Métis person, what your healing and wellness priorities might be, and how you can act to affect the changes that are important to you. Finally, I would encourage anyone who feels that they may need help with something in their life to seek it out. There are many qualified and caring MNO staff in place with an important understanding of Métis needs and history. We are in place to help you with whatever you need, as best we can, and without making any judgements.

For further information about available MNO health services, call toll free: 1-800-263-4889.



MNO LONG TERM CARE PROGRAM:

Transportation Services

The Métis Nation of Ontario, through the Long Term Care Program, offers transportation services at no cost to frail, and at risk elders, and people of all ages with a chronic condition.

Transportation is offered from Monday to Friday, between 8:30 AM and 4:30PM. Anyone, self-identified as Métis is eligible.

In the Ottawa region, we need volunteers in order to offer this service. You can help by volunteering once a week (1-3 hours) according to your availability. (We pay 48¢ per kilometre to help with the high cost of gas.) You will receive the satisfaction of knowing that you made a difference in someone's life because you were there. Anyone interested in either receiving the service or volunteering or to receive more information, please contact the Health Branch Services Co-ordinator at 798-1488 ext.126

— Carmen Prigent, LTC Co-ordinator, Ottawa

FORT FRANCES | UPDATE (AND SOME CORRECTIONS) ON THE HEALTH IN A BOX PROGRAM:

Everyone deserves nutritious food



by Anne-Marie Armstrong

The Healthy Living Food Program began in November, 2006, as a result of the Coalition for Kids group identifying a need for accessibility to healthy and economical fruits and vegetables in our area. A committee with partners from Métis Nation of Ontario Healthy Babies, Healthy Children and Aboriginal Health and Wellness program workers, Gizhe-

waadiziwin Health Access Centre, Northwestern Health Unit, and Valley Diabetes was established. Each agency has specific duties related to the program with much in-kind work happening. Administrative costs are minimal but include such things as bags for the produce, and are covered by the \$20.00 food box cost. There has never been corporate sponsorship involved.

We started with 40 boxes in November of 2006, and by March, 2008, the number had risen to 638 boxes.

The Healthy Food Box is available to anyone regardless of age

or income. A few changes have been made since our program began. The \$20.00 and the order form are now brought to the Northwestern Health Unit at 396 Scott Street on or before the first Wednesday of the month.

The third Wednesday of the month is busy with volunteers filling the boxes at the Sunset Country Métis Hall at 714 Armit Avenue. Food Box pick-up happens between noon and 5:00 p.m.

The food is ordered through local distributors, and we also try to fill the boxes with local farm produce when it is available. We work very hard to make sure that

fresh produce goes into our boxes. Each box contains in-season fruits and vegetables with basic items such as potatoes, carrots, onions, lettuce, apples, bananas and oranges as our staples. Our boxes have at least 15 items and usually more. A newsletter with nutrition tips and recipes based on the contents of the box has always been included with the food box.

We receive many comments about how the Healthy Living Food Program has changed the way people eat and is promoting healthy lifestyle choices for young and old.

The Healthy Living Food Program would not be where it is without the hard work of its committee members, and of course our volunteers. Volunteers help set up the hall, prepare the boxes, and help during the pick up time. We also have high school students earning their volunteer hours with our program. Our Métis community should be proud of our direct involvement in this program.

If you would like to help with any part of the program, or need any information, please contact Anne-Marie Armstrong at the Sunset Country Métis office.

MÉTIS HEALTH

Kenora Métis take in great music

by Martin Camire

The Kenora Catholic District School Board hosted a cultural event at Thomas Aquinas School that included awesome music from Sierra Noble, her guitarist and Tom Jackson on April 22nd.

The Kenora Métis Council sponsored 20 Métis Elders and citizens to attend this event through a New Horizons Seniors' grant.

This is the third time I witnessed Sierra's performances and I never heard her sing until this time. Her voice is as amazing if not better than, her fiddle playing. Sierra's gift is sharing herself from the heart and I am proud to be somehow related to this young star. Tom Jackson had everyone in stitches with his many jokes and expressions.

Martin Camire is the Health Services Coordinator (LTC/CTC) for the Kenora Métis Council.





Captain's Corner

BY KEN SIMARD
CAPTAIN OF THE HUNT, REG. 2

It's that time of year again, so here are some tips before you go boating.

- Provide those on shore with a description of your boat: length; name; licence number; engine type; make and model; number of persons on board; phone number.
- Provide someone information about your trip: point of departure; intended destination; proposed route; estimated time of arrival; phone number for your destination.
- Leave a copy of a float plan with the marina office, Canadian Coast Guard, or a trusted friend or relative before you depart.
- Remember to notify people if you change your plans.

Métis Nation of Ontario Health Branch Staffing News:

MNO Health branch's new faces and places

by Doug Wilson
MNO Chief Operating Officer

Two new employees have been added to Health Services Branch in order to better serve our communities.

Amanda Cox has accepted the position of Co-ordinator in the Community Action Program for Children at the Baptiste Lake Métis Council office. Amanda has been working in the childcare and family support field for 14 years, with experience planning, organising, co-ordinating and implementing a variety of child and family activities.

At the Sunset Country Métis Council office in Fort Frances, Wendy Kabel has accepted the maternity leave backfill position of Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Co-ordinator. Wendy has a diploma in Early Childhood Education and has primarily worked in education and the care of children.

Loma Rowlinson has accepted the position of Métis Health Human Resources Co-ordinator in the Ottawa office. Loma has been working with the MNO and other Aboriginal organisations for over 10 years in various capacities, most recently as MNO's Provincial Telehealth Medicine Co-ordinator. Some of the duties of that position will continue, as well as her strong commitment and dedication to MNO citizens.

Bobbie Burns, formerly Primary Health Care Manager in head office, has replaced Doug Wilson as the new Director of Health Services.

Welcome to our new staff, Amanda and Wendy, and congratulations to Loma and Bobbie in their new positions.



Roberta (Bobbie) Burns replaces Doug Wilson as MNO Director of Health.



Wendy Kabel



Loma Rowlinson

Roberta (Bobbie) Burns
Director of Health Services
500 Old St. Patrick St.
Ottawa, ON K1N 9G4
Tel: 613-798-1488 ext. 129
TF: 800-263-4889
bobbieb@metisnation.org

Amanda Cox
CAP-C Coordinator
91 Chemaushgon Street
Bancroft, ON K0L 1C0
T: 613-332-2575
amandac@metisnation.org

Loma Rowlinson, Métis Health
Human Resources Coordinator
500 Old St. Patrick Street
Ottawa, ON K1N 9G4
Tel: 613-798-1488
or 800-263-4889
lomar@metisnation.org

Wendy Kabel
AHWS Coordinator
426 Victoria Avenue, PO Box 403
Fort Frances, ON P9A 3M7
Tel: 807-274-1386 or 888-793-3334
wendyk@metisnation.org

RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING AWARENESS PROGRAM:



Elders speak out about gambling

by Glen Lipinski

The new fiscal year brings with it some new and exciting gambling awareness announcements!

The first quarter of the new fiscal year will see the release of a new awareness DVD called *Aboriginal Gambling, Métis Elders Speak Out*, this video produced in the last quarter of the '07/08 fiscal year delivers some very dramatic, emotional and factual stories and opinions surrounding Aboriginal gambling in our communities. Through interviews with several Métis people a story is told of the hazards and realities of gambling.

Gambling as we all know is "risking losing anything of value on an outcome decided by chance". Gambling surrounds us in all of our communities, whether it be in the form of lottery tickets, scratch tickets, pull tab tickets, bingo, card games, race track betting, sports betting, internet gambling or casino games, gambling is nearly everywhere. We need to become as well educated as we can about the dangers, the facts and realities of gambling in our Métis communities. The Aboriginal gambling video may help explain some of the myths, misunderstandings and issues related to gambling. If

you get a chance make sure you have a look at the video!

Anyone attending the Annual General Assembly will have an opportunity to experience real live gambling at our very own "mock casino" during the assembly. A number of real games will be played by volunteers from the audience allowing people a chance to feel and see what it is really like to gamble with real (play MNO money) funds, make decisions about when they gamble, how they gamble and the frequency of their gambling. Participants will be given an amount of money to play with and at the end of their gambling session they will be able to see how they did, how much they have left, did they win or lose, can they still pay the household bills, pay the rent, buy groceries etc.

The exercise takes place live in front of interested observers and will provide awareness and education on gambling practices and promote informed gambling choices.

For information on these or other topics relating to gambling or substance abuse contact:

Glen Lipinski
Addictions Wellness Co-ordinator
20 Division Street, Welland, ON
Tel: (905) 714-9864
glenl@metisnation.org

OUR STORIES:



Healing Journey

By Wendy Kabel
*AHWS Co-ordinator
Fort Frances, ON*

In February of 2008, I was granted the opportunity to work temporarily with the Métis Nation of Ontario, as an Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy (AHWS) Worker in Fort Frances until June. I researched the position and found that I had already been working toward a life of traditional healing and wellness without even knowing it, and now I wanted to know more about facilitating this journey for myself, our clients and the overall Métis community.



At the time of writing, I have been in the position for approximately two months and I would like to share my findings about a holistic process to overall healing and wellness as it has presented itself to me, through Aboriginal and mainstream practices across the north and beyond.

The following are a few technical definitions of a holistic healing process: “the process of curing the mind or body”; “refers to invoking unified states of order, alignment, integration and balance within our entire system...creating synchronous relationships within the whole-being”; “Healing is the process whereby the cells in the body regenerate and repair to reduce the size of a damage”; “Restoration to health or wholeness, to perfect balance, harmony and equilibrium: physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually; movement from a lesser to a higher rate of vibration and state of consciousness”. All very well said I believe, and I hope to continue the learning, rather as a hands-on, evolution of a unique healing journey, based on cultural and historic practices, combined with relevant current research and knowledge.

After reading all of the technical definitions I asked myself: “What really is healing and wellness all about?” I researched everything I could and thought in order for me to

facilitate and to help others heal I had to know more. I decided to start with the following quote: “The cure of the part should not be attempted without treatment of the whole. No attempt should be made to cure the body without the soul. Let no one persuade you to cure the head until he has first given you his soul to be cured, for this is the great error of our day, that physicians first separate the soul from the body.” PLATO, a Classical Greek philosopher, who together with his teacher, Socrates, and his student, Aristotle, helped to lay the philosophical foundations of western culture.

By using the “Wellness Wheel”, the knowledge of our elders, health professionals and traditional medicines, we can journey toward the best we can be, by equally treating and equally maintaining the spiritual, physical, emotional and mental wholeness of ourselves, our families and our communities.

“Holistic Healing and Wellness” is essentially each person’s journey, including: spiritual; physical; emotional and mental aspects of the self; being in balance, and also in tune with our soul, our Creator, our consciousness or a greater power. Healing and wellness should be a natural part of everyday living, in which imbalances are identified so the symptoms can be recognised, healed and/or alleviated.

Sometimes our own natural ability to heal ourselves can be misplaced or hidden. Therefore, AHWS workers, among countless other health professionals, are out there to help you find your path. Thus, my journey as an AHWS worker began and continues as I learn how important it is to understand the holistic

healing and wellness process in order to facilitate and empower clients to help themselves begin their healing and wellness journey.

The practice of finding or repossessing one’s overall personal balance begins with the clients’ view of their life situations or the consequences of negative behaviours. The clients must then accept the nature of their life challenges and seek to consistently make choices to live a more balanced lifestyle. One should practice: acknowledging and expecting healing; stimulating a working-wellness-plan, and then establish a presence (always of the now-the present moment) of positive choices and continual healing and wellness.

Healing and wellness is certainly a gift that can be used by everyone, but it is also a central part of ancient, traditional, medical treatments. Physical illnesses can also be symptoms of a greater imbalance that

may or may not have a root cause in the physical. Holistic healing is not an “alternative” to conventional medical care and many conditions require professional medical treatment. Holistic healing and wellness is an ongoing journey of discovery, a search for more challenges and ultimately the transformation and renewal of consciousness. Acceptance of self as part of the spiritual “whole” or creator is a goal all of us should take a look into to find out more.

So, in closing I would like to thank the Métis Nation of Ontario, the staff, clients and community members for sharing part of their journey with me and I am grateful to have had the experience to add to my life journey. Adieu-va, jouer la sécurité, et la poursuite du Bonheur pour tout le monde!



Sudbury Métis Council partners with Shkagamik-Kwe Centre on cancer video

The Sudbury Métis Council is part of a collaboration which has brought about the creation of a cancer information video. The key impact of the video is to positively influence treatment and survivorship decisions, detect cancer earlier, identify the holistic strengths of the community and address language and cultural barriers in the description of treatment modalities.

The video, “In Our Own Words: The Cancer Journey”, premiered April 3rd in Sudbury. It is the direct result of a collaborative effort, led by the Shkagamik-kwe Aboriginal Health Access Centre. In 2006, the project got a \$225,200 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to produce the video. There has been much

interest and involvement in creating the video, which helps demystify cancer treatment, and promote cancer prevention and early detection for First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

“This initiative represents an important bridge between mainstream cancer care and the Aboriginal community,” said MPP Rick Bartolucci. “In increasing the understanding of cancer treatment within the Aboriginal community, promoting healthy lifestyles and highlighting the need for early detection, I believe this video will have a positive impact on Aboriginal communities in north-eastern Ontario and across the province.”

Using the voices of Aboriginal cancer survivors and their family members, the goal of the video is

to increase access to holistic cancer information, promote screening as a form of prevention and to encourage Aboriginal people to seek early treatment. In addition, mainstream medical personnel will also gain an understanding of the Aboriginal world-view of cancer management.

“Shkagamik-Kwe Health Centre is very excited to launch this creative, thoughtful and necessary initiative,” said Joyce Helmer, Board member Shkagamik-Kwe Health Centre and Chair of Cambrian College’s Wabnode Institute. “Storytelling and visual arts, which provide the basis of this video, are natural components of our traditional

**THE VIDEO,
“IN OUR OWN
WORDS: THE
CANCER JOURNEY”
PREMIERED APRIL
3RD IN SUDBURY**

ways of teaching and learning.”

The collaborative involves participation from: Shkagamik-kwe Health Centre, N’Swakamok Native Friendship Centre, the Aboriginal Cancer Care Unit of Cancer Care Ontario, the Regional Cancer Program of the Hôpital régional de Sudbury Regional Hospital, Weeneebayko Health Ahtuskaywin, Mnaamodzawin Health Services Inc., Canadian Cancer Society, the Sudbury Métis Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario, and Cambrian College.

The organisations gratefully acknowledge the significant financial support from Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Government of Ontario.

EDUCATION



NEW BUSARY FOR ABORIGINAL SINGLE MOTHERS

The National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation (NAAF) in partnership with the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres is pleased to announce the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres (OFIFC) Bursary Awards Program.

“There are added challenges for single mothers in urban centres,” said Sylvia Maracle, Executive Director of the OFIFC. “We thought that this bursary might address some of these challenges.”

The first agreement between OFIFC and NAAF was signed in 2007 with a \$50,000 bursary. In December of 2007 a second agreement was signed increasing the amount to \$100,000, which makes \$10,000 per year available annually over 10 years.

“This is a great opportunity for Aboriginal women in a city environment to receive much needed support while they attend training or post-secondary studies. We are delighted to partner in this, first of its kind, bursary. I congratulate OFIFC for the vital work they do in support of Aboriginal people in urban centres. We all know how tough it can be,” says Roberta Jamieson, CEO and President of the NAAF.

The bursary is available to mature Aboriginal women who live in an urban setting in Ontario and who have dependent children. These women must be enrolled in (or planning to attend) post-secondary studies or training and development programs.

The applications can be accessed on the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation web site at www.naaf.ca under the Education Programs link. This year’s deadline was March 10th, but it’s never too early to plan for next year.

CONTACT:
Rachel Hill
1-800-329-9780 (xt 020)
or email: rhill@naaf.ca

The National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation is a nationally registered non-profit organisation dedicated to raising funds to deliver programs that provide the tools necessary for Aboriginal youth to achieve brighter futures.

MÉTIS AIRCRAFT ENTHUSIASTS MAKES DOCUMENTARY

The Barnstorming Birdwoman takes flight

by Linda Lord

Michelle Goodeve's Fearless Widget Productions is pleased to announce the release of "Flying The Finch," the first in a series of DVDs on Tom Dietrich's, world-famous "Tiger Boys" Antique Aeroplane Collection, located on the grounds of southern Ontario's Guelph Airpark.

Métis host and Executive Producer, Michelle Goodeve—a Tiger Boys' pilot herself—learns all about the group's immaculately restored, 1940 Fleet Finch 16B Trainer from this episode's featured pilot, Bruce "Rotten" Paylor (an "airport kid" who's been flying antique aircraft since Michelle and her friends introduced him to aviation when he was 12 Years old!)

Flying The Finch, shot in high definition, tells Rotten's story; hears Tom Dietrich's tale of the acquisition and restoration of this classic WWII trainer, then takes you along on a flight, set to the original music of Lindsay Thomas Morgan.

DVD extras include: a complete pre-flight inspection; Tom Dietrich's full interview; the original 1940 pilot's notes supplied by WWII's Commonwealth Air Training Plan and a 180-pix slideshow imaged by Goodeve.

Half of the proceeds from *Flying The Finch* (and all future Tiger Boys DVDs) go to the restoration and upkeep of The Tiger Boys' Antique Aeroplane Collection.

For more, visit Michelle's web-site: www.fearwidg.com. To see a clip of Michelle landing her old 1937 Thruxton Jackaroo biplane, go to YouTube and search: "Alien Landings 2".

About Fearless Widget: Partners, Michelle Goodeve and Glenn Norman, chose *Flying The Finch* as their first project because it incorporates many of the goals they hope to achieve in their own productions. The couple, who have known each other since they were children, both learned to fly in their teens and have spent most of their adult lives working in television.

Michelle started off as a dancer at the tender age of three, then segued into acting. She got her start in the movie "Riel," which holds particular significance for Michelle as she is Métis. After that auspicious start, she appeared in numerous TV shows—*Danger Bay*, *Street Legal*, *Ready or Not*, *White Fang* and *Vulcan EFTS*, to name a few—but she is probably best remembered for her four-year stint as teacher "Ms. Avery", the only Native-Canadian on *Degrassi Jr. High* and its sequel, *Degrassi High* (the most successful franchise in Canadian television history!)

Glenn began his TV career as a film editor for Robert Lawrence Productions and worked on one of the first Muppets TV specials. He then moved to CTV where he spent three years as a film editor for the CTV National News.

The couple's love of flying led them to a friendship with author Richard "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" Bach. After several barnstorming tours and trans-continental air dashes in antique aircraft, Glenn made the career change to aviation writer.

When Michelle began to act, Glenn's desire to work with her morphed him into a playwright, then a television screenwriter. He wrote for shows such as *The Campbells*, *Danger Bay* (guest starring Michelle), *Night Heat*, and *Adderly*, as well as the couple's own *Vulcan EFTS* (which starred Michelle.)

In the early nineties, Michelle began writing screenplays of her own and won a Harold Greenburg grant for her First-Nations-themed screenplay, "Birdwoman." As they were now both screenwriters, the couple decided to pool their talents and become a story editing team. They flew to New Zealand to work as head writers on CTV's "White Fang" series (in which Michelle was also

Euro-hit *Houdi Gaudi*.

The TV work was fine, but the couple's desire to get back to their aviation roots led them to create *Barnstormers* for the Outdoor Life Network. Michelle starred in the project, and flew the Guelph-based Tiger Boys' 1937 Thruxton Jackaroo in the show (the same biplane the couple had owned and flown across North America in their early twenties.)

The pair also looked after the creative producer chores on "Barnstormers," so after the production was completed they decided the time had come to make their own shows. As a result, Michelle and Glenn's Fearless Widget Productions just released *Flying The Finch*, their first DVD. Several more DVDs are scheduled for release in the months to come, and many more projects will follow.

However, the most important film for Michelle will definitely be a documentary on the cross-Canada flight she plans to make in



Michelle Goodeve is a Métis actor, screen-writer, pilot and television producer. Whew.

a recurring character.) then helmed the writing chores on Global TV's "Mysterious Island."

After one of their *White Fang* writers asked the couple to pen episodes for a new animated project, Glenn and Michelle wrote for a string of animated series including, *Redwall*, *Mattimeo*, *Martin The Warrior*, *Malo Korrigan* & *The Space Tracers*, and the cult-

her own aeroplane, a 1929-style, open-cockpit "Pietenpol" aeroplane she and her friends have been rebuilding for the past four years.

One of Michelle's goals in making the cross-continent trek, is to over-fly the lands walked by her Métis ancestors. Michelle spent several years researching her family tree and managed to



Métis Senators, Reta Gordon (right) and Lois McCallum (left) welcome Métis documentary makers at the Ottawa airport.

MÉTIS YOUTH CHANGE THE WORLD ONE TV AT A TIME

by Joni Labbe

Twenty-five creative youths from the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council in partnership with Minwaashin Lodge and the Métis Nation of Ontario have been working together to promote healthy, equal relationships within our culture.

Over the last year these youths have taken leadership roles in spreading the word about domestic violence and the work that can and needs to be done in order for it to stop and not continue into future generations of the Métis nation.

The project, which was funded by the Ontario Women's Directorate, began during March Break, 2007, when I and four other youths (Anthony Powley, Hunter Leffleur, Sarah Aiken, and Arla Biron) were brought to Ottawa for Leadership Training. We were lucky enough to be participating with four Inuit youths and four First Nation youths who were all between the ages of 12 and 16. In this training we learned about our different Aboriginal cultures and how we are different and yet so much alike. We also created action plans for youth-led activities in our own communities that would help us bring the message of how Métis culture promotes healthy relationships.

As part of our action plan, the Métis youths created a documentary that completely surpassed any of our expectations. The documentary is approximately 20 minutes long and features youth engaged in a range of healthy cultural activities including canoeing expeditions,

T-shirt making, jigging, camping and spending time with our elders. The youths did an incredible job fusing issues of domestic violence with activities aimed at diverting youth away from the type of unhealthy relationships that we see all too often in the media, community and everyday life.

Our documentary launched at Sault College on March 6, 2008, to an enthusiastic audience of 50 youths, proud parents and project partners and was covered by CTV News of the North. Our Métis youth project was also featured at a provincial conference, "Communities Working Together to Prevent Violence Against Women" in Waterloo, where I presented as part of a panel titled "Engaging Youth in Stopping Violence".

As well as the documentary, we produced a newsletter, a Métis Fact Sheet, a blog site and many, many memories. This March Break when we returned to Ottawa once again for training in Media Arts we were warmly welcomed at the airport by our Métis Senators, Reta Gordon and Lois McCallum as well as Deb Chansonneuve from Minwaashin Lodge. As we sat in our nation's capital once again creating even more new peer education and prevention tools, we reflected on all the hard work that we and the other youths have completed, and realised that we are truly the next leaders of the Métis Nation of Ontario. ∞

Joni Labbe is Project Co-ordinator of "Métis Youth as Leaders" and Region 4 Youth Representative of the MNOYC.

identify more than 400 ancestors going back as far as 1588! She knows her antecedents came from Quebec, Penetanguishene, Drummond Island, Sault Ste. Marie, and the Red River region, but there are gaps in the story of her Métis ancestry; incomplete bloodlines she wants—needs—to fill in. For a "Birdwoman" like Michelle, there is no better way to

achieve that goal than to fly herself to the lands where her ancestors lived and find the answers first hand—possibly, if not probably, from Métis relatives she has yet to meet!

It will be the trip of a lifetime, and if all goes according to plan, Michelle will take off on that epic flight of discovery in the spring of 2009. ∞


Improving Aboriginal education in near north

by Anne Trudel

The Aboriginal Education Committee located in Region 4, would like to hear from parents and seniors with an interest in improving Aboriginal student education. Starting fall 2008, the committee will include parents and senator representation for the First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples. Since the three Aboriginal peoples are all distinct, our citizens must provide the Métis perspective. Representatives for the Métis Nation of Ontario, Brent McHale and Anne Trudel have been meeting with the Algoma Dis-

trict School Board (ADSB) and the Huron Superior Catholic School Board (HSCSB) which encompasses the Region 4 and Chapleau area. Each of the school boards has hired Aboriginal co-ordinators. Mona Jones of HSCSB and Carol Trudeau of ADSB have a vested interest in Aboriginal students. Both Carol and Mona are qualified teachers and First Nation women. The Ontario Government, specifically through the Ministry of Education have two primary challenges for the educational system to increase our Aboriginal students' level of achievement and close the gap between

Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students (Ontario, *First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework*, 2007). Our children's education is vitally important for their future as individuals and for the future of the Métis nation. Through the Aboriginal Education Committee, you have the opportunity to promote strategies that will enhance our Métis students' learning outcome. If you have questions and are not from Region 4, please feel free to contact Anne Trudel (mno-culture@shaw.ca) or the local Provincial Councillor in your region.



MAPPING ROOTS:
Perspectives of land, water in Ontario

Christi Belcourt
exhibiting new work at
Ode'min Giizis Festival

June 20 - July 12, 2008
ARTSPACE
378 Alymer Street
Peterborough, ON
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MÉTIS VOYAGEUR • ADVERTISING RATES & SIZES

The *Métis Voyageur*, the official newspaper of the Métis Nation of Ontario, is published six times a year. It has a print run of 12,000 and is mailed directly to over 10,000 households across Ontario. Copies are also sent to government, business and educational institutions throughout the province.

PUBLICATION SPECIFICS:

- 16 to 24 page tabloid-sized on newsprint
- 11" x 17" with a 5-column grid

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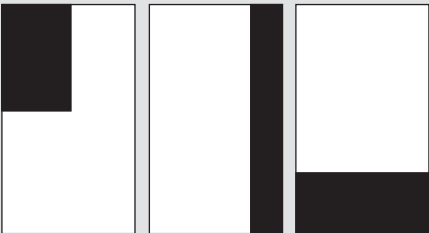
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vertical or horizontal
8"x5" or 2.5"x16" or 10"x4"



The following article was submitted to sootoday.com and with their permission is reprinted here. The article is written by Mitchell Case, a Métis Youth who participated in a youth conference hosted by the Alex Muir Urban Aboriginal High School, and sponsored by the Métis Nation of Ontario Health Services and the Algoma Council on Domestic Violence. This event was a great success, with a lot of positive feedback from the teachers, resource people and attendees. The Health staff are very grateful to Mitchell for submitting this wonderful article and for being a great resource person for us and the community. – **Michele Dale, Health Services Coordinator, SSM**

I Choose a Good Life

ABORIGINAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

by Mitchell (Mitch) Case
A Proud Métis youth

Alex Muir Urban Aboriginal High School played host for the day to approximately 100 Aboriginal and non-aboriginal youth and young adults for the 2008 Sault Ste. Marie Aboriginal Youth conference. The Métis Nation of Ontario Health Services Branch and the Algoma Council on Domestic Violence organised the youth conference. The conference was attended by students from various local high schools including the Urban Aboriginal Alternative High School. "The speakers touched on many issues affecting aboriginal youth growing up in the world today with a special emphasis on choosing to live a 'good' violence free life," summarised one youth.

Students sat down to the morning session after enjoying a wonderful, nutritious breakfast. The session was opened with a special song by the women's hand drum group, Waabshkizi Nimkii Kweok (White Thunder Women), followed by a welcoming address by Michele Dale of the Métis Nation of Ontario Health Services Branch.

Jayna Amting, the first presenter, was a young woman from London, Ontario of the Speers Society. "Donna Speers created it after her daughter Monica was murdered by an abusive ex-boyfriend. She wanted to save other girls from following in her daughter's foot steps" stated Amting. Jayna spoke of how to recognise a healthy relationship and more importantly the warning signs of an abusive relationship/partner. She explained the necessities of a healthy relationship, which include communication, respect, caring, trust and loyalty. Jayna spoke about the fine line between caring and jealousy. She went on to list the signs of an abusive relationship/partner such as isolation, guilt tripping, threatening, putting down, cutting off money, violent behaviour and making you reliant on them. Jayna also spoke about

what a person can do to help a friend who is in an abusive relationship. The youth had many questions about the legal responsibilities for a person who uses abuse in a relationship. Kirk Kinghorn, a retired Sergeant who is now the Domestic Violence Co-ordinator with the Anishinabek Police Services was on hand to answer law related questions. Mr. Kinghorn spoke about the cycle of violence and how it moves from one generation to another. He spoke about how his son-in-law, a police officer with Sault Ste. Marie Police Services, is investigating people for domestic abuse whose parents were investigated by Kinghorn. He also spoke about disturbing statistics in northern communities: 75% of aboriginal women are abused while only 20% of non-aboriginal women are abused. Kinghorn pointed to the residential school system, which First Nation and Métis children were forced into, as the most likely cause for the out of balance numbers.

The students then enjoyed a nourishing lunch including sandwiches and wraps, potato, macaroni and tossed salad, fresh veggies, fresh fruit, desserts and a variety of beverages. Willard Pine, a Ketegaunseebe Anishnabai (Garden River First Nation) Elder, gave a teaching about the seven grandfathers after lunch. Willard reiterated what Jayna had said earlier about the necessities of a relationship based on respect, trust, and love. He spoke about how alcohol and drugs were to blame for most of the abuse seen in aboriginal communities. "The creator does not create mean people; alcohol and drugs do," stated Pine. "The word 'love' only means as much as you are willing to put into the relationship you have with the person you said the word to. Love is just one word of many in the dictionary." Willard told a story about how to always look on the bright side. The story was of a time when his wife went into Wal-

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Drummers at Sault Ste. Marie Aboriginal youth conference.

Musicologist Anne Lederman
and fiddler Alyssa Delbaere-
Sawchuk jigging at Hart House

Fiddle Stories

PHOTOS: Bernard Leroux

Jiggin' in the Aisles at Toronto's Hart House

By Bernard Leroux

On the evening of May 24, 2008, at the University of Toronto's Hart House music room, John Arcand and James Cheechoo, two legends of the Métis fiddle, came together to perform with 11 youths, in a fundraising concert supporting Fiddle Stories – From Me to You, a project presented by the Métis Artists Collective (MAC) and Anne Lederman, renowned Métis musicologist.

The halls of Hart House were filled with rousing reels and jigs all evening in a lively event that had audience members jiggin' in the aisles by night's end.

James Cheechoo, accompanied by his wife Daisy on the wooden spoons and son Lawrence on guitar, joined the youths taking part in the *Fiddle Stories* mentorship project that culminates in the group participating at the North Atlantic Fiddle Convention this summer in St. John's Newfoundland August 2-8. John Arcand, recent recipient of the Order of Canada, (see page 26) joined the group on the day of the concert and finished out the week with the Cheechoos, conducting workshops for the project.

This was a chance of a lifetime for both youth and audience to enjoy two recognised treasures of traditional Métis fiddle styles as they came together to share a legacy that will now be passed on to young players and audiences into the future. The *Fiddle Stories* project led by Anne Lederman gives Aboriginal youth fiddlers from across the country

this unique opportunity to learn, perform and compete with the world's best.

The concert drew a wide range of audience members and media to the gothic music room of Hart House, which was filled to the brim. Group and solo performances were presented by John Arcand, James Cheechoo and family, the Métis Fiddler Quartet with Scott Kemp on bass, Ryan D'Aoust, Matthew Contois, Ruby John from Michigan, Alyssa and Nicholas, Delbaere-Sawchuk, Nora Pellerin and Alicia Blore of Toronto with Conlin Delbaere-Sawchuk accompanying on guitar.

Anne Lederman enlightened the audience throughout the evening with the background history of the music and anecdotes about the project. MAC representative and a key organiser of *Fiddle Stories*, Diane Vezina, addressed the audience to thank the project supporters, participants and organisers on behalf of MAC.

The evening was a great success for the *Fiddle Stories - From Me to You* project and will help ensure that the legacy of traditional Métis fiddling styles endures.

We were thrilled to see elders and youth alike, as well as many members of the MNO community from around Ontario in attendance. If you missed this historic performance, you have another opportunity to see this project in action at the Métis Arts Festival at Black Creek Pioneer Village in Toronto July 11, 12 and 13th. We hope to see you there.

For more information about MAC, the Métis Arts Festival or the *Fiddle Stories* Project, visit: www.metisartsfestival.com.



Ruby John



Hart House at the University of Toronto



Ryan D'Aoust



James Cheechoo

Fiddler John Arcand receives Order of Canada

In April, well known Métis fiddler, John Arcand, was presented with the Order of Canada by Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada. Created in 1967, the Order of Canada is regarded as the country's highest civilian award. It was created to recognise a lifetime of achievement, dedication to community and service to the nation.

"John Arcand is a master of traditional Métis fiddling and a musical ambassador for his culture. He has also been a driving force behind the preservation of unrecorded Métis tunes. He has applied his skills as a performer and educator to promoting and popularising this unique musical heritage. Through endeavours such as the John Arcand Fiddle Fest, and as a representative of western Canada at the Fiddles of the World Conference, he

has inspired other fiddlers to embrace this art form and has helped to bring it to light for both Canada and the world."

Arcand says he's "quite emotional and quite honoured" at the award.

"I guess I'm being blessed."

John Arcand grew up in the Big River area of Saskatchewan where he started playing fiddle at the age of six, coached by his father and grandfather. He has composed some 300 original tunes and recorded 14 albums. Arcand has also been teaching fiddle for more than 20 years to students of all ages—children to seniors—he currently has about 15 students.

John Arcand is an expert on the fiddle as a collector, luthier and appraiser. His hand-crafted instruments are highly valued.

Arcand returned from the investiture to join other veteran fiddlers and the next gen-

eration at a fund raiser for the John Arcand Fiddle Fest Raise the Roof Campaign. Organisers want to raise \$300,000 to build a permanent roof structure at the site of the annual festival.

Another fundraiser is the Big Bear Fiddle raffle. Interest in the hand-crafted instrument is so great that tickets are being purchased from all over North America, and a museum in Arizona has expressed an interest in buying "the Big Bear". Tickets are \$20. The draw will be made on August 10th. Call Vicki at (306) 382-0111 for tickets.



above: **A hide freshly cleaned.** inset: **Examples of Tracy Turk's bird ornaments and moccasins.**

Leather and Wood

TRACY TURK IS ANOTHER TALENTED MÉTIS ARTISAN WHO HAS CHOSEN TO TELL US ABOUT HER CREATIONS

by Tracy Turk

I thought I would share with you some of the things that I enjoy making. The bird statues/ornaments are made from river rocks and various pieces of metal. They can be left outside all year and make an interesting addition to a patio or pond area. My birds can be found in many backyards in this region.

The moccasins are made from deer leather. The very first ones I made were moose. I just finished making a men's size 10 1/2 for one of my clients.

However, making hand drums is my passion and fortunately I know some hunters who are kind enough to bring me back deer hides and heads. (I use the brains for tanning). I have been making hand drums

since the fall of 2006 and each drum has its own voice; no two are the same.

Through the labour intensive process it takes to prepare a deer hide for drums, moccasins, garments etc. I have gained a deep sense of appreciation of how our ancestors worked with their hands to make the things they needed in their daily lives. Our society doesn't make things the way earlier societies did; we just go to the store and buy what we need, ready-made.

When I got my very first deer hide I went to work on it right away—scraping the flesh and fat tissue and soaking and scraping some more. Then, the de-furring process was even more of a challenge, wow, all that thick, coarse winter fur the deer had. What a job it was removing all that fur!

My intention was to tan the hide, so I took a sledge hammer and cracked open the skull; reached in and scooped out the brains; put them in my blender to puree them; then put them in a sauce pan with some water and heated up the mixture. (Suffice it to say, I don't use that blender anymore.)

After soaking the hide in the brain mixture the next step was to build a smoky fire to soften the hide. Well that part didn't work out because I didn't have enough rotten wood and leaves to make

enough smoke; so, after an hour of standing outside in the cold and damp with just a little bit of smoke, I decided to cut a drum head and laces out of the hide and make a hand drum. This first hide made a beautiful 15" hand drum, and since then I have been making hand drums from all the deer hides given to me.

Last fall I was given four big buck hides which I kept in the freezer till I was ready to work on one. I have now upgraded from using my jack-knife and kitchen knives for scraping, to a very sharp skinning knife and scraping tools which make the job easier. I have made 15" and 12" drums and am currently preparing three hides to make more drums. I have discovered a natural method of keeping the drum heads from absorbing too much humidity and going out of tune. They stay nice and tight. Unfortunately, it's a trade secret, so I can't share it with you. Not too many women make drums, but I really enjoy it and hope one day I'll have a web site to display them on. So those are my hobbies, keeps me out of trouble.

Want to show off your skill? Send story and pictures to: llord@kingston.net

Tracy Turk is a Métis Nation of Ontario citizen from Hamilton.

Skate Star

Hollie McHale placed third in northern Ontario at the Skate Canada Competition, Festival of Stars, held in Sault Ste. Marie on February 16th, 2008. This event qualified her to compete at the provincial competition, Trillium Star Skate, held in Waterloo on March 8th. There she placed ninth in Ontario at the preliminary level.

Wiki singer sets sights on stardom



Another Aboriginal performer seems to be on her way to stardom. Bypassing the Canadian music scene, Crystal Shawanda, from Wikwemikong on Manitoulin Island, moved to Nashville alone at the age of 17. This young, dynamic singer/songwriter has become the first Native artist to be signed by a major record label (Sony BMG in Canada and RCA in Nashville) in the United States.

Crystal was recently featured on a six episode series on CMT titled, *Crystal: Living the Dream*. The series chronicled Crystal's dream of becoming a country music star. Part documentary and part "reality series", it followed Crystal's life over eight months, from signing her record deal to dropping her first single and playing the Grand Ole Opry.

Crystal's debut single, *You Can Let Go* has already been released to radio.

For more info visit: www.cmt.ca, YouTube, MySpace, Facebook, *You Can Let Go* is available on iTunes.

Métis Senators

Through good times and bad

It seems that everyday we are reminded of how fragile and precious life really is. Recently, the passing of a good friend who was a Métis Korean War veteran (who crossed over after having suffered a massive heart attack following knee surgery) brought this home to me in a most poignant way. Our time here on Mother Earth is so limited.

Then, two of our beloved MNO employees were recently injured in accidents. Bobbie Burns, Director of Health Services, was seriously hurt when she fell backwards from the top of a ten foot ladder. Hank Rowlinson was injured when a tree



SENATORS' SPOTLIGHT

BY **RETA GORDON**
PCMNO SENATOR

fell on him. All of these happenings brought home how tenuous life can be. The support of family and community helps us to deal with these crises and we become a cohesive group. Our Senators are often a focal point that many turn to in time of need or in seeking counsel. We all go through that circle of good times and bad times but our Senators are always there; they are the

backbone of our nation. Having said this, it is so important that the Senators attend the AGA, meetings, workshops, the Voyageur Games and as many community events as possible. It is important that they interact with their fellow Senators and citizens from across Ontario. It is important that we have our minds, hearts and spirits in tune with the

heartbeat of our nation. The job of a Senator is a working job. It is not just an honour or a form of recognition; it is an ongoing commitment. When our Senators gather I feel that heartbeat. Our Elders can stand tall and proud, confident in the knowledge that the Senators will guide the way by example and spirit and with a sense of who and what we are.

I am proud to have served with such outstanding Métis citizens many of whom I count among my closest friends and whose encouragement and counsel is something I cherish. As the representative of the Senators on the PCMNO Executive I draw on their support, their knowledge,

and their love of life and of our people. This is what gives me that little push to keep going. Their energy is my energy.

I would like to thank our elected officials past and present for their support and encouragement. The job of Senator is made so much easier because of our elected members of the PCMNO and because of the MNO staff at head office in Ottawa and throughout Ontario. I ask the Creator to keep them safe, guide them and look after them.

My job as Senator is not finished. I look forward to many more years working with our people and the PCMNO. To all I extend hugs and blessings.

I Choose a Good Life

from page 22

Mart while Willard waited outside in the car. She stayed for five hours and then returned empty handed, as there were no bargains. Willard said he could have gotten angry but he realised instead that she had given him a great opportunity. He had a chance to listen to his entire CD collection.

After a short break, students enjoyed Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niim (I am a kind man) presentation which has been shown to over 2000 people in Ontario. Ken McLean, a Métis man with Ojibwa connections to Ketegaunseebee Anishnabai (Garden River First Nation) and Urban Aboriginal Homelessness Co-ordinator for the Sault Ste. Marie Indian Friendship Centre, delivered the presentation. He spoke about love and explained, "most abuse stems from a lack of self esteem. You must respect and love yourself before you can love someone else."

The day, full of lessons on choosing a good life, was closed with songs from Waabshkizi Nimkii Kweok (White Thunder Women) hand drum group and an offering of tobacco to Mother Earth and the Creator. Everyone enjoyed them selves while learning and sharing.

Mitchell is looking forward to taking part in similar events in the future. He is a strong Métis youth advocate in our community, and is a very proud Métis person who you will always find attending events and activities such as this and always with his sash.

We always welcome Mitchell's help and participation at the Sault Ste. Marie site. It is with great pride we have the opportunity to watch as Mitchell grows from a Métis youth to a strong Métis man.

∞

Flying Colours

The Senator has a new flag pole. After 50 years of waiting, Senator Earl Scofield has a brand new flag-pole. It was fabricated by a couple of friends (Jim Turner and Roger Sleight) and installed in his front yard. The picture says it all!



Métis Cookhouse

by Gail LeBlanc

More than just a good cook, Gail LeBlanc has been busy with lots of things and brings us not only a recipe but an up-date

BBQ SEASON IS HERE AGAIN!

We have been coming and going on road trips since Christmas. We were down in Florida over the winter. Plus, I recently got back from visiting Washington with my girl friend. Now that summer is here, Ken and I will be taking off again in our Roadtrek. It is sooooo nice to be retired.

I still do Aboriginal presentations to schools and now I also go to retirement homes. The seniors are really glad and appreciate that someone is bringing this information to them. I just gave a talk to a group of engineers. They presented me with a \$500.00 donation for the Aboriginal children's program. I was so excited and grateful!

Ken has been after me to send you this recipe to share with your readers. It is a favourite he loves to make, not only in the summer on the BBQ, but has been doing it during the winter months in our oven. I am not a very big pork eater but this one is so good that I appreciate it when he plans to prepare it. Guests rave about it too.

Here goes: Yipee - summer has finally arrived and it's time to take out our BBQ. Here is a fabulous pork loin recipe my hubby likes to prepare for family and friends.



KOBE RANCH PORK LOIN

INGREDIENTS:	
4 to 5 lb. (2 to 2.5 kg) pork loin	
2 tblsp. black crushed peppercorns	
2 cups ranch dressing (any brand will do)	
3/4 cup President's Choice Memories of Kobe (the 2 minute miracle marinade)	

Place pork loin in a heavy plastic bag. Add the ranch dressing, crushed peppercorns and Memories of Kobe marinade. Seal well; turn a few times to coat the meat. Refrigerate for 6 to 8 hours or overnight.

Place pork loin on lightly greased grill over high heat and cook for 2 to 3 minutes per

side to sear the meat. Reduce heat to medium and cook with lid down for 40 to 50 minutes until internal temperature reaches 150°F (65°C) on meat thermometer. Turn meat 2 to 3 times while cooking.

Let stand 10 to 15 minutes before serving.

Enjoy.

Heaven’s Duvet

by Senator Earl Scofield

The clouds, full of grey moisture are heaven’s duvet, and cover
Mother Earth to keep Turtle Island warm. They drift in the
Direction, slowly but surely, that the Lord Jehovah has decreed.
They carry the moisture in the form of a shower or a heavy
Rain to nurture Mother Earth.

The rain is the blood of Mother Earth that gives life to all
Things; trees, grass, and flowers that provide food to all
Creatures, the animals, birds, bees, bugs, and humans. In the
Form of Jesus, the Creator of the universe, is responsible for all
Creation and loves us with a love of infinity. He is the great I AM
That created the clouds, the stars, the moon, the sun, the
Seasons and day and night.

What an awesome God he is, blessed be the Father,
Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen

I Heard My Language Crying Out to be Spoken

by Debra Malandrino

I heard my language crying out to be spoken.
I heard it from the rivers and the lakes of my home.
I heard it in the stories told by the Métis Elders.
I heard it in the wind.

I heard it from the rocks and the soil,
And from the tops of the hills in my valley.
I heard it in my heart crying to be spoken.
I heard it from my ancestors.

It is a part of me.
Without it I am broken.

Debra talks about her poem: I am Métis , born in
Lebret, Saskatchewan. I am a mature student studying at Trent
University in Peterborough, Ontario. I am doing a double
major in Indigenous Studies and English. My most recent
research was on the Michif language. Michif was spoken in our
home when I was a child but all that was lost when I was
brought to Ontario. Although I did not have the chance to
experience the language in Ontario, I never stopped reminis-
cing about the Métis culture and language. I hope this poem
will inspire those who have lost the language to take it back.

Spring Time

By Raymond D. Tremblay

Springtime! Extreme cold winds of
Winter giving way to the warmer and
Gentler breeze of spring. Birds nesting.
Trees budding. Rivers close to overflowing.
Ice quickly disappearing, and beautiful lakes
Reappearing thanks to the rays of Brother Sun.
Springtime, Mother Earth nurturing herself.
A time of rebirth and rejuvenation. A time
To establish new relationships and
To nurture those built on faith,
Compassion and mutual trust.
Springtime! A season of love.
New found vitality is in the air.
A time of eternal bonding. A season
Of extreme tenderness and gentleness.
An Incredible reserve of energy flowing very freely
Through the cosmos and every minute fibre of our being.
Springtime! The ideal season to celebrate mothering.
A precious time to celebrate all those Eves who
So generously give of themselves to nurture
Humanity's well being. A time to give
Many thanks to the Creator for
The divine gift of pure love.

MOON RIVER MÉTIS: SENATOR CONSIDERS RUN FOR PCMNO

by Ruth Wagner-Millington
Senator, Moon River Métis Council

First let me introduce myself. Moon
River has been a “council” with the
MNO for four years. I have been Sen-
ator since its inception. We have
accomplished a great deal during the
four years. I have struggled with the
idea of running for PCMNO Senator
because I like working with Moon
River Council and would miss that.
Still, I feel that I have a lot to offer to
the PCMNO.

I grew up knowing that I was
Métis. Dad would often talk about the
fact that if he had put the word Métis
on his first job application as a teacher
in 1926, he would probably not have
been considered for the job. Howev-
er, as a teacher, he had every summer
off. Everyday he prepared lessons for
the coming school year, and then take
me and my sister out. We summered
on St. Joseph Island near Sault Ste.
Marie where my Mother (not a Métis)
was born.

Dad would take us walking
through the bush, showing us how to
go silently, not stepping on any twigs
or dry leaves, and how to move so we
covered our shadows. We would
come right up to animals this way and
observe them. We learned how to sur-
vive in the bush if stranded there;
how to catch a fish without a line and
hook; how to make and use a snare;
how to use real line and hook and
exactly where to make it land to get
the catch; and how to use real snares;
how to clean and prepare our catch-
es; how to gather black walnuts and
boil traps in the walnut tea we would
brew, and set the traps with tongs so
our human scent wasn’t on them.
Dad also taught us never to take from
nature without giving back, and
thanking the Creator. We were shown
to leave a gift such as tobacco or
cedar as thanks.

Dad would also show us endlessly
how to watch the sun and the stars,
the angle the trees grew, the way
moss grew, the direction of any
stream or creek, to find our location
in the bush. Then, one rainy dull day,
while we were way out in the bush,
after we had been walking up and
down and back and forth and were
tired and wet and wanting to go
home, to our HORROR Dad disap-
peared! After the initial panic, my sis-
ter and I decided we would have to
get out on our own. We both were
quite concerned, and at one point my
sister was crying and said she thought
that Dad was trying to kill us! Hours
later we made it out to the road, and
there was Dad sitting 100 yards or so
farther along with a smile on his face.
When we dragged ourselves up to
him, he said he had wondered how
long it would take us to get out. The



Moon River Métis Council Senator Ruth Wagner-Millington.

next time Dad was ready to go adven-
turing my sister refused to go, and
Mother said that it was all useful infor-
mation and that we must go and
learn. To this day, I think it would be
hard to get me lost in the bush.

Dad would whistle tunes all the
time when he was working. Now I
know them to be Métis tunes, and can
fiddle them, but often I don’t know
the names of the tunes because I
heard them whistled. He would tell us
stories after dinner and years later he
would tell these same stories to my
children. Dad taught us Métis games
for outside and Métis string games
and finger shadow drama stories
inside. Sometimes he would whistle
and jig to his whistling at the same
time.

Every fall we would stand on a
piece of paper and Dad would trace
our feet, and send it to his Mother.
Then for Christmas we would receive
a beautifully beaded pair of new moc-
casins from Grandma.

From my contact with many citi-
zens of the MNO, I have become
aware that many citizens only recent-
ly found out that they were Métis, per-
haps while researching their family
tree.

I commend them for pursuing
their roots.

It is from the strength of my having
been brought up as a Métis that I feel
I have wisdom accumulated from my
upbringing which I could bring to the
position of PCMNO Senator. I would
like to see all sides of Métis culture
being taught and pursued at meetings
and AGA's. We have such a rich her-
itage. We are so much more than ille-
gal hunters and fishermen, and sadly
that seems to be the only part of
Métis heritage which hits the media

these days. I feel it is important to
teach our youth all the sides of our
heritage, and make the public aware
of events and happenings which show
our culture to its advantage.

When I phoned Senator Reta Gor-
don, and told her that I was consider-
ing running for PCMNO Senator, she
asked me to write something out
about what I have done in the past
year.

First, I think I should tell you that I
am by trade a luthier. That is, I make
and repair stringed instruments such
as fiddles, violins, guitars etc. I was
fortunate enough to have parents
who gave me years of music lessons
and I have diplomas in piano, big
church organ and violin. Many years
ago I played professionally in sym-
phony orchestras, and as pipe organ-
ist in several large churches, and cur-
rently I play with a classical music trio.
Three days a month I play fiddle tunes
for dancers who entertain at the three
different nursing homes in Brace-
bridge. I also teach violin and piano
and fiddle. I studied at Buczynski Vi-
olin Making Institute and at Ontario
College of Art to become a Violinmak-
er. Later, I was married to Sieg Wagn-
er, a Belgian, who was a wonderful
violinmaker and husband. He
changed the way I make new instru-
ments, and taught me how to restore
old and damaged instruments. Sadly,
he died of cancer. Later on, I married
again, a very nice gentleman named
Rod Millington. I just added his name
to mine since I am still “Wagner’s Vi-
olin Workshop” thus, the hyphenated
name. I have four adult children, and
many grandchildren. I have been
blessed with a wonderful life.

continued in our next issue...



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Education

BACKGROUND: Aboriginal Education Strategy

The McGuinty government launched Ontario's new Aboriginal Education Strategy last year with the release of the First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework.

Its purpose is to help close the educational gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students and to increase knowledge and awareness about Aboriginal histories, cultures and perspectives among all students.

The Aboriginal Education Strategy includes initiatives designed for schools and school boards. It also contains initiatives to encourage and sustain Aboriginal student success, such as:

- Establishing an Aboriginal Education Office to support the learning and achievement of Aboriginal students;
- Improving literacy and numeracy skills;
- Increasing the number of Aboriginal staff working in school boards;
- Encouraging parents to get more

involved in their children's education;

- Integrating information about Aboriginal culture, histories and perspectives throughout the Ontario curriculum to increase knowledge and awareness among all students;
- Building partnerships with Aboriginal communities and organisations to develop strategies to support student achievement;
- Funding of the Native Counsellor Training Program;
- Funding the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program in First Nation Secondary Schools.

Investments in Aboriginal Education

The Ontario Government's investment in Aboriginal education for 07/08 included:

- A \$12.7 million investment to support the implementation of the First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework.

- The First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Supplement, which provides an additional \$10.5 million to:
- Increase funding for Native Languages programs offered in any of the seven Native languages recognised in the Ontario curriculum;
- Increase funding for boards to offer any of the 10 native studies courses available in the Ontario curriculum;
- Offer additional funding to support programs that assist Aboriginal students.

Other investments included initiatives that support the academic achievement and success of Aboriginal students:

- Aboriginal Student Success Projects that give Aboriginal students more options to complete their secondary education;
- Alternative Secondary School Programs in Native Friendship Centres to help Aboriginal students at risk of

leaving high school--and those who have already left--to complete their diplomas;

- Projects within school boards focussed on mentorship, community outreach, and transitions for Aboriginal students.

A new investment is being made to support the needs of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students. Because 70 per cent of these students live in urban areas, \$3 million has been committed to the development of a new urban pilot project:

- The project will be developed in three urban school boards, following a sub-missions process.
- Three new education models adapted to the needs of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students living in urban areas will be created.
- The aim of these education models will be to build family and community engagement to support Aboriginal student success.

THE EDUCATION AGENDA:

Developing a Métis Education Action Plan

by Gary Lipinski

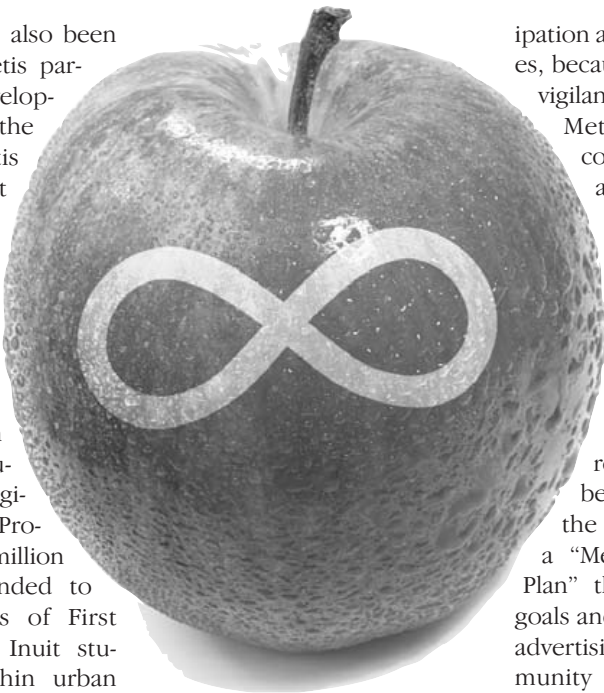
The Métis Nation has always placed a high priority on the educational needs of its citizenship and in ensuring that the voice of the Métis is clearly reflected in the education system. The MNO's Statement of Prime Purpose identifies it as a main objective: "To encourage academic skills development and to enable citizens of the Métis Nation to attain their educational aspirations". As a result, the MNO has been actively engaged with the federal and provincial governments, school boards and other education stakeholders to move the agenda forward.

In 2006 the MNO embarked on a number of focus groups with Métis citizens to review and provide recommendations to the Ministry of Education's, "Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework". This new education policy framework has prompted a number of new ministry initiatives and is generating significant interest from school boards in incorporating a Métis perspective into the classroom and the curriculum. There is a growing demand for presentations on Métis history and culture and a substantial number of sessions have already been delivered at various schools and conferences.

School boards have also been actively seeking Métis participation in the development and design of the First Nation, Métis and Inuit student identification policies that school boards are currently developing or implementing.

For example, the MNO was invited to participate in the Ministry of Education's Urban Aboriginal Education Pilot Project. This new \$3 million investment is intended to support the needs of First Nation, Metis and Inuit students residing within urban settings. The pilot project will encompass the development of three urban Aboriginal education models through the Toronto District School Board, Simcoe County District School Board and Lakehead District School Board. The models will be adapted to meet the needs of First Nation, Metis and Inuit students living in these urban areas and focus on building family and community engagement to support Aboriginal student success.

A provincial steering committee has been developed with representatives from various school boards, government, the ministry's Aboriginal education office and represen-



tatives from Aboriginal organisations. The MNO is represented on this provincial steering committee and will play an active role in providing overall guidance and direction for the project and in overseeing the development and implementation of the education models. There will also be three sub-committees developed to be responsible for the implementation and evaluation of the pilot projects, and the development of each urban education model. These sub-committees will also include representatives from the Métis nation. We will continue to share more information and seek input and partic-

ipation as this project progresses, because we will need to be vigilant to ensure that the Métis voice, issues and concerns are adequately addressed at each level.

While all these initiatives mark a positive step forward in ensuring that the Métis voice is entered into education policies and into the classroom, there remains much more to be done. The MNO is in the process of developing a "Métis Education Action Plan" that will detail vision, goals and strategies. We will be advertising and holding community meetings as well as holding some video-conference sessions. I encourage all citizens to come out and participate.

If you have questions or comments, please feel free to contact Jen St.Germain, Director of Education and Training, at 1-800-263-4889 or via email at jennifers@metisnation.org. As well, I can be reached at (807) 274-1516 or via email at garyl@metisnation.org



Gary Lipinski is the President of the Métis Nation of Onatrio.

Community councils are being encouraged to participate in Ontario's new Aboriginal Education Policy, if contacted. President Lipinsky stated that self-identification was a high priority for the MNO, and that separate self-identifying boxes were needed on forms for First Nations, Métis and Inuit, not just one for Aboriginal. Some of the benefits of such a policy are detailed below.

A self-identification policy was first introduced to the Northern Ontario Education Leaders and Northern Aboriginal Education Circle (NOEL/NAEC) Joint Aboriginal Steering Committee in 2003. Such a policy is also used in British Columbia as a mechanism to gather data, flow funding (\$950.00 for every self-identified student) and negotiate agreements between Aboriginals and school boards.

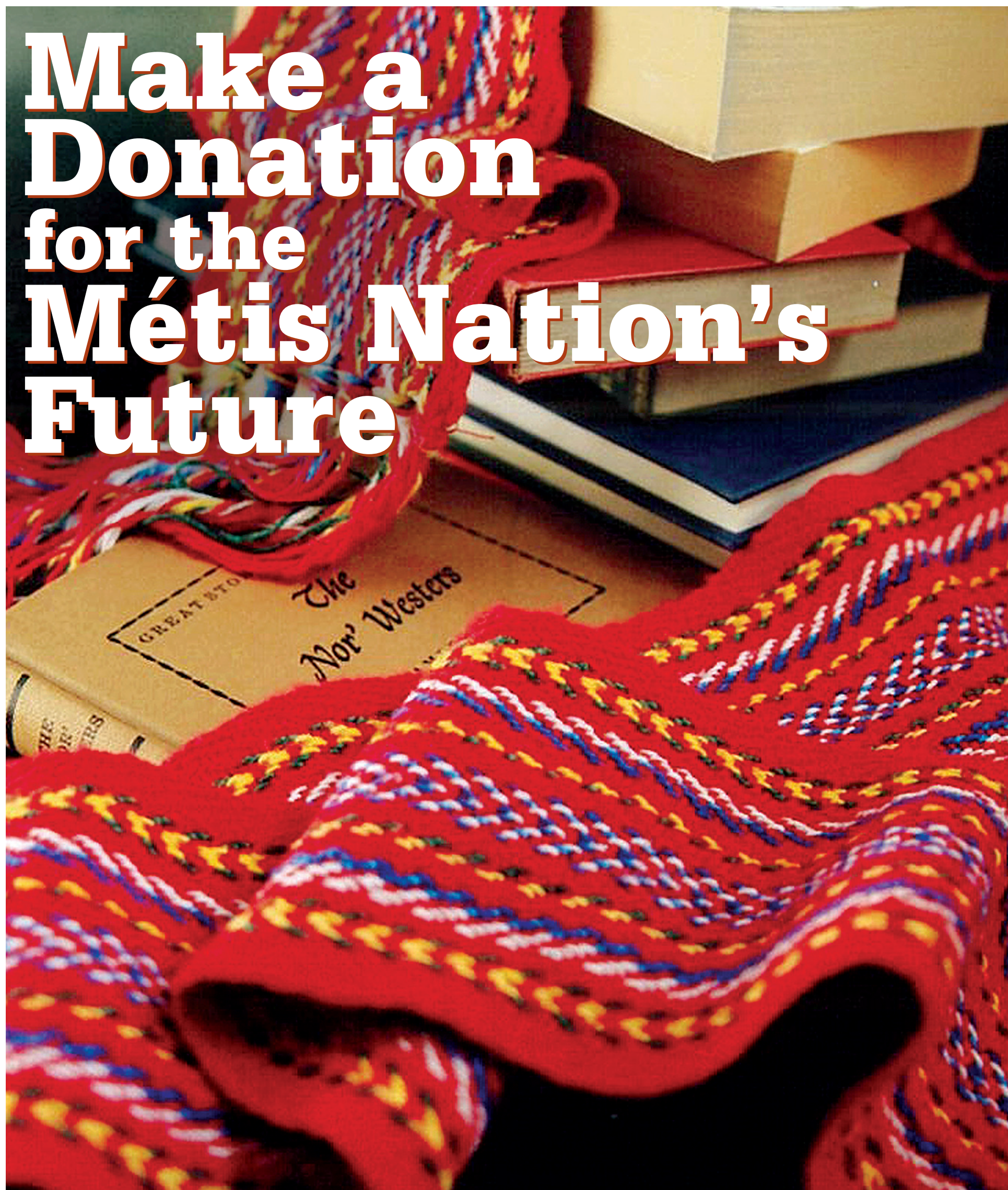
The establishment of a self-identification policy facilitates obtaining resources from the Ministry of Education in order to develop and implement programs that respond to the particular needs of Aboriginal students. It makes it possible to direct resources to Aboriginal educational projects that:

- Provide high-quality learning opportunities that directly address the needs of Aboriginal students experiencing gaps in their education.
- Improve Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) test scores for Aboriginal students.
- Improve the retention rate of Aboriginal students in schools.
- Increase graduation rates for Aboriginal students and help ensure entrance into post-secondary studies and the world of work.

The self-identification process would provide data that could lead to increased funding for Aboriginal education. This money could be used to bring specific programs to schools to increase the success of Aboriginal students.

All data would be securely stored to respect privacy and used only as a means to enhance Aboriginal education programs. It would be treated in the same manner as Ontario Student Records and protected and governed by the Freedom of Information Act. Individual data would not be communicated. The information gathered would be used in the aggregate only.

SOURCES: www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/; *Building Bridges to Success for First Nation Métis and Inuit Students*; *Ontario First Nation Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework*; Gary Lipinski



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Through this *Trust*, the Métis Nation of Ontario is making post-secondary education a real option for Métis students, not just a dream.

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cheques or money orders (no cash) payable to the Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission to the address below. For more information or to arrange monthly payments, contact Doug Wilson at 1-800-263-4669.

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