

MÉTIS VOYAGEUR



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MÉTIS TALENT

A PROFILE OF
MULTI-TALENTED
ANDREA MENARD

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A NEW ERA FOR MÉTIS RIGHTS

The Law Society of Upper Canada at Osgoode Hall hosted a special symposium which explored the issue of Métis rights. A series of presentations addressed the continuing legal development of Métis rights by addressing who the Métis are, probing the legal obligation to consult and offering some practical suggestions about effective consultation at the community level.

more on page 14...



PHOTOS: Marc St. Germain



above left to right: **Symposium moderator Clint Davis, CEO CCAB; Gary Lipinski, MNO President; Susan Hare, Law Society of Upper Canada; Jean Teillet, Pape, Salter, Teillet; Jason Madden, JTM Law; Bob Waldon, MNO; Tracy Campbell, Calliou Group.**



DEADLY HEADLOCK

MÉTIS OUTDOORMEN
MAKE AN INCREDIBLE
DISCOVERY IN THE
FEBRUARY SNOW

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MÉTIS CELEBRATE

OSHAWA MÉTIS ARE
HOSTING THEIR ANNUAL
HERITAGE CELEBRATION
... DON'T MISS IT!

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CULTURAL OUTREACH

SAULT STE MARIE MÉTIS
SHARE RICH HISTORY
AND CULTURE WITH
YOUTH

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HAPPY HEALTHY FEET

BANCROFT FOOT CARE
CLINIC GETS TOES
WIGGLING

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Métis Community News

THE
MÉTIS
VOYAGEUR
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The next Voyageur deadline
is June 1st, 2009



I'm Being Bullied. What should I do?
Some things you can do if you are being bullied.

- Ignore the bullying and walk away, then tell an adult who can help.
- Talk to a teacher or parent.
- Practice with your parents or teachers what to say and do next time you are bullied.
- Go to areas where you feel safe.
- Stay close to students who will stick up for you.
- Look brave and tell the child who bullied to back off. Bullying is NOT cool!
- Don't blame yourself; it's not your fault.
- The more we talk about it, the faster we will stop it.

Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868
www.kidshelpphone.ca

REGION 7 | 90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION



Stephanie Irene Marie Beauchamp with some of her great-grandchildren on her 90th birthday.

Stephanie Irene Marie Beauchamp of Victoria Harbour, celebrated her 90th Birthday on February 14, 2009, in Midland at the Best Western Inn. Many of her 12 children, 35 grandchildren, 37 great grandchildren, 2 great-great grandchildren, relatives and friends attended her Valentine's Day birthday party. Stephanie was honoured to receive a memento and letter from the MNO to commemorate her 90th Birthday. — by Art Turner

NEW ARRIVAL

Kaiden Pilon Saulnier

Welcome to our new little Métis warrior **Kaiden Pilon Saulnier** who was born a “pre-mie” on August 16, 2008, weighing 3 lbs. 7 oz. on August 27th, 2008, Kaiden had to undergo surgery at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto where he lived until December 7th, 2008.

The Saulnier and Pilon families would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who supported us during this time of crisis through all the prayers and positive thoughts.

We are tremendously grateful that Kaiden is now home with his family. Eventhough he is now six months old, he only weighs 8 lbs., but Kaiden is so happy to be part of the Métis Nation of Ontario and he already is quite attached to being wrapped in the sash!

OBITUARY

Arthur Lavalee

1942 - 2009

Arthur Lavallee died suddenly at his home on January 20, 2009, at the age of 66.

He was born in Cobalt on August 27, 1942, and lived at Mileage 104 for most of his life. He had been employed with the ONTO as a telecommunication technician until his retirement.

Mr. Lavallee was an avid fisherman and outdoorsman and he enjoyed socialising with his friends at Sam's Place in New Liskeard. He is remembered as a real people person who was always there to lend a hand but seldom asked for help himself.

He was very devoted to his family and friends and will be sadly missed.

Mr. Lavallee was predeceased by his parents Moose and Antoinette; and by his siblings Margaret, Marie and Edward. He is survived by his loving wife of 39 years Shirley (nee Steward); his children Darin (Natasha), Brent (Barbara) and Paula (Serge Sylvester); and many grandchildren; his siblings Armand, Florence, Ernie and Jane; and numerous family members and friends.

Funeral services were held on January 23. Reverend Midol Cottrell officiated.

Art Lavallee was the brother of Senator Ernie Lavallee of the Temiskaming Métis Council.

LOOKING FOR A NEW JOB?

Be sure to check out
www.metisnation.org

for employment
opportunities.

OBITUARY

In Loving Memory of Andy Slobodian

July 17, 1985 - January 21, 2008



One year ago we received the horrendous news about our Andy. At his funeral very few spoke, but now that time has passed and we can think a little more clearly, I would like to share some thoughts and memories I have of my son.

One of the many cards we received, expressing condolences, simply read “we'll always remember Andy as the kid with the big hair, the big smile and who was a great friend to our daughter. You are in our thoughts and prayers.”

This is such a tribute. Andy was a great friend to many. He had a multitude of people he kept in touch with, who remained steadfast friends, even in what I would consider a very short life. It was with a good friend that the adventure so often craved, led him to the fortunes of the west. He was growing up and he so wanted to be successful.

The Local 97 Ironworkers' Union became his new life and it offered him all that he needed to start making his dreams come true.

Easily bored, even as a youngster, he would do anything to shake things up. The structural steel occupation filled all the requirements and gaps he wanted for an interesting and adventurous life. Being out west his love of skiing/snowboarding and swimming were also easily fulfilled. He respected the ocean and admired the mountains.

Somewhat shy, but loving attention, Andy had an expensive sense of style and even as a kid, was always concerned with his appearance. The big hair was his trademark in high school-never left the house without smelling good and every hair in place-his other trademark-white shoes. At last count he may have had seven pairs.

Music - I can still hear him singing his high pitched rendition of Neil Young or Gnarl's Barkley's “Crazy” while making his breakfast. Music was always playing. Everything from Pink Floyd to Eminem to the Beatles. He loved life, activity, family, friends and NICE things. He was a light, a joy and a bit of a bugger to all who knew him. A loving brother, an uncle and a son. We miss him everyday, every hour, every minute. The light is gone and with it, his presence; fate has stepped in and taken over.

Andy, Please know how very proud of you we are and how much you are loved.

Always and forever, Mom, Travis, Allison, Jason, Christopher, Ethan & Emma.

PS: I thank all who shared this tragedy with us—to those I see everyday and those I will never see again-it has meant the world to us to have met you.

OBITUARY

Gabriel LeBlanc

“Winter Starlight”

born an angel on Jan. 9, 2009

Although Gabriel's spirit was not in his little body when he was born, this beautiful child nevertheless was born into a loving family, into the hearts of many and was born into the kingdom of God. Don't shed tears unless they are tears of joy; we are happy to know that our little Gabriel is now in a very special place in Heaven, for God chose him to be his Angel before he was born.

He will never know hurt, sorrow or sin. His purpose on this earth was completed while in his mother's womb. His being is complete. God said, “it is finished; he must return to Me.”

Dear Creator, grant us peace and help us accept that Gabriel is now your angel.

Our deepest sympathy to Gabriel's mother and father.

Love, the LeBlanc families and godmother Catherine.

OBITUARY



Beauchamp/Fraser

Reggie Beauchamp/Fraser, loving daughter of Ken and Sue Fraser, proud wife of Norman Beauchamp and dear mother of Mackayla Lucienne Storm Beauchamp, lost a battle with cancer on Nov 19th, 2008, at Mount Sinai hospital with her parents by her side. She now walks among the spirits of her ancestors and waits to welcome the spirits of family and friends who enter the great resting place of the spirit world. Gone but not forgotten, until we meet again, AHO, Dad and Mom.

Provincial News



MNO PRESIDENT
Gary Lipinski
UPDATE
January & February '09

February 6th, 2009 • Ottawa, ON
REGISTRY THINK TANK

President, Gary Lipinski; Chair, France Picotte; Vice-Chair, Sharon McBride and Secretary Treasurer, Tim Pile, attended an MNO Registry “Think Tank” session at the Chimo Hotel in Ottawa. The main purpose of the meeting was to examine the overall structure of the *Registry* system. The two-day session was an opportunity to educate new directors about the critical role of the *Registry* in the MNO and ended with an in-depth look at the “big” principles of the MNO Registry.

February 17th, 2009 • Toronto, ON
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FORUM

The Métis Nation of Ontario hosted a one-day economic development forum to bring together Ontario Métis entrepreneurs, key representatives of culturally relevant corporate sectors, and government staff who administer programs and services for business development. President Lipinski felt that feedback from this forum was especially important for the MNO to better understand how it can best support Métis entrepreneurs. The comments and recommendations from the forum will give guidance to the MNO for its economic development strategies and how it provides services to Métis businesses.

February 18th • Toronto, ON
CANADIAN COUNCIL OF ABORIGINAL BUSINESS (CCAB) MEETING

President Lipinski and MNO Chair, France Picotte, connected with 500 Aboriginal business and community leaders gathered in Toronto to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the CCAB. The afternoon and evening event covered how Canadian companies initiate, build and sustain positive relationships with Aboriginal communities.

CONTINUED RIGHT SIDE OF PAGE

MNO REGISTRY NEWS:
New Registry staff will support Communities

by Janet Leader

A pilot project aimed at enhancing service at regional Métis Nation offices across the province is underway. Five new Regional Intake Officers (RIOs), will provide client service to citizenship applicants and citizens alike.

Mari Beaton has been hired to work in Thunder Bay and Faye Naveau will join the Sudbury office. MNO citizen and genealogist, Hubert Charlebois, can be found at the Midland office and Mary-Beth Eltherington-Vaughan has joined the crew at the new

Toronto office, now located at 75 Sherbourne Street. MNO citizen Julie Meraw may be the new voice you hear if you call the MNO Registry head office in Ottawa. In addition to *Registry* related duties, the RIOs will help out with front desk duties and in providing support to local community presidents and MNO directors.

The *Registry* is also pleased to announce that Mary Furlan has been hired as the new Registry Manager/Liaison and Margaret Caron-Voutari has joined MNO as Research Assistant. Both Mary and Margaret are working out of the Ottawa office.

As recognition of the Métis culture grows, so does the number of people who are discovering their Métis roots. The *Registry* of the Métis Nation of Ontario issues Métis citizenship to those who supply genealogical documentation and proof of Métis ancestry. This application process establishes the Métis Nation of Ontario’s credibility and integrity and distinguishes it from organisations that issue membership with little or no valid documentation. To date, 15,000 Métis are registered as Métis Nation citizens in the Province of Ontario.

MNO STRATEGIC PLAN:
MNO starts work towards economic self-reliance

One of the strategic goals identified by the Métis Nation of Ontario and endorsed by delegates to the 2008 AGA, is the creation of a five to seven year economic development plan. This work is being done in conjunction with the development of the *MNO Strategic Plan* in partnership with the federal and provincial governments.

The Economic Development Plan will support Métis business and communities, capitalise on current MNO assets, increase the level of Métis participation in infrastructure and other major developments in the province and foster additional partnerships that will stimulate economic development. The ultimate

goal for the MNO is economic self reliance and the capacity to support the provision of a full range of programs and services to Métis in the province.

In mid-February, a one day economic development forum was held in Toronto. The event brought together Métis entrepreneurs, corporate representatives from the banking and business sector and both federal and provincial government representatives. The forum provided an opportunity for Métis business people to provide feedback to

the MNO and the private business sector regarding the tools and resources they required to help them succeed. They did this by sharing their successes con-

cerns, and the challenges they face in operating a business in Ontario.

“THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN WILL SUPPORT MÉTIS BUSINESS AND COMMUNITIES, CAPITALISE ON CURRENT MNO ASSETS...”

The February forum is only one of several gatherings the MNO is planning to inform the finalisation of the MNO Economic Development Strategy. MNO hopes to have a fully developed Economic Development Strategy ready for the Annual General Assembly.

Date Announced for
2009 ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO

The Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) is pleased to confirm that the 2009 Annual General Assembly (AGA) will take place **August 22nd to 25, 2009**, in **Sudbury, Ontario**.

The annual gathering of the Métis Nation of Ontario is a chance to renew old friendships and make new ones. The PCMNO hopes as many of you as possible will take advantage of the opportunity to do just that!

Planning is in full swing with a Meet & Greet planned for the evening of Friday, August 21, 2009, at the Mine Mill Campground on Richard Lake located on Highway 69 South in Sudbury.

More information and highlights about the AGA and the venue will be provided in the summer edition of the *Métis Voyageur*. You can also visit the MNO web site at www.metisnation.org for updates as they become available.

To confirm your attendance or to obtain further information, please contact: Chelsey Quirk, *Communications Assistant* at **613-798-1488** or chelseyq@metisnation.org



Métis Nation of Ontario
PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

February 19th • Sault Ste. Marie, ON
CONSULTATION PROTOCOL REVIEW

The first of two *Consultation Protocol* review meetings took place in Historic Sault Ste. Marie. MNO President, Gary Lipinski and Community Council Presidents, Kim Powley of the Historic Sault Ste Marie Métis Council and Rick Bennett of the North Channel Métis Council explained to local citizens how the *regional consultation protocols* will work. The group reviewed with the president and MNO staff the proposed consultation agreement and discussed when it will be signed. A question and answer period followed.

February 24-25, 2009 • Ottawa, ON
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF EDUCATION SUMMIT

President Lipinski and MNO Chair, France Picotte joined 40 leaders in education, several Ministers of Aboriginal Affairs and provincial and territorial Ministers of Education at a summit hosted by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC).

The *Summit* is an important step forward in addressing the gaps in Métis, First Nations, and Inuit education in Canada. Ongoing commitment from every level of government is necessary to ensure that all national, provincial and territorial strategies on education, training and skills development include processes designed specifically for Métis learners.

February 26th • Midland, ON
GEORGIAN BAY COMMUNITY MEETING

A second *Consultation Protocol Review* meeting with the Georgian Bay Métis Council (GBMC) took place in Pentanguishene. The community meeting was attended by President, Gary Lipinski, Chair, France Picotte, Region 7 Councillor, Pauline Saulnier, Deputy Chief Captain of the Hunt, Louise Goulding, GBMC President, Alden Barty, Grey-Owen Sound Métis Council President, Malcolm Dixon, Moon River Métis Council President, Larry Duval, many GBMC citizens and various MNO staff.

President Lipinski supplied an update on new and ongoing MNO initiatives and provided a greater understanding of the *Duty to Consult and Accommodate* with Métis in Ontario. A chronology of the proposed protocol implementation and an account of the protocol was also given. Citizens took part in a question and answer period to end the meeting.

MÉTIS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

The Way Forward - A Youth Perspective

by Chelsey Quirk

On March 2nd, Métis Nation of Ontario youth took part in an Aboriginal Youth Engagement Session titled “Toward a New Federal Framework for Aboriginal Economic Development,” a session hosted by the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC) in partnership with Indian and Northern Affairs, Canada (INAC).

This period of economic instability can be seen as a time of opportunity, especially for young Aboriginal people. It is a time when new ideas may be given greater consideration. With access to education, training and business opportunities the potential for enhanced quality of life while contributing to local, provincial and national economies can be realized. It bears repeating--

today’s youth are tomorrow’s leaders. Unfortunately, the voice of youth often goes unheard.

The importance of providing young Aboriginals with the tools and skills they need to succeed in the business world is invaluable. They will carry on the culture, tradition and knowledge of our people and move the Métis Nation forward.

That is why three MNO youth from Ottawa and one from Thunder Bay were happy to have the opportunity to participate in the session that brought together Métis, First Nations and Inuit youth from across Canada. The day long event was designed for youth to explore their ideas and expertise about economic development and share the wisdom of their families, elders and communities.

Participants were welcomed by Allan Clarke, Director General of Indian and Northern Affairs

Canada, Strategic Policy Branch. Mr. Clarke briefed the young people on the increasing need for an updated Framework on economic development and the importance of youth involvement in this process. A question period gave the youth a chance to question Mr. Clarke on current and upcoming federal initiatives and about the process involved in forming policy around economic development.

As the day progressed, youth took part in mind mapping and interview sessions focused on what an economic development strategy looked like to them individually, and in their traditional environments. Several key messages came through over the course of the day, including the need for formal and consistent mentorship in the beginning, maintaining and sustaining stages of economic development projects. Other hot points included

the need for:

- consistent reliable funding;
- easier access to information;
- more appropriate communication tactics;
- access to education and training programs;
- publicising success stories;
- policy specific to Métis, First Nations and Inuit;
- labour force procurement;
- sustainable development;
- cultural support systems;
- planned networking opportunities;
- access to capital;
- funding for improved government and capacity;
- lasting partnerships with non-Aboriginal businesses and partners;
- Tool kits for Métis entrepreneurs (including business plan templates);
- Ongoing information sessions and consultation between government and youth.

Creating a new Canadian Economic Development Strategy (CAEDS) is vital to the ability of the Métis Nation to become full partners in the Canadian economy. The purpose of the existing CAEDS strategy, launched in 1989 was to provide “long-term employment and business opportunities to Canada’s Aboriginal citizens by giving them the means to effectively manage their own businesses, enterprises, economic institutions, job training and skills development.” Unfortunately, this strategy is out of date and not reflective of the aspirations of the Aboriginal population today. The climate for Aboriginal economic activity is changing as quickly as the demographics. With Aboriginal youth the fastest growing demographic group in Canada, it is critical that contemporary strategies and policies be designed to coincide with these changes, not work against them.

NATIONAL FILM BOARD BONANAZA | Must-see video now free online

The National Film Board of Canada (NFB) has recently made hundreds of films from its archives available for free on-line. The NFB has been producing and distributing innovative, socially relevant documentary, animation and alternative drama for over 6 decades. Great Aboriginal filmmakers like Alanis Obomawin, Gil Cardinal and Loretta Todd have created films in partnership with the NFB. Here is a sampling of must-see films now available on-line:



Richard Cardinal: Cry from the Diary of a Métis Child: A tribute to a Métis adolescent who committed suicide in 1984. Taken from his

home at the age of 4, he spent the rest of his 17 short years in and out of 28 foster homes, group homes and shelters in Alberta.



Forgotten Warriors: Cree/Métis filmmaker Loretta Todd presents Aboriginal veterans sharing their war memories and their healing process.

While they fought for freedom for others, ironically the Aboriginal soldiers were not allowed equality in their own country.

www.nfb.ca



Improving Education for Aboriginal Students:

Ontario builds stronger relationships with Aboriginal communities

The Ontario Government, First Nations, Métis and Inuit organisations are working together to achieve better outcomes for Aboriginal students at all levels of learning. Several new initiatives will help build stronger relationships and provide increased opportunities.

The Ontario Government will:

- Provide \$6 million in funding through the Access to Opportunities Strategy, to improve access to post-secondary opportunities and boost the number of Aboriginal graduates in Ontario.
- Work with the federal government and First Nations partners in talks about the future of Aboriginal post-secondary institutes in Ontario.
- Within the context of federal responsibility for on-reserve Aboriginal education, work with the federal government and First Nations partners to improve the relationship between schools on-reserve and provincially funded schools.
- Establish two new bodies to advise the Ontario Government about Aboriginal education and training, including: A time-limited working table to provide advice about the development of a First



WE ARE PLEASED THE ONTARIO GOVERNMENT REMAINS FOCUSED ON SUPPORTING ABORIGINAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING.

— Gary Lipinski,
President of the MNO

Nation, Métis and Inuit Post-secondary Education and Training Policy Framework, and an advisory council on First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education to provide advice to the Minister of Education on the implementation of the *Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* launched in 2007.

These new initiatives build on Ontario's Aboriginal Education Strategy and will help close the education gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

“As we work together to create strong relationships between the government and our Aboriginal partners, we are improving

the educational opportunities for Aboriginal youth and creating a stronger, more inclusive education system for all students,” said Minister of Education, Kathleen Wynne.

“Closing the education gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students is vital to ensuring greater success and opportunities for future generations,” said Aboriginal Affairs Minister, Brad Duguid. “Our province and Aboriginal communities will only grow stronger when everyone in Ontario can access quality education and training opportunities.”

BACKGROUND: Since 2003, the McGuinty government has been committed to providing accessible, high-quality education and training opportunities to Aboriginal peoples at all levels of learning.

There are increased opportunities for Aboriginal students and improved resources so educators and staff can better support Aboriginal learners and increase awareness about First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures. The McGuinty government has also created strong partnerships with Aboriginal communities and organisations and is continuing to work closely with these partners to build on their successes.

Another Success Story:

Ontario College of Teachers names Métis as Department Director

Michelle Longlade is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Longlade of Sturgeon Falls and a descendant of the Drummond Islanders who settled in the bay across from Penetang. As Director of Standards of Practice and Accreditation, Michelle joined the college staff in September 2008.

Longlade will head the department at the college that promotes professional standards and manages the processes for accrediting pre-service and in-service teacher education programs.

“The Ontario teaching profession is well known for its very high degree of professionalism,” said Longlade. “I appreciate the opportunity to support and foster that professionalism and to contribute to the process of teacher preparation and ongoing professional learning.”

Longlade brings to the college more than 20 years of education leadership experience. Following several years as an elementary and secondary teacher in Manitoba and Ontario, she worked with the Halton Catholic DSB as a consultant to the French as a Second Language program and as a vice-principal and principal.

Longlade’s school board



MICHELLE LONGLADE

experience was followed by three years with the Ministry of Education as an education officer with responsibilities in the areas of teacher mentoring, among other assignments. She then led the Qualifications Evaluation Council of Ontario for two years as Bilingual Executive Director.

This past year, Longlade completed research for the Council of Yukon First Nations and Yukon College. Michelle Longlade also has several years experience as a course director in primary-junior teacher education and as a faculty advisor with the York University Faculty of Education. She holds Supervisory Officer qualifications and earned her Masters of Education degree in administration and supervision.

Michelle’s parents, who are themselves graduates of the University of Toronto, have good reason to be proud. Michelle’s brother Daniel is a Chartered Accountant and a former chairperson of the board of Canadore College. Her younger brother is a graduate of the University of Indiana and now practices as a Doctor of Optometry in North Bay.

Métis Education

Métis Community | Education Community Discussions



A Métis Education discussion meeting in Toronto last March.

Communities talk Métis Education

by Chris Paci

During the month of March, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) held discussions to elicit community input and feedback regarding the implementation of the *Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework*, the MNO’s draft Education Action Plan, and related Métis education and literacy priorities.

The discussions explored the existing and developing relationships between school boards, schools and the Métis community. Community members were asked to voice their opinions on what has worked and what has made a difference, and whether gaps remain since the framework has been in place.

The *First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* was announced by the Ministry of Education in 2007 to pro-



Virginia Barter (left) and Bonny Cann, Provincial Education Initiatives Co-ordinator at community discussion in Toronto.

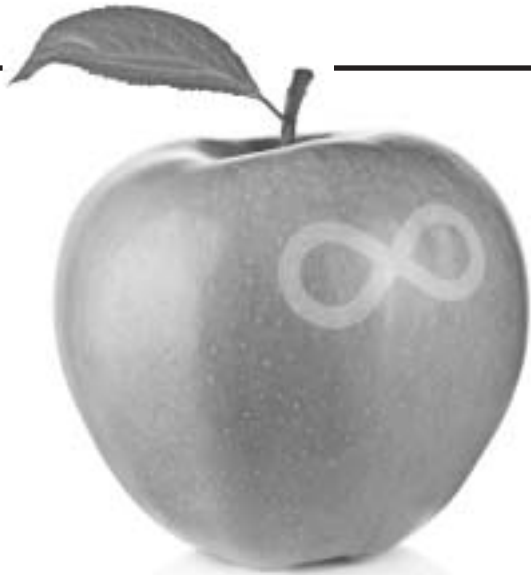
mote achievement of Aboriginal students and to close the gap that exists between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in the areas of literacy, numeracy, retention, graduation and post-secondary entry.

The MNO’s draft *Education Action Plan* will lead to a co-ordinated focussed strategic approach by the MNO, in collaboration with other agencies, educational partners, parents, students and the community to

address the needs of Métis learners.

The MNO is looking to an engaged Métis student in every publicly funded school in Ontario and is committed to the provision of an improved and appropriate education for all of its students that will be a sustainable effort over time.

Chris Paci is the MNO’s Manager of Education and Training. cbrisp@metisnation.org.



MNO puts education first

by Chelsey Quirk

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) was a full participant in an historic Aboriginal Education Summit held in Saskatoon recently. MNO President, Gary Lipinski, MNO Chair, France Picotte, and Jennifer St. Germain, Director of Labour Market Development for the MNO, joined 40 leaders in education, several Ministers of Aboriginal Affairs and provincial and territorial Ministers at the event hosted by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC).

Over two days, ministers heard from participants about the importance of strengthening partnerships and the need for more federal and provincial support to promote success among Aboriginal learners.

The Summit is an important step forward in addressing the gaps in Métis, First Nations, and Inuit education in Canada, that will require an ongoing commitment from every level of government to ensure that all national, provincial and territorial strategies on education, training and skills development include processes designed specifically for Métis learners.

CMEC has indicated that Aboriginal education will con-

tinue to be a priority for action and further discussions and focussed meetings are anticipated.

President Lipinski commended the Province of Ontario for making education a priority and continuing to show its commitment to building a solid partnership with the Métis Nation of Ontario. The Government of Ontario delegation, represented by Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Brad Duguid; Minister of Education, Kathleen Wynne; and, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities, Deborah Newman was an active participant who throughout the summit worked closely with MNO delegates to explore ongoing opportunities for collaboration. The MNO is optimistic about the commitment by all Ministries to continue to support the needs and interests of Métis people across Ontario.

In March, the MNO launched a series of community consultations on education across Ontario aimed at identifying gaps and priorities in the delivery of Métis-specific learning.

The goal is to get input from Métis communities on the potential effects of the province’s Education Policy Framework called “Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Framework Policy”.

You can find the Framework here: www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/policy.html

Métis Bursary Program “makes things happen”

With the MNO education meetings currently underway, education is now--more than ever--at the top of the MNO agenda.

Ensuring that Métis learners are given the opportunities and tools they need to support post-secondary education is a key reason the MNO has been participating in the Métis Bursary Program since 1998.

The introduction of the Government of Ontario’s Student Opportunities Trust Fund (OSOTF) in 1998 was the opportunity the MNO needed to develop a unique partnership that established a province-wide bur-

sary trust for Métis students. The MNO Bursary Trust, valued at \$3,000,000, was established at 32 Ontario universities and colleges.

More than 1000 Métis students have benefited from the bursary program in its first 11 years. In the 2008/2009 academic year alone post-secondary Métis students at Ottawa’s Carleton University have received \$21,000.

Carleton University scholarship specialist, Elizabeth DiSabato, expressed the university’s gratitude by saying, “it’s donors like you who make things happen for students...today and for the rest of their lives.”

This financial support recognises success by supporting Métis students like Chris Haldorson, Eric Turcotte and Stephanie Humphries who achieve their

personal goals and are able to enter the workforce with confidence.

Biology student, Chris Haldorson, says the \$1,000 bursary he received “means a lot to me, as it really eases the strain on my finances during the school year.”

History student, Eric Turcotte, says, “I would like to very much thank the Métis Nation of Ontario for awarding me this bursary. This bursary will help me to keep my university costs down, especially since the hours at my part-time job get reduced during inclement weather. It will be very helpful in continuing my studies in history at Carleton.” Eric was awarded a \$1500.00 scholarship.

Repeat scholarship winner, honours psychology student, Stephanie Humphries, says, “I

want to thank the Métis Nation for once again coming through and helping me when I needed it the most. I do not know what I would do if it was not available. The Métis Nation is extremely generous and has helped me significantly with my schooling this year.” Stephanie received a \$2,000.00 scholarship.

Chris, Eric and Stephanie are only three of the hundreds of Métis students who have benefited from the Métis Bursary Program. And while the MNO continues to seek additional opportunities to expand and enhance the Métis Bursary Program, MNO President, Gary Lipinski, is quick to point out that the bursaries would not be possible without the hard word of citizens across the province.

MNO Student Bursaries are available at the following Institutions:

UNIVERSITIES:	
ALGOMA	QUEENS
BROCK	RYERSON
CARLETON	TRENT
LAKEHEAD	TORONTO
LAURENTIAN	WESTERN
OTTAWA	
COLLEGES:	
ALGONQUIN	LAMBTON
CAMBRIAN	LOYALIST
CANADORE	MOHAWK
COLLEGE BOREAL	NIAGARA
CONESTOGA	NORTHERN
CONFEDERATION	OCAD
FANSHAWE	ST. CLAIR
GEORGE BROWN	ST. LAWRENCE
GEORGIAN	SAULT COLLEGE
HUMBER	SHERIDAN
SIR SANDFORD FLEMING	

NATIONAL NEWS

Métis Nation has ‘Deep Misgivings’ on Canada's Economic Action Plan

OTTAWA--The leadership of the Métis Nation at a meeting held on January 30th expressed deep misgivings with the 2009 Federal Budget and will be seeking assurances from Prime Minister Stephen Harper that Métis Nation citizens will benefit from Canada's Economic Action Plan. After undertaking a detailed analysis of the budget plan, President Clément Chartier and the Presidents of the provincial Métis governments from Ontario-westward found a distressing absence of any Métis-specific economic stimulus opportunities.

“While the Federal Government has committed over \$20 Billion in economic stimulus, nothing was set aside for Métis communities or Métis Nation citizens”, said Chartier.

Of the \$1.4 Billion in new spending for Aboriginal peoples in the 2009 Federal Budget, \$1.2-billion is set aside exclusively for First Nations and Inuit. The Métis are eligible to participate in the \$200-million committed to Aboriginal skills and employment training but even here none of these dollars have been committed specifically for Métis.

Chartier reaffirmed the desire of the Métis Nation to work with the federal government and Parliament to strengthen the economy for Métis citizens and all Canadians.

“My office has received some preliminary assurances from the government that elements of our Métis Nation Economic Stimulus Proposal can be addressed both within and outside the budget but I will be seeking clarification from the Prime Minister on where specifically we will access stimulus funding.”

The Métis National Council submitted a Métis Nation Economic Stimulus Proposal as part of the pre-budget consultations. It called for much needed Métis-specific investment in social housing, education and skills development, and for additional support to businesses and entrepreneurs. The proposal was based on short-term, “shovel-ready” initiatives which would have had significant economic stimulus for Métis and all Canadians.

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A Unique Partnership | Ontario Power Authority

PARTNERSHIP PROVIDES NEW FUNDING FOR CAPACITY BUILDING AT MNO

by Janet Leader

A unique partnership between the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and the Ontario Power Authority (OPA) is providing \$250,000.00 that will enable the housing branch and personnel to become a “centre of excellence” that will supply training for staff who will, in turn, be able to train others. Included is a pilot project that will strive to ensure housing provided is energy efficient while at the same time enhancing capacity within the housing workforce by creating learning opportunities for students as they contribute to research and development in the energy fields.

The proposal for this initiative was called “The Métis Energy Conservation Workforce Project”



This project is an excellent way of adding value to services already being provided while creating opportunities for MNO personnel to add to their existing skill set.

and was put forward by the Housing and Education and Training Branches.

Métis Nation of Ontario President, Gary Lipinski, says he hopes this winning joint proposal will pave the way for a series of cross portfolio initiatives within the Métis Nation of Ontario. “This project is an excellent way of adding value to services already

being provided while creating opportunities for MNO personnel to add to their existing skill set,” he said.

In a letter to the MNO announcing the good news that the proposal had been accepted, OPA says the Energy Conservation Workforce Project “addresses a unique need for trained energy efficient professionals in the Aboriginal housing sector” and builds on MNO’s previous experience in successfully delivering core housing services and technical advice for government sponsored low-income repair programs.

In addition to developing market place capacity for the design, delivery, marketing and uptake of conservation programs, the project will also provide a forum for testing new and unique conservation program elements. “The

project will not only help the MNO provide quality housing services that reflect Métis cultural values and put efficiency and energy savings at the forefront, it will provide an opportunity for innovation in this field,” says President Lipinski.

“MNO has established its technical expertise in housing inspections,” he added. “The OPA funding will provide an opportunity to build on that expertise in a way that will benefit other Métis citizens in two ways-by saving them money and in skills development.”

Both OPA and the MNO hope the project will help to establish the housing branch as a leader in the province in the delivery of energy efficient program delivery that also helps support skills development within the technical workforce.

BRUCE TO MILTON LINE UPDATE:

MÉTIS CONSULTATION IN ACTION

Hydro One Networks Inc. (HONI) has now completed the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Bruce to Milton Transmission Reinforcement Project.

The Project includes the planning, designing, constructing, operating and maintaining of new transmission facilities adjacent to the existing transmission corridor between the Bruce Power Complex and the Milton.

The proposed Bruce to Milton transmission line will be approximately 180 kilometres long and is designed to accommodate the output of two refurbished Bruce units (approximately 1,500 megawatts (MW), 700 MW of existing and committed renewable energy sources, and up to 1,000 MW of identified future renewable energy sources in the Bruce area.

For over a year now, Métis citizens, Métis

Nation of Ontario (MNO) Community Councils and the MNO’s Natural Resources, Environment and Community Relations Branch have been engaged in consultations with Hydro One aimed at identifying the potential impacts of the project on Métis rights, interests and way of life in the Georgian Bay territory. This work included several information mail-outs to all Métis living throughout the Georgian Bay traditional territory; community information meetings; ongoing meetings with Hydro One and interviews with Métis traditional resources users to collect Métis traditional knowledge about the area and an independent assess-

ment of HONI’s environmental assessment.

Building on this collaborative, transparent and inclusive consultation process, Hydro One continues to work with the Métis community in the region. Specifically it seeks to address potential issues related to the upcoming construction of the project and includes finding measures for mitigation and accommodation. Other considerations include the collection of Métis traditional knowledge, a Métis biodiversity initiative, ongoing information sharing and the identification of training, contracting and employment opportunities for Métis related to the Project.

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DEFENDING MÉTIS HARVESTING RIGHTS | R. v. GOODON

Manitoba Métis win court victory

On January 8, 2009, the Métis Nation of Ontario offered its congratulations to the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF), on yet another victory for Métis harvesting rights in *R. v. Goodon* (the “Goodon case”).

The Goodon case began in October, 2004, when Will Goodon harvested a duck near Turtle Mountain in south-western Manitoba. Mr. Goodon did not obtain a provincial license, but was harvesting under the authority of a MMF Harvesters Card. He was charged by Wildlife Officers for unlawful possession of wildlife contrary to s. 19 of Manitoba’s *Wildlife Act*.

The MMF defended Mr.

Goodon based on the Métis right to harvest, which is protected in Canada’s Constitution. After a trial that lasted over a year and included testimony from Métis community witnesses, experts and historians, Justice Combs of the Provincial Court of Manitoba dismissed the charge against Mr. Goodon in a written decision that was released in Brandon.

Justice Combs ruled that Mr. Goodon has a constitutionally

protected Métis right to hunt. In dismissing the charge against Mr. Goodon, Justice Combs relied on the Supreme Court of Canada’s decision in *R. v. Powley*, which was initiated and supported by the MNO over a decade and at all levels of court.

In applying the Powley test the Court ruled that in Manitoba there is a regional rights-bearing Métis community that “includes all of the area within the present boundaries of southern Manitoba from the present day City of Winnipeg and extending south to the United States and north-west to the Province of Saskatchewan including the area of present day

Russell, Manitoba.” The Court also acknowledged that this rights-bearing Métis community in historic and contemporary times extends well outside of Manitoba.

“On behalf of the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario and all MNO citizens, I want to congratulate Will Goodon and the MMF. Similar to the Powley case, this is a victory for the entire Métis Nation. I also want to acknowledge our Métis lawyers, Jean Teillet and Jason Madden, for their ongoing efforts and commitment to advancing the Métis Nation’s rights agenda,” said MNO President Lipinski.

Community Council News

REGION 4 | HISTORIC SAULT STE MARIE MÉTIS COUNCIL



Senator Brenda Powley (standing left) and Anne Trudel (standing right) lead Grade 6 students in a Métis history and culture workshop.

Soo school-kids get some Métis culture

by Neil Trudel

This Métis booth, operated by Kim Powley, President Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council and Tammy Webb, was to promote MNO services and training. The booth continued to be up for the remainder of the three day Gathering at the Rapids Powwow.

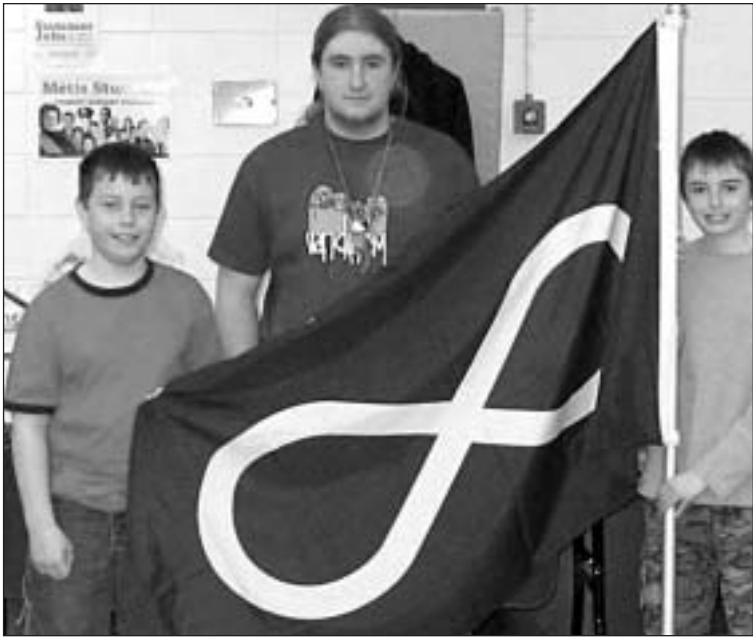
March 6th was marked as Aboriginal Education Day by two of the local school boards: Algoma District School Board and Huron Superior Catholic District School Board. In attendance were more than 800 grade 6 children. The event was part of the “Gathering at the Rapids, Honouring Life-

Long Learners Powwow” at the Algoma University’s George Leach Centre in Sault Ste. Marie. This day of education included workshops and displays on such topics as: snow shoeing, traditional games, crafts, art and artists, trapping, fishing, story-telling, grandfather teachings and drumming, with a powwow session and First Nation dancers in full regalia in the afternoon.

A two table Métis display booth was set up to showcase Métis culture and music. Four separate consecutive Métis workshops were conducted that allowed approximately 160 children and their teachers to learn about Métis culture and to participate in a brief sessions of

instruction on Métis dance. Anne Trudel, who presented to the children *the Métis Way of Life* was assisted by Senator Brenda Powley, Mitchell Case, Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Youth Representative, and Neil Trudel. On completion of the structured sessions, the 800 students plus teachers were able to travel from booth to booth to ask more questions of the presenters.

left to right: **Caleb McHale of the North Channel Métis Community, a student at Johnson Tarbutt Public School, Mitchell Case Youth representative, Brendan Case of the Historic Sault Ste. Marie community, a student at H. M. Robins Public School.**



Métis Day

by Chelsey Quirk

Métis Day was celebrated February 8, 2009, in the Grand Hall of the Canadian Museum of Civilization, in Ottawa. The event featured displays of Métis arts and crafts; fiddle and guitar music with Anthony Brascoupé; storytelling with Bruce Sinclair,

and the Jig on the Fly dancers. Meanwhile, Jamie Koebel demonstrated beading in the River View Salon at the south end of the Grand Hall where people could drop by and try their hand.

At the Cascade Water Court, Morgan Baillargeon demonstrated how to cook bannock on an open fire (photo above).

NIAGARA REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL | Community Outreach

Niagara Region Métis make most of Welland information day

by Stephen Quesnelles

On February 27th and 28th The Niagara Region Métis Council had tables set up in the Mall in Welland for Community Information Days. The event was sponsored by the City of Welland and the Seaway Mall. It was well received by the public and many questions were asked and answered by the health branch staff, as well as members of our council. Applications for citizenship in the MNO were handed out, as were information packets about the MNO. It was another opportunity for the Niagara Region Métis Council to share with the community, who the Métis are and what we are doing in the Niagara Region. Welland Community Information Days are held twice a year and we will be involved in



Rebecca Vander Sanden (left) and Glen Lipinski (right) at Welland’s Community information Day this past February.

sharing our heritage and culture with anyone who asks. We are investigating to see if Niagara Falls and St.Catharines have similar opportunities in which we might be involved.

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OSHAWA MÉTIS COUNCIL • 2009 CANNINGTON DOG SLED RACES



The Métis in winter

Métis and First Nations take centre stage at ‘09 Cannington Dog Sled Races and Winter Festival

by Bernard Leroux

It was another great year at this popular Cannington winter event in spite of the main attraction of the weekend—the dog sled races—being cancelled. With an early thaw and only a light layer of snow just prior to the event commencing, the Grand Marshall of the race, Jim Cunningham deemed the dog sled course unsafe for racing. This disappointed many regular visitors to the event but turned out to be a blessing in disguise for the participants of the heritage component as the crowd of approximately 3000 then turned its attention to the native village erected for the weekend event.

Five years ago, when I was President of the Oshawa Métis Council, I opened the races with a simple ceremonial smudge. At

that time I was surrounded by a small circle of Métis and an even smaller circle of curious onlookers. From there, the involvement of local regional Aboriginal organisations, such as the growing Oshawa Métis Council, the Métis Artists Collective and several other local groups, has swelled to include participants, vendors and demonstrators from Quebec, Mississauga and Six Nations.

In addition to the installation of several wekons (Mohawk shelters), tepees and the traditional foods concession hosted by the OMC, we were thrilled to have a main stage on the grounds to feature such performing acts as Charlie Fife, The Métis Fiddler Quartet and The Olivine Bousquet Métis Dancers. Once again, the event featured demonstrations, vendors and displays by several facilitators such as Trapper Bob Stevenson, Miq'Mak Métis Elder Archie Martin with his wife Pierrette and

Elder Joseph Paquette.

The media attended this event in full force, with articles appearing in the Toronto Star as well as local newspapers. Local broadcast media from CHEX TV and ROGERS CABLE were also present. Durham Regional Tourism was a big booster of the event this year and provided support, publicity and a welcomed presence at the event.

The Cannington Dog Sled Races and Winter Festival is a great example of how we can educate and at the same time, entertain our communities with Métis culture. I highly commend our community and especially our Métis Mayor of Cannington, Larry O'Connor, and Ben Deith, President of the Cannington Business Association, the official host, for embracing this cultural activity and promoting it locally as a fun family event and a way to learn more about Canada's first peoples. I

clockwise from top left: **Region 8 PCMNO Councillor, Charlie Fife; Cecile Wagar with the Olivine Bousquet Métis Dancers; Jean Turgeon; Senator Joseph Poitras.** photos by Bernard Leroux

recommend that we all look at similar ways we can do this in our respective communities. It builds bridges of understanding and strengthens our bonds with the public and each other.

Congratulations to all involved and all who came out to participate this year. To see more on the event visit : www.canningtondogsledraces.com. Next year's dates for the event are February 27th and 28th, 2010.

Bernard Leroux is the President of the Métis Artists' Collective.

Coming together to share traditions & culture

by Rob Pilon

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank everyone who pitched in, helped out, and worked hard to support the Oshawa Métis Council at the Cannington Dog Sled Races. Even with strong winds, and a last-minute cancellation of the actual races, it was still a remarkable success when you consider the high profile that the Métis community presented to the people of Durham Region and beyond.

As usual, the members of the OMC, along with family and friends, came together and worked hard—from



those who prepared the bannock and boulettes, to the volunteers in the cooking tent, to those who hauled all the supplies and materials up (and back!) from the event, to the hard-working set-up and take-down crews.

It took a community of positive-minded and labour willing Métis to make this another successful event.

It was wonderful to see the Olivine Bousquet Métis Dance Troupe perform; kudos to Cecile for

singing Art's favourite song! And it's always a treat to see Charlie on stage! It was also great to see Nicholas and Conlin perform; we never tire of the wonderful fiddling of the Delbaere-Sawchuks.

The tepees brought by Archie and Pierrette Martin from Quebec, and Jean Turgeon added wonderful atmosphere to the event, joining Bob Stevenson (Trapper Bob) to demonstrate traditional aspects of our culture. Add in the vendors, the Youth Council selling "sucré tartes" and the many citizens with fur hats and Métis regalia, and the atmosphere was definitely one that recognised and celebrated our rich Métis culture.

A big thank you to Bernie Leroux and Larry O'Connor who arranged for the OMC's participation; it continues to be a pleasure to be involved with this fun family festival, and we are grateful for the opportunity to play a part in an event that is sure to grow over the coming years.

So, to the many, many volunteers who helped out, our extended family of Métis from other councils, and everyone who participated in one way or another, thanks again for showing how we can all pull together to share our traditions and culture!

Robert Pilon is the President of the Oshawa Métis Council

HISTORIC SAULT STE MARIE MÉTIS COUNCIL | HEALTH BRANCH STAFF

My Amazing Métis Community

by Jamie Panco-Fox

It is nice to know that when times are tough we can rely on our community for support. As we all know, people everywhere are currently feeling the effects of the economic crunch in one way or another.

Here in Sault Ste. Marie, like most small communities, we see it everyday: line ups at local food banks, soup kitchens and milk programs. As the Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children Co-ordinator for the Métis Nation of Ontario I try to make sure that I can at certain times of the year--such as Christmas--offer something special to those that access my program services. While most people were trying to stretch every dollar they had, I was able to reach out to some of my contacts both personal and professional this past Christmas and ask for ideas of any kind to help start the season off with hope.

To my surprise we were able to pull together enough

businesses, people and donations to organise a great Christmas party. It took about two weeks to get everything organised, and on December 15th at the soup kitchen we had our party and we also had our first winter blizzard; thanks to 7500 Taxi everyone arrived safely. To everyone's surprise we had approximately 65 people of all ages come out for the event. Through the kindness of many we were able to offer the families a feast with all the trimmings. We had turkey, ham, scalloped potatoes, baked beans, perogies, vegetables, salads, fruit and plenty of deserts. We had so much food that every family was able to pack up a snack for lunch the next day.

“
WE HAD SO MUCH FOOD THAT EVERY FAMILY WAS ABLE TO PACK UP A SNACK FOR LUNCH THE NEXT DAY.
”

Then, on December 20th, to mark the first day of the Christmas break and to give back to our great community, both Aboriginal Healing and Wellness programs, Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children, and the Historic Métis Council of Sault Ste. Marie pulled together at the last minute and organised a great day for the families of our community by planning a family sleigh ride. The day was cold but the families came and enjoyed the sleigh ride followed by hot chocolate and hot dogs; Santa even came to ensure each child left with a gift. The kids had an amazing time in the shack singing Christmas songs and opening presents.

It is for these times that we must remember and rely upon the community partnerships that we as workers try so hard to build.

Jamie Panco-Fox is the Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children (AHBHC) Co-ordinator in the Métis Nation of Ontario office in Sault Ste. Marie.

Oshawa Métis Council | Community Outreach

The fish below the ice

Métis presence prominent in two North Durham events

by Art Henry

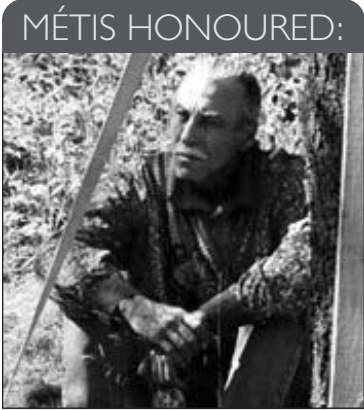
Métis culture and heritage were celebrated at two events in the Township of Brock, Durham Region, during the month of February. On February 17th, Township of Brock Mayor, Larry O'Connor, hosted a day of ice fishing on Lake Simcoe to kick off Beaverton's 125th anniversary celebrations, and on February 21st and 22nd the 5th Annual Dog Sled Races were scheduled in Cannington (see page 8).

Special guests attending the ice fishing event included Senator, (Northumberland) André Bosse, MNO Senior Policy Advisor, Hank Rowlinson and representatives from the Oshawa Métis Council (OMC).

The day began with breakfast at a local restaurant at Beaverton harbour, after which guests travelled by dog sleds and vintage Bombardiers to fishing huts on Lake Simcoe. Boulettes and bannock prepared by the OMC were enjoyed by all after catching some whitefish and perch.



From the left: **Mayor of Brock, Larry O'Conner; Mayor of Scugog, Marilyn Pearce; NMC Senator, André Bosse; Durham Regional Chairman, Roger Anderson; MPP of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, Laurie Scott and MNO Representative, Hank Rowlinson.**



by Linda Lord

In February, Heritage Mississauga again honoured "heritage heroes" in its community. Among this year's honourees was Métis Elder, Joe Paquette, who received "The Lifetime Membership Award".

Mr. Paquette can often be found at Métis gatherings. He may be telling stories or demonstrating "fire by friction" at the Métis Artists' Collective summer get-together; singing with the Shwa Singers around the World Drum when it visited the Annual Métis Heritage Celebration in Oshawa; or, conducting a "medicine walk" at the Cawthra Trail, near Toronto. He might be providing spiritual guidance at the AGA or taking part in a fiddle fest, or sharing traditional wisdom at Canada Day festivities.

Congratulations to our Métis hero: Joe Paquette.

Historic Sault Ste Marie Métis Métis Council | Office Renovations

The Sault Métis Centre is open!

by Neil Trudel

The Sault Métis Centre (MNO Sault Ste Marie Office) is open again for walk-in visitors and clients.

The office has been closed for the last three months for major renovations due to the ageing condition of the building. MNO staff has recently moved back into their downstairs offices after working temporarily from the community hall on the second floor. Because of safety concerns about the construction, the front door was closed to the public and all appointments were made by telephone for home visits or to

meet staff and council at the back entrance that led to the second floor. Construction is currently under way on the second floor and once completed repairs will be made to the garage.

Agreements between the building's owner, Historic Sault Ste Marie Métis Council, MNO Health, and Training, made way for improvements.

The first floor received new ceilings in the hallway and all of the offices; new lighting; new tile flooring for the offices and rugs for the hallway; fresh paint to brighten and improve the overall appearance; a new small storage room was added and the kitchen/meeting room was elimi-



nated with the space being subdivided into a new office and a conference room dedicated to video-conferencing.

Improvements to the second floor include the construction of four new offices, with the Historic Sault Ste Marie Métis Coun-

cil relocating their office upstairs to a larger room allowing for their older office to be used for more day services.

The garage and back storage room will be converted into a new larger kitchen and a larger dining area for community meals and meetings with direct access to the back parking lot.

Overall, the Sault Métis Centre with its upgrades will provide a more modern look and feel and will maximise the full potential of the building by creating more offices for new services. These ongoing improvements will help our community grow and expand.

OSHAWA MÉTIS COUNCIL • 4TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY POTLUCK

Venison, bear & elk tourtiere

The Oshawa Métis Council host a banquet table few will forget

by Art Henry

Almost 200 people gathered on Saturday, January 10th for the 4th Annual Oshawa Métis Council (OMC) Holiday Potluck--an event that is growing every year. This year, people from OMC, as well as friends, family and guests from other councils gathered at Camp Samac, the Scouts Canada Camp, in north Oshawa.

The evening began with a meet and greet and the opportunity to buy tickets on a silent auction for many beautiful items donated to this fund-raiser. Dinner was then brought out, and included a wide variety of interesting and delicious foods: an amazing range of wild meats, such as braised venison, beaver, moose shepherds pie, rabbit stew, elk tourtiere, bear meat, and goose, as well as more common main courses like, salads, side-dishes and fantastic desserts. It was a banquet table few will forget!

As soon as dinner wrapped

up, the entertainment began. From Joe Paquette's story telling, to a magic show, to a drum performance, we all enjoyed the wide variety of talented people who made their way to the front of the room. Highlights included the Olivine Bousquet Métis Dance Troupe, who continue to delight and amaze everyone with their talent. This time they added spoon playing while dancing, and a few new innovative moves. They were accompanied by Charlie Fife on the guitar and young fiddler Alicia Blore, who also played later with none other than two of the Métis Fiddle Quartet, Alyssa and Nicholas Delbaere-Sawchuk. It was an evening filled with traditional Métis music, dancing and entertainment enjoyed by all who attended.

Art Henry is the Vice President of the Oshawa Métis Council.



left to right: Region 8 PCMNO Councillor, Charlie Fife; Alyssa Delbaere-Sawchuk, Virginia Barter, Nicholas Delbaere-Sawchuk and Alicia Blore.



Community honouring Elder Olivine Tiedema (standing) of the Olivine Bousquet Métis Dance Troupe.

ABORIGINAL INITIATIVES

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION:

- OFFICE OF ABORIGINAL INITIATIVES (AI)
- ABORIGINAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL (AMC)
- DEPARTMENT OF INDIGENOUS LEARNING (IL)
- NATIVE NURSES ENTRY PROGRAM (NNEP)
- NATIVE ACCESS PROGRAM (NAP)

EDUCATION

- DEPARTMENT OF ABORIGINAL EDUCATION
- HONOURS BACHELOR OF EDUCATION (Aboriginal Education)
- NATIVE TEACHERS EDUCATION PROGRAM (NTEP)
- NATIVE LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS PROGRAM (NLIP)
- CANADA RESEARCH CHAIR (CRC) — INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

SUPPORT SERVICES

- ABORIGINAL CULTURAL AND SUPPORT SERVICES (ACSS)
- ELDERS PROGRAM
- LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY NATIVE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (LUNSA)
- ABORIGINAL AWARENESS CENTRE (AAC)

Office of Aboriginal Initiatives
<http://aboriginalinitiatives.lakeheadu.ca>
(807) 766-7219

Office of Admissions & Recruitment
www.mylakehead.ca
(807) 343-8500

AT LAKEHEAD

Lakehead University is dedicated to working with Aboriginal people in furthering their aspirations. Aboriginal programs at Lakehead University offer academic, research, cultural, and support services tailored to Aboriginal needs.

Lakehead
UNIVERSITY



Former-sled dog Inouk the malamute.

Niimki has a partner, Inouk is on her way

BY BARBARA GINGRAS | In the last issue of the *Métis Voyageur*, I wrote more about our birch bark canoe, Niimki. I told you that she was a canoe, without a paddle; I actually said she was up a creek without one! An amazing Métis citizen from Chapleau read about our plight, and I share one of the most profound stories I have ever read, with all of you today. Before I present our next great benefactor, I must publicly thank her for her kind generosity. This story is how “Inouk” got her name, and the glorious spirit that will follow her on every adventure Niimki’s new owner takes her on. I am so proud that we have a connection with the Métis people that we do. We are truly fortunate. With that, I humbly present to you the story of Inouk, as shared with me by Micheline Boisvert...

I was living in Quebec, and was Credit Manager for many stores. One of my employees came to me and asked if I could receive a young native couple, with no credit at all; everywhere they had been refused them. I was upset for them; in talking with them they only needed a chance for the first buy. I accepted it; one week passed by and the situation was done and dealt with.

One Friday, at closing time an “Elder” walked into the store and asked to talk with me. He came into my office, with a white shoe box and asked me to accept the gift. I told to him: “You don't owe me anything; it's my job; I am pleased to help.” A little female wolf was inside, I didn't know if I should cry or not. I probably did because I cry easy.

The Elder told me that during the trapping season North of Bay Comeau, they lost their malamute dog “Leader“. They looked, and looked but to the sadness of the children they had to return to their camp. Every time they returned to their trap line for their run, there was no sign of the dog. Two and a half months passed. The family was getting ready to pack everything and return to town with their furs. One morning Leader was in front of their camp barking like there was no tomorrow. They decided because of the children asking and crying, to follow Leader. Time went fast but, Leader just lead on. The father said, “no, move, let me go and check. Leader was not growling just mourning. There were lots of tracks around a tiny hole. The father asked the child to bring him one snow shoe, then asked him to bring the pair and “come



Micheline Boisvert and the “Inouk paddle”.

here”. They started to dig a bigger hole; the older child crawled inside only to come out yelling “urkk urkk”. The father told him to return and bring him “the urk” as he didn’t understand. The child returned, bringing him a little pup all warm and alive. The mother was dead, with five pups, but two were alive.

The father explained: his dog Leader did what he could. It was not his instinct to regurgitate and give away what he ate, but he came to us to rescue his two pups.

It was after he told me this story, that I did accept his gift with great honour.

We named her “Inouk” and she lived in our closet up to a certain point; she needed to be in the dark for the first month. My daughters had small bottles for their dolls and Inouk was in need of a feeding every two to three hours for the first four weeks. We started to go hunt for small animals, and we processed everything in a blender, and spoon fed her. One day we had to take her out of her den, “my closet”, she was chewing on everything she could put her teeth into. From this little one pound pup she turned into a super female of 115 pounds! She saved my husband’s life twice. She passed on at the age of 13, and we still cherish her memory today.

During the days Inouk was outside, but at night she was in one of my daughter's beds!

My husband and I are a foster family, and 29 stars have joined our family in eight years! We cry with our children, we laugh with them and we miss them all. When they leave our house a part of our hearts leaves with them.

A special note from Micheline to our council : Ma grand mere maternelle disait toujours...Sa ne prends pas des sous pour voyager, ou se deplacer, ferme tes yeux et rêves , tu vas ou tu veux , quand tu veux ! Elle finissait toujours en disant, si tu le fais maintenant reviens vite car on a des choses a faire...et sa me faisait bien rire. Longue vie a votre comite, vous avez un groupe extraordinaire c'est le pourquoi que j'ai ete accrocher a votre annonce.

Miigwetch,
Micheline & Claude Boisvert

MÉTIS IN THE NEWS:



Logan Couture celebrates after a game by meeting and greeting friends and family. From left to right: grandmother, Marie Lemon; father, Chet Couture; great-grandmother, Jessie Couture; Logan and mother, Lori (Lemon) Couture.

Métis OHLer drafted by Sharks

by Jeff Wilson

The Couture family connection was out in force at an Ontario Hockey League game featuring the Owen Sound Attack versus Ottawa 67s on February 15, 2009.

The star of the game, scoring two goals, including the shootout winner, was Ottawa centre Logan Couture, grand-

son of Sharon and the late Bob Couture and son of Chet and Lori Couture. Logan was born in Guelph, but his parents and family are all natives of Owen Sound and area. Congratulations Logan!

Couture, a draft pick of the NHL San Jose Sharks and captain of the 67s, is in his last year of junior hockey. Next season, he hopes to crack the tough San Jose line up.

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Senator Jacques Leroux with dignitaries in front of the Ermatinger Old Stone House June 9th, 2006. The City of Sault Ste. Marie and the historic site board requested Senator Leroux smudge and bless the site. You might well ask what we Métis have to do with old stone houses; in this case, quite a lot.

The story behind the photo:

A piece of fur trade history preserved in Soo

It's still a few years off, but the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council is already involved with the preparations being made to mark the bicentennial of the War of 1812. It so happens that the date coincides with the centennial of the city of Sault Ste. Marie. Beginning in June of 2012, and continuing over a three year period, the events will take place between Sault Ste. Marie and Thessalon. At this point, the committees and sub-committees are in the initial planning phase, but included in their work is the development of a business plan for the proposed visitor centre at the Ermatinger-Clergue National Historic site, as well as a monument. Long time readers of the *Voyageur* may recall this story from 2006.

by Linda Lord

Charles Oakes Ermatinger, of Swiss descent, launched his fur trade career in 1797 or 1798 in the Sandy Lake area near the headwaters of the Mississippi River. It was here that he met and married Manowé, the daughter of Katawabeda, an influential policy chief of the Sandy Lake tribe. Ermatinger was associated with the North West Company by 1799, and continued in their employ until 1807, when Charles and the company went their separate ways. This led Ermatinger to resume his status as an independent trader. With his wife and four children, he made his way to Sault Ste. Marie where he established a permanent residence and post.

The site he chose was a wooded lot on the bank of the St. Mary's River about a mile and a half below the rapids and the North West Company post. In between the posts there were a few scattered houses belonging to retired voyageurs and their families.

Upon arrival, Ermatinger and his employees began to build the post and a cabin to house the Ermatingers. The post itself would have been built of logs complete with a finished bark roof. The windows would have been covered with parchment and the chimney would have

been made of compacted clay and grass.

Ermatinger began work on the property now known as the Ermatinger Old Stone House in 1812. Situated on 252 acres (30 of which were cleared), the house measured thirty-five feet by forty-five feet. It was constructed using a typical Quebec masonry method: stones of varying sizes were applied to both faces of the walls and then covered with a lime mortar without any attempt at pointing.

In 1814, American troops attacked Sault Ste. Marie with a force of 150 troops. They burned most structures, including the North West Company post, but Ermatinger's house escaped unscathed.

After the Ermatinger family left Sault Ste. Marie in 1828, the house was variously occupied by a caretaker, a missionary, The Church of England, a collector of customs and post master, and in 1852 the "Stone House Hotel".

Over the next several years, the house served as a tavern, courthouse, post office, dance hall, tea room, and apartment building. In 1965, it was purchased by the City of Sault Ste. Marie and restored. It now stands as it did originally at a cross roads of Canada's history on the St. Mary's River and a testament to the Métis entrepreneurial spirit.

(Summarised from <http://collections.ic.gc.ca/ssm/pages/english/stone.html>)

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EDUCATING GENERATIONS

Métis Senator and granddaughter teach Niagara region elementary school students about Métis culture

by MARYANNE FIRTH
The Welland Tribune

PELHAM—It's not often a sixth-grader takes a senator to school—but Glynn A. Green student Rebecca Booth did just that Monday.

Sharing a piece of her heritage with her classmates, Rebecca made a presentation to Grade 5 and 6 classes based on her Métis background, and with a little help from her family.

She was accompanied by her grandfather, Stephen Quesnelle, senator of the Niagara Region Métis Council and her sister Julie, who also assisted with the presentation. The three came dressed in traditional clothing worn by the Métis, and brought tools that were used for hundreds of years.

Students also came prepared with questions.

Fur pelts, flags, photos and loads of information sat at the front of the room for students to explore after the presentation was complete.

Rebecca and her grandfather spoke about many aspects of Métis life, including clothing, transportation, shelter and food.

Rebecca explained how the Métis came to be, when "First Nation women and European men united together" about 400 years ago.

Quesnelle explained the many uses of the traditional Métis sash worn around the waist. It can be used to carry larger items, or as bandages for a wound, he said. The thread from the fringe can be used if something needs to be sewn.

He spoke about the differences between travel today and traditional travel used by the Métis. They would use a large canoe to carry freight, often having to portage across land, first carrying the freight then coming back for the canoe, he said.



top: Niagara Region Métis Council Senator Stephen Quesnelle and granddaughter Rebecca Booth at Glynn A. Green Public School in Fonhill near Welland. bottom: Glynn A. Green Public School students learn about Métis history and culture.

When travelling solely on land, they would use a Red River cart.

Questions were asked about different cultural practices, such as hunting and beadwork, to which Quesnelle happily replied. The students seemed particularly impressed that no piece of a buffalo went to waste when hunters brought one home.

Eleven-year-old Rebecca said she thinks it's important that children learn about their cultural background.

"I'm proud to be a Métis," she said, adding "without my forefathers ... Canada wouldn't be like it is right now."

Quesnelle said he only began to learn about his family history in the 1990s. Now, he proudly

tells people of his Métis background, he said.

He said he takes pride in being able to share with his children and grandchildren information about their heritage.

Quesnelle encouraged students to look into their backgrounds where they may find interesting facts about their family history. For students interested in learning whether they have some Métis blood down the family line, Quesnelle handed out information on how to contact the council.

If the Métis connection can be made somewhere, a person is considered Métis, he said, no matter how long ago the connection occurred.

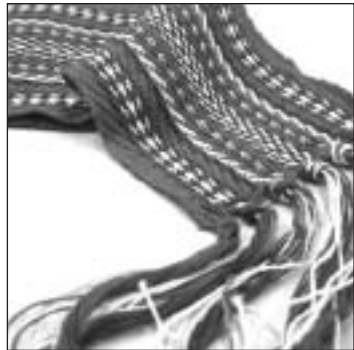
NIAGARA REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL

Learning the culture

In February, Beamsville resident, Derrick Pont, was featured in an article that appeared in a local newspaper. Now the Vice-president of the Niagara Region Métis Council, Derrick only recently found his Métis roots.

It's a story familiar to many of us: he knew his family had some native connections, but wasn't sure what they were. Derrick feels that being Métis is more acceptable now than in his grandmother's day, when, as a child she attended a residential school where they tried to eliminate her cultural background.

Derrick discovered that his family on his father's side were from Manitoba. "I got talking to my cousins in Manitoba and from



that, I was able to get my history," he said.

"I learned a lot. I decided to register with the Métis Nation of Ontario as a citizen. Growing up, it was something that wasn't really talked about," he said. "Being Métis was like being a half-breed. Right now, I'm enjoying learning

my past culture." Belonging to the local Niagara Region Métis Council has helped him come even closer to his family history and the Métis culture.

While Mr. Pont is still learning, he's also trying to bring greater awareness to the general public. The Métis Nation of Ontario currently counts 14,100 registered citizens, with more than 70,000 Ontario residents self-identifying as Métis in the 2006 census. Derrick encourages Métis in the Niagara region to make themselves known. "If they want to get registered, we'll help them," he said.

Niagara Region Métis Council
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niagararegionmetisCouncil@gmail.com

Métis Senators

Seeking out “Other Opportunities”

The other day, while looking at Métis web sites on my computer, I came across a link in the Métis National Council’s site listed as “Other Opportunities”. The content of this web link was interesting enough but the title intrigued me: “Other Opportunities”. In today’s society it seems easier to go with the flow, to be content with being directed from above. Let someone else set the course and plan the route. Our lives are often so busy that we follow the path of least resistance, walking down the well worn trail and missing the other opportunities of life. Our ancestors were not afraid to seek out opportunities, sometimes out of necessity



and sometimes out of the desire to change, to better themselves. Spring has always been viewed as a time of new beginnings, not just a time of renewal, but a time to set out on a new path or in a new direction. It is a perfect time to seek out other opportunities. We must not allow ourselves to sit back and let the world pass us by. We must put our resourcefulness into overdrive and meet today’s chal-

“OFTEN WE ARE BLINDED BY THE WORLD AROUND US AND WE FIND IT EASIER TO BURY OUR HEADS IN THE SAND OR FOLLOW THE OFT TRAVELLED PATH.”

lenges head on. We are all aware of the hardships being faced, not only by our own people but by all Canadians, North Americans, and, indeed, people throughout the world. Times are hard; the economy is in a mess and a sense of direction seems to have been lost. Often we are blinded by the world around us and we find it easier to bury our heads in the sand or follow the oft travelled path. When we do that, we are missing out on the other opportunities. It is up to us to pick up the pieces ourselves and with great resolve to seek out those other opportunities. We cannot wait for others to set the pace or lay out the course; we ourselves bear that responsi-

bility, not just for ourselves, but for our families, our communities, our councils, the Métis Nation, and Canada. In my last letter/article I said, “yes we can”, and now is the time to make it happen by seeking out those other opportunities. I leave you with the words of an individual who despite great hardships sought life’s other opportunities: “The most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched; they must be felt with the heart.” (Helen Keller) Reta Gordon / Executive Senator 208-2019 Carling Ave., Ottawa tel: 613-722-7078 retag@metisnation.org

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A Musical Love Story

by Paula Boon
The Huntsville Forester

Ruth Wagner’s life has been a musical love story. As a child living in Toronto, Wagner became enamoured with violins when she went to the symphony for the first time. Because her parents were only prepared to pay for piano lessons, she anxiously awaited Grade 5, when she would have access to violin instruction at school. When that day finally came, she learned there was no available instrument for her. “It was the most horrifying thing that had happened in my life,” she says. “I didn’t have a handkerchief, and I had to blow my nose on my slip because I couldn’t stop crying.” When Wagner’s grandmother heard what had happened, she sent Wagner a violin that had been tucked away in her attic. The little girl emptied her piggy bank and went in search of someone who would fix it up. At the first two shops she visited, she was told she would have to leave the instrument behind and come back for it later. “But I couldn’t do that because I needed it Monday morning,” she says. Seeing her distress, the man in the third shop she visited put his other tasks on hold and did the work right away. “He told me my bow was only good for staking tomatoes with,” she says with a chuckle. “Then he picked out a new one and showed me how to take care of it.” When he was finished the man told her to keep in touch, adding, “I think you’ll make a good violin player.” Although Wagner studied piano to the highest level possible with her parents’ sup-

port, the violin remained her first love. She won violin scholarships, earned the highest possible level in violin performance, and played the instrument in several symphonies in Toronto. All that time, the man from the shop came to her concerts. Then the violin-maker moved away, returning to Toronto once a week to pick up repairs at another music store. Wagner married, had four children and moved to a farm outside Bracebridge, and one day while shopping in town she was surprised to meet the violin-maker. It turned out he now lived in Beatrice, near Utterson. Later, Wagner returned to the city to care for her mother, who had Alzheimer’s. She also completed an honours program in instrument-making from the Ontario College of Art through six years of night school.



Ruth Wagner-Millington is a Senator on the PCMNO.

Much later she returned to Muskoka to live with and then marry the violin-maker, whose name was Sieg Wagner. “I admired him so much as a person for years. Then I fell in love with him,” she says. “He was an amazing man. I was blessed to have him in my life.” Sieg, who had started his business in 1934 in Antwerp, Brussels, taught Wagner a new and different way to make violins, and most valuably how to repair and restore old instruments and re-hair bows. They worked together in the studio he had built. Since Sieg’s death in 1999 Wagner has continued to serve the same clientele, which includes symphonies from around the world. There is a two-and-a-half-year waiting list for her instruments. It is not unusual for security guards to show up at Wagner’s home bearing valuable instruments. “You don’t just send those by courier,” she says, adding that she has dogs and an alarm system to satisfy insurance companies. Last year, in homage to her Métis heritage, Wagner built a fiddle of Canadian maple and spruce with f-holes shaped like the infinity symbol found on the Métis flag. Wagner also teaches music to a few children and does repairs for those who live in the area. “I never know what will come my way,” she says, giving the example of a filthy, battered violin that had originally been acquired in exchange for a fig tree. When Wagner cleaned it up, the instrument turned out to be worth about \$53,000. “Every day is a surprise,” she says. “It’s never the same old thing, which makes coming into my workshop a real joy.” Thanks to Verna Porter for suggesting that Ruth Wagner be profiled.

Métis Cookhouse

by Gail LeBlanc

Travelling is great, especially if you can come home with new recipes. Here are two easy and delicious recipes I collected while travelling in Toronto last summer.

Ruth’s Tea Biscuits

2 cups flour
1/4 cup sugar
1 tbsp. baking powder
1 tsp. salt
1/4 cup oil or shortening
3/4 cup milk

Mix flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Cut in the oil; add milk and stir with fork to make soft dough. Gather into a ball and knead several times until smooth. Roll out to 1/2 inch thick and cut with small round cookie cutter (about 2 inches). Bake at 420 for about 13 minutes (depends on your stove).

Ruth's Marinated Cucumbers and Onions

1/4 cup vinegar
1 to 2 tbsp. sugar
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. celery seed
1 large cucumber thinly sliced (about 3 cups)
1/2 cup thinly sliced onion

Combine marinade ingredients. Add cucumber and onions and toss to coat. Cover and chill in fridge for four hours or up to five days. Stir occasionally. Enjoy!

Métis Politics



Community council presidents and Senators, as well as PCMNO and staff in a *Duty to Consult* workshop at the Sheraton Hotel in Toronto.

MÉTIS DESCEND ON DOWNTOWN TORONTO

Visitors to the Toronto Sheraton Centre on Queen Street West, the last week of March would have encountered a hotel lobby teeming with Métis Nation of Ontario citizens. The spring gathering began on Sunday, March 22, with the quarterly Captains of Hunt meeting and culminated on Saturday, March 28, 2009, with a *Duty to Consult and Accommodate* Workshop attended by Senators and Community Council Presidents.

CAPTAINS OF THE HUNT

William Van Drunen of Fort Frances, Acting Captain of the Hunt for Region 1, was the rookie at the table when the meeting convened bright and early Sunday morning. Ken Simard, Captain of the Hunt for Region 2, welcomed everyone with an opening prayer. The meeting was chaired by Deputy Captain, Louise Goulding of Moon River.

Following some words of welcome by President and Chief Captain of the Hunt, Gary Lipinski, MNO Legal Counsel, Jean Teillet, offered a brief lesson on the history of the Métis struggle for harvesting rights in Canada. Teillet explained that the "Captain of the Hunt" tradition is one dating back to the days of the buffalo hunt and the use of this term by the MNO is another way of promoting and retaining Métis culture and tradition. Chief Captain Lipinski followed up with an explanation of the role of the 1997 Interim Harvesting Policy in triggering the Crown's Duty to Consult and Accommodate the Métis in Ontario and the role of the volunteer regional Captains in sharing this information with citizens in their regions.

Other topics discussed on day one included support available for Captains of the Hunt, a report on the MNO/MNR working table, Harvesters Cards and Incidental Cabins.

Day two began with regional reports, starting with Bill Van Drunen for Region 1; Senator Ken Simard for Region 2; Andy Lefebvre for Region 3; Richard Sarrazin for Region 5; Pat Thibault for Region 6; Louise Goulding for Region 7; Senator



clockwise from top left: **PCMNO Chair, France Picotte; MNO President, Gary Lipinski addresses the PCMNO; Region Two Councillor, Cam Burgess (foreground) and members of the PCMNO.**

Gerry Bedford for Region 8 and Peter Rivers for Region 9. Acting Captain of the Hunt for Region 4, Chris Belisle, was unable to attend. The day wrapped up with an extensive discussion about the loss of fishing quota for Métis fishers. Ken Simard offered a closing prayer. •

PROVISIONAL COUNCIL OF THE MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO

The week long gathering continued Tuesday when the directors and PCMNO Executive met. The focus of the meeting was administrative matters with several directors providing year end reports.

Wednesday was the first day of

the PCMNO meeting which opened with a prayer from Senator Gerry Bedford. Chair, France Picotte, offered opening remarks and then President Lipinski welcomed delegates to the meeting.

A review of the minutes from previous meetings and a presentation from Finance Director, Steve Berry, were followed by an update from Jennifer St. Germain, Director of Labour Market Development and a presentation by Manager, Dr. Chris Paci, and Bonny Cann concerning the ongoing province-wide public discussions on the Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework.

On the second day of the meeting Jason Madden and Jean Teillet dealt with the Registry and the Harvester's Card system. The

focus for the afternoon was MNO Consultation Policy, the Regional Consultation Protocols, and a presentation on the proposed Green Energy Act. The meeting wrapped up with a closing prayer from Senator Reta Gordon. •

LAW SOCIETY OF UPPER CANADA HOSTS MÉTIS RIGHTS SYMPOSIUM

Friday, March 27th, was very special as the Métis Nation of Ontario and the the Law Society of Upper Canada at Osgoode Hall hosted a special symposium which explored the issue of Métis rights. A series of presentations addressed the continuing legal development of Métis rights by addressing who the Métis are,

probing the legal obligation to consult and offering practical suggestions about effective consultation at the community level.

The panellists, Jean Teillet of Pape Salter Teillet, Jason Madden of JTM Law, Bob Waldon of the Métis Nation of Ontario and Tracy Campbell of the Calgary based Calliou Group, shared their experiences and their perspectives on advancing Métis and Aboriginal rights and self-government issues regarding resource development in Ontario and throughout Canada. The research papers are being prepared for publication.

Opening comments were provided by Métis Nation of Ontario President, Gary Lipinski, and Law Society bencher Susan Hare. Clint Davis, President and CEO of the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, was chair of the symposium. The overflow crowd included Senators, PCMNO members, community council presidents and MNO staff, as well as government and industry lawyers and communications people.

The afternoon symposium was followed by a reception featuring remarks from Law Society Treasurer, W. A. Derry Millar and a performance of traditional Métis music by Roger and Aline Giroux. MNO representatives were then treated to a private dinner with a performance by Alyssa Delbaere-Sawchuk, winner of the 2008 Best Fiddle Album at the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards for the CD, "Omeigwessi Reel Métis: A Tribute to Walter Flett".

On Saturday, the community council presidents and Senators, as well as PCMNO and staff spent the day in a Duty to Consult workshop. •

LOUISE GOULDING HONoured BY PROVINCE:



The Value of Volunteering

by Chelsey Quirk

Recognising the dedication of its volunteers is something in which the Métis Nation of Ontario takes great pride. The passion, determination and selflessness of our volunteers plays a significant role in the success of the Métis Nation as a whole.

This spring, the Women’s Secretariat of the Métis Nation of Ontario successfully nominated Louise Goulding for the 2008 Ontario Heritage Trust Community Recognition Award. The award recognises individuals who have made a significant effort in the preservation of culture across the province. Louise’s contribution was celebrated along with 236 other volunteers from throughout Ontario.

Louise has held several different positions at the provincial, regional and community level within the MNO since the doors opened in 1994. She began as a founding delegate and moved on to become President of the Moon River Métis Council, Co-Chair of the Region 7 Métis Rendezvous, Region 7 Captain of the Hunt,



Louise Goulding (centre) was recently awarded the 2008 Ontario Heritage Trust Community Recognition Award.

PCMNO Councillor and member of the Board of Directors for the Métis Nation of Ontario Development Corporation. Most recently, Louise was named Deputy Chief Captain of the Hunt, using her skills and knowledge to advocate for Métis Harvesting Rights in Ontario.

Here is what some of Louise’s colleagues had to say about her:

“Louise is a great role model; she’s very proud to be Métis and shows it!”

“Louise is a strong Métis Woman who volunteers many hours to her community”

“Anyone who knows Louise understands that she can’t just be a little involved in something. When she decides to be involved it’s full speed ahead and don’t get in her way”

“Her devotion toward the Métis Nation of Ontario is truly admirable”

“She is a strong Métis woman who lives and breaths her culture.”

Louise is a leader and perhaps more importantly, a team player for whom the greater good of the Métis Nation is always at the forefront. She is a proud Métis woman who spends her time sharing her traditional ways and educating others on the rich heritage of the Métis people. When asked about her many successes, Louise credits the work of those around her, saying that she “didn’t do it alone”--a sign of a true leader.

Since the Heritage Community Recognition Program began in 1996, *the Trust* has helped communities across Ontario recognise 3,160 local heritage volunteers. *The Trust* also co-ordinates the Young Heritage Leaders program, which recognises heritage volunteers under the age of 18.

INSPIRATION:

TRYING ON A PAIR OF SNOWSHOES

by Sandra Morgan

I hope this message finds you all healthy, blessed and prosperous! I would like to share some highlights with you from one of our programs: a snow shoe activity that I recently planned with a local school. Although we had no snow, the activity was lots of fun for all of us!

I recently discovered a class of third grade children who were learning about the early pioneers and Aboriginal people. I thought this would be a great opportunity to offer our services to this group, in terms of helping to get more understanding of the way of life of the early settlers. When I think of the pioneers, I think of the Métis people, because I recognise that there is a spirit of perseverance within the Métis population.


Part of my discussion with these children related to courage and determination. We agreed that if we wanted to be successful we needed to have courage, determination and focus as the early pioneers did. We shared our thoughts around the idea that a way to overcome obstacles in life is to face them with the boldness of a pioneering spirit.

This discussion helped to stir up courage in some of these little ones who had never seen nor worn snowshoes. It was important for them to focus on what they were doing as they tried on the snowshoes. For these children, the objective was to navigate themselves while doing something they were not accustomed to. The moral of the story is the same for you and me. We are all navigating through something while attempting to get somewhere. Just as these children had some challenges with the snowshoes, we too have challenges; although, they look a little different. Nonetheless, they are challenges and the objective is the same; without focus and perseverance both personally and collectively, we will not reach our goal.

Working with these children stirred up a child-like faith within me. They simply believed in themselves and accomplished what they had set out to do. For some of us it may be as simple as “trying on a pair of snowshoes” (doing something different, getting creative), and for others it will be something else. The important thing to remember is that all things are possible to those who believe.

Sandra Morgan is the Community Wellness Co-ordinator in the Hamilton Wentworth Métis Council Office.





Join us at **Babies & Beyond**

Offered by the Bancroft community service providers, *Babies and Beyond* is an educational program for pregnant and parenting teens up to 21 years of age.

Sessions are held Mondays 9:30am to 12:30pm at the Bancroft Bible Chapel. Participants provide facilitators with input on the varied program of speakers and activities. Participants may also work with a facilitator to develop a personal support map and a mentoring program is a possible option.

For more information call Tammy at **613-332-2575** or tammyh@metisnation.org.

WANTED: MÉTIS MUSICIANS, ARTISTS & PERFORMERS!



THE MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO CULTURAL COMMISSION
presents the annual

BUILDING BRIDGES FESTIVAL 2009
August 21 - 24, 2009 in Sudbury, Ontario

The Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission is seeking performers and workshop presenters for our Annual Building Bridges Festival.

We are encouraging **established and up and coming, traditional and contemporary Métis recording artists, songwriters, musicians, singers, performers, crafters, storytellers, jiggers, and fine artists** to submit a letter of interest with a biography, sample of their work, and press kit or portfolio (if available) for consideration. Musicians who perform cover material must include a complete set list. Original musical performers that do not have an audio or video recording must include lyric samples with a description of their musical style and at least one letter of reference.

All applicants will be considered. Submissions must physically arrive in our office by 4:30 P.M. on June 30, 2009. Late applicants will only be considered in the event of a cancellation. No phone calls please. Only those selected by our entertainment committee will be contacted and notified on or before July 15, 2009. If you would like your items returned, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope with your submission.

Submission Deadline: June 30, 2009. Applications should be sent to the: Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission Attn: Entertainment Committee 500 Old St. Patrick Ottawa, Ontario K1N 9G4


MÉTIS HEALTH | DIABETES AWARENESS:


Healthy feet are happy feet


On February 13, the MNO Health Branch operating out of the Georgian Bay Métis Council, offered a fun filled day of exploring the Wye Marsh in Midland. Included were lots of fun and games, a tasty lunch, diabetes awareness and health promotion, and for a lucky few, some TLC for their feet. Many participants were surprised to see our foot care provider, Donna Evans, at the event feeling that her services were only for those who are diabetic or have existing foot problems. However, foot care really is for anyone; a foot care provider can help make you aware of potential problems and keep your feet healthy in the future. Here are ten steps to healthy feet, all good advice, whether you are a diabetic or not. **by Tracy Bald**




Yvonne Bald receives foot care from Donna Evans.


-  **Step #1.**
Have your doctor check your feet regularly.


If you are diabetic, see your family doctor regularly to be sure your diabetes is in good control. Have your doctor look at your feet at every visit.
-  **Step #2**
Wear the right shoes and socks.

Don't wear shoes that fit too tightly or pinch your feet. Choose thick cotton socks and well-cushioned shoes with plenty of room in the toes. (Look for shoes with a high toe box.) They will help keep your feet healthy. Never go barefoot.
-  **Step #3**
Check your feet every day


Look at your feet very carefully every day to be sure you have no cuts, scrapes or blisters. Look at every part of your foot, even between your toes.


-  **Step #4**
Treat cuts, scrapes and blisters. See your doctor if a wound does not heal

If you get a small cut, scrape or blister on your foot, wash the area gently with soap and water. Don't break the blister. Put an antibiotic cream on the wound several times a day. If the wound does not heal in a few days, see your doctor.
-  **Step #5**
Keep your feet clean


Gently wash your feet with soap and water every day. Pat your feet dry. Put on a moisturising cream or ointment (for example, petroleum jelly). Don't put too much moisturiser between your toes, however.
-  **Step #6**
Cut your toenails correctly


Cut your toenails straight across the top, not curved at the sides, to prevent

- ingrown toenails. Ask your doctor for help if your nails are too thick or if they crack when you try to cut them.
-  **Step #7**
Treat athlete's foot

Athlete's foot is more common in people who have diabetes, and it can cause problems. If you have athlete's foot, wear a different pair of shoes every other day. This lets your shoes dry out. Always wear absorbent cotton socks. See your doctor if over-the-counter treatments don't clear up your athlete's foot.
-  **Step #8**
Get proper treatment for thickened skin, calluses & corns

Many people with diabetes get thickened skin, calluses or corns over the bony spots on their feet. Don't trim or cut these spots at home with razor blades or other sharp tools. Ask your doctor how to treat these spots.

-  **Step #9**
Avoid heating pads and hot water foot soaks

Because diabetes can hurt the nerves in your feet, you might not be able to tell if something is hurting your feet. It's best not to use heating pads or hot water soaks, since you could burn your feet without knowing it.
-  **Step #10**
Take action to improve your circulation

High blood pressure, high cholesterol levels and smoking can harm the circulation in your feet and keep sores from healing. Ask your doctor for help if you have any of these problems.
- For more information please contact Tracy Bald, Community Wellness Coordinator for the Georgian Bay Métis Council, at 705-526-6335 or via email at tracyb@metisnation.org.*

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL HEALTH ORGANIZATION:

NAHO and StatsCan report on Métis health

The National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO) recently commended Statistics Canada on the release of its article on Métis health and well-being. The article, titled *An Overview of the Health of the Métis Population*, summarises findings from the 2006 Métis Supplement of the Aboriginal Peoples Survey.

“We have been saying for years that there is a clear gap in information about the health and well-being of Métis people,” said Dr. Paulette C. Tremblay, Chief Executive Officer of NAHO. “The release of this Métis-specific information is an important step in the right direction towards closing that gap.”

The report analysed Métis health and well-being by examining the social determinants of health--information such as demographic information, health behaviours and health care utilisation. Key findings outline many significant gaps in health between Métis and the total population, including the following:

- Métis tend to have high rates of chronic disease. Just over half (54 per cent) of Métis adults have been diagnosed with a chronic condition.
- Twice as many Métis adults report asthma (14%) and dia-

- betes (7%). For Canada, the rates are 8% and 4%.
- The most common chronic condition reported for Métis youth was asthma, at rates almost double that of Canada's total population—20% for Métis vs. 11% for Canada.

“Despite these gaps in health status, there are many positive signs of the increasing well-being of Métis, particularly among youth,” said Dr. Tremblay.

“While we must address the significant gaps in health, we must not overlook the positive indicators that clearly demonstrate the resiliency of Métis. This strength and resiliency is seen throughout the Statistics Canada report, particularly in the increasing health status of many Métis youth.”

Approximately one third of Métis people reported access to traditional medicines or wellness practices. Interestingly, Métis living in urban centres are more likely to report access to traditional healing practices.

Furthermore, almost 60% of Métis adults rated their health status as very good or excellent.



And, according to the report, the Métis population in Canada is growing. In fact, the number of people identifying as Métis increased 33% in the five years since the last Aboriginal Peoples Survey in 2001. There are now 389,785 people in Canada who identify as Métis, making up 33% of the Aboriginal population in Canada of 1,172,790.

Catherine Graham, Director of the Métis Centre of NAHO says, “This is a great day for Métis in Canada. As this and other information begins to make its way to leaders, researchers and community members, we will hopefully begin to see programs and services developed in accordance with Métis needs and priorities.”

NAHO is proud to have played a role in the development of the report. A NAHO Métis Centre Research Officer, Joyce Seto, was one of the authors.

NAHO is an Aboriginal-designed and controlled body that works to influence and advance the health and well-being of Aboriginal peoples through knowledge-based strategies.

HEALTHY BABIES, HEALTHY CHILDREN:

Sore fingers for Sudbury drummakers

by Dale Xilon

Hello, my name is Dale Xilon; I am the Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children Co-ordinator and the newest member of the Health Branch Team in Sudbury. I thought it appropriate for my first submission to the *Voyageur* that I write about my first workshop.

I organised a “Grandmother Drum-making” workshop, in partnership with Better Beginnings Better Futures-Aboriginal Hub. Elder Winnie Pitawanakwat was our facilitator. In total 11 drums were made. Many stresses, stories and teachings were shared during this three day

event.

Day one had us making our drum sticks and sanding our rings. Day two brought sore fingers, partridge soup, and many laughs as we strung our drums. On January 15, 2009, a ceremony was held to “birth” our “Grandmother Drums”. This was followed by a feast. In total 18 participants took part in the ceremony and seven new drums were welcomed into the community. (Some of the participants could not make it to the ceremony due to unforeseen events.)

This was the first of many workshops I have planned and I hope they will all be as successful as this one.



Some of the drum-making workshop.

REFLECTIONS ON COMMUNITY HEALTH:

The Evolution of Double-Double Hands

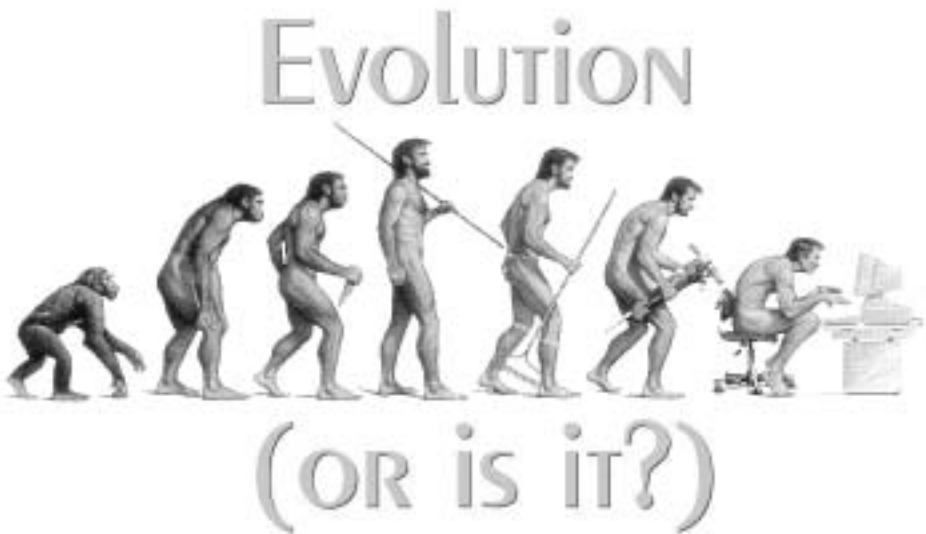
by Lynne Sinclair

As a new person to this position, I have spent a lot of time going over health related workshop topics and ideas. Some of the areas covered--problem gambling, substance abuse, diabetes, foot care, vaccination awareness, and technology--have gotten me thinking. What would Darwin think of our process of evolution in the past 125 years since his death?

We know that people have the ability to adapt to their surroundings. People from different areas of the world have different characteristics. The Indigenous people in tropical climates have darker skin and long slender bodies to help the body to tolerate hot temperatures. The Inuit have also adapted to their environment. They have short compact bodies that hold in the heat. Even their facial structure protects their sinuses from harsh temperatures. The adaptation of a body type to the environment takes many years to develop. Researchers have hypothesised that the first human existence was in Africa; 100,000 years ago the Homo

Sapiens ruled the African continent. About 30,000 years ago the more modern forms of man began to appear. However, the process of evolution does not have to take this long. The Inuit are estimated to have inhabited the Arctic for only 5000 years—not a long time to develop such a specific body type, not a long time considering how long man has been in existence.

I wonder what the actions of today's society will bring in the future. What will we look like 500 years from now? Will our hands



“What will we look like 500 years from now? Will our hands have thicker skin to hold those hot Tim Horton's cups filled with double-double coffee with more ease?”

have thicker skin to hold those hot Tim Horton's cups filled with double-double coffee with more ease? Will our ears have some built in ability to drown out “white noise” from cell phones? Will we have a Wal-Mart area in our brains that is more perceptive to “roll backs”? The possibilities are endless and a bit alarming.


Métis and First Nations people have changed a lot in appearance over the past 100 years. The introduction of western foods to our diets has not been favourable to many of us. Our body types

have changed but for the most part, it is not for the better. We were once a nation that was far more active. Today, weight issues are a problem, especially because many of us are gaining in the abdominal area. Apparently, this is the worst place to carry extra weight. The prevalence of diabetes is a testament to the internal imbalance of our health. These are two huge changes and they have largely come about in the latter half of this past century. We are not at our best when it comes to health issues.

This brings me back to Darwin. His works on evolution have been summed up by one statement, “survival of the fittest”. When you think of the process of evolution, this statement rings true. Given our health situation, we are not the fittest. So, how are we to survive? We may not be able to help the fact that we will have double-double hands a hundred years from now, but we can make sure that we are the fittest that we can be. We do this by starting today and your local Community Wellness Worker can help!

Lynne Sinclair is the Community Wellness Worker in Region 4.

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GREY-OWEN SOUND HEALTH STAFF:

Grateful to be a part of MNO's AHWS program

by Kurv Makkapalil

I recently started working as a Community Wellness Co-ordinator; therefore, I'm new to this program. However, I would like to take a minute to describe how I feel about it.

I truly believe that the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy is a one of a kind program. I have not heard of any other countries offering such a program, including our neighbour to the south. This is why I'm so grateful and privileged to be a part of it. I think that AHWS offers an amazing opportunity to all Aboriginal people in Canada. It is wonderful to have such a program available and to be funded by the government, especially with the focus being on health and wellness from an holistic perspective. This is exactly the opportunity that is needed by the Abo-

riginal people of this country in order for them to move forward and meet the standard of health care that is right for everyone. I sincerely hope that more and more Aboriginal people will take part in and become more and more aware of the significance of this great program. It is only through such participation that the AHWS program can continue to flourish and be around for years to come. Once again, I am truly grateful to be associated with AHWS and would like to thank the Métis Nation of Ontario for giving me this opportunity.

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Owen Sound, ON, N4K 1P1
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kuruvillam@metisnation.org

The Sprouting Seed

The mix of the essential elements was perfect.
Heat, water and good earth greeted her.
Enwrapped by pure love, she thrived.
Sunbeams warmed her bed of soil.
Pools of rain gently quenched her thirst.
Rich earth provided her with nutritional food.
Oh, but the loving care came from Mother Nature!
Under her spell, she couldn't help herself from thriving.
The day had arrived for her to reach out for the sky.
In breaking her shell, she began to softly sprout.
Nearing the crest of her shield, she pushed to
Give herself the pleasure of seeing daylight.
Seeking refuge above ground, she never
Ever forgot about the strength of her root system.
Each reached downwards or sideways to provide support.
Destined to become a majestic oak or a rose, she thanked her Creator.

– Raymond D. Tremblay

NUTRITION:



Healthy eating workshop successful again

by Tracey Dale

With our year-end just past, I wanted to tell you of a success story from one of our 2008 programs.

In September and October of 2008 we offered the “Take-5” program once again. This is a six-week program designed for women to teach them how to ensure they are getting five to ten servings of vegetables per day.

Recently, one of the participants came back into the office to tell me that by making simple lifestyle changes which she had learned at the Take-5 program held by the Métis Nation of Ontario she has dropped 20 pounds. Way to go Lyla!

Tracey Dale is the Community Wellness Coordinator in the MNO office in Bancroft, ON.

A LONG AND HEALTHY LIFE:

MEN PLEASE PAUSE...

Now that I have your attention, please read on and don't run in fear, as this article you are about to read is all about menopause and the women in your life--wife, partner, sister, mother, cousin, daughter, niece, neighbour or just a woman in your community. **by Shawna Hansen**

For you ladies about to read this article please don't dismiss this just because you are young or think you don't need to know about this because you've already gone through it. Please take from this article some wisdom and pass it on to the women in your life.

Let's start at the beginning, when all those lovely symptoms show their ugly faces. This usually starts between the ages of 40 - 56; symptoms include but are not limited to: hot flashes, joint pain, headaches, nausea, mood swings, sleeping disturbances, memory loss, fatigue, and loss of sexual desire. These are the most common symptoms and are for some very severe. This time is called "perimenopause" or the stage just before menopause. It is not until a woman has not had her moon time for at least a year that she can say that she is going through

menopause. All the fun stuff before hand is just the beginning of the end of her moon time, and menopause is the official end.

Yes, it's okay to be afraid guys but being understanding and helpful when we need you will make things go a lot smoother too. Even if we are yelling at you while our heads are buried in the freezer, please just rub our backs and tell us you love us. Doing things like bringing fans into our living areas and assisting with laborious chores will help lower the body temperature and relieve hot flashes and night sweats. If we complain of weight gain during our transition into our grandmother years, please don't tell us we look beautiful the way we are; we don't want to hear that; we want you to tell us we are beautiful but that you are willing to help us in our challenge of losing weight. Besides, studies show that people lose and keep

weight off better when their partner does it too. If it is a sister or mother that is going through the transition, offer your services as a coach, just spending time and showing that you are empathetic to our plight earns you brownie points!

Studies show that Métis and Aboriginal women overall have an easier time with the "Change of life" and that they don't report as many severe symptoms as non-aboriginal women. There are several theories on this; one is that it is because our customs welcome a woman's moon time and we as Métis and Aboriginal women embrace the beginning of our moon time when we are young girls, whereas non-aboriginal women were

“*Listening to your body and doing what it tells you can never lead you astray.*”

taught to hide this coming of age and many were embarrassed or ashamed of it. Another theory is that because on average Aboriginal women use more holistic remedies versus pharmaceutical medicines we are still more in touch with nature and thus more in touch with our bodies.

Overall non Aboriginal women look at their moon time as a curse. They think of it this way from the beginning and continue to look at it through their child bearing years, and once the onset of perimenopause occurs think of that as an even worse curse. They think of having to stick their head in the freezer for the next so many months and shiver with fear. Likewise so do their partners who can only think of the mood swings and the possible ups and downs their wife or partner is going to go through. Aboriginal women on the other hand have a very different view; menopause is seen as a gaining of power where we transition from a child bearing mother into wisdom filled grandmothers. One writer even characterized menopause as the dark moon crone stage of life. Crone doesn't sound very womanly, but grandmother does, so for this article I'm using grandmother. Now think of what comes to mind when you think of grandmother, especially in relation to the moon as this is the symbol of grandmother and women. Personally, I remember looking up at my grandmother when I was small and thinking that she knew everything and always had an answer to every question. Is it possible that this line of thought is what makes it easier for Métis and Aboriginal women to go through menopause? The thought that once we are finished with our moon time we move on to a freedom that younger women do not have, and that now that we have more power and wisdom we are able to care not only for our children but all those needing our advice or experience?

Knowing our bodies and treating them with respect also helps Métis and Aboriginal women transition into the grandmother stage of life a lot easier. As natural hunters and gatherers Métis and Aboriginal women look to the earth to help heal us as we have for generations before us. Using teas made of nettles, dried sage, or even oat straw can help alleviate night sweats and hot flashes. Other herbs are known to help with mood swings and there are always hormone replacement therapies should nothing else help. Listening to your body and doing what it tells you can never lead you astray.

For the men who were brave enough to read the article, thank you. Women who read this and got some comfort that you are not the only one who shoved her head in a freezer, you're welcome. To all who read this article I hope you are better able to understand that women everywhere transition differently and at different ages. One thing is certain, we will all be grandmothers, and as grandmothers we will be able to impart our wisdom to all those who come after us. I am proud to be a woman, and you should be too.

Shawna Hansen is the MNO Community Wellness Coordinator in the offices of the Historic Sault Ste Marie Métis Council in MNO Region 4.

STROKE WARNING SIGNS



WEAKNESS Sudden loss of strength or sudden numbness in the face, arm or leg, even if temporary.



TROUBLE SPEAKING Sudden difficulty speaking or understanding or sudden confusion, even if temporary.



VISION PROBLEMS Sudden trouble with vision, even if temporary.



HEADACHE Sudden severe and unusual headache.



DIZZINESS Sudden loss of balance, especially with any of the above signs.

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INSPIRATION:



CARROTS, EGGS & COFFEE

by Tera Lynn Copegog
Community Wellness Co-ordinator
Georgian Bay Métis Council

A carrot, an egg, and a cup of coffee. You will never look at a cup of coffee the same way again.
A young woman went to her mother and told her about her life and how things were so hard for her. She did not know how she was going to make it and wanted to give up. She was tired of fighting and struggling. It seemed as one problem was solved, a new one arose.

Her mother took her to the kitchen. She filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire. Soon the pots came to boil. In the first she placed carrots, in the second she placed eggs, and in the last she placed ground coffee beans. She let them sit and boil without saying a word.

In about twenty minutes she turned off the burners. She fished the carrots out and placed them in a bowl. She pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. Then she ladled the coffee out and placed it in a bowl. Turning to her daughter, she said, “Tell me what you see.” “Carrots, eggs, and coffee,” she replied.

Her mother brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots. She did and noted that they were soft. The mother then asked the daughter to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard boiled egg. Finally, the mother asked the daughter to sip the coffee. The daughter smiled as she tasted its rich aroma.

The daughter then asked, “What does it mean, mother?” Her mother explained that each of these objects had faced the same adversity: boiling water. Each reacted differently. The carrot went in strong, hard, and unrelenting. However, after being subjected to the boiling water, it softened and became weak. The egg had been fragile. Its thin outer shell had protected its liquid interior, but after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened. The ground coffee beans were unique, however. After they were in the boiling water, they had changed the water.

“Which are you?” she asked her daughter. “When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a carrot, an egg or a coffee bean?”

Think of this: Which am I? Am I the carrot that seems strong, but with pain and adversity do I wilt and become soft and lose my strength?

Am I the egg that starts with a malleable heart, but changes with the heat? Did I have a fluid spirit, but after a death, a break-up, a financial hardship or some other trial, have I become hardened and stiff? Does my shell look the same, but on the inside am I bitter and tough with a stiff spirit and hardened heart?

Or am I like the coffee bean? The bean actually changes the hot water, the very circumstance that brings the pain. When the water gets hot, it releases the fragrance and flavour. If you are like the bean, when things are at their worst, you get better and change the situation around you.

When the hour is the darkest and trials are their greatest do you elevate yourself to another level? How do you handle adversity? Are you a carrot, an egg or a coffee bean?

May we all be COFFEE!

NIAGARA REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL | FAMILY ACTIVITIES



Scenes from the Niagara Region Métis Council's Family Game Night in February.

Game Night!

by Stephen Quesnelle

On February 6th the Health Branch of the MNO held its Diabetes Awareness and Family Game night and the Niagara Region Métis Council was involved in its preparation. We asked everyone to bring their favourite game and share it with others,

which many did. As you can see in some of the pictures, the children had a ball.

Representatives of the Southern Ontario Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative came to share information about diabetes awareness, they also shared gifts and handouts. There were approximately 40 in attendance. Even with the low numbers, an informative and fun time was had by all.

The food was buffet style and delicious as usual. We are planning and looking forward to our next event.

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Welland ON. L3B 3Z6
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quesnelles@cogeco.ca

NUTRITION:

Resolving to eat healthier

by Jeanine Moyer

A commitment to healthier eating is always near the top of the list of popular New Year's resolutions. Not surprisingly, it's also one of the hardest vows to keep. While intentions are good, willpower can waver after the first few days. An eating strategy that includes cooking dishes that are lower in fat yet rich in flavour and nutrients can help keep you motivated.

“Sometimes we need to be reminded that healthy eating doesn't mean we have to sacrifice taste and flavour,” says Kimberly Green, registered dietician with Pork Marketing Canada. She suggests keeping your New Year's enthusiasm for healthy eating alive throughout the year by using these mouth-watering ways to add flavour while maintaining low fat:

- **Choose Lean:** All fresh trimmed pork cuts, except ribs, are 'extra-lean' (7.5% fat or less).
- **Give It A Trim:** Trim visible fat from meat.
- **Rack It Up:** Grill, broil or roast on a rack so any fat can naturally drip away.
- **Add Flavour:** Create marinades from citrus

juices, vinegars, low fat salad dressings or soy sauce.

- **Give It A Rub:** Zesty

herbs and spices add taste without calories and fat.

- **Pair Wisely:** Pair pork with seasonal fruits and

vegetables to tantalise the taste buds.

- **Portion Control:** One serving of meat is about the size of a deck of cards.

Pork Cassoulet, Serves 8

Cook Time: 1hr 15min Prep Time: 10min

2 lbs. Pork loin or sirloin roast, boneless
1 Tbsp. (15 ml) vegetable oil
Salt and pepper
1 large onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
3 cups (750 ml) cranberry juice cocktail
2 (19 oz/540 ml) cans white kidney beans
2 Tbsp. (25 ml) tomato paste
1 Tbsp. (15 ml) dry mustard
1/2 tsp. (3 ml) thyme
1 bay leaf
1 cup fresh/frozen cranberries, chopped (optional)
Fresh parsley, chopped

Cooking Instructions:

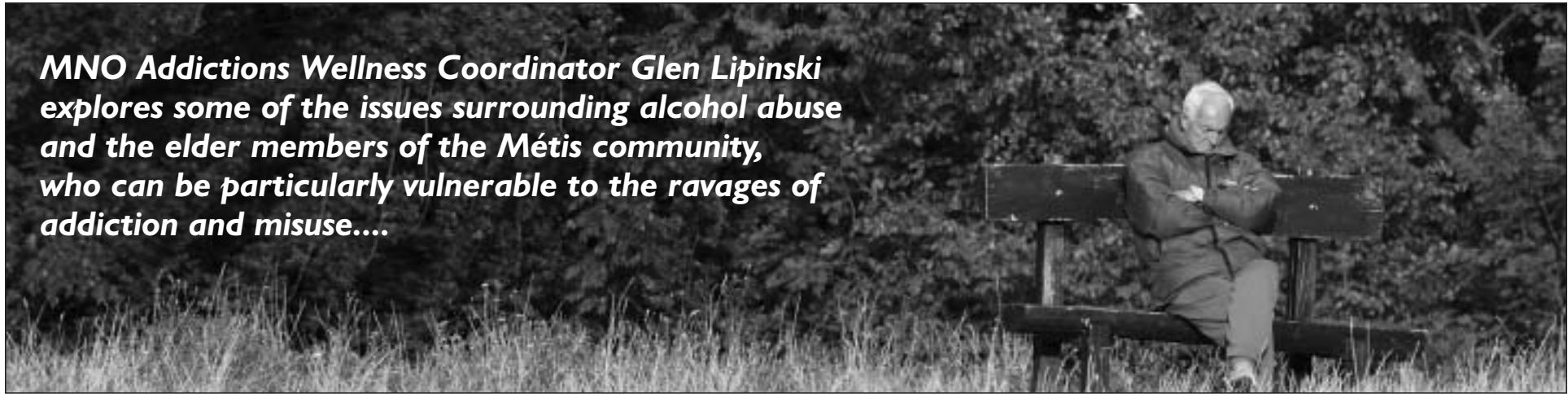
Cut Pork into 3/4 inch (2 cm) cubes. In large Dutch oven over medium heat, heat oil. Season Pork cubes with salt and pepper and brown. Transfer to a plate, and set aside. Brown onions and garlic until soft, then add cranberry cocktail. Stir to scrape up browned bits; bring to a boil and simmer for 5 - 7 minutes to reduce liquid.

In a small bowl, mix together tomato paste, mustard, and thyme. Add to onion and garlic mixture in Dutch oven, along with Pork, white beans and the bay leaf. Cover and bake in a 350°F (180°C) oven for 30 minutes. Remove from oven and stir in cranberries, if using. Return to oven and bake 30 minutes longer.

Top with fresh parsley and serve with French bread.

Canada's Food Guide recommends that Canadian adults eat two to three servings per day from the meat and alternatives food group, and that they choose leaner meats more often. “Pork is one of the leanest protein choices available. Tenderloin has essentially the same amount of fat and cholesterol as a boneless, skinless chicken breast,” says Green. In fact, there are ten common cuts of pork including roasts, chops, loins and steaks that have only six grams of fat or less per 100g serving. Including fresh Canadian pork into your healthy lifestyle has never been easier thanks to a new label that now identifies “Canadian Pork” in participating grocery stores.

Start the New Year off right by serving Pork Cassoulet, a flavourful and nutritious pork dish full of lean protein and dietary fibre. Try serving this dish with fresh bread and a side salad. For more healthy pork recipes visit www.put-porkonyourfork.com.



MNO Addictions Wellness Coordinator Glen Lipinski explores some of the issues surrounding alcohol abuse and the elder members of the Métis community, who can be particularly vulnerable to the ravages of addiction and misuse....

Alcohol Abuse and Seniors

by Glen Lipinski

Alcohol is a widely-used socially accepted drug within our Métis communities. Most people don't realise that it is a depressant drug that slows down the central nervous system and affects the way we think, feel and act. Alcohol has a greater effect on seniors/elders because our metabolism changes as we age and seniors have lower body water content and are more sensitive to the effects of alcohol; a little will go a long way. In addition, seniors generally take more medications than other adults and alcohol interacts with at least half of the 125 drugs that are frequently prescribed for seniors. Mixing alcohol with

either prescription or over-the-counter drugs is unwise and can be dangerous. The development of age-related health problems can cause anxiety and drinking may help some people feel more relaxed. At the same time, chronic conditions such as heart disease or decreased mobility can be aggravated by alcohol use. Loss of a spouse, friends, home, or career often occurs in later years. Alcohol may be used to deal with these and other emotional stresses. Retirement brings long stretches of leisure time and may result in feelings of loneliness and depression. Alcohol may assume a role in helping pass the time. Alcohol problems among older persons are often mistaken for physical, social or

emotional conditions associated with ageing. The abuse or misuse of alcohol may go undetected or may be treated inappropriately. For some seniors, lack of day-to-day contact with fellow workers, families, and neighbours can make it difficult for others to detect an alcohol problem. Older people who have lived through many life experiences often pride themselves on being able to handle their problems without the help of outsiders. They may be unwilling to admit to a drinking problem or uncomfortable seeking help. In general, alcohol problems among older people can be divided into three categories. Some seniors have used alcohol excessively throughout most of their lives. Others drink at low levels but are inadvertently mixing alcohol with other drugs in ways that are harmful. And some people begin to use alcohol for the first time in their later years. Alcohol slows the brain's ability to think clearly, impairs decision making, effects co-ordination and reaction time which in turn can become a safety issue. Long term problem drinking can lead to brain damage, stomach ulcers, liver problems, malnutrition, heart disease and various forms of cancer. Some helpful items to remember about alcohol are that (most important) it is a drug and is a depressant; and alcohol's effects will depend on:

- a person's size, sex, body type and metabolism
- type / amount of food in the stomach
- amount of alcohol consumed
- Drinking is much more common among older men than older women
- Daily drinking increases significantly with age
- Many older adults consider three to four drinks a day moderate.

We have likely all heard some of these statements when referring to alcohol and seniors: "Why do anything? It's too late in their lives." "It's the last pleasure they have left; let them enjoy it." "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." None of these statements is healthy or beneficial to our elders/seniors. Research tells us that seniors do very well, in fact better than younger folks when they receive appropriate support and assistance with alcohol problems. Only through awareness and education (for seniors as well as the rest of the population) surrounding alcohol and its potential for abuse can we ensure that our elders remain advisors and role models for us in our communities. Seniors can choose healthier alternatives to alcohol use—exercise, a second career, hobbies, or professional counselling to help deal with grief and loneliness. Let's make sure we do everything we can to give them our support.

For assistance or more information on substance abuse you can contact any one of your local MNO Health Branch Offices, the Addictions Wellness Co-ordinator in Welland or the MNO Ottawa Office at 1-800-263-4889 and ask for Health Services.



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Arts & Culture

BOOK REVIEW | MÉTIS HISTORY

Riel’s grandmother’s life of adventure

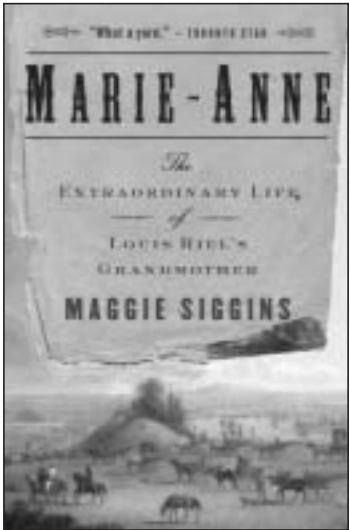
by Janet Leader

For a second time, author Maggie Siggins delves into Métis history. The result is a lively and suspenseful book called “Marie-Anne, The Extraordinary Life of Louis Riel’s Grandmother”. The narrative chronicles the life of Marie-Anne Lagimodiere nee Gaboury, an extraordinary woman who made what could be considered a naïve, even impetuous, decision to accompany her husband, coureur de bois Jean-Baptiste Lagimodiere to the wilderness of western Canada.

In an interview, Siggins said she stumbled onto the “pretty fascinating story” while researching the award winning *Riel, A Life of Revolution*. Reading between the lines she uncovered evidence that Louis Riel was profoundly influenced by the courage and passion of his grandmother, Marie-Anne.

The book begins in Quebec in the late 1700’s. Marie-Anne’s family lived a comfortable existence, but Siggins speculates that a spirited woman like Marie-Anne probably found her life near the village of Riviere-du-Loup quite restrictive. In an act that would have bordered on the scandalous she remained unmarried until she was 26. But when she finally married, it was for love, and this book is as much a love story as historical narrative.

Marie-Anne’s husband, Jean-Baptiste Lagimodiere, was by all accounts, larger than life. Siggins describes him as an enormous man and a real character who loved to drink and to talk. There is much evidence Jean-Baptiste loved his wife but there are indications that he may have been



“
If Marie-Anne herself had not been open to new ideas, her very close relationships with First Nations women would never have developed. She would not have learned to speak Cree and Ojibwe, nor given birth “Indian style” nor participated in a sweat lodge ceremony to heal her baby son when he fell ill.

naïve in his own way. One of the more entertaining sections of the book tells what happens when Jean-Baptiste sets up a tent for himself and his new wife close to where his former country wife and their two children were camped.

According to Siggins, both Marie-Anne and Jean-Baptiste were staunch Catholics typical of the day, yet both appear to have been open minded. After all, without Jean-Baptiste’s consent, Marie-Anne would not have been the first white woman to travel west by voyageur canoe through the fierce wilderness of Canada’s fur trade country. If Marie-Anne herself had not been open to new ideas, her very close relationships with First Nations women would never have developed. She would not have learned to speak Cree and Ojibwe, nor given birth “Indian style” nor participated in a sweat lodge ceremony to heal her baby son when he fell ill.

Siggins dismisses the notion that Marie-Anne was simply a pioneer. She says Marie-Anne was an “explorer for women.” Siggins says without the participation of women—first Indian, then others, neither the fur trade nor the buffalo hunt would have been as successful as they were. It was an egalitarian existence where the women worked as hard, if not harder than the men.

Siggins said, although the lack of journals or a written record prevented her from giving Marie-Anne a direct voice, she felt her story was important enough to be shared as “a social history of the Canadian west”. If you have the opportunity to read this book, I’m sure you will be as happy with that decision and with Marie-Anne’s decision to leave her comfortable home and set out on a life of adventure.

Marie-Anne, The Extraordinary Life of Louis Riel’s Grandmother is published by McLelland Stewart.

BOOK REVIEW | CANADA’S CANOE HISTORY

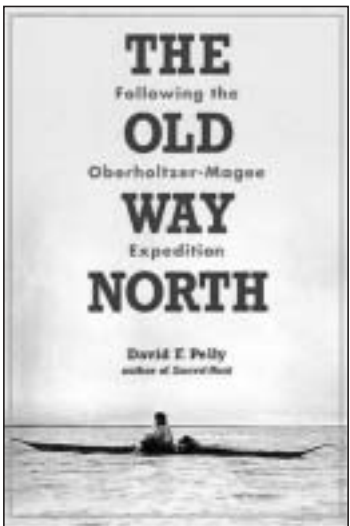
A road less travelled

by Quentin Mills-Fenn

In 1912, an American named Ernest Oberholtzer and an Anishinaabe named Billy Magee set off on a five-month, 2,000-mile canoe trip from Lake Winnipeg to the far North. They used the historical route of the Dene as they followed the caribou migrations from Reindeer Lake to the Barren Lands of today’s Nunavut. It’s an ancient route, but one seldom written about.

The Oberholzer-Magee journey is the basis of *The Old Way North* (Borealis Books) by David F. Pelly.

“A recreational canoe trip, in 1912, is pretty amazing,” Pelly says. “When we think of access routes to the North, we think of



the Northwest Passage, we think of the Athabasca, but we never think of this route. This had been used for centuries. It really is the old way of getting to the North. It was a lifeline; they emi-

grated with the caribou.”

Oberholtzer was ridiculously unprepared and Magee, acting as his guide, was way out of his comfort zone. It was a foolhardy trip, but Oberholtzer was drawn to the country.

It’s a feeling Pelly knows well. He’s been living, traveling and writing about Canada’s North for decades.

“I went there in 1972 and was taken with the land,” Pelly says. “I feel it’s a magical place. That began the process of learning about the land and the people. You come to the conclusion when you spend time with the people and the land that the concepts are one. They’re so interwoven.

“If you’re open to being bound to the land, it’s bound to grab you.”

This article is reprinted with the permission of its author, Patricia Baker of The Sault Star.



Carving the Wild North

Brothers Joe and Jamie Aikens put their passion for the wilderness into their works of art

by Patricia Baker
The Sault Star

He readily admits to having a spiritual connection to the wood. When it talks to him he listens, because the voice speaks well of his instinctive and lifelong co existence with nature.

Heyden resident Joe Dan Aikens is a carver who for many years has created one-of-a-kind walking sticks and canes. His younger brother Jamie is a talented carver in his own right and collectively the pair is known as the Wild North Carvers.

Some of their work is colourful and intricate, while a more earthy and simplistic presentation is created in contrast. “The soul of the roots is in the canes, because they come out of the ground and grow to the sun,” said Joe. He said the sun draws them out and he knows where to find these natural roots that have convoluted into every shape imaginable. Most come from St Joseph Island and Joe digs them out of the ground.

Maple is the most common choice for the creations “because it has a really nice grain, and it’s harder to crack,” said Joe.

He created a cane using the wood from an apple tree once, and he uses beech, cedar, dogwood and iron wood as well. “White ash is another possibility, as the grain is straight. Natives used it because it split in a straight clean break,” he said. “They used it for snowshoes and the gunnels on their canoes.”

Joe hunts for the roots year round, “but sometimes I leave them and come back later. I have to remember where I saw them,” he said. Joe said he sees all sorts of shapes and creatures in the twisted roots, and it is here where many of his inspirations come from. The roots of the trees are what the handles become for the canes and walking sticks and both brothers have a wealth of

imagination.

Sometimes several small trees are close enough to be tied together at the top.

“Then they will twist as they grow,” giving a unique braided appearance, Joe said.

Joe said a walking stick is taller and used on a hike or a walk. “You can push yourself up or hook the end around a tree to pull up,” he said. “Whereas a cane is shorter and used to balance.”

Joe said he is the spiritual one when he is creating because the process is medicinal for him. Jamie said that while his brother’s work is abstract, he doesn’t consider his own work to be the same. In any event, he said he knows his work is therapy and it makes him feel worthy.

Joe is the second born out of a family of thirteen, while Jamie is the tenth. Situated near Gawas Bay on St. Joseph Island, the once 100-acre homestead where they were born and bred had a sugar bush. Their dad Leo made maple syrup with the aid of a generator.

“
WHITE ASH IS ANOTHER POSSIBILITY, AS THE GRAIN IS STRAIGHT. NATIVES USED IT BECAUSE IT SPLIT IN A STRAIGHT CLEAN BREAK.

Joe uses Bamagesics Landing as a point of reference for where the farm was. Jamie said the house was expanded in the early 1970s when his parents still had five at home.

“We were still using coal lamps till then,” he said, noting his dad worked at just about everything to support his family. It was back breaking work. The property is

continued page 26

Multi-talented Métis

by Linda Lord

We all love success stories, especially when they are about Métis people. This is just such a story. I first became aware of Métis chanteuse Andrea Menard in 2002, when I received a copy of her CD, “The Velvet Devil”. Although I didn’t realise it at the time, the music on the CD, a nostalgic mix of jazz, blues, and roots, was taken from her play of the same name. *The Velvet Devil*, was written by Andrea Menard with music co-written with Robert Walsh. It was an original, one-woman play that premiered in the 2000-2001 season at The Globe Theatre in Regina.

The play, which is told through song and storytelling, is about a Métis singer from the 1940’s struggling to come home. *The Velvet Devil* is a Métis story. The premiere production was directed and dramaturged by Ruth Smillie. The play was then adapted for CBC radio and dramaturged by Kelley Jo Burke.



THE VELVET DEVIL: The play takes place at the Capitol Theatre in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan in 1941. Velvet Laurent, known as “The Velvet Devil - star of Vaudeville stage”, is home for the first time since she ran away, and is performing for her hometown crowd.

In an act of youthful independence, a gifted Métis girl from Batoche rebelled against her mother’s dream by running away to Toronto to become a star.

She left without saying goodbye and has been running ever since. Twelve years later, the death of her mother, Willy Laurent, finally brings her home.

Under the weight of regret and unspoken farewells, Velvet arranges a performance of *The Velvet Devil* to prove to herself and her family that she had made the right choices. In the highly emotional, yet animated re-telling of her story, in a beautiful farewell to her mother, she finally says goodbye.

Larry Bauman, a director with Westwind Pictures, directed the film version of the story the following year.

Amazingly, *The Velvet Devil* still shows up on TV on a fairly regular basis. There is a really good reason for the popularity of this show; it’s really good! *The Velvet Devil* earned several nominations: Best Aboriginal Recording, Western Canadian Music Awards (2003); Best Female Artist and Best Folk Album, Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards (2003).

Andrea Menard is not a one trick pony. Defying categorisation, this Métis actor, singer/songwriter and playwright is a gifted performer who crosses cultures and languages by speaking from her heart.

The versatile powerhouse that is Andrea Menard, dazzles audiences on screen and stage, alone—on a bare stage, singing a cappella, or accompanied by a 50-piece orchestra. Her voice is lyrical, raw, and reminiscent of the jazz and blues singers of the

1940’s, yet she captures the simplicity of the great folk artists.

Andrea’s talent has taken her to film, television and theatre. “Nothing gives me more satisfaction and joy than a great role and a great script”, says Andrea. “It’s about the craft, the creation, the doing. That’s why I love film and stage. It really doesn’t matter how large the audience—whether it’s a film crew or a theatre audience—acting fires me up.” And the fire spreads, as anyone who has ever seen her perform live can attest.

Andrea now has two more CDs: *Simple Steps* and *Sparkle*. Visit her web site for samples and more information: www.andremenard.com



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MÉTIS IN THE ARTS:



Métis’ work performed by Georgian Bay Symphony

by Leora Wilson

On Sunday, February 15, 2009, the principals of the Georgian Bay Symphony Orchestra (GBSO) played an original composition by Graeme Warder Anderson, son of Rod and Val Anderson of the Grey-Owen Sound Métis Community. His composition was part of a concert, “Tales from the Forefathers”, which included two First Nations stories set to music by GBSO composer-in-residence Richard Mascal.

Graeme’s composition, titled “Lost and Nameless”, was a short piece for string quartet. This piece was also a first place winner in the Kiwanis Music Festival in 2008 and was originally debuted in Canada by Eros, a Detroit, Michigan based string quartet.

Graeme is planning on studying music composition at Laurier University this fall and continues to compose new works for orchestra as well as honing his singer/songwriter skills. More of Graeme’s work, including “Lost and Nameless” can be found at www.myspace.com/graemewa.

Métis Harvesting

OUR STORIES:

A deadly headlock

by Roly Blanchette

In mid-February, a local minnow trapper told me about a set of horns he saw sticking out of the snow on one of his regular outings, and that he had no interest in recovering them. I told him I was very interested in having them, and he replied, “they are probably gone by now.” I was too interested not to go out looking anyway.

I wasn't very familiar with the territory so I asked a friend of mine if he would take me to the general area, and off we went. On Saturday February 28/09, still convinced they would be out there somewhere, we headed off first thing in the morning in -30 degree weather and with a fresh eight inches of snow. After crossing every swamp, lake and creek in the area for about three hours, I finally came across some wolf tracks that lead me right where I wanted to be.

My buddy couldn't believe it and thought we were just out there for a joy ride and that we would never find them. I've never come across this type of thing before. I have heard about deer being caught in this situation, but never moose. I was able to see that the smaller of the two had a



Yvon Blanchette with locked moose horns.

broken neck and that both stomachs had been picked at.

We shovelled and picked around the head and neck until I was able to remove both heads from the carcasses. The carcasses will feed the smaller animals for a while yet. I tied them up so that they would not come apart. If I had known how tightly locked up

they were--it took two of us and an axe to pry them apart--I would not have bothered tying them together.

About 20 feet away we could see some small pines that had the bark scraped off of them and some taller pines that had a lot of branches broken. The racks measure 54" and 46". They are

being mounted European-style and we hope to get them locked back together.

My dad, Yvon, (see pic) has been fishing, trapping and hunting moose in northern Ontario for over 50 years and has never seen anything like it.

Roly Blanchette is a Métis citizen from Elliot Lake.



Captain's
Corner

by **KEN SIMARD**
CAPTAIN OF THE HUNT, REG. 2

Keeping Your Head Above Water

According to the Canadian Red Cross National Drowning report, 90% of boaters who drowned were not wearing a personal flotation device or lifejacket or did not have it done up properly, at the time of the incident.

The law requires boats to be equipped with a Canadian-approved personal flotation device (PFD) of an appropriate size for each person on board (except for any infant who weighs less than 9kg or any person whose chest size exceeds 140 cm).

A standard lifejacket has a self-righting capability that turns an unconscious person who is face down in the water to a face-up position, allowing them to breathe.

The standard lifejacket is keyhole style and comes in two sizes—one for people who weigh over 40 kg (90 lbs.), and one for people who weigh less than 40 kg (90 lbs.).

Standard lifejackets must be orange, yellow or red, and have a whistle attached. To wear your standard lifejacket:

- **Place your head through the keyhole**
- **Tie neck tie**
- **Criss-cross the waist straps on your back and tie them at the front, against your stomach. Never tie the strap on top of the standard life-jacket.**

Wear your life jacket; it can save your life.

Ken Simard is the MNO Captain of the Hunt for Region 2.

UPDATE | MNO Participation in the National Aboriginal Committee on Species at Risk

A Métis way of life framework

by Janet Leader

In February, there was a call for Aboriginal traditional knowledge to be given greater recognition in the management of Species at Risk in Canada. The call came from delegates to a National Aboriginal Committee (NACOSAR) Conference in Halifax.

Senator Bob McKay; Captain of the Hunt, Richard Sarrazin; former Captain of the Hunt, Eric Scofield; and, former Natural Resources, Environment and Community Relations Director, Bob Waldon, represented the Métis Nation of Ontario as part of the Métis National Council delegation at the conference.

Richard Sarrazin says many felt Aboriginal traditional and local knowledge must be given the same consideration as western science in wildlife management, protection and recovery.



clockwise from top left: **Richard Sarrazin, Senator Bob McKay, Bob Waldon and Eric Scofield.**

“If that doesn’t happen, many delegates felt Species at Risk Act (SARA) programs could lead to ineffective decision making that, over the long term, will have a negative impact on the lives of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.”


The conference included a

workshop that could be extremely beneficial to the MNO in the development of a traditional knowledge strategy specific to the Métis Nation of Ontario called, “Métis Way of Life Frameworks” (WOLF). Once fully developed WOLF could be a touchstone in helping to predict the potential impact of proposed activities on the Métis way of life and on the plants and animals that sustain it.

MNO Director, Bob Waldon, also noted that there may be advantages if the various levels of government harmonise their legislation and co-operate more on efforts to monitor species at risk. He felt this was especially true in the area of community consultation. Concern was also expressed by all delegates about the limited funding available for the NACOSAR program.

The final report on the NACOSAR Workshop will include

Species At Risk:



The American Elk was distributed across much of the northern hemisphere, but today it exists in only isolated populations. In Ontario, it was found in the Rainy River District and throughout southern Ontario as far north as Lake Nipissing.

a declaration that outlines the concerns raised. It will be sent to Prime Minister, Stephen Harper and Environment Minister, John Baird in May.

www.rom.on.ca/ontario/risk.php

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

SUBMITTING ADS:

Advertising may be submitted as camera-ready artwork or as electronic files (PDF preferred)

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1/2 Page: \$250
vertical or horizontal
5"x16" or 10"x8"



1/4 page: \$150
vertical or horizontal
8"x5" or 2.5"x16" or 10"x4"



COMMUNITY OUTREACH:



left to right: **Region 2 Regional Employment and Training Coordinator, Tiffany Schmidt; Registry Intake Officer, Mari Beaton and Housing Special Projects Support, Meghan McCarville.**

Métis presence at Confederation College Summer Job Fair

by Tiffany Schmidt

Confederation College hosted the first annual “Summer Job Fair” in the Shuniah Building, main campus, in Thunder Bay, ON, on March 10, 2009. From 10:00 A.M. until 2:00 P.M., students had access to more than 20 employers and service providers including: TbayTel; The Athletic Club; Canadian Forces Recruiting Centre; Fort William Historical Park; Dilico; Job Connect; Home Depot, and the Métis Nation of Ontario. The MNO, Thunder Bay, had three representatives from Registry, Housing, and Employment and Training branches in attendance. Registry Intake Officer, Mari Beaton, provided information and application forms to students interested in becoming cit-

izens. Housing Special Projects Support, Meghan McCarville, supplied information regarding housing and opportunities within the branch for summer employment. Tiffany Schmidt, Region Two Employment and Training Co-ordinator, spoke to students, employers and service providers about all MNOTI programs, focussing mainly on the Summer Career Placement program. The Client Success Stories video was played all day and attracted many people to the booth for further information. This event afforded the Métis Nation of Ontario an opportunity to access current students looking for summer jobs or field placements. It was both cost and time effective as a means of achieving face-to-face interaction with target candidates, potential clients, and the public at large.

NEW FACES AT MNO:

Ottawa | New Manager of Education and Training

We would like to welcome Chris Paci to the MNO. Chris is the Manager of Education and Training. We are pleased to have Dr. Paci in this new MNO position. Chris is a graduate of the University of Manitoba with an interdisciplinary doctorate and has completed his Masters at the School of Canadian Studies, Car-

leton University. He has over ten years of experience with Aboriginal, territorial and federal governments. He has worked in northern Canadian Aboriginal communities and has international experience with Environment Canada, Northern Ecosystems Initiative (NEI), and the North-

ern Contaminants Program lead by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Chris Paci *Manager of Education & Training* 500 Old St. Patrick St., Unit D Ottawa, ON, K1N 9G4 Tel: 613-798-1488 chrisp@metisnation.org

Thunder Bay | New Health Worker for community

by Joan Panizza

I am very happy to introduce myself as the Community Wellness Co-ordinator of the new Health Branch team in Thunder Bay. My name is Joan Panizza and I started at the MNO in early January. I have been busy orienting myself to my new job and look forward to serving clients and delivering programs. Some of the happenings in February and March were Arm-

chair Fitness classes, a grand reopening in early March, a Self Care Sharing Circle, a Community Kitchen afternoon, and a Cardio-Fitness class. We are looking forward to having two first year students from the Northern School of Medicine available to the Health Branch in May. These students will be completing a placement with the Thunder Bay Métis Council so look for a diabetes lunch and learn workshop and a foot care

clinic during that time. For further information about any of the services or programs of Community Wellness please contact me. Joan Panizza *Community Wellness Coordinator* 226 May Street South Thunder Bay, ON P7E 1B4 Tel: 807-624-2522 Tel: 807-629-2599 (cell) joanp@metisnation.org

Thunder Bay | New Children’s program coordinator

by Joyce Michalchuk

Greetings from Thunder Bay! I'm pleased to introduce myself as the new Co-ordinator for the Community Action Program for Children (CAPC). Having just started work on February 2, I've been “busy as a beaver” with orientation activities, and helping to re-start our child and family drop-in centre. A variety of CAPC programs and activities began as early as

March 2nd, including a big, all-day Open House on March 6th. Well over 100 individuals and organisations were invited to help launch our re-start. Some programs we'll be offering include workshops and sharing circles on Healthy Relationships, Parenting, and Abuse: Physical, Emotional, and Sexual. Children's Storytime, Cultural (Métis) Teachings, a Parent/Community Kitchen, and a Children's Sing-along.

Stay tuned for the next edition of the *Voyageur*, when I'll undoubtedly be able to fill you in much more on what's been happening here in Thunder Bay! Miigwetch. Joyce Michalchuk *Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) Coordinator* 226 May Street South Thunder Bay, ON P7E 1B4 Tel: 807-624-5012 joycem@metisnation.org

Thunder Bay | Labour Market Development

We would like to welcome Tiffany Schmidt to the MNO. Tiffany is the Regional Employment and Training Co-ordinator for Region 2. Tiffany’s past experience as the employment counsellor for the Nishnawbe-

Gamik Friendship Centre will be a great benefit in quickly serving Thunder Bay clientele, as well as facilitating workshops.

Tiffany Schmidt / *Regional Employment & Training Co-ordinator* Thunder Bay Community Centre 226 May St. S., Thunder Bay, ON Tel: 807-624-5014 or 1-800-256-2595 tiffanys@metisnation.org

NIAGARA REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL | COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

WELLAND | Social interaction and health education

by Rebecca Vander Sanden

My how fast time goes by when you're busy and having fun! Just reflect on the past year and all the gatherings, events, workshops and even the fitness walks along Welland's beautiful canal-way. Weather permitting we schedule fitness walks along the canal-way for those who enjoy the outdoors and want to get fit. The Welland Canal is of great significance to our people in the community. There is a memorial monument built to commemorate the people who worked on this waterway. It reminds us of the importance of multiculturalism to Welland's development in the past, present and future. Industries, businesses and citizens have prospered in Welland because of the efforts of the people who built the canal. Some lost their lives

digging with picks and shovels. Surrounding the monument are bricks with the names of the people who worked on the Welland Canal; many Métis people are honoured here. The walk is just one of the many events that we held this year. We had a diabetes luncheon workshop with a representative from Southern Ontario Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative SOADI educating our citizens on proper foot care and also foot care was provided to those who were in need. We now have arranged for a regular foot clinic to be held every six weeks here in our office. We participated in Welland's 150th Anniversary by having a float in the Rose Festival Parade along with a hand made Red River Cart with many citizens walking along side. Our Family Fun Day was held at Memorial Park, with lots of games, crafts and great food. Unfortu-



Annual Harvest Potluck Dinner in Welland.

nately, the weather did not work with us that day, nor for our flag raising celebration on Louis Riel Day. However, even bad weather did not stop our devoted citizens from attending. In November our very success-

ful Annual Harvest Potluck Dinner was held. Wild game such as moose, deer, bear, and goose were supplied by our Métis harvesters, and prepared by one of our local high school's culinary students. Métis citizens brought

their family favourites and the Mayor of Welland contributed a generous supply of lasagne on behalf of the city. Thank you to all who contributed so generously to this event's success. Diabetes Awareness Fun and Games Night was also a hit with many games—including Aboriginal stick throwing and Viking games—brought by families, citizens, and friends. Our SOADI representative was present with educational information and a nutritional bingo was played. Workshops, presentations and circles are held on child development, and parenting skills. With every event planned we promote social interaction and health education. It is our intention to continue to promote a happy healthy lifestyle. *Rebecca Vander Sanden is the AHBHC Co-ordinator in the MNO office in Welland.*

A Trapper's Point of View:

ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVISM: SYSTEMATIC GENOCIDE OR JUST ANOTHER METHOD OF ASSIMILATION?

by Marcel LaBelle

I have been asked if trapping is still an important part of Aboriginal people's income and culture.

First, I will refer to the original people of this land as what they called themselves prior to European contact, "Anishnabae". It simply means "the people".

Second, I am not going to get into statistics and figures. I will discuss why trapping is important, and always will be, for me. I do not intend to pretend that I can do justice to a culture that has been on this land (Turtle Island) for countless generations in a few minutes. Here is my story

I was born in the 50's in Mattawa, a small community in northern Ontario. Both my parents are of mixed native and European ancestry. They both came from trapping families. My grandmother (memere) on my father's side is Algonquin. Her family comes from the islands in the Ottawa River some 60 miles west of Ottawa. Memere did not speak Algonquin. Her father did. He was Anishnabae. He spoke French, English and Algonquin. Memere's family

name used to be Outajawadjiwi and her people's name Kitchisiripini (means from the big waters). I say "used to be" because there was a time in our history when the government registered Anishnabae people. Like many other families, the people doing the registry had difficulties writing most of the Anishnabae family names, so they simply asked the people to pick good French or English names; that would be more convenient. That explains why many Anishnabae family names today are Fleury (French for blossom) or for example, my friend Mister Johnston. The Johnston's got their name because when they were asked to pick a name the grandfather really liked his Johnson outboard motor. So he picked Johnston. Easy to remember, easy for

people to write.

I asked my father one day why memere always got upset when people called her "une sauvagesse" (the French word for savage). "Savage" is the word many people used to identify Anishnabae back then. My dad explained to me that it was not a good thing in those days to be Anishnabae. He said that memere denied her ancestry to protect herself and us. He went on to explain that admitting you were Anishnabae meant not getting a job, not being able to buy beer and wine at the liquor store, not being able to get a loan to buy a house. So I asked the obvious. "Dad, are we Anishnabae?" He said, "yes, we are mixed, French and Anishnabae, but don't say that in front of memere." For me that

explained why dad always let the Anishnabae people in Mattawa know when to come get food, beaver meat, when we had some to share. I remember the families coming to our back window and we would hand over the beaver after we had taken the furs from them--warm memories of smiling faces.

What I did not understand then, but do now, is this: We are half-breeds. When I grew up half-breeds were the scum of the scum. Not real Anishnabae. Not real French. Back then the government had a plan to get rid of the Anishnabae people or "problem", as they were called, through assimilation. I was a product of this system.

Memere did not learn the Algonquin language of her father so she could not pass it on to me. The way assimilation was to work was this: Take away Anishnabae's language; take away their pride, their way of life. Take away their culture by removing their children from the household and raising them in boarding or residential schools. But they had not taken everything away from memere.

Memere knew how to trap. She showed her son, my dad, how to prepare animal skins to sell to the fur market. She showed us, perhaps without her knowing (but I suspect this was her way to secretly pass on her knowledge of her culture) how to live from the land...what was left of it.

But back to my childhood: I learned how to trap, how to respect the land, the animals. I learned that I was not above all things as a human but that I was merely a part of this amazing web. From this I myself had my own family and raised them with what the land had. I raised them from the profits made from killing animals. I never questioned if it was right or wrong. I just knew it was my way.

Then I started working for the fur industry. Because I spoke both of Canada's official languages and I enjoyed telling people about my way of life, I was asked to go to places like Montreal and Toronto to tell my story. I was surprised by the way some of the people that came to talk to me treated me. Most of the general public were interested and pleased to meet a "real live trapper", but some were not so pleased with my way of life.

In Montreal a lady came to me. She was accompanied by a camera. She asked to speak with a trapper. After introducing myself she asked if I had a leg hold trap. I did not. So out of curiosity I asked why she wanted a trap. Her reply is still very vivid for me. "Because I would trap you by the foot and hang you from that beam", she pointed to a section of the building we were in that was open for about 15 stories high, "and watch you bleed to death." I was shocked and hurt that a human being claiming to be humane towards animals would want to do something so senseless to another animal--one of the human kind, her own species. Cannibalism came to my mind.

continued page 27



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To learn more about quitting, contact the Canadian Cancer Society's Smokers' Helpline at:

1-877-513-5333

www.smokershelpline.ca

Let's put our **Hearts** into it!

OUR STORIES:



The Winnipeg Victorias were champions of Canada and winners of the Stanley Cup in 1901. The famous Métis player, Antoine “Tony” Gingras, of St. Boniface (standing second from right). Source: Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame and Museum

Métis On Ice

I am a Researcher and Genealogist and forever seeking information to share with my Métis family. Here is an educational web site I have located that lists a number of Métis activities: www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Traditions/English/metis_games.html

Herein we can find a section on “Métis Games”. To my amazement there are seven windows on which one may click to read a bit of history and culture on our forefathers. I was taken aback with the window on “Canadian Hockey”, because my father played hockey for the St. Boniface College League. My Brother was named after Rocket Richard. Hockey has been an important part of Métis recreation for a very long time, and this article sheds light on what my father told me. Remember Saturday nights? Hockey Night in Canada was on everyone’s television or radio. Furthermore, I now understand why my family was so involved with the Montreal Canadiens. BY BARBARANNE WRIGHT

In northern European countries, people first began to skate in the 12th century. Native peoples used bone skates well before the Europeans came to North America, bringing with them skates with iron blades. By the beginning of the 19th century, skating on the frozen waterways of the colonies was well established as a winter pastime for everyone. People of many nations on both sides of the Atlantic knew how to skate. They also invented a variety of team sports, played with a ball and a stick, on grass or on ice. In Europe, the Scots played shinty, the Irish played hurling (or hurling), and the English played bandy. In North American Native cultures, both men and women played a kind of shinny on grass, rather like hockey without skates.

Canadian hockey evolved from those sports. It was first developed in Nova Scotia in the 19th century, and was played in Montreal and Ottawa in 1875 and 1880. The immigrants to Canada who moved west in the late 19th century took the popular game along with them, and it was being played in Winnipeg and Victoria by 1890. Given the multicultural roots of hockey, it is not surprising that one of Canada's greatest players at the turn of the 20th century was a Métis from St. Boniface,

Antoine “Tony” Gingras.

The earliest rinks were built in both St. Boniface and Winnipeg in the 1870s with the St. Boniface College rink being the first. So it seems very likely that local hockey was first played there. “Tony” Gingras, who became famous in the annals of Canadian hockey, was a student at the college. He said that when he was 12, in 1888, he made a stick from a little tree and cut a slice from a rubber lacrosse ball for a puck. That was before the official start of hockey in the Canadian west.

There were over thirty hockey teams in Winnipeg and St. Boniface. Teams travelled to eastern Canada to compete as early as 1892. “Tony” Gingras, playing right wing, was a top

scorer for the Winnipeg Victorias. In 1901, the Vics won the Stanley Cup and the national championship against the Montreal Shamrocks in a best of three series. Gingras was an exceedingly agile player. The enthusiasm generated by this French-speaking Métis is believed to have contributed to the creation of the Montreal Canadiens hockey team. He was also credited with an innovative new hockey stick of a much more modern design.

After his playing days were over, “Tony” Gingras dedicated himself to coaching minor league teams at the Union canadienne of St. Boniface as well as at St. Boniface College. He also became a scout for the Montreal Canadiens.



The daughter of hockey player Tony Gingras, was the only Métisse on the St. Boniface Athletic Association women's team, 1939. Rolandee (middle row, far right). Source: Provincial Archives of Manitoba

Carving the Wild North

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no longer owned by the family.

“The instinct and interest in nature was passed down from Dad,” said Joe, who has a love of rocks as well as wood. “Some stones I pick up feel like they are alive,” he said. “There's a spirit in them. I learned at maybe age eight how medicinal a walk in the bush can be,” he said. When he's finished digging for roots, “your feelings go into making the canes and walking sticks.”

The creation of a cane is a lengthy process and can take up to 150 hours. Jamie is more pragmatic when he describes how many prospective buyers aren't prepared to pay what the brothers would ask if they charged for every hour of work spent creating a cane or walking stick from start to finish.

“Someone wasn't happy about a price of just over a hundred dollars,” Jamie said.

He said people just look at the canes and don't realize the work that goes into them.

The brothers sold a cane to tourists from Vancouver a while back for several hundred dollars. “They sold it out there for triple what they bought it for,” said Joe. “They called us up and wanted us to supply them with more so they could sell them.” Joe said he was told once that if he and Jamie could get their wares to California, a cane or walking stick could bring as much as two thousand dollars.

Once the roots are harvested, which can be a tremendous job in itself, they are carved, shaped and sanded. The surface is transformed into a piece of art - with intricate markings, carvings, and accents -- and then highlighted with wood-burning.

Coloured with markers and coated with lacquer, no two are alike as they take on a life of their own.

It isn't because of age necessarily, but Joe said he doesn't carve as much anymore. A visual and auditory impairment he suffered about fifteen years ago when an artery ruptured behind his right eye makes things harder. But carving remains his medicine.

The brothers are Métis and have an inherently strong, proud connection to the Métis community in Sault Ste. Marie, one of the oldest in Canada. There wasn't always pride in this ancestry. Their maternal and paternal grandmothers knew of their aboriginal blood but did not share the existence because they didn't want anyone to know, say the brothers. Jamie said one grandmother was educated by the nuns in Trois Rivières Quebec, the other on an Indian reserve near Massey. His grandfather was a fur trader and the original spelling of the family's surname was Acquin. Their father's surname was changed to Aikens. One of Jamie and Joe's sisters changed her name

back to Acquin after doing a genealogical study of her family.

Jamie said the Métis work of Ontario buys Métis nation to present to dignitaries. Jean Chrétien, the 20th Prime Minister of Canada, has one of Jamie's canes, as does former South African president Nelson Mandela. Tony Belcourt, past president of the MNO, has one that sports an eagle head, while Jean Teillet, great-grandniece of Louis Riel, has one with a mallard duck.

Teillet provided legal council in the Powley case where she represented Steve and Roddy Powley. The Sault Ste. Marie Métis hunters were charged in 1992 by the Ministry of Natural Resources with hunting and shooting a moose without a license. On September 19, 2003, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in favour of the Powleys in a landmark decision that would preserve Métis rights.

Jamie says another cane was donated and was raffled off at a MNO Assembly in Garden River First Nation and the funds went toward Steve Powley's court expenses.

On February 23, 2004, five months after the ruling, Steve died from complications of diabetes. The families remain close, and Joe said there's a spot

along the Goulais River where “I've sensed Steve's spirit to be close by. I know he's there.”

Challenges have plagued both brothers and this is why carving is medicinal, therapeutic and spiritual. Jamie was injured in two separate work related incidents. The first saw him suffer a broken neck when a piece of wood kicked back and hit him. He recovered but in a subsequent accident, a piece of Jamie's clothing got caught in a pulley. He was unable to reach the kill switch. “It pulled the clothing tight around his neck, but he was saved at the last minute,” said Joe.

“I do my carving to feel worthy,” said Jamie. Joe on the other hand worked at Algoma Steel in the coke ovens for 22 years. “My first job was in the tar tanks,” he said. “They had to be shoveled out by hand. You'd hold your breath and get as many shovels full in the wheel barrow as possible,” he said. “You'd be covered in white stuff that burned your skin.”

He doesn't know what all that did to his lungs but he developed ulcerative colitis. He eventually had surgery and is able to cope with the disease now. Carving played a major role in healing because it's so medicinal, he said.

He said he gives a lot of his canes away. If he visits somewhere he'll find a way to leave a cane or walking stick behind so the hosts will find it after he is gone. But when all is said and done, when the wood speaks, Joe knows what to do. “You do it for the passion,” he said.

“your feelings go into making the canes and walking sticks.”

OSHAWA MÉTIS COUNCIL THIRD ANNUAL

Métis Heritage Celebration

SATURDAY, JUNE 27, 10AM-8PM & SUNDAY, JUNE 28, 10AM-4PM
MEMORIAL PARK, OSHAWA, ONTARIO

The Oshawa Métis Council expects to bring together over 2000 visitors: Métis families, friends, other Aboriginals and their families, and non-Aboriginal peoples from our Region, other parts of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Manitoba, and New York State, to celebrate our Métis heritage. We plan to have several tee pees, voyageur canoes, a Red River Cart, Métis flags from various communities and Canadian flags set up to attract everyone to our location and to set the mood for the weekend. We are planning a wide variety of entertainment, interactive activities and demonstrations throughout the weekend:

- Opening Ceremonies with a Métis prayer and smudging
- Fiddlers, drummers, singers, and jiggers
- Jigging instruction, demonstration and contest
- Displays of Métis artefacts, sacred medicines
- Métis vendors from several Métis Councils
- Story-telling, crafts, and voyageur games for the children
- Demonstrations of sash finger-weaving & fiddle making
- Genealogy and Métis information
- Silent Auction
- Musical “jam” session
- Traditional foods (bison burgers & bannock) for sale
 - And of course we cannot forget our favourite jiggers, the Olivine Bousquet Métis Dancers!

Come out and enjoy a culture filled weekend with the Métis Community.

CONTACT:

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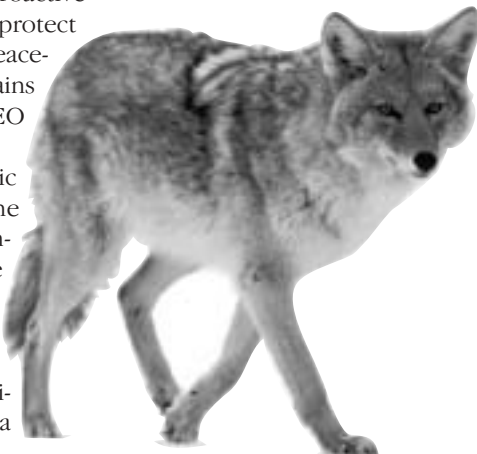
People and Coyotes need to get along says Humane Society of Canada

As urban sprawl continues, more and more encounters with displaced wildlife are inevitable, and we need to find ways to co-exist peacefully says the Humane Society of Canada (HSC). Nowhere is this more evident than in the current alarm being raised about a coyote living in the east end of Toronto.

“Along with many other wildlife species, coyotes are a fact of life because they have adapted successfully to life in many urban areas across North America. By taking a number of proactive steps we can work to protect our pets and co-exist peacefully with wildlife,” explains HSC Chairman & CEO Michael O’Sullivan.

“In this specific instance, The Humane Society of Canada recommends that a humane box trap should be set out in the ravine area where the coyote has been spotted, and the animal be relocated to a

wilderness area. We are prepared to work with all interested parties to make this happen. However, we need to be emphatic and clear. We do not under any circumstances recommend shooting and killing the coyote. Our experience has been that we need to change the conditions that made it favourable for the first coyote to stay in the area, or killing this wild animal will only open the area for the arrival of a second coyote. More violence is not the answer,” says O’Sullivan.



THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF CANADA RECOMMENDS:

- Do not leave your pet’s food or water dishes outside.
- Do not feed these wild animals.
- Do not approach a coyote and advise your children to do the same.
- Put any bird feeders well above the reach of these animals and clean up any spilled bird seed daily (birds and their nests are a source of prey for coyotes).
- Never leave your pets unattended at any time especially at night when coyotes are most active.
- When you participate in organic wet waste programs, make sure the lid is securely fastened with a bungee cord or other device, and do not put meat, poultry or fish scraps out until the morning of your organic pickup.
- If you do see coyotes in your yard discourage them by making loud noises or spraying them with water.
- Cut back bushes and other plants that could serve as cover or a denning area for coyotes.

A Métis Trapper’s Point of View: ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVISM

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I responded by holding back tears and saying to her I wanted no harm for her. She left with the camera following. My way of life was under attack. My culture was under attack. I was confronted with many other such episodes by animal rights activists, but more disturbingly for me, the majority of the general public who seemed to act out of misinformation and fear.

So a few years went by and then it happened. In the early 90s society as a whole, for whatever reason, started to buy less fur, so much so that I could not sell enough pelts to make enough money to provide for my family. So I did what society wanted me to do. I stopped trapping. I could not afford to trap anymore, emotionally or financially.

That’s when I almost died.

The doctors treated me for a heart condition for four months. I was on blood pressure controlling pills. The nitro inhaler was held tightly in my fist wherever I went. I could barely put one foot in front of the other to walk. I was being prepared by the medical team to expect by-pass surgery soon. When the cardiologist went into my heart he realised that there was nothing wrong with my heart-

-at least physically. I did have a heart condition though. I suffered from a broken heart due to lack of identity. I had lost my way of life, my culture, trapping.

So now that I had identified the problem, to make a long story short, I decided to change direction. Society wanted me to stop living from the land so I thought, “Ok. I’ll educate myself and get a real job. One in an office somewhere.” I went back to school. In 1997 I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Geography. I moved to southern Ontario and got a job in an office. “Finally”, I thought, “a real good job. All I have to do for the rest of my life is talk to people and repeat the same thing over and over. Now I fit. Perfect. Good little Anishnabae.” Not!

I started feeling empty inside again. My chest pains were returning. This time I recognised what was happening. I started having dreams, recurring visions. I quit my good paying secure job with a great pension plan; off I went on my vision quest.

I was gone for two months-travelled all across Turtle Island to Tofino and back. This is when I got the message that I could do something that would be more cultural-



ly appropriate for someone part Anishnabae like me. I went back to my trap line--to the land--with the help of the spirit world and all of the knowledge passed on by my grandparents and parents. I started to build a birch bark canoe. I had never built a canoe before. It just came. Every step of the process came to me--all of the materials that are needed to build a canoe, birch bark, cedar, spruce roots, spruce gum were there.

Today, I demonstrate my craft to many people. I am recognised as an Aboriginal artist by the Ontario Arts Council (I’m just a trapper). When I speak about my canoes and way of life at universities, high schools, elementary schools, powwows, people want to learn about my culture. There seems to be a thirst to know more about the Anishnabae way of thinking and living. People

At the Outdoors Caucus Breakfast Meeting at the Parliamentary Restaurant on February 24th, Shane Mahoney and Marcel Labelle agree that the original people of this land did practice sustainable use of wildlife.

encourage me to continue doing what I do. They tell me that it is a lost art. That I should teach it and document it so that society does not lose this part of who we are. I agree with them.

The question most often asked me is this: “Where did you learn this?” I learned it from the trapline. The canoe is what I do. It is an important part of the Anishnabae way of life and culture. There are many other parts of the Anishnabae way of life that are worth saving. They have been protected from loss through assimilation by our memeres. Take away the trapping and you take away this knowledge.

So now I ask you this question: “How important is trapping to the original people of this land, the Anishnabae and their descendants?”

Mahigan

A MÉTIS TRAPPER ON PARLIAMENT HILL

On February 24th, Marcel Labelle, on behalf of his father donated a beaver hide to a group of senators. The beaver had been trapped by legendary Métis trapper, Ralph Bice, and the hide had been hooped by Marcel’s father, Roger Labelle, who is still a trapper in the Mattawa area.

Shane Mahoney was the guest speaker. He is the Executive Director of Sustainable Development and Strategic Science, Department of Environment and Conservation, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, St. John’s, NF, as well as the founder and Executive Director of the Institute of Biodiversity, Ecosystem Science and Sustainability at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador. Mahoney also heads Conservation Visions, Inc.

Marcel was transported to the meeting by the Friends of Fur.



MNO Partners with the Ontario Power Authority

The Ontario Power Authority (OPA) is responsible for ensuring a reliable, sustainable supply of electricity for Ontario. Its four key areas of focus are: planning the power system for the long term, leading and co-ordinating conservation initiatives across the province, ensuring development of needed generation resources and supporting the continued evolution of the electricity sector.

In September 2008, Energy Minister, George Smitherman directed the OPA to look at greater use of renewable electricity supply in the OPA's Integrated Power System Plan (IPSP) and to undertake an enhanced process of consultation with First Nation and Métis communities. Furthermore, he asked that the principle of Aboriginal partnership opportunities be considered in matters of both generation and transmission.

Over the last few years, the MNO has been working with the OPA to ensure Métis input into the IPSP and to increase Métis opportunities in Ontario's energy sector. In 2008, the MNO was one of the first Aboriginal groups in Ontario to finalise a capacity building agreement with the OPA. Some of the objectives of this agreement are:

- Creating an improved level of understanding of, and participation in the IPSP by the MNO and Métis across Ontario;
- Supporting the ability of Métis to become meaningfully engaged in the development and review of the IPSP;

- Obtaining input from Métis on the IPSP, the possible changes arising from the directive and the principle of Aboriginal partnership in generation and transmission of electricity; and
- Developing a positive long-term relationship between the parties that will be the basis for consultation on future iterations of the IPSP.

As a part of this agreement, the MNO held regional consultation meetings in Ottawa and Thunder Bay in January, 2009, with more to follow. Copies of the OPA's presentations to Métis citizens are available on the MNO's website at www.metisnation.org.

Additional information about the OPA is available at www.powerauthority.on.ca. The OPA invites the MNO to participate in Energy Conservation Week — May 17-23, 2009. Full details on what is happening and ways that you can become involved are available at www.energyconservationweek.ca.

If you have questions, would like to provide input to the Métis Nation of Ontario on energy related issues or would like more information please contact Hank Rowlinson, MNO Manager, Natural Resources, Environment and Community Relations by telephone at **1-800-263-4889** or via email at hankr@metisnation.org.

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