

MÉTIS VOYAGEUR



MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO'S 16TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Members of the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) and other delegates to the MNO's Annual General Assembly arrive via voyageur canoe on the shores of Richard Lake in Sudbury, Ontario on August 22nd, 2009.

Complete AGA coverage on pages 13-19 and 28

Photo: Marc St. Germain



CONSERVE THE LIGHT

MÉTIS & FIRST NATION
ELDERS GATHER ON TOP
OF MOUNT MACKAY IN
THUNDER BAY
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ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

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Announcements

New Arrival



Congratulations to Jennifer Cann and Aaron Alexander on the birth of their daughter, **Trinity Devona Rose**, born July 9th at 4:34 A.M., weighing 7 lbs. 1 oz., also best wishes to big brother Jayden and big sister Jenaiyah.

Thank you to the Special Care Nursery staff at Credit Valley Hospital for the wonderful care and consideration during baby's two week stay following her birth.

It was a happy day on July 24th when Trinity finally got to come home. Nana, Bonny Cann (MNO's Provincial Education Initiatives Coordinator) wants to thank her big Métis family for all the prayers and good wishes for Trinity when things were a little tough for baby. Life is good!

Congratulations



Lenny and Nicole Deschatelets of Sturgeon Falls, Ontario, are pleased to announce the graduation of their son, **Zachari Deschatelets**, from Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario, in June, 2009.

Zachari received financial assistance from the Métis Nation of Ontario to complete his Bachelor in Specialized Physical Education and Health in 2008, and his Bachelor of Education Degree in 2009. Zachari has accepted a teaching position in the Toronto area with the "Conseil Scolaire du District Catholique Centre Sud", starting in September, 2009. Proud grandparents are Donat and Pauline Séguin.

Congratulations Zachari!

Thank You

To The Welland Council, Recently, I had occasion to meet with a client whose mother had recently passed away. The client could not express her heartfelt thanks to the council and Senator Steve Quesnelle who attended the funeral. She was truly amazed and very touched by this gesture. The client's mother was a Métis citizen who had attended many of our events.

Quite often we do not hear of the GREAT things we as a team, council, and health branch do or the effect of our actions. So, today I am passing this on to everyone and saying "Thanks".

– TerryLynn Longpre

Wired Métis

GBMC has a New Website

The Georgian Bay Métis Council has recently upgraded its web site. It now includes up-coming meetings, events and downloadable *duty to consult* documents. Please take the time to have a look. The web site address is: www.georgianbaymetisCouncil.com

Workshop

Thunder Drum Workshop

The Méis community in Bancroft is making Thunder Drums. Book your spot to come and learn how to make these great instruments. Meet new friends and learn a new craft. Call Tracey Dale 613-332-2575.

Congratulations



Congratulations to Velvet Johnson who was the successful candidate for the MNO's newest position: Procurement Officer. As procurement officer reporting to the financial controller, Velvet will ensure the best use of funding for the purchase of supplies, equipment and other capital items. She will also deal with purchase orders, and subsequent invoices and inventory.

Obituary

MNO expresses condolences to Senator Verna Porter of the Moon River Métis Council on the passing of Doug Porter, husband, father and friend

Gary Lipinski, President of the MNO expressed his condolences and those of all Métis citizens in Ontario to the family of Senator Verna Porter on the passing of her husband, Doug Porter, on September 16, 2009.

Doug was a huge supporter of the Métis community. He attended all of Moon River's functions with Senator Porter and assisted in any way he could. He will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved him.

A memorial service was held on September 26th.

Condolences may be sent to Senator Verna Porter by e-mail at hummingbird50@live.ca or by mail to 386 Canal Rd, Huntsville, Ontario, P1H 1B2.

THE MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

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editor

Linda Lord

design & production

Marc St. Germain

contributors

Alex Tesar
Barbaranne Wright
Barbara Gingras
Bonny Cann
Chris Paci
Desneige Taylor
Diane Lampi
Donn Fowler
Erin Strachan
Glen Lipinski
Hank Rowlinson
Janet Leader
Joan Panizza
Julie Meraw
Ken Simard
Jeam Mcisaac-Witala
Lisa McCron
Lynne Sinclair
Patrick Lannigan
Pauline Saulnier
Raymond Tremblay
Reta Gordon
Scott Carpenter
Stephen Quesnelle
TerryLynn Longpre
Tracy Bald

contact

Linda Lord, editor
RRI Hartington, ON
K0H 1W0
llord@kingston.net
NEW PHONE:
613-374-2305

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

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Happy 40th Anniversary



By **TINA ETHIER-NICHOL**

Congratulations to Liliane and George Ethier who recently celebrated their 40th anniversary. They are the parents of former Youth Representative, Tina Ethier-Nichol. Liliane is the President of the Temiskaming Métis Council.

The celebration—with a Flintstones theme—was held at their cottage in South Lorraine, near Temiskaming.

George and Liliane plan to move to their cottage in a few years and they would like to invite their Métis brothers and sisters to visit them in the bush sometime.

Métis-at-Law



tle Adams, was born and raised in the same historic Métis community of Hunter's Point.

Austin was raised in Kenogami, Ontario. He earned an Honours Bachelor of Science in Biological Chemistry from the University of Toronto in 2001. Austin worked as a Professor of Pharmaceutical Technology and Biotechnology at Seneca College for three years while doing post-graduate research at York University. Austin decided to change career paths in 2004 and study Aboriginal Law at the University of Toronto, where he earned the degree of Juris Doctor in 2008.

Austin articulated with noted First Nation lawyer Tracey O'Donnell. After completing his articles, Austin opened his own law office on land he leases from the Nipissing First Nation. Austin is currently practicing Aboriginal, Corporate/Commercial, Employment, and Environmental law. He is also involved in civil litigation, capacity development training, and self-government negotiations.

Austin currently serves as Chair of the North Bay Métis Council.

Austin's website is located at www.austinacton.com.

Congratulations from your parents. Miigwetch and merci for your work.

Volunteer Award



Louise Goulding of the Moon River Métis Council was named this year's recipient of the Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award. Watch for more about Louise in the next issue of the *Voyageur*.

LOOKING FOR A NEW JOB?

Be sure to check out
www.metisnation.org
for employment opportunities.

Métis Nation News



PHOTO: Marc St.Germain

Gary Lipinski, President MNO (left) and Allan Rock, President of the University of Ottawa (right) sign an historic Memorandum of Understanding on August 10, 2009.

Métis Nation of Ontario signs historic Agreement with University of Ottawa

By **CHRIS PACI**

On August 10th, 2009 Gary Lipinski, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), and Allan Rock, President of the University of Ottawa (U of O) signed an historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will pave the way to enhanced educational outcomes for Métis students and improve Métis content in course offerings at the U of O.

"Historically, Métis in Ontario learned through experience, by being on the land and through

interaction with our elders," said President Lipinski. "When the university was founded in 1866 by the Catholic Church it was not an inviting place for Métis. This agreement is part of the healing journey Aboriginal people and learning institutions have travelled in recent years and is one more step toward greater cooperation between Métis in Ontario and the university community."

The two presidents were joined at the signing ceremony by MNO Executive Senator Reta Gordon, and Ottawa Métis Council President, Robert Pellerin, and

“**This agreement is part of the healing journey Aboriginal people and learning institutions have travelled in recent years...**”

— Gary Lipinski, MNO President

from the U of O, Vice-President Governance, Diane Davidson and Project Coordinator, Aboriginal Program, Faculty of Medicine, Rachèle Prud'homme, as well as others from the Métis and academic communities.

The MNO is also working in partnership with the Ontario Association of Universities and Colleges to establish the Research Chair in Métis Studies at the University of Ottawa. An announcement about the successful candidate is expected soon.

According to President Lipinski, both the MOU and the estab-

lishment of the Chair are significant in the evolution of the MNO as a nation.

"Ultimately, strengthening research of interest to Métis and increasing the presence of Métis in Aboriginal programming and services available at the University of Ottawa will lead to an increase in the recruitment, retention and graduation of Métis students in all faculties," said the president.

For information please contact:
Chris Paci, Manager
MNO Education and Training
613-798-1488 Ext. 118

NEW RELATIONSHIP FUND | MNO-ONTARIO FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

Ontario Métis receive funding from Ontario Government to build capacity for Crown Consultation

On August 19th, the Ontario Government announced it will provide \$2.6 million to the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) this fiscal year to support the Métis Nation's consultation framework and to enable Métis communities to more effectively participate in consultation and accommodation processes with the Crown and industry in Ontario.

The funding announcement delivers on the McGuinty government's commitment to create a "New Relationship Fund", flowing from Justice Linden's recommendations in the *Ipperwash Inquiry Report*. The Fund's objective is to enable First Nations and Métis

communities to build core capacity for effective participation in activities relating to consultation and accommodation processes with the Crown and industry throughout the province.

"This announcement is indeed welcome news for Ontario Métis," MNO President Gary Lipinski said. "It delivers on one of the key recommendations of the Ipperwash Inquiry Report as well as the Ontario Government's commitments in the *MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement*, which was signed in November, 2008."

President Lipinski added: "Equally important, the funding supports the MNO's unique consultation framework, which was

developed and designed by the Métis people themselves after extensive consultations. This framework respects the democratic governance structures created by Ontario Métis at the local, regional and provincial levels, while also ensuring Métis citizens are provided the opportunity to be engaged and consulted through a fair, inclusive and pre-

dictable process."

The MNO's unique consultation framework includes Regional Consultation Protocols supported by the MNO's Land, Resources and Consultation Branch to ensure regional rights-bearing Métis communities have access to the necessary technical and environmental expertise required for meaningful consulta-

“**This agreement is part of the healing journey Aboriginal people and learning institutions have travelled in recent years**”

tion and accommodation.

President Lipinski concluded: "On behalf of the Métis Nation, I want to thank Minister Duguid and the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs for working in partnership with us to ensure the *New Relationship Fund* meets the Métis Nation's distinct needs in this province. This announcement represents yet another positive outcome from the *MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement* process and will benefit Métis children, families and communities in this province."

For more information on the MNO and its unique consultation framework visit:

www.metisnation.org/consultations

GEORGIAN BAY MÉTIS COMMUNITY

Métis Rendezvous ‘09

By **SCOTT CARPENTER**

The southern Georgian Bay Métis community, in partnership with the Township of Tiny, hosted the Fifth Annual Métis Rendezvous at the Lafontaine Parks and Recreation Centre, on September 19th, 2009.

The Métis Rendezvous is a community gathering held every year to celebrate the history and culture of the Métis people who have resided in the area since the arrival of their ancestors around 1828. September 19th was also significant to people across the Métis Homeland because it is the anniversary of the *Powley Decision*, the Supreme Court of Canada ruling which, in 2003 recognized Métis harvesting rights in Ontario.

A highlight of the day was a visit from the Honourable Brad Duguid, MPP and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, who brought greetings on behalf of the Government of Ontario.

Those in attendance enjoyed lively entertainment, shopping at the Métis market—a great source for unique handmade arts and crafts—and of course the famous fish fry supper.



MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO STAFF:

Best wishes to long-time staff

By **JEAN McISAAC-WIITALA**

We would like to send best wishes to two long-time MNO staffers.

Robynn Maluga started with MNO as a Métis summer student in 1998, working out of the Housing satellite office. She stayed on for summers and in part-time positions until 2001. On June 24, 2002, Robynn accepted a permanent full-time position as Junior Development Officer and worked her way through various positions to Client Services Coordinator which evolved to include Admin Assistant for the Director.

Robynn has been a valuable asset to branch management and staff, an excellent role model and a worthy team-player. She has filled a huge gap in assisting the Director to position Housing Branch for the internal Economic Development Plan and in preparing numerous proposals.

Robynn has now accepted a position with the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services in Thunder Bay.

Leafy Shaw has been with the MNO even longer than Robynn. She started with MNO Housing in Thunder Bay, on September 23, 1996, and since then has held progressively more responsible positions, including acting manager of the branch. Throughout her long career with MNO, Leafy has been a valuable resource and holder of corporate memory related to Housing and the Thunder Bay Rural Native Housing (RNH). In addition to serving clients and communities all over north-western Ontario, it was her vision that led to the MNO's first building purchase. As many of you know, that building is now known as the "Thunder Bay Community Centre". For those who



Robynn Maluga



Leafy Shaw

are unaware, Leafy is also a valuable resource for Métis merchandise and gifts through her home based business—the Métis Trading Post.

Leafy ventured beyond the Housing Branch for a few years to work for the MNO's Education and Training branch, becoming better known and appreciated within the larger environs of the Secretariat. During her last year of service, Leafy held a position vital to Housing. As a Housing Policy Analyst, Leafy represented the

MNO on a senior level committee charged with holding community engagement sessions on housing needs in partnership with Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres (OFIFC) and Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA). This culminated in the development and preparation of a final paper called *The Ontario Off-Reserve Aboriginal Housing Trust Report* which was presented to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The report attempts to ensure Métis people have equitable access to Aboriginal Housing Trust Funds for a variety of housing needs specific to individuals and communities through the First Nation, Inuit, Métis Urban & Rural Housing (FIMUR) program.

Despite efforts to obtain funding to continue Leafy's position, such funding is no longer available. Needless to say, Robynn and Leafy will be missed!

A farewell to paper cuts

By **ALEX TESAR**

Chelsey Quirk joined the Métis Nation of Ontario as the Provincial Youth Coordinator in Ottawa in 2005. Very quickly her infectious laugh was as much a fixture in the office as her positive outlook and unique perspectives on life. Even after she took on the role of Communications Officer, which involved a hefty workload and regular battles with a cantankerous, unforgiving envelope printer, she retained a cheerful

disposition. If you crossed paths with her early on in the day, she would make sure you didn't go without a "good morning" and if you needed a hand, she would ask how she could help.

Sometimes, of course, you would be called upon to reciprocate. MNOET Administrative Assistant, Guylaine Morin-Cleroux, remembers one occasion when the machine responsible for stuffing envelopes failed spectacularly—leaving Chelsey with hundreds of envelopes to stuff by hand. Together, the friends man-

aged to fill each and every envelope, though not without some colourful language and a few injuries: "I remember there were paper cuts all over our hands," said Guylaine. Chelsey, clearly, is the kind of person who inspires committed friendships.

Although she is leaving her job with the MNO, Chelsey will not be leaving the Métis community. As a Métis citizen, and a proud member of the Métis fam-



Chelsey Quirk

ily, Chelsey's roots are firmly embedded in her people's soil and she will continue to grow amongst us. Chelsey took up her role as a Strategic Media Analyst with the Federal Department of Western Economic Diversification in May. She left MNO with an abundance of good wishes for future success. Her intelligence and vivacity will continue to make her valuable as both an employee and a friend. Pishshapishko, Chelsey.

ENERGY:

Métis awarded Federal funding to participate in Bruce Power “new build” hearing process

On June 16th, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) received funding from the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency to facilitate Métis engagement in the ongoing Joint Review Panel assessment of an application from Bruce Power to begin site preparation for future construction of a nuclear reactor generating station in Kincardine, Ontario.

“The funding will enable the MNO to work with its community councils and the over 3,000 Métis citizens it represents in Bruce, Grey and Simcoe counties to become involved in the review of Bruce Power's application for a ‘New Nuclear Build’,” said Gary Lipinski, MNO President.

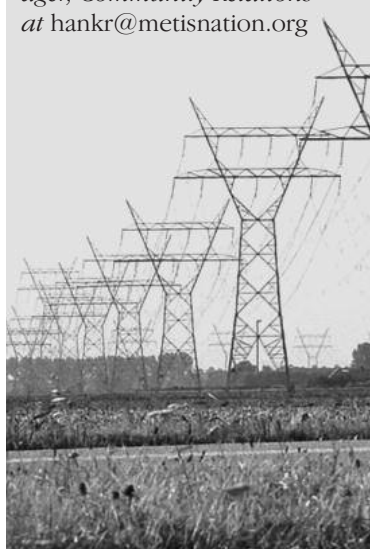
Lipinski added: “The potential effects of this new nuclear build on Métis rights, interests and way of life in the region must be determined, considered and addressed. This funding will allow the regional rights-bearing Métis community that lives in and uses this territory to begin its important work to ensure appropriate consultation takes place.”

This announcement builds on the Regional Consultation Protocol recently signed between the MNO President and Métis leaders in the region. The Protocol sets out a process for consultation with the regional rights-bearing community in the Georgian Bay traditional territory, an area that encompasses roughly the counties of Bruce, Grey and Simcoe. Métis community meetings on the new build project will be held over the next few months.

As well, mail-outs on the “new build” project and the joint panel review process are being sent to Métis citizens.

For more information about the MNO and its consultation related activities visit: www.metisnation.org/consultations.

Additional information can be obtained by contacting Hank Rowlinson, MNO Manager, Community Relations at hankr@metisnation.org



NEWS BRIEFS:

MANITOBA |
Métis couple charged for fishing

A husband and wife team of Métis citizens were recently charged with exceeding fishing limits in Manitoba. The Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) believed that the Manitoba Government would be working with the Métis Government to negotiate an acceptable recognition of Métis harvesting rights in Manitoba.

It is now unclear whether these charges are the actions of over-zealous, local conservation officials, or a renewed crack-down province-wide. The MMF has said it is only upholding the law as has been determined by the Supreme Court of Canada in the Powley case and by the courts of Manitoba, the latest Métis victory being the judgment in January in the Goodon case.

ALBERTA |
Métis post-secondary education boosted by \$2 million

On September 1st, the largest student-awards fund in the history of the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) was announced, one that will see over \$2 million go towards Métis youth education.

The new awards are meant to encourage more Métis youth to pursue education after high school.

Any Métis interested in pursuing a post-secondary education at NAIT can apply for these awards immediately. They range from \$1,500 to \$5,000 and the Métis Nation—Alberta (MNA) and NAIT hope to distribute up to \$50,000 in awards this year alone.

TORONTO |
Former National Chief named advisor to RBC

On September 2nd, 2009 the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) announced that Phil Fontaine, former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), had been appointed Special Advisor to RBC. Fontaine will provide advice and counsel to RBC's Canadian businesses to help the company deepen its relationships with Aboriginal governments, communities and businesses in Canada.

ENVIRONMENT | **GREEN ENERGY ACT**

Sun, Wind and Water

Province offers support for First Nations and Métis communities in Green Energy Development

McGuinty government initiatives will create *Green Jobs* and spur economic development

Ontario is launching two new programs for First Nation and Métis communities interested in developing and owning renewable energy facilities, such as wind, solar and hydroelectric. These initiatives will create jobs and stimulate economic development as well as offer a guaranteed and sustained long term revenue stream.

Under the \$250 million Aboriginal Loan Guarantee Program, Aboriginal communities will be eligible for loan guarantees that will allow them to take on equity participation in renewable generation and transmission projects. The program will facilitate Aboriginal ownership in energy projects by providing loan guarantees for up to 75 per cent of an Aboriginal corporation's equity in an eligible project.

Ontario is also launching an "Aboriginal Energy Partnerships Program" to maximize participation in renewable energy projects. This initiative will build capacity and participation by providing funds for community energy plans; funds for feasibility studies, technical research and developing business cases; and, create an "Aboriginal Renewable Energy Network".

Aboriginal communities will also be eligible, under certain conditions, for price incentives as part of the Feed-in Tariff program (A feed-in tariff is an incentive structure to encourage the adoption of renewable energy through government legislation. The



“By providing loan guarantees and facilitating viable partnerships for Green Energy projects, the province is supporting the kind of economic development within Métis communities that provides a solid foundation on which to build a self-reliant nation that personifies the values of conservation and respect for the land that are the hallmarks of Métis tradition and culture.”

— Gary Lipinski, President, MNO

regional or national electricity utilities are obligated to buy renewable electricity [electricity generated from renewable sources, such as solar thermal

power, wind power, biomass, hydropower and geothermal power] at above-market rates set by the government.) Together, these initiatives will

QUICK FACTS

- Ontario has already brought approximately 1,000 megawatts of new renewable energy on-line since October, 2003.
- The \$250 million Aboriginal Loan Guarantee Program is part of the 2009 Ontario budget.
- A number of Aboriginal partnerships in renewable energy development are now in place or are in the planning stages.
- Lac Seul First Nation has 25% ownership in a new hydroelectric plant built by Ontario Power Generation (OPG).

assist First Nation and Métis communities to unlock vast renewable energy resources by providing the knowledge and financial support to begin building economically viable projects. Providing economic opportunities through green energy development is a cornerstone of Ontario's Green Energy Act. It also establishes Ontario's place as North America's Renewable Energy leader, with over 50,000 jobs expected in the next three years as projects get underway.

Over the next several weeks, the Ontario Government will take ten important steps to bring the Green Energy Act to life. These milestones will help transition the province to electricity generated from green energy, which will create jobs and open investment opportunities in Ontario's green economy. These two Aboriginal programs are steps two and three.

Learn more about Ontario's Green Energy Act online at: www.ontario.ca/greenenergy.

Ontario tire industry rolls out recycling program

Program means free tire disposal for consumers, elimination of stockpiles and \$23 million investment in the first year in the scrap tire recycling industry in Ontario.

TORONTO (September 2, 2009) – A new tire recycling program rolling out in Ontario will bring new life to the millions of used tires that come off vehicles in the province every year by responsibly recycling them into useful products, creating investment and new green jobs, driving innovation. The Used Tires Program is being funded by the tire industry, and managed by Ontario Tire Stewardship.

Through a network of registered collectors—which includes retailers, municipalities and other drop-off points across the province—the program will allow



Ontarians to drop off up to four used tires per person, at no charge, to be collected and recycled. Tracking systems will help eliminate the illegal dumping of scrap tires and ensure that used tires are managed by service providers that have adopted best

environmental practices.

"Ontario's Used Tires Program marks the most ambitious used tire program in the country," said Andrew Horsman, Executive Director of Ontario Tire Stewardship. "The Program will remove tire stockpiles, recycle tires into household, commercial and automotive products, and create green jobs and economic benefits right here in our province."

The Used Tires Program includes a three-year plan to eliminate the approximately 2.8 million stockpiled tires in dumpsites across Ontario, as well as ensure that the approximately 11 million plus scrap tires generated annually are diverted from burning and land filling to other uses, such as rubber mats, playground products, hockey rinks and automotive parts, adding to the everyday life and economy of Ontario's communities. Until now, approximately 50 percent of Ontario's used tires were trucked into the US to be burned.

How the Used Tires Program benefits Ontario residents:

- Environmental:* Responsible management of used tires will eliminate the unauthorized disposal of scrap tires and promote reuse and recycling of scrap tires into green products.
- Economic:* The Used Tires Program will create jobs and ensure economic growth by injecting over \$23 million in scrap tire recycling in the first year.
- Health & Safety:* Ontario Tire Stewardship will clear stockpiles protecting both Ontarians and the environment.
- Innovation:* Funding for research and development of scrap tire management options will create new processes and markets for recycled rubber products within the province.

Ontario Tire Stewardship (www.ontariots.ca) is an industry funded organization implementing and operating the approved Used Tires Program, a province-wide scrap tire solution for on-road and off-road tires diverting them away from burning and land filling to reuse and recycling.

ENVIRONMENT

Conserve the Light

Aboriginal Elders' Gathering brings recommendations on protecting Mother Earth through energy conservation to "Conserve the Light" conference in Thunder Bay

By September 1st the tepees, sweat lodges and teaching lodges were in place on Animiki wadjiw (Mount McKay, west of Thunder Bay). Each had been carefully erected in accordance with regional traditions, for the unprecedented gathering of over 80 First Nation and Métis Elders who would soon arrive to discuss how they could protect Mother Earth through energy conservation.

For two days, these Elders from across Ontario, representing a cross section of experiences, backgrounds, and home communities, prepared for the *Conserve the Light* conference with deliberations and ceremonies. First Nation and Métis Elders who follow both Christian and traditional teachings shared music, ceremonies and traditions for the purpose of developing the opening message to the conference. The Elders then made recommendations to the leaders and delegates on what needs to be done to help preserve Mother Earth.

Charles Fox, who oversaw the *Conserve the Light* conference said, "Elders from across the province are here together, intent on protecting Mother Earth through conservation. Their thoughts and recommendation will directly influence the broader conference. It is unprecedented to have Métis and First Nations Elders, including those that follow the traditional ways, and others that follow Christian teachings coming together to learn and share."

Conserve the Light opened with the Elders' presentation on energy conservation in First Nation and Métis communities. Workshops were then held as a forum for discussing:

The gathering and Energy Efficiency Measures for the Aboriginal Community in Ontario (EEMAC) programs; Reports on Energy Kits and Energy Audit Retrofit Pilot Projects; The EEMAC Report on retrofits, kits, and education; Energy efficiency for Aboriginal communities in Ontario; The Hydro One remote conservation experience; The Green Energy Act (FIT Program).

Deputy Premier and Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, George Smitherman, senior officials of the Ontario Power Authority (OPA) and many First Nation and Métis leaders were among the keynote speakers.

Métis Nation of Ontario President, Gary Lipinski, who took part in the second half of the conference, says he appreciates the hard work of Senators Ruth

Millington-Vaughn and Bob McKay, who served on the Manachatoon Wash-ti-ni-gun *Conserve the Light* organizing committee. "I was pleased to see the recommendations of the Métis Elders who attended the gathering receive the respect they deserve. The collaborative nature of the event, with both First Nations and Métis working together is an important step forward in the evolution of a positive working relationship amongst Aboriginal groups in the province," he added.

(The next issue of the *Voyageur* will include a report from Senator Ruth covering the historic gathering of Elders on September 1st and 2nd.)

Ontario Power Authority

In its presentation, the OPA elaborated upon what it had learned from the pilot project, acknowledging the importance of Elders and community champions who possess tremendous insight into the communities. The Elders had indicated that there are many different approaches to a situation; that the communities should decide what is right for themselves; and, conservation tools have to be adaptable.

The OPA indicated that it would look to the Elders and community champions to provide guidance on program design and cultural considerations; to provide guidance to the External Program Manager on acceptance of a program within various Aboriginal communities; and, to assist in working at the community level.

For its part, OPA had found that there was much interest at the community level, but some technical training was required for the average person to see the house as a "system". It was also noted that more remote communities have to deal with the logistics of getting material, people, and information to their locations. This requires multiple layers of co-ordination because few companies can deliver products and services across all of Ontario. It would therefore be beneficial to combine conservation with other community activities.

The Green Energy Act

An overview of the *Green Energy Act* was presented, stressing the importance of enabling First Nation and Métis partnerships and participation in the electricity sector as well as:

- Supporting capacity development in First Nation and Métis



PHOTOS COURTESY: The Charles Fox Foundation



clockwise from top:
Mount McKay in Thunder Bay;
Senators Andre Bosse (left) and Roland St. Germain;
Charles Fox;
Senator Ruth Wagner-Millington.

communities;

- Increasing conservation and culture of conservation;
- Creating green jobs;
- Developing a "smart grid"; (A smart grid delivers electricity from suppliers to consumers using digital technology to save energy, reduce cost and increase reliability and transparency. Such a modernized electricity network is being promoted by many governments as a way of addressing energy independence, global warming and emergency resilience issues.)
- Renewable Energy Sources "...renewed by natural processes and includes wind, water, biomass, biogas, bio-fuel, solar energy, geothermal energy, tidal forces and such

other energy sources as may be prescribed by the regulations...."

See page 5 for more on the *Green Energy Act*.

Efficiency & Conservation for Aboriginal Communities

In December of 2005, a meeting was held to examine the development and delivery of a pilot project on an energy conservation program for the Aboriginal community in Ontario.

In February and March of 2006, focus groups were held in Toronto with both on-reserve and off-reserve housing groups to examine the needs of the Aboriginal community. In April of 2006, the EEMAC proposal was made to the OPA board of directors and

subsequently approved by the board.

During the summer of 2006, Charles Fox Consulting Inc received developmental funding to liaise with the First Nation community for the development and implementation of the proposed EEMAC program.

A contract for services was signed in early 2007 and the core committee, composed of three Elders and three members from the Network of Champions (those who assume responsibility for conservation in their respective areas), was formed. It was determined that the program should have four components:

Conference: Plan, organize and implement an Ontario-wide con-

ENVIRONMENT | **CONTROVERSIAL SITE 41 SCRAPPED**

The Dump is Dead

On September 23rd Simcoe County councillors voted 25-3 to permanently scrap Site 41, the proposed garbage dump in Tiny Township that was on the verge of opening this fall.

More than 200 people--farmers, environmentalists, concerned residents and members of the Aboriginal community--filled the council chambers and spilled outside waiting for the result of the vote.

The defunct landfill site is in the Georgian Bay traditional harvesting territory of the Métis of Ontario. It is situated in the midst of a significant watershed and a leak could have contaminated, not just the pristine groundwater at the site, but as many as 13 lakes in the Georgian Bay area. In addition to the MNO, Nature Canada; the Chiefs of Ontario; the Dairy Farmers of Ontario; members of the Beausoleil First Nation; Keepers of the Water, a group of Anishinabe Women; John Hawke, area farmers and many others, all opposed the dump.

The future looked bleak on August 9th when Simcoe County workers accompanied by the OPP entered the landfill site and arrested at least ten people, including Keith Wood, 82, and his wife, Ina, 76. Others facing charges were Barbara Hunt; Bob



Ritchie and his daughter, Anne Ritchie Nahuis; Gavin Jamieson; Vicki Monague, John Hawke and Beth Elson of Christian Island. Mohawk environmentalist, Danny Beaton, who last winter walked from Site 41 to Toronto to protest against the dump, was sent to the “super jail” in Penetanguishene for a weekend.

On June 19th the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) had expressed support for the Council of Canadians and its efforts to have Simcoe County halt construction of

the North County Landfill known as “Site 41”.

“The Métis Nation of Ontario wants to add its voice to the growing chorus of individuals and groups who are strongly opposed to Site 41,” said Gary Lipinski, MNO President. “We endorse the plan by the Council of Canadians to pursue appropriate legal action aimed at halting construction activity at the site.”

In early May, a group of Anishinabe women had set up a makeshift encampment across

the road from Site 41 that quickly became the epicentre of resistance. People would gather day and night, standing around the camp's sacred fire. On September 23rd hundreds of supporters returned to the camp at sunset to put out the fire--a ceremonial celebration of victory.

“It was lit for the protection of the water and the purpose of preventing the dump. Now it has served that purpose,” said Vicki Monague, spokeswoman for the Anishinabe Kweag.

HOUSING | First Nation, Inuit, Métis Urban & Rural Housing Assisted Homeownership Program

Program addresses Aboriginal housing needs

By **DIANE LAMPI**

On September 1st, 2009, Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS) announced the launch of the First Nation, Inuit, Métis Urban & Rural Housing (FIMUR) Assisted Homeownership Program.

The goal of the FIMUR Assisted Homeownership Program is to help address housing needs for Aboriginal people in Ontario living off-reserve, designed and delivered based on community engagement processes, to move from rental to homeownership.

The program will provide funding through forgivable loans for the purpose of purchasing

primary residences for a limited number of eligible self-identifying Aboriginal individuals and families with low to moderate income. Eligible homes can be in off-reserve urban communities and rural locations across Ontario excluding the Greater Toronto Areas. The value of a home cannot exceed the average market value in the respective area.

Applicants will be evaluated on a first-come, first-served basis, against the mandatory criteria. Priority will be given to those who are currently residing in social housing, and families escaping situations of violence.

This fall, the FIMUR Rental Component Program is expected

to initiate its second stage funding to also help address housing needs for Aboriginal people in Ontario living off-reserve, to build or renovate existing housing to better address the needs of Elders and families.

The program will provide funding to Aboriginal organizations or a partnership between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations through forgivable loans, with sustainability for 20 years. Eligible housing stock and new construction locations can be in off-reserve urban communities and rural locations across Ontario excluding the Greater Toronto Areas. Existing tenants cannot be displaced for the pur-

poses of this program.

Applicants are required to submit ideas in writing within 30 days of the launch. It is expected that funds will be allocated by February, 2010. This is an excellent opportunity for your organization to secure required housing.

For further information contact:

Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS)
(705) 256-1876, or toll-free at (866) 391-1061

Métis Nation of Ontario -- Housing Branch
(807) 626-9300, or toll-free at (800) 891-5882

SENIORS:

Ontario Seniors' housing vacancy rate rising

TORONTO, June 22, 2009 – Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) released the 2009 Ontario Seniors Housing Report, showing that the vacancy rate based on total accommodation spaces moved up to 13.2 per cent from 12.5 per cent last year. In 2009, the first National Seniors' Housing Survey replaced surveys previously conducted only in Ontario, Quebec and BC. The new survey distinguishes between standard and other types of spaces, particularly heavy care spaces. The national vacancy rate for standard spaces was 9.2 per cent, while in Ontario it was 13.3 per cent. Other highlights of the 2009 Ontario Seniors' Housing Report are as follows:

The vacancy rate for total retirement home spaces moved up after declining steadily for five years from the peak of 13.6 per cent registered in 2003.

Total retirement home supply continued to grow, with one and two-bedroom units gaining market share.

The average monthly rent for a standard private/studio space was \$2,520.

“Since the previous survey, the retirement home supply in Ontario has been growing faster than the population aged 75 and over. As a result, the downward trend in the vacancy rate reversed in 2009,” said Ken Sumnall, CMHC's Ontario Manager, Housing Market Surveys. “Looking ahead, the vacancy rate will increase moderately. The growth rate of the senior population in Ontario will remain relatively low until 2017 due to the low birth rates in the 1930s. At the same time, the substantial number of recently opened retirement homes and projects under construction will boost the supply of available spaces. However, this new supply with its larger suites and enhanced amenities will tend to generate more interest in a retirement home lifestyle, even among people as young as 65.”

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) has been Canada's national housing agency for over 60 years. CMHC is committed to helping Canadians access a wide choice of quality, affordable homes, and making vibrant and sustainable communities and cities a reality across the country. For more information, visit www.cmhc.ca or call 1 800 668-2642.

Conserve the Light conference

from page 6

ference on energy conservation for the Aboriginal community;

Retrofit Program: Plan for the development and execution of a retrofit program for 240 housing units in First Nation communities; Plan, develop and distribute energy efficiency kits to 25,000 First Nation residential homes in Ontario;

Education: Develop education curriculum on energy conservation for the First Nation community; Roll out to the First Nation schools in Ontario.

In May of 2007, the first conference titled “Manachatoon Washtinigin”, which means “Con-

serve the Light”, was held with 120 participants from First Nations throughout Ontario. At that time presentations were made to the delegates in attendance on the Energy Conservation Kits, the Energy Retrofit Pilot Program, the selection of five First Nation communities and Education Awareness/Curriculum Development.

Of 52 communities who were asked to provide expressions of interest, 26 responded. The five who received audits and retrofits on electrically heated homes were: Sheshegwaning First Nation; Sheguiandah First Nation; Slate Falls First Nation; Mitankoming First Nation and Anishin-

abek of Naongashing First Nation.

Then, 25,000 energy conservation kits were sent to all First Nation homes in Ontario, and a culturally appropriate education curriculum was developed for junior kindergarten to grade 12 on the subject of “Energy Efficiency in the Home”.

The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Measures for Aboriginal Communities program was developed by Charles Fox Consulting Inc. and funded by the Ontario Power Authority. The main goal of the program is to introduce and implement energy efficiency and conservation measures throughout all 134

First Nations' communities in Ontario. This program consists of four main components: the Conserve the Light Gathering conference, Education and Awareness, Energy Conservation Kits, and the Energy Retrofit Pilot.

The Ontario Power Authority is working directly with First Nation communities on a range of initiatives, including long-term systems planning, and is committed to ensuring that First Nation communities have access to the tools to participate in Ontario's growing culture of conservation, in a manner that complements First Nations values and heritages.

Community Councils

MOON RIVER MÉTIS COUNCIL | NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY

Métis gather in Muskoka

The Moon River Council, hosted by “The Rosseau” in Minett, celebrated a day of history awareness and culture on June 21st, National Aboriginal Day. — By **LARRY DUVAL**

The day began with the voyageur canoe making its way to shore to welcome the group of Métis and non-Métis visitors to the resort. The Métis flags fixed to the bow and stern of the canoe flew proudly as they neared the end of their short journey. Paddlers included, the Honourable Tony Clement, Minister of Industry and MP for Parry Sound-Muskoka; Susan Pryke, Mayor of Muskoka Lakes; MNO Senator, Ruth Wagner-Millington; from Moon River, Senator Verna Porter; Councillors, Dan Quesnelle, Eugene Boucher, Tammy Porter and President, Larry Duval. The canoe was expertly steered by Stephen Porter. Upon arrival, they were greeted by Chair, Louise Goulding, representatives from the resort and many welcomed guests.

On shore, leading the group to the main tent were Eric Quesnelle and Jim Tolles carrying the Métis flags. Senator Ruth Wagner-Millington played the “Red River Jig” on her fiddle, accompanied by Senator Porter on the guitar. Sharon McBride, Vice Chair of the PCMNO, was on hand to greet visitors to the displays.

After the introductions and speeches, the visitors toured the various displays, crafts and information tables and were able to get a better understanding of who the Métis are. Karen Muscat

helped children make a leather beaded bracelet to take away with them, while explaining the meaning of the four colours. Visitors explored the beading exhibit with Cathy Fournier, learning about the traditional Métis method.

They discovered the vast fishing exhibit with Louise and Chris Goulding hearing about fishing and hunting in the early days. The taxidermy exhibit by Jim Tolles displayed some of the pelts prominent in the area. Impromptu music from Senator Wagner-Millington’s fiddle-making display kept everyone entertained. Outside there was a voyageur canoe exhibit with Tammy Porter, outdoor survival with Eric Quesnelle and homemade chowder and bannock by Lisa McCron.

We are grateful for support and assistance from The Rosseau as well as Gayle Dempsey and Gary Froude, both of the Muskoka Lakes Festival committee and we look forward to working with them in the future.

Moon River Council has been very busy with getting the information out to the general public. May 14th saw them represented at the Trillium Lakelands School Board information day for teachers and the public. On June 19th they spent the day at MacTier Public School educating the staff



and students on Métis history and culture. On June 22nd they presented to the staff and students of Riverside School in Huntsville. They were involved with the two-day Oshawa Métis Celebration in Memorial Park. On July 18th they were once again set up on Frying Pan Island at

Sans Souci presenting information to the Sans Souci Cottagers’ Association. Future plans include Discovery Harbour on August 8th, the AGA in Sudbury, August 22-25th and the Rendezvous in Lafontaine on September 19th. Spreading the word has become a Council priority.

above:
A voyageur canoe, Métis flags fixed to the bow and stern, nears the end of its short journey. Paddlers included, the Honourable Tony Clement, Minister of Industry and MP for Parry Sound-Muskoka.

NIAGARA REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL:

CANADA DAY MÉTIS-STYLE

By **STEPHEN QUESNELLE**

In June, the Niagara Region Métis Council (NRMC) was asked by the Welland Heritage Council, if we would be interested in joining them to celebrate Canada Day, July 1st. I accepted and contacted our council to see if anyone would be interested in volunteering to carry our flags in the grand entrance. Richard Paquette, NRMC President; Barbaranne Wright, NRMC Women's Rep., and Valerie Boese, NRMC councillor agreed to carry our flags. When I saw the red and blue Métis flags following the Canadian Flag, leading the flags of other Nations, it was a very proud moment.

We set up a table and with the help of Margaret, Valerie and Doug Boese, distributed Canadian flags, flag lapel pins and Frisbees to the kids and anyone else that asked. The Frisbees were donated by Malcolm Allen MP. We also handed out many Métis Nation of Ontario calendars, application forms and the *Métis Voyageur* to those in attendance. There was a great deal of interest and numerous questions about



Barbaranne Wright, Women's Rep. Niagara Regional Métis Council (NRMC) and Richard Paquette, NRMC President, carry the Métis flags while Valerie Boese, Councillor (whose son serves in the Canadian Armed Forces) carries the Canadian maple leaf.

the Métis and the Métis Nation of Ontario. A great time was had by all who were there.

I would like to thank all the citizens who joined us in our first

Canada Day celebrations with the Welland Heritage Council; we are looking forward to joining them in many more events.

OUR ELDERS:

SENIORS' DAY

MNO Health Branch staff and Niagara Regional Métis Council arrange activities for seniors

By **STEPHEN QUESNELLE**

On July 17, 2009, the MNO Health Branch Services and the Niagara Region Métis Council (NRMC) held a special Seniors Day.

TerryLynn Longpre, Community Wellness Coordinator and Tammy Wintle, Long Term Care Coordinator arranged a day of celebration and activities to address the health concerns of our elderly and to raise awareness of our health programs. On hand to advise and help our elders and citizens were representatives from Nike, the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Niagara Regional Housing, Dr. Kevin Hotham (Panda Chiropractic) and the NRMC.

The celebration started at ten with a continental breakfast. Nike Footwear, who now provides a custom-made wider shoe at wholesale cost for Aboriginal people, had a beautiful display and area for members to try on shoes for a proper fit.

As Senator, I did a presentation on the “History of the Métis People” for those in attendance.

Volunteers from the Heart and Stroke Foundation were on hand to answer our citizens’ questions pertaining to stroke and blood pressure management.

Current social and economic conditions have necessitated affordable housing and long term care; Niagara Regional Housing was present to take applications and assist our citizens first hand.

Glen Lipinski presented on Responsible Gambling.

Tammy Wintle and Rebecca Vander Sanden prepared a heart healthy lunch. At lunch we gathered, celebrated and visited with our Elders.

A great day indeed! The MNO Health Branch Services and the NRMC would like to thank all those who participated and give a very special thanks to our Elders, all of whom hold a key to the past and to Tammy who spear-headed this event.

Métis Nation in Motion

It is with great enthusiasm that I say, “Yes, we are growing! Yes, we are a nation in motion!”

By **TERRYLYNN LONGPRE**

On the early, slightly chilly Saturday morning of July 18, 2009, the Niagara Region Métis Council, Long Term Care and AHWS programs partnered for a Nation in Motion Event: canoeing. The event took place on our very own Welland Canal. After many challenges and lots of teamwork, the day finally had arrived.

Originally prepared for ten

participants, in the event’s final moments, 21 members departed the north shore to head up to Merritt Island.

We began with all safety regimens in place. Every woman, child and man donned proper life jackets. Children were strategically placed in the centre of the canoes; the inexperienced paired, with the experienced. Richard Paquette, President of the Niagara Region Métis Council (NRMC), with three years experience in the Niagara Falls Fire Department Marine Unit, was participating and we were very happy to have his expertise. I myself, certified in first-aid CPR and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) was also there for added safety.

As I stood on shore, the scene

before me was breath taking, exhilarating, a captivating moment in time. Imagine, the cool morning, the still waters, the canoes gliding out in almost perfect harmony. I felt as any mother would feel watching her young about to embark on a new adventure--trepidation and apprehension, yet excited and in awe of what was taking place.

Soon, before we knew it, time was up and our members slowly embarked upon the very shore they had left. Everyone gathered together and shared an abundant feast of smoked bacon, sausage, eggs, fruit, cheese, vegetables, yogurt, muffins and strawberry punch—a feast that not only satiated our hungry members, but signified the success of our voyage.



As we ate, we shared the euphoria of our experience and achievement. There was talk of our next adventure. The day ended with great thanks and the raffle of an Indian head dress donated by Kelly and Clayton Latham.

At this time I would like to extend a very special thank-you to Tammy Wintle, Coordinator of LTC, for being there every step of the way and preparing our abundant feast. I would also like to thank Richard, for without his diligence this event could not have taken place.

TerryLynn Longpre is the MNO Community Wellness Coordinator for the Niagara Region Métis Council.



Métis paddling the Welland Canal.

NIAGARA REGION MÉTIS COUNCIL:



Niagara’s family day picnic & BBQ

By **STEPHEN QUESNELLE**

On June 27th, with thanks to Rebecca Vander Sanden, the Healthy Babies and Healthy Children Coordinator, as well as other staff members and the Niagara Region Métis Council, our family day picnic and BBQ was held at Memorial Park.

Again this year, the event was well attended and enjoyed by all. There was swimming and games for children and good food for all

to enjoy. Everyone had a good time making their own talking stick while learning its meaning—to the amazement of some.

I would like to thank everyone who attended and helped out with this year’s picnic and BBQ. You made this event the success it was.

Stephen Quesnelle is the Senator for the Niagara Region Métis Council. He can be reached at quesnelles@cogeco.ca.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

Niagara Region Métis Council participates in Welland Rose Parade

By **BARBARANNE WRIGHT**

June 21, 2009, Aboriginal Day, was the second annual event for the float. A heart-felt thank you to the Niagara Region Métis Council volunteers for all their hard work. You made this a wonderful day!

People clapped and enjoyed the toe tapping fiddle music we provided. Our president, Rick Paquette sported a fiddle as a

prop! He did a great job keeping the beat. Thanks Rick!

We had great fun as we anticipated participating in the Niagara Festival Parade on September 26th in St. Catharines.

Our Métis family in Niagara continues to grow! Many thanks to the volunteers who make us so proud of our heritage!

Miigwech.

Check our web site at: www.niagararegionmetisCouncil.ca.



top: Kirby Lynn Wright, Harry Wright and Rick Paquette with the fiddle.
above, left to right: Valerie Boese, Andrea Paquette and Alex MacDonald

DUTY TO CONSULT AND ACCOMODATE MÉTIS RIGHTS

Georgian Bay area Métis sign historic agreement on consultation

By **PAULINE SAULNIER**

On May 20th, 2009, the active chartered councils of Grey-Owen Sound, Georgian Bay and Moon River had the opportunity to review, discuss, and ensure that the signing of the Protocol in Region 7 did happen. Present to sign this legal document were the President of the Grey-Owen Sound Métis Council (GOSMC), Malcolm Dixon; President of the Georgian Bay Métis Council (GBMC), Alden Barty; President of the Moon River Métis Council (MRMC), Larry Duval; President of the MNO, Gary Lipinski; Deputy Chief Captain of the Hunt, Louise Goulding and PCMNO Region 7 Councillor, Pauline Saulnier.

By signing this historic document Region 7 has demonstrated solidarity, unity and the collective right of Métis citizens in this area. It also shows that “the right” is not the right of the individual but rather the collective Métis right as per the Supreme Court of Canada in the Powley case decision. It was history in the making and



left to right: **Malcolm Dixon, President of the Grey-Owen Sound Métis Council; Larry Duval, President of the Moon River Métis Council; Gary Lipinski, MNO President; Alden Barty, President of the Georgian Bay Métis Council and PCMNO Region 7 Councillor, Pauline Saulnier**

another mile stone in the evolution of the MNO. After careful review of all the information contained in the protocol agreement, this signing was a proud and memorable moment for me as regional councillor.

With this accomplished there is a lot of work ahead for the regional councillor and the protocol committee. The topics being discussed relate to our

“Métis Way of Life” and our attempts to maintain the simple good life that we have always enjoyed in our Homeland.

Most Métis citizens at the grassroots level have requested that the environment (water, animals, nature’s playground, air quality, etc) be maintained. We as Métis people need to have more consultation rights from the ‘get go’ as to what we think about the

“
The signing of the Protocol signals the beginning of a lot of work and discussions ahead.
”

various projects that are being undertaken in our individual communities. The task of tracking projects is not an easy one.

As regional councillor, I have used the new relationship funding to attempt to open up more lines of communication with all my Region 7 community councils to begin the dialogue on what the various councils want; how they will achieve their goals; how they envision the future of the MNO, and how to show appreciation to hard working volunteers who are always willing to donate time and to promote our Métis Nation.

The signing of the Protocol signals the beginning of a lot of work and discussions ahead.

I would like to thank those volunteers and staff members who have already worked hard and long hours to ensure that this process functions with ease. We have a great team that can only get stronger and better as it grows.

Pauline Saulnier is the Region 7 Councillor on the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO).



Captain's Corner
BY **KEN SIMARD**
CAPTAIN OF THE HUNT, REG. 2

Hunting season is here again!

It's that time of year again! Saddle up your horse and practice your lassoing. If you're not good at that, try bow and arrow. If that doesn't work, try the rifle; failing that, call Captain Ken in Region 2 for further instructions.

Hello everyone: I hope you're getting ready for the big harvest. Well it's time now!

1. Start by exercising and walking long distances before you set out this year.
2. Make sure you are in good shape physically. This could prevent a heart attack or stroke; ask your doctor.
3. Beware of moose on the loose on all roads; slow down and stay safe; stay alert. A collision with a moose can be deadly.

Happy hunting to you all, and don't forget where Captain Ken lives if you're nearby. We supply wild meat and fish to our elders who can't get out to hunt.

Good luck to all.

Métis Feedback Needed for an Aboriginal Initiative for Aboriginals Involved in Crime

On July 7th at the Indian Friendship Centre, North Bay held a community consultation to assess the need for aboriginal justice initiatives in North Bay and surrounding areas.

This event was sponsored by representatives of the Aboriginal Justice Initiative Committee including: Amelia Rising Sexual Assault Centre of Nipissing Anishnabek Police Services Crown Attorney's Office;

Indian Friendship Centre; Métis Nation of Ontario; Nipissing First Nation; Ojibwe Family Resources Centre; People for Equal Partnership; Probation and Parole Services; Temagami First Nation; True Self and the Victim Witness Assistance Program.

The Aboriginal Justice Initiative Committee in North Bay and surrounding area strives to define and develop community based initiatives focusing on Aboriginal justice issues, based on the needs expressed by the community.

We need to hear from Métis people. Please send your responses to darlenem@metisnation.org or mail them to:

Aboriginal Justice Initiatives Feedback
Métis Nation of Ontario
235-101 Worthington St. East
North Bay, ON, P1B 1G5

1. Do you think your community needs to look at alternate ways to address some of the crime in your community?

2. Are you interested in participating in an alternative to court process?

3. How does the alternative way look for you?

4. Please provide your name and phone number if you are interested in participating or receiving more information.

Métis Roots

HISTORIC GATHERING OF THE L'HEUREUX-TREMBLAY CLAN:



PHOTO COURTESY: Raymond Tremblay

Métis clan gathers in Timmins

By **RAYMOND TREMBLAY**

During the weekend of July 3rd, 2009, approximately 125 descendants of Rose-Alda (L'Heureux) and Donat Tremblay gathered in Timmins, Ontario, to celebrate their Métis and Franco-Ontarian roots.

Members of the clan came from Winnipeg, Washington, Toronto, Sarnia, South River, Sudbury, Kingston, Ottawa, Kitchener, Caledonia and Timmins to honour their ancestors, to celebrate, to meet new members of the L'Heureux-Tremblay Clan and to renew old family ties. Many family members who couldn't attend due to conflicting commitments sent their best wishes.

In the course of the evening of Friday, July 3rd, family members warmly greeted and reconnected with each other over an appetizing Chinese buffet as they watched a presentation of some

425 pictures of their ancestors and of the respective families of the eleven first generation descendants of Rose-Alda and Donat Tremblay. Guests were also treated to a display of framed pictures of their ancestors on both sides of the family and historical documents confirming their Métis roots. Santa Claus even made a surprise visit and distributed gifts to those present. Needless to say, everyone deserved a good night's sleep following such an emotional and awesome evening of activities, but there was more to come.

On Saturday, July 4th, interested individuals went on a Timmins gold mine tour. Following the tour, the group held a ceremonial gathering in memory of Roger Tremblay, who, for many years, acted as a senior tour guide. In 1997, a plaque was mounted on a boulder in recog-

nition of his dedication to developing this tour and for having built a number of the buildings on the grounds of the site, namely the "prospectors' cabin" and the "blacksmith log structure". Concurrently, another group of family members met at the Porcupine Miners Memorial Monument to honour Jeanette (Tremblay) Dubeau-Bélair's husband, Lorenzo (Larry) Dubeau who was killed in a mining accident in 1961.

Following these memorials, a family picnic was held at the Big Water Campground. Hamburgers, home baked beans, hot dogs and refreshments were served. Some played various lawn games including horse shoes while others walked along the sandy beaches. Throughout the afternoon, individuals reminisced about and caught up on their mutual life experiences. Smiles, joy and laughter permeated the entire afternoon. The family chose to celebrate and re-affirm its Métis roots immersed in Mother Nature's soothing and inspiring surroundings. This was a particularly moving ceremony because some members of our clan had not previously been aware of their Métis heritage.

Following a roast beef dinner held that evening at the Howard Johnson Inn, older members of the clan tap danced, played the mouth organ and the Jews harp. The younger children were simply amazed by their elders' musical talents which they had obvi-

ously inherited from their Métis and Franco-Ontarian ancestors. However, some of the younger crowd were not to be outdone: they sang and played the electric keyboard.

That night, as family members proudly wore their Métis sashes, the eagle was identified as the official emblem of the L'Heureux-Tremblay Clan. The eagle was chosen because of its sacredness and the fact that it reflected what all this clan's members strive to achieve: wisdom, patience, courage, forgiveness, healing and transformation, faithfulness and loyalty to their Creator, and respect for Mother Earth and the environment. A print of an eagle (painted by Ottawa artist, Yao Wen Kui) was raffled and won by Eric Tremblay (Kingston).

During both evenings, family members were invited to give testimonials. Many expressed words of thanks to the organizers of this major event, particularly Fern Tremblay (Timmins) and Raymond Tremblay (Ottawa). In turn, the organizers thanked everyone for their much appreciated support--numerous family members had gone beyond the call of duty to ensure the ultimate success of this unique event.

On Sunday, July 5th, attendees went to St. Dominique's Church where Rose-Alda and Donat Tremblay introduced their children to Christian values. Following a relaxing lunch and an afternoon full of recreational activities at Fern Tremblay's home, the

family gathered for a delicious spaghetti supper and succulent desserts at the church hall. Entertainment was provided by a well-known entertainer and close friend of the family, Gabe Benoit.

This "last supper" was followed by a flurry of lively conversations and flashing cameras taking numerous pictures of groups of families joining hands and hearts together to further bond as proud members of the L'Heureux-Tremblay Clan. People quickly realized that this one-of-a-kind historical family reunion was coming to an end. Hugs, kisses and best wishes were warmly exchanged. A few tears were shed but all recognized that the spirit of kinship within the L'Heureux-Tremblay Clan would last forever under the piercing eye of the eagle, the divine grace of our Creator and the nurturing of our generous Mother Earth regardless of the obstacles we would encounter throughout our lives.

It was refreshing and stimulating to see and hear that everyone truly enjoyed themselves throughout the weekend. It is no wonder that they gave thanks to their Creator and their ancestors for having guided them to reach this major crossroad on their earthly path and for encouraging them to bravely and safely continue to travel on their journey.

Until we meet again, we remain proud of our Métis, Franco-Ontarian and Christian heritage. À la prochaine. Baa Maa Pii. Migwetch.



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For the past 20 years, at 21 sites throughout Canada, we're proud of our commitment to the communities where we operate. At Canadian Hydro, we don't just prospect an area and hand it off to another company. We own and maintain every one of our wind, biomass and run-of-river hydro facilities striving to achieve a balance between operational excellence and respect for the land.



GENETIC GENEALOGY UPDATE:

The Art & Science of Ancestry

By **DONN FOWLER**

The necessary research toward finding more information about the “life and time” of my GGG grandmother, Mary (Daniel) Corrigan (1788-1823), and her brief thirty-five years of life, has not only included purchasing four Full Genetic Sequence (FGS) DNA kits, from the Genographic Project's Family-Tree-DNA, but also necessitated accessing www.mitosearch.org and www.Ysearch.org computer databases associated with the DNA discovery system. These two search items are, respectively, the female and male (mtDNA and yDNA) results of the present maximum possible number of Single Nucleotide polymorphisms (SNP)--67 markers--as distinct from the basic Short Tandem Repeats (STR)--12 Markers, with the modest costs being greatest for the better FGS results. It all boils down to the total number of genetic mutations we want to find in our own individual chromosomes.

I first became involved because I was curious about my own yDNA ancestry and the swabs I purchased initially gave me a mere 12 markers (of a possible 67 that I could have purchased). In my ignorance, I did not know that buying my first yDNA results would also include giving me my birth mother's actual mtDNA without any additional cost. In other words, my very first purchase gave me my father's AND my mother's basic DNA Haplogroup results as “R” (father and me) and “U” (my mother). Later, the additional genetic work I purchased eventually enabled me to obtain the two distinct Haplotypes which are now my male only R1b1b2a1b and my late mother's U5a1. These two results alone have enabled me--thanks to the above-mentioned search databases--to locate all kinds of common haplogroup and haplotype persons worldwide and to ascertain the genetic distance of each of them from my or my mother's haplotype. There is of course genetic (time) dis-

tances to consider. A genetic distance of 0-25 years or fewer indicates an exact genetic common match, regardless of the surname of the individual. A genetic distance of say 15 would mean a time distance of possibly 15 times 25 years or approximately 325 years. “Time to Most Recent Common Ancestor” (TMRCA), indicates approximately how much time has elapsed from that particular ancestor to your own present time. All that said, I went ahead and purchased the FGS for my wife and learned that her Haplotype is “H1”. When I purchased one kit for relating directly back to Mary (Daniel) Corrigan—a five generation female sequence, I was happy to learn that my “Métis Mary” ancestor had a Morganshire, Wales, father, named Jenkins Daniel, who was employed with the Hudson's Bay Company. However, I have not yet determined Jenkin Daniel's Native wife's name nor her band or tribe. All we know at present is that Mary (Daniel) Corrigan is a Haplogroup “A” and now a Hap-

lotype “A2”. However, there remain questions that might--or might not--relate directly to Mary as an Haplotype “X2a” or possibly a Haplotype D4h3 depending on whether her maternal ancestry was respectively of a “Beringian” crossing or a “Pacific Route” Amerindian. Apparently Mary's “A” haplotype was originally “certified” to me by mail. But I discovered it was database posted as a Haplotype “A2” and when I brought that difference to their attention they informed me that a corrected “certificate” was in the mail certifying the “A2”. In the meantime, I have already been in email contact with several males and females with whom I share the same “zero distance” Haplotype. I have not looked at much more than a genetic distance of 2 or 3 (50 and 75 years back) for a MCRA. That process will take place when I have completed the North American information on Mary (Daniel) Corrigan's mtDNA female only roots. The progress thus far has been both fascinating and enlightening.

OLD WORLD ANCESTORS:

Reprinted with the generous permission of the author, John Ivison.

The following article was brought to the attention of the Voyageur by MNO Registrar, Karole Dumont-Beckett, who noted that many MNO citizens have a Scottish branch in their family tree.

Banished Scots in Canada may be in line for a title

Scottish Parliament asked to lift Jacobite stigma

The Scottish Parliament wants the slur against Jacobites lifted. Scots Canadians whose ancestors supported Bonnie Prince Charlie's Jacobite rebellion may not know it, but their family names have officially been mud for more than 250 years. After the failed insurrection to restore the House of Stuart to the British throne, Acts of Parliament deemed the blood of many rebels “corrupt,” confiscated their property and exiled them to North America as indentured servants. Now, the Scottish Parliament is taking steps to remove any stigma associated with support for the Stuart cause. Canadians with the last name Cameron, Drummond, Fraser,

Gordon, Graham, Laird, MacDonald, Mackenzie, Mackinnon, MacKinnon, Mackintosh, MacKintosh, MacLeod, Nairn, Ogilvie, Ross, Stewart, Stirling or Sutherland may well be the descendants of Jacobites who were exiled after the rebellions. Many Jacobites were “attainted” by Act of Parliament that denied them their property and disinherited their descendants. Those affected included national hero Rob Roy McGregor and Flora MacDonald, Bonnie Prince Charlie's rescuer after the Battle of Culloden in 1746, who settled in North Carolina. Scottish Conservative Jamie McGrigor has tabled a motion, with cross-party support, calling on the Scottish Parliament to



back a petition that demands the Westminster Parliament overturn the Acts of Attainder and clear the names of Jacobite families. Not only could the stigma associated with “corruption of the blood” be overturned, but some Canadians may also find they have legitimate claim on ancient titles that would be restored if the campaign is successful. Peter Drummond-Murray, a retired banker and heraldry expert who started the petition, said that a number of peerage titles could be affected, including the Earl of Kilmarnock and the Duke of Berwick. “Lots of ordinary people were transported to North America

▲ **Jacobite forces clash with the British at the Battle of Culloden in 1745.** who still have this slur on them. We're petitioning for it to be removed,” he said. He did not rule out that there could be Canadians with claim to old titles, but said that there is no question of successful land claims being launched after nearly 300 years. The list of those “attainted” included all ranks from peers and lairds to clerks and commoners. As the Jacobite threat subsided in the 19th century, a number of peers were able to afford the procedure of a private bill in Parliament to reverse the attainder process. However,

many families that supported the Stuarts are still stigmatized by what one member of the Scottish Parliament called “historical discrimination.” After 1688, when James VII of Scotland and II of England was replaced by his daughter Mary II and her husband, William of Orange, many who refused to swear allegiance to William and Mary were tried for treason and “attainted”. Some were executed; some sent into exile and were punished by Acts of Attainder--losing their rights and property. This process continued after the Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745. Below is a list of those who were attainted. Many of their descendants live in Canada now.

| A list of Scottish “Jacobites” who were attainted. Many of their descendants live in Canada now. | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Sir Hugh Paterson of BannockburnSir Donald Macdonnald of SlateSir John Preston of PrestonhallSir John Mackenzie of CowlAlexander Mackenzie of Apple CrossDonald Mackenzie of KilcowieAlexander Cameron of DungallonEvan MacPherson of ClunieLauchlan MacLauchlan of Castle LauchlanJohn MacKinnon of MacKinnonCharles Stewart of ArdschielDonald MacDonald of LochgarieSir John FenwickRobert CharnockSir George BarclayMichael HareMajor George HolmesPhillip Hanford aka Brown Richard RichardsonJohn MaxwellJohn BernardiRobert CassellsRobert MeldrumJames ChambersRobert BlackburneJames Duke of OrmondeJohn Earl of MarWilliam Murray Esq. commonly called Marquess of Tullibardine, eldest son and heir apparent of John Duke of AtholJames Earl of Linlithgow | <ul style="list-style-type: none">James Drummond Esq. commonly called Lord Drummond eldest son and heir apparent of the Earl of PerthGeorge Earl of MarischallWilliam Earl of SeaforthJames Earl of SouthesqueJames Earl of PanmuirWilliam Viscount of KilsythJames Viscount of KingstoneRobert Lord BurleighKennet Lord DuffusJames Ogilvie commonly called Lord OgilvieWilliam Sutherland Laird of Roscommon brother to Lord DuffusLieutenant General George HamiltonMajor General Thomas Gordon LairdColonel John Hay son of the Earl of KinoulevMajor William ClephaneSir David Threppland of FfingaskSir Hugh Paterson of BannockburnSir Donald Macdonnald of SlateSir John Preston of PrestonhallSir John Mackenzie of Cowl MasterJames Malcolm of GrangeMr John Stuart of InneruittyMaster Alexander Robertson of StrowanMaster John Wakinshaw of ScotstouneMaster George Mackenzie son of Delvin George Mackenzie of BallamukieAlexander Mackenzie of Ffraserdale | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Roderick Mackenzie of FfairburnAlexander Mackenzie of Apple CrossDonald Mackenzie of KilcowieJohn Mackenzie of AvachAlexander Mackenzie of DachmaluackJohn Sinclair Esq. called Master of SinclairAlexander Farquharson of InveraryColin Campbell Laird of GlenderuleJohn Cameron younger of LochielJames Stirling of KeirWilliam Grahme of DuntroonRobert Campbell alias McGregor commonly called Rob RoyJohn Oliphant late Baillie of DundeeRobert Stuart of ApinHugh Rosse Laird of ClavaJohn McDowgal of LorneJohn Grant Laird of GlenmorisonJohn Mackinnin Laird of McKinninRoderick Chisholm of StrathglassAlexander McDonald of GlencoJohn McCra of DavachcartyAlexander McDonald Laird of GlengaryRanald MacDonnald Captain of ClanranaldThomas Forster Esq.William Mackintosh commonly called Brigadier MackintoshAlexander Earl of KellieWilliam Viscount of StrathallanAlexander Lord Pitsligo | <ul style="list-style-type: none">David Wemyss Esq. called Lord Elcho son and heir apparent of James Earl of WemyssJames Drummond Esq. eldest son and heir apparent of William Viscount of StrathallanSimon Fraser Esq. eldest son and heir apparent of Simon Lord LovatGeorge Murray Esq. called Lord George Murray brother to James Duke of AtholLewis Gordon Esq. called Lord Lewis Gordon brother to Cosmo Duke of GordonJames Drummond taking upon himself the title of Duke of PerthJames Graham late of Duntroon taking upon himself the title of Viscount of Dundee John Nairn taking upon himself the title or stile of Lord NairnDavid Ogilvie taking upon himself the title of Lord OgilvieJohn Drummond taking upon himself the stile or title of Lord John Drummond brother to James Drummond taking upon himself the title of Duke of PerthRobert Mercer Esq. otherwise Nairn of AldieSir William Gordon of ParkJohn Murray of BroughtonEsq. John Gordon the elder of GlenbuckettDonald Cameron the younger of LochielDoctor Archibald Cameron brother to Donald Cameron the younger of LochielLudovick Cameron of Tor Castle |
| | | | |

Annual General Assembly



PHOTOS IN THIS SECTION: Bonny Cann & Marc St.Germain

One Nation, One People

▲ Senator Earl Scofield leads the procession that opened the 16th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario in Sudbury.

Ontario Métis gather in Sudbury for 16th Annual General Assembly

By LINDA LORD

The 16th Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the Métis Nation of Ontario was held this year in Sudbury, from August 22 to 25, 2009. As is customary, the flags of the Métis Nation and the Province of Ontario were paraded into the assembly room to the accompaniment of Roger Geroux on fiddle and Aline Geroux on guitar. Dignitaries made up the rest of the Grand Entry.

This year's assembly was dedicated to Métis veterans and many were in attendance (see page 14). The entire gathering was moved by the opening prayer offered by Executive Senator, Reta Gordon.

We ask you to pray for our men and women who are in war torn countries fighting to restore peace and democracy. May the Creator send down his angels under whose wings they shall safely travel. May he keep them in his love 'til they return to the arms of their loved ones.

Let us not forget our veterans: veterans of World War Two; the Korean Conflict; Vietnam; those in peace-keeping missions and on the home front. Their steps may be slowing, their eyes dimming, but in our hearts they are still the mighty warriors of old. May the Creator grant them peace and dignity in the twilight of their years.

*It is the veteran, not the preacher;
Who has given us freedom of religion.
It is the veteran, not the reporter;
Who has given us freedom of the press.
It is the veteran, not the poet,
Who has given us freedom of speech.
It is the veteran, not the campus organizer;
Who has given us freedom to assemble.
It is the veteran, not the lawyer;*

*Who has given us the right to a fair trial.
It is the veteran, not the politician,
Who has given us the right to vote.
It is the veteran, who served honourably under the flag.
It is the veteran who salutes the flag, and today,
all of us, salute you.*

MNO Chair, France Picotte, then took control of the meeting and welcomed everyone. Her greeting was followed by a few words of thanks from the new President of the MNO Veterans' Council, Maurice Sarrazin.

Representing the Premier and the Government of Ontario, the Honourable Rick Bartolucci, Minister of Community Safety & Correctional Services, welcomed delegates to Sudbury. Minister Bartolucci served as Deputy-Mayor and worked as an educator prior to his election as MPP for Sudbury. He congratulated the MNO on the number of Youth in attendance (See page 16), adding that Premier Dalton McGuinty regretted that he could not attend in person.

Next to speak to the assembly was Ontario Attorney General Christopher Bentley. A familiar presence in MNO circles for the past five years, Mr. Bentley brought greetings from the Honourable Brad Duguid, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, and from the Minister of Education Kathleen Wynne. Minister Bentley said that he felt that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the MNO and the Ministry of Education would help improve educational outcomes for Métis people in Ontario.

Finally, Nickel Belt New Democratic Party MPP France Gélinas, welcomed delegates to Sudbury.

At this point, the MNO AGA delegates witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the MNO and the Ministry of Education by MNO President



Métis Nation of Alberta
President Audrey Poitras

Lipinski, Chair France Picotte and the Honourable Rick Bartolucci. (See page 15)

Next to the microphone was Audrey Poitras, President of the Métis Nation of Alberta. She thanked the MNO for sharing the work that has been undertaken, especially in the area of the Duty to Consult.

The next honoured guest was the President of the Métis National Council, Clément Chartier. National President Chartier thanked Senator Gordon for her eloquent prayer and went on to address some of the issues relevant to Métis veterans. Chartier commented on the difficult struggle to obtain the recognition that Métis veterans deserve. He said that David Chartrand, (President of the Manitoba Métis Federation) who holds the Veterans Portfolio nationally has been working very hard on these issues. As a direct result of his efforts, the Juno Beach Museum Board agreed to fly the Métis flag with the flags of other nations this past year. As well, they will showcase the Métis as part of a rotation, and have agreed to add a Red River Cart to



Métis National Council President
Clément Chartier

the site. In addition, a "Métis Nation" year will be declared from time to time.

The National President went on to say that the MNC was working with the government to have veterans attend the ceremonies planned for this fall to commemorate the 65th Anniversary of D-Day at Juno Beach in France. (See *Senators' Meeting* page 18)

President Chartier then moved to the subject of residential school survivors by saying that while the Métis had suffered the same abuses as the First Nations their suffering had not been acknowledged. Although he represented the Métis nationally at the reading of the government's apology, he feels the agreement does not address the outstanding issues of the Métis people. He said that true reconciliation can only happen when there is acknowledgment that someone did wrong.

Following President Chartier's address, two more "Memorandums of Understanding" (MOU) were signed: one with Collège

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Métis gather in Sudbury for Assembly



MÉTIS VETS:

AGA dedicated to Métis Veterans

On Saturday, August 22nd, the MNO veterans met to elect a new council. This is the first time in a long time that the MNO has had a full Veterans' Council in place.

MNO VETERANS' COUNCIL:

President - Maurice Sarrazin
Vice President - Steven Callaghan
Secretary - Joseph Paquette
Treasurer - Renee Gravelle
Chair - Jean Camirand
Senator - Elmer Ross

New president, Maurice Sarrazin, said: "For me this is a huge success." He reported that there were 18 veterans at the meeting of a possible 51 who are registered with the MNO. The list is growing every day. If you are a veteran who has not yet made yourself known, contact Maurice at maurices@metisnation.org or call head office 1-800-263-4889.

A highlight of this year's AGA was a lunch which the veterans shared with the youth. This was an opportunity for the vets to tell their stories and for the youth to record them. Maurice says that he is still receiving calls and emails from veterans who enjoyed this event. "We agreed that we must invite our youth to participate and interact with the veterans at every AGA," he said.

"This was the best meeting the veterans have held to date. We got to meet new friends and old friends and shared old memories and stories. I must say that I am very proud to be part of such an elite group of men and women. My hat goes off to all you veterans for make this AGA a huge success."



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Boréal (see page 15) and the other with Providence Care (see page 19).

Richard Sarrazin, President of the Sudbury Métis Council, then welcomed delegates to Sudbury before MNO President Gary Lipinski took the floor to deliver his State of the Nation address.

President Lipinski began by expressing his pleasure at the number of people in attendance. He said that it was heart warming to see so many proud Métis people waiting to greet the PCMNO as they had paddled up to the tent at Richard's Lake the previous evening. He said that Métis stories needed to be told and shared more often and he was happy that the previous evening had provided that opportunity.

President Lipinski then congratulated Nick Callaghan who have been elected PCMNO Youth Representative by the more than 40 Métis Youth in attendance. (See page 17) The President said that in the future it would be up to the young people of today to move the Métis agenda forward. He stressed the importance of their participation in the AGA and mentioned a forthcoming resolution from the youth requesting that the Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth Centre (UMAYC) funding be reinstated.

The president then recapped the activities of the 14 months since he took office. He highlighted the adjustments in priorities but said he felt the MNO was now moving to another level. Many initiatives, like the *Strategic Plan*, which was later presented to the assembly for approval, have been undertaken. The five year *Strategic Plan* is a living document that will provide guidance to the MNO as it moves forward, while allowing for adjustments and updates as new priorities are identified.

According to President Lipinski, one of the most significant events of the past year was the

signing of the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement because it recognises the existence of Métis people in Ontario, something the government has denied in the past. A victory in the *Powley Case* paved the way for a different response from the government and the *Framework Agreement* moves the rights of Métis people in Ontario forward. In addition, this agreement has led to the signing of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with other provincial government ministries.

While the courts should always be the last option, President Lipinski suggested that the MNO must be prepared to go to court when necessary. He recalled that when the *Powley* case was discussed initially, no one knew how much time and money the case would eventually take. He said that the court case was successful in the end because the Métis stood together as a people, pointing out that the significance of the case in asserting Métis rights is recognized across Canada. The president said it was remarkable to see how the relationship between the MNO and the various levels of government has changed and that the MNO has moved forward on several initiatives such as the Tri-Partite agreement that is now in place and the appointment of a Chair of Métis Studies at the University of Ottawa.

The creation of a Chair of Métis Studies this year was possible because the government put forward \$3 million and when the University of Ottawa was selected, it contributed \$1million. (Watch for an announcement of the successful candidate in a future *Voyageur*.)

President Lipinski reviewed other MNO successes, such as the signing of an Interim Harvesting Agreement with the Government of Ontario. The agreement is something that none of the other MNC governing members presently has with their respec-



Richard Sarrazin, Sudbury Métis Council President.



Chris Bentley, Ontario Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities and Minister of Labour.

tive provincial governments. He acknowledged that the agreement is not perfect, but the process is advancing and he hopes that recent negotiations will result in advancing the agreement in the areas that matter the most to Métis harvesters in Ontario.

President Lipinski then told delegates he was happy to report that the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs (MAA) has agreed to a funding proposal that the MNO put forward under the Duty to Consult program and that as a result the MNO would receive \$2.6 million from the New Rela-

tionship Fund. He said the funding will enable the MNO to do the work required in Duty to Consult issues and will allow the Métis Nation to hire the expertise necessary to engage fully in the consultation process.

In addition, President Lipinski said that the MNO is also discussing Resource Revenue Sharing with MAA. He pointed out that the government makes a lot of money from the resources taken from Métis lands and if revenue sharing were in place, the MNO would be in a better position to undertake future work.

The MNO is also actively engaged in work around the Green Energy Act. (See page 5) The *Act*, which was passed in the spring, is consistent with Métis values. Because of the potential impact of the legislation on the Métis people, it is important they continue to be involved in discussions related to the Green Energy Act.

President Lipinski concluded his remarks by reiterating that the goal of the MNO is to be seen as the best Aboriginal organization in the country. It is a goal that places a lot of pressure on MNO staff across the province. He expressed his appreciation to the MNO staff for their hard work and their continued commitment to making the changes required to take the MNO to the next level.

DELEGATES GET DOWN TO BUSINESS

Following President Lipinski's comments, the business of the AGA began in earnest. Last year's Minutes were dealt with and quorum was established.

Chief Operating Officer, Doug Wilson, then spoke to delegates about the link between making the MNO more professional and more accountable and access to additional government funding. He thanked MAA for its continuing support of the MNO and

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SIGNING AGREEMENTS:

MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement takes another step forward

On August 23rd, another significant step toward achieving the overall objectives of the 2008 MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement was realized by the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) with the signing of a "Memorandum of Understanding" (MOU) between the MNO and the Ministry of Education. The signing was one of several highlights of the first day of the MNO's Annual General Assembly which took place in Sudbury.

"The Memorandum with the Ministry of Education (MEDU) strengthens further the existing bilateral processes between the MNO and the province," said MNO President Gary Lipinski. "It will help enhance the capacity of the MNO and all Métis in the province because it recognizes the distinct identity and culture of the Métis people. The relationship between the MNO and the province will be strengthened by this commitment as gaps in student achievement across the province are reduced."

The Ministry of Education promotes a strong, vibrant, publicly funded education system by focusing on three core priorities: improving student achievement; reducing gaps in student achieve-



▲ Gary Lipinski, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario (foreground), Rick Bartolucci, MPP for the riding of Sudbury and Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services (middle) and MNO Chair France Picotte sign an historic Memorandum of Understanding on August 23, 2009.

ment; and increasing public confidence in our publicly funded schools.

Over the last few years, the Ministry of Education and the MNO have worked together to find ways of improving Métis educational outcomes consistent

with the Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework. The work by the MNO in this area has been done in consultation with students, parents and community groups across the province.

"We are strengthening our

relationship with the Métis Nation of Ontario through this historic agreement, and look forward to working with them to improve outcomes for Métis students in Ontario," said Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Education.

"This signing enhances the

Ontario Government's collaborative relationship with the Métis Nation of Ontario by further promoting the distinct identity and culture of Métis citizens and the importance of these for education, learning and success," said Brad Duguid, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

The implementation of the MOU will be guided by a mutually agreeable work plan which identifies opportunities and partnerships to address the unique educational needs of Métis people in Ontario, reduces the gaps in Métis student achievement and student success, and, increases the confidence of Métis parents in the education system. That work plan will include regular meetings between the Minister of Education and MNO President, Gary Lipinski.

"The signing of this MOU is the latest in a series of longstanding partnerships in education that have been formalized by the MNO in recent months. It is also further evidence of the commitment by the Government of Ontario to live up to the promise it made with the signing of the MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement in November, 2008," added President Lipinski.

Many thanks to all the sponsors of the Métis Nation of Ontario's 16th ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY



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that optimism by directing it toward the key priorities and initiatives presented here. The plan has come to fruition through extensive engagement at all levels of the MNO: with the Executive and Provisional Council of the MNO, including Regional Councillors; with the Presidents of the Community Councils, Captains of the Hunt, Senators, veterans, women and youth representatives; and with MNO branch directors and staff.

The plan sets out the vision, mission, and key priorities of the MNO for the next five years as well as the initiatives the MNO will pursue to realize them. It is a rolling plan to be reviewed and updated regularly. Building on its past accomplishments, the anticipated potential of the Framework Agreement, as well as the new federal bilateral sup-

port and tripartite initiatives, the MNO will strengthen its role in improving the lives of Métis people in Ontario. It will more actively promote Métis culture and traditions, advance the economic self-reliance and sustainability of its operations and promote economic development for its citizens. Finally, the MNO will use both newly developed regional consultation protocols and its existing governance structures (PCMNO, Regional Councillors, and Community Councils) to ensure that it speaks with a unified, inclusive voice to governments, industry and other stakeholders.

Following the COO's presentation on the Strategic Plan, the remainder of the business day was devoted to resolutions. (The Resolutions that were passed will be published in their entirety in the next edition of the *Voyager*.) Fol-

lowing the discussion on the Resolutions, many delegates made their way to Richard Lake for an afternoon and evening of traditional Métis games and culture.

BUILDING BRIDGES

On Tuesday morning, Chair Picotte reconvened the 16th AGA for the final day. Angus Toulouse, from the Sagamok Anishinabek First Nation and Regional Chief of Ontario, was invited to the podium and he welcomed delegates in Ojibway.

Regional Chief Toulouse told delegates that his home was about an hour west of Sudbury and that he was glad to be home. He said he had visited President Lipinski's home territory the previous weekend while attending a powwow in a small *Treaty Three* community which was hosting the opening of its traditional grounds and gathering site. He

enjoyed seeing people celebrating their culture and heritage. Chief Toulouse said the struggles of Métis and First Nations have many similarities. One of the challenges is getting governments to recognize that Métis and First Nations are distinct peoples and have much to offer the country and the Province of Ontario. Chief Toulouse said he had an opportunity to speak to President Lipinski about a common agenda and that he feels the discussion about where the Métis and the Chiefs of Ontario could work together needs to continue. He said there was a time when it was necessary to get the government to recognize that the Métis and First Nations are distinct from each other and have separate agendas. Now that the recognition is there it is time once again to work together on common issues like the environment,

resource revenue sharing, mines and resources and other priority areas. He suggested that it may be time for a formal MOU between the Chiefs of Ontario and the MNO to formalize the relationship. He concluded by thanking the MNO for inviting him to the AGA.

COO Wilson then introduced Clint Davis, President and Chief Operating Officer (CEO) of the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB). Mr. Davis began his remarks by saying that this is a good time for Aboriginal business in Canada. Companies are looking to the growing Aboriginal population for employees. He said it is exciting to see Aboriginal people starting to exercise economic influence in the country. Mr. Davis went on to talk to the delegates about the work of the CCAB and "Progressive Aboriginal Relations".

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Fiddler Sierra Noble performs with Wendell Ferguson and Andre Giroux under the big tent.



Métis gather in Sudbury for Assembly

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acknowledged the representatives of the Office of the Federal Interlocutor (OFI) who were present at the AGA. He added that without the help of OFI, who worked with the MNO on the Powley funding, the necessary work would not have been done. He also thanked them for the contribution that helped the MNO hold the AGA.

COO Wilson then introduced the directors and their reports with a *PowerPoint* presentation titled, “Métis Nation of Ontario – Organization Chart.” It provided an overview of the organizational structure within the MNO Secretariat.

The directors’ reports included presentations by Jean McIsaac, Director of Housing; Jennifer St. Germain, Director of Education and Training; Melanie Paradis, Director of Lands, Resources and Consultation; Janet Leader, Director of Registry; Joanne Meyer, Director of Intergovernmental Relations and Donna Lyons, Director of Health Services. The session ended with Hillary Thatcher of the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, being called to the podium for a *PowerPoint* presentation titled, “Building a Green Economy for Ontario: The Green Energy Act”.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

The assembly then adjourned for the day. However, there was barely time for delegates to catch their breath before dinner and the *Gala Evening* that followed. Loma Rowlinson, Master of Ceremonies, called guitarist, André Geroux and noted musician and fiddler, Senator Ruth to the stage. In seconds, toes were tapping and hands were clapping. What was perhaps the highlight of the set was a sweet tune composed for Honourary Senator Olivine Bousquet Tiedema on the occasion of her 80th birthday, titled “Olivine’s Waltz”.

The crowd was humming with anticipation prior to the announcement of the winner of this year’s Suzanne Rochon Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award. Every year since 2006, the MNO has chosen a special person to receive this award which, while honouring the recipient, also honours a great Métis woman who died in 2006, Suzanne Rochon Burnett. MNO Chair, France Picotte and President, Gary Lipinski came forward to make the presentation, and as Gary said: “It was a heck of a choice.” People outside of the MNO may not realize just how

many people volunteer to ensure MNO remains a vital organization, nor can they conceive of the number of hours given freely to and by the Métis community. Finally, the much anticipated announcement: Louise Goulding of the Moon River Métis Council was named this year’s recipient. Louise, however, was not in attendance as she was volunteering her moral support to Senator Verna Porter and her family who were coping with the final illness of Senator Porter’s husband Doug, who passed away on September 16th. When contacted by phone, Louise expressed her surprise, her appreciation and her thanks for having been chosen the recipient of this year’s award. (Watch for a profile on Louise in the next edition of the *Voyageur*.)

Next on the stage were the ever popular Geroux Family—Roger, Aline, and son André—who brought out the jiggers in the crowd with tunes like Bonaparte Crossing the Rhine, and the Old Rose Waltz.

Executive Senator, Reta Gordon, is an active and passionate supporter of Métis veterans. (See Senators’ Report page 18) It was only appropriate that she make a presentation to Senator Earl

Scofield, “the patriarch of the Métis Nation”, in honour of his service during World War Two. As Senator Scofield came forward, special guest, Sierra Noble, played a tune she had composed called, “Warrior’s Lament.” In her skilled hands the lone fiddle filled the room with a bagpipe like keening. There was not a dry eye in the house.

Sierra was joined by André Geroux for a set that included tunes from Sierra’s new CD, “Possibility” as well as traditional jigs. A surprise, and much appreciated guest was Jamie Koebel of Jig on the Fly, whose fancy foot work set the standard for jiggers. The set closed with everyone’s favourite, the Red River Jig. The evening concluded with more dancing and comedy.

DAY TWO DAWNS

On a foggy Monday morning, Chair, France Picotte, reconvened the assembly. First to take the floor was Secretary/Treasurer, Tim Pile, who reported to the delegates that the MNO had had a fairly good year but was still dealing with an old debt load. He talked about the new accounting guidelines and said that while many organizations will to change their financial reporting

processes, the MNO is already meeting or surpassing these guidelines. He said that efforts to ensure financial guidelines are met will include a commitment by the Executive to provide Council Presidents with financial training and this is possible because of funding received through the New Relationship Fund.

COO Doug Wilson, then presented a *PowerPoint* presentation on the MNO’s recent financial activities. The 2008/2009 audited financial statements were presented by Randy Tivy of Collins Barrow Chartered Accountants. Stephen Berry, Director of Finance, followed with the MNO Financial Report for the Fiscal Year ended March 31, 2009.

Doug Wilson then provided an overview of the new Strategic Plan to the delegates. (The document is 36 pages long and cannot be reproduced here. However, the following introductory excerpt will give the reader an idea of its content. ed)

THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Looking toward the future, the MNO is marked by a widespread feeling of optimism.

This strategic plan channels

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Annual General Assembly • August 22-25, 2009 • Sudbury, Ont.



▲ MNO Chief Operating Officer Doug Wilson addresses the 16th Annual General Assembly in Sudbury, Ontario, on August 24th, 2009.

from page 16

Next on the agenda was an update from President Lipinski on Métis rights litigation and issues from across the Homeland; the Captain of the Hunt Report; results of the MNO Harvesters Survey; and an update on the *MNO/MNR Harvesting Agreement*.

President Lipinski pointed out that right now the MNO is in a better position with the province than any of the other MNC voting members. He reviewed the harvesting negotiations that began with the MNR in 2004. In the last year or two the MNO has re-established discussions with MNR and for the first time last year the MNO received funding to deal with the important issues relating to the traditional harvest.

A key element of those negotiations is the annual Harvester's Survey. President Lipinski said that the 2008 survey had been completed by an independent contractor and the data revealed that 184 moose were harvested. He suggested the notion that Métis harvesting was a threat to conservation was unfounded.

Following President Lipinski's presentation and the discussion that followed, delegates heard meeting reports from the Women's Secretariat of the Métis Nation in Ontario (WSMNO); Métis Nation of Ontario Veterans' Council (MNOVC); Métis Nation of Ontario Youth Council (MNOYC); and the Senators.

MNO Co-Chair, Sharon McBride, spoke for the WSMNO. She reported that the 2009 AGA provided the first opportunity for the elected regional representatives to meet. They used the opportunity to hold a planning session that included key staff from Health Services.

Newly elected Veteran's president, Maurice Sarrazin, informed the delegates that the 17 veterans who attended the meeting held Saturday decided to change their election format and had elected a new council. (See page 14) He informed the AGA that through fund-raising the veterans had \$1,600 and that three councils had donated an additional \$750.

Nick Callaghan, the new Youth Representative, thanked the Ontario Power Authority (OPA) for giving the youth an opportunity to come together to discuss energy issues. He read a note prepared by the youth to the AGA



Angus Toulouse, from Sagamok Anishinabek First Nation and Regional Chief of Ontario.

delegates. The note focused on the importance of youth participation in the MNO. (See page 16)

Executive Senator, Reta Gordon, informed the delegates that there were 26 Council Senators, 5 PCMNO Senators and 6 Honourary Senators in attendance at the Senators' meeting. She thanked the Senators for the work they do to get councils running in many areas, and pointed out that they represent the MNO on approximately 50 boards within the province. Reta thanked and blessed everyone and wished them a safe journey.

President Lipinski then added a new element to the traditional Closing Ceremony. He informed delegates that the MNO was introducing the tradition of passing the Métis Nation flag from the current AGA host committee to the next MNO AGA host. Sudbury Council President, Richard Sarrazin, then passed the Métis Nation flag to Senator Bob McKay of the Thunder Bay Métis Council. The 17th MNO AGA will be held in Thunder Bay.

President Lipinski congratulated the Sudbury Métis Council for hosting the AGA and putting on such a great event. He reminded delegates to mark their calendars for the 17th AGA that will take place in Thunder Bay from August 22-24, 2010, at Old Fort William. President Lipinski also thanked the MNO staff for their work and the many hours that they put into the preparation and execution of the AGA. Following lunch, delegates headed home.

MÉTIS YOUTH:

YOUTH APPRECIATE INCLUSION IN AGA

By **JAMES CALLAGHAN**,
Region 5 Youth Council Rep.
& **NICK CALLAGHAN**,
PCMNO Youth Rep

If you are still in school or have just graduated you repeatedly heard about the need to conserve energy, carbon footprints and greenhouse gases. Sometimes the way this was presented in school was a little dry and maybe you thought at the time that this didn't really apply to you.

Recently, Métis youth were called to participate in a consultation session with the Ontario Power Authority (OPA). This consultation was held in conjunction with the MNO's 16th Annual General Assembly in Sudbury. The OPA is a government sponsored organization that aims to ensure that electricity needs are met for the benefit of Ontario both now and in the future. The youth heard in this consultation that the OPA is approaching the problem on two fronts: by ensuring investment in needed electricity supply, and by leading and coordinating conservation initiatives.

Many changes are coming to the energy sector in Ontario. Coal generating plants are set to close by 2014 and many nuclear plants in Ontario will soon need to be replaced or refurbished. Wind, solar, water, and bio-energy will increasingly be looked at to make up the deficit.

Conservation is another way to curb the energy deficit, not only in the future but in the present as well. Conservation doesn't mean doing without; conservation means being smarter about how we use our electricity. Simple things--like turning off lights and computers when they are not in use, unplugging cell phone chargers, and being aware of "phantom power" appliances that have a stand-by mode--are things we can all do to make changes to our energy usage right now.



▲ Nick Callaghan elected to the PCMNO as Youth Rep.

Métis youth are encouraged to be active in energy conservation and become leaders in the future. Many opportunities await us in conservation services and in renewable energy projects. The *Green Energy Act* (see page 5) will mean opportunities for Métis communities to develop their own renewable energy projects. With these projects come many opportunities for jobs, such as conservation industry specialists and program administrators.

The AGA was an opportunity for Métis youth from across Ontario to meet each other and to discuss matters that are of some importance to them. Energy usage is a matter that will remain important in the future, but we should also not lose sight of the present, nor forget our history.

One of the most memorable and appreciated events of the AGA was the opportunity the youth had to share a lunch and conversation with Métis veterans. Stories are woven through the fabric of our Métis history, and certainly the stories told by the veterans are some of the most colourful.

The youth would like to thank the organizers of the AGA for the inclusion of a youth agenda and for cultural learning opportunities. We look forward to other occasions to meet each

other and to learn about our culture. It is our hope that even more youth will participate in future AGAs and that even more sharing, socializing, learning, and bonding will occur.

A big thank you goes out to all the youth that did attend this year's AGA and a special thank you to the youth who let their names stand for Youth Council Regional Representative and for PCMNO Youth Representative. Newly acclaimed to the Youth Council are: Janine Landry, *Region 2*; James Callaghan, *Region 5* and Ryan McBride, *Region 8*. Newly elected as PCMNO Youth Representative is Nicholas Callaghan.

It is often said that youth are our future, but it can also be said that they are our present and therefore must be present. For a shining example of the influence and importance of Métis youth, one needs to look no further than Chelsey Quirk. (For more on Chelsey, see page 4.) Not only did she let her name stand for election, but a quick scan through the pages of the MNO web site will show some of Chelsey's other involvements. It is hoped that all Métis youth will continue to speak out, will continue to run for office, will continue to be present, will continue to stand up and proudly proclaim their Métis heritage.

Annual General Assembly

MNO SENATORS:



▲ **SENATORS:** Alis Kennedy; Earl Scofield; Lois McCallum; Helen Bradley; Gerry Bedford; Rene Gravelle; Jacques Leroux and Reta Gordon.

“Like a family reunion...”

On Friday evening, August 21st the Senators of the Métis Nation of Ontario came together for their annual “meet ‘n greet”. According to Executive Senator, Reta Gordon, “it’s like a family reunion”. This year, the Senators added three new smiling faces to their number: Eugene Contant of the Northern Lights Métis Council; Micheline Boisvert of the Chapleau Métis Council, and Janette Levis of the Grand River Community Métis Council.

In attendance were four PCMNO Senators: Gerry Bedford, Joseph Poitras, Reta Gordon, and Ruth Wagner-Millington. They were joined by four Honourary Senators: Audrey Vallee, Gilbert Gervais, Olivine Tiedema, and Roland St. Germain. The Community Council Senators completed the delegation. In attendance were: Alis Kennedy, of the Credit River Métis Council; Andre Bosse, of the Northumberland Métis Council; Bob McKay, of the Thunder Bay Métis Council; Brenda Powley, of the Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council; Cecile Wagar, of the Oshawa Métis Council; Doris Lanigan, of the Hamilton-Wentworth Métis Council; Earl Scofield, of the Windsor-Essex Métis Council; Earnie Lavallee, of the Temiskaming Métis Council; Gordon Calder, of the Sunset Country Métis Council; Helen Bradley, of the Georgian Bay Métis Council; Jacques Leroux, of the North Channel Métis Council; Leonard Rondeau, of the Métis Nation of Ontario—Timmins; Leora Wilson, of the Owen Sound Métis Council; Lois McCallum, of the Ottawa Métis Council; Marlene Greenwood, of the North Bay Métis Council; Patricia Dryden, of the Geraldton and Area Métis Council; Rene Gravelle, of the Sudbury Métis Council; Al Roussin, Northwest Métis Council; and, Stephen Quesnelle of the Niagara Region Métis Council.

Among the Senators are sev-

eral veterans, five of whom were honoured with eagle feathers and sashes in recognition of their military service. They are: Gerry Bedford; Alis Kennedy; Earl Scofield; Rene Gravelle; Jack Leroux and Veterans’ Senator, Elmer Ross.

Senator Reta Gordon has been busy trying to raise sufficient funds to send two Métis veterans to the Juno Beach memorial in November. There was a raffle; Sierra Noble donated a portion of CD sales; a BINGO was held; and, a hat was passed. Reta says that people were handing her money right up to the last minutes of the AGA. “One woman even gave me her expense cheque, and another gave me a hundred dollar bill. I was so touched by their generosity, but I should have known our citizens would dig deep in their pockets to help our revered veterans.” To date, Reta has received about \$5,000. If you would like to do your part to help send a Métis vet back to Juno Beach, call head office at 1-800-263-4889 or email Reta at retag@metisnation.org

Reta also wants to thank the citizens and staff for their kindness to the senators. She singled out the Youth Council Representative from Sault Sainte Marie, Mitch Case, for an extra special “thank-you”. Reta says Mitch devoted all of his time to looking after the Elders. “Young men like him are such an asset to the MNO. In the future I am sure you will be voting for Mitch to sit on the PCMNO or even the Executive.”

Finally, Reta said: “I would be remiss if I did not include the Head Office Staff in our thank you. Unless the citizens of the MNO were in the office they cannot imagine the dedication and all the work the staff go to, to put together a gathering of this magnitude. As well, we give them thanks for their daily input and work for having brought the MNO these many miles. Thank you one and all.”



▲ Gary Lipinski, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario (foreground) and Collège Boréal President, Denis Hubert sign an historic Memorandum of Understanding on August 23, 2009.

Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Métis Nation of Ontario and Collège Boréal

At Sudbury, on August 23rd, the Métis Nation of Ontario and Collège Boréal signed a “memorandum of understanding” (MOU) aimed at responding more effectively to the specific needs of the Métis people in the province. This agreement’s main objective is to enhance the professional integration of the Métis, respecting their cultural specificity and improving their access to services, programs and employment services offered by Collège Boréal.

The strategies implemented within the framework of this memorandum included an evaluation and augmentation of the opportunities available to the Métis in an effort to increase their participation in postsecondary education initiatives. An equally important priority has representatives from the Métis Nation participate actively in all phases of consultation and the development of Collège Boréal’s practices and policies with regard to Aboriginal teaching.

Collège Boréal President, Denis Hubert, notes the importance of such a memorandum of understanding: “It is essential to improve conditions for the Métis people in order to improve the quality of life for all Ontarians. By enhancing the exposure of the Métis Nation to the various training opportunities available throughout the province, Collège

Boréal hopes to include this important component of the cultural landscape and Ontario heritage on the threshold of the forecasted economic rebound.”

Gary Lipinski, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario, anticipates positive results from this memorandum in the near future: “Partnerships like this one with Collège Boréal hold promise on many levels. MNO is pleased to work in partnership with Collège

“Partnerships like this one with Collège Boréal hold promise on many levels.”

Boréal whose reputation and proven track record on student success and graduate employability is well established. Working together to build capacity within the Métis community will benefit the MNO, and bring our people and members of the Franco-Ontarian community closer together.”

It is worth noting that part of the agreement includes an important component geared to exposing Collège Boréal’s staff and students to the history, the culture, the language as well as the contributions and contemporary issues of the Métis people of Ontario.

ABOUT COLLÈGE BORÉAL:

Collège Boréal is a francophone college of applied arts and technology with its principal campus in Sudbury. The college has satellite campuses in Hearst, Kapuskasing, Timmins, Temiskaming Shores, Toronto and West Nipissing, as well as a network of access centres throughout the province to promote the college and its programs.

The institution began operations in 1995, taking over the francophone programs of Sudbury’s Cambrian College. It is a French-language college where students receive hands-on training, tailored to the job market.

In 2002, Collège Boréal added a campus in Toronto, taking over the programs and services of the defunct Collège des Grands-Lacs. The Toronto facility is located at the Carlaw Avenue campus of Centennial College.

For seven consecutive years, Collège Boréal has had the highest graduation rate among the 24 colleges of applied arts and technology in the province. Its graduate satisfaction rate has also been the highest in the province for six of the last ten years according to the “Key Performance Indicators” published each year by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Collège Boréal is the first education sector representative officially designated by the Ontario Government under the French Language Services Act.

Working together to build a powerful future

Hydro One is proud to serve Métis citizens through both Hydro One Networks and Hydro One Remote Communities.



Partners in Powerful Communities

Annual General Assembly

MNO Re-news Agreement on Mental Health Care

Métis health care providers to benefit from mental health care expertise of Providence Care and Queen's University

On August 24th, 2009, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) renewed its landmark agreement with Queen's University and leading health care provider Providence Care, which specializes in mental health. The agreement expands the MNO's mental health resources, training and resource capacity across the province through a partnership with Kingston-based Providence Care and the Centre for Health Services and Research Policy at Queen's.

"The health and well-being of our citizens is a priority," said MNO President Gary Lipinski. "By working with Providence Care and Queen's we are able to bring valuable and much-needed resources into our communities. As well, we are able to build capacity at the community level by training our own health care providers according to the most current standards."

Under the agreement, Providence Care will provide training and certification for all MNO health care workers, including annual certification in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills and Non-Violent Crisis Intervention training. The MNO will also receive additional access to clinical training and mental health expertise via video-conferencing.



▲ Gary Lipinski, MNO President (foreground) and Allen Prowse, Vice President of Mental Health Services at Providence Care, sign a landmark agreement on August 23, 2009.

This agreement builds on the initial two-year agreement between the MNO, Queen's and Providence Care which was signed in 2007.

Under this agreement, MNO clients are also able to access telepsychiatry services from Providence Care via video-conferencing. President Lipinski says this has been a great resource for the MNO, because access to specialists in mental health can be hard to find, especially in rural and northern communities.

"Providence Care is committed to leading the way in compassion and discovery," said Allen Prowse, Providence Care Vice-President, Mental Health. "Our relationship with the Métis, which began over three years ago, allows us to share our resources with the MNO and at the same time discover new ways

of delivering care. We look forward to opportunities to expand our agreement as demand increases."

Researchers at the Centre for Health Services and Policy Research at Queen's University in Kingston will work with Providence Care and the MNO to conduct a survey of mental health conditions among the Métis people.

"We are looking forward to finalizing the study plan for the mental health survey and are grateful to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care for providing seed funding to assist us," said Dr. Heather Stuart, a professor in the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology at Queen's. The collection and analysis of the data will provide the information necessary to help plan, access and provide appro-

priate services to meet the needs identified by the Métis.

Providence Care is south eastern Ontario's leading provider of specialized mental health care. Mental health services span the full continuum of care-inpatient, outpatient, and community. Providence Care is also a leading provider of specialized geriatric services, complex continuing care, physical medicine and rehabilitation, palliative and long-term care.

One of Canada's leading universities, Queen's is renowned for scholarship, research and a vibrant learning environment. With its strong tradition of public service, the university has been helping shape Canadian values and policies, educating many of the country's most notable political and cultural figures for over 165 years.

MÉTIS YOUTH:

Power discussions at AGA

Métis in Ontario will play an important role in the production and delivery of electricity as the province moves to a cleaner, greener system. As this transformative process unfolds, there will be increased opportunity for Aboriginal partnerships in both power transmission and generation.

The Ontario Power Authority (OPA) is the government entity that makes recommendations about the generation and transmission of electricity in the province. Prior to the AGA, OPA had hosted four consultation sessions to engage Métis citizens on the Integrated Power System Plan (IPSP) and procurement processes, Bill 150—the *Green Energy and Green Economy Act* and the proposed Feed-in Tariff Program.

A fifth session, aimed at getting input from Métis youth, was held in Sudbury on Friday, August 21, 2009, in conjunction with the MNO's 16th Annual General Assembly. The session was arranged to solicit feedback from young people on Ontario's push towards a "green energy economy." The decisions made today will be the reality for youth tomorrow.

More than 40 Métis Youth from across Ontario attended this important and informative session as the guests of OPA. In addition to travel expenses and accommodation for up to two Métis youth per community council, the OPA provided a \$100 stipend for each participant.



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.

Additional information about the OPA is available at www.powerauthority.on.ca

OPA
Ontario Power Authority_{OM}

Our Stories

Finding My Spirit

By LISA McCRON

I sit at the computer at 1:00 A.M. awakened by songs from the weekend still drumming and singing in my head. It is as though my spirit does not want to sleep and wants my body to listen and know that it is here.

Where do I begin? I am a proud Métis woman with a wonderful supportive husband and two beautiful energetic boys. I am the daughter of a fisherman and the youngest of 10 children. I was brought up being proud of my origins. My father was a very proud “part Indian” man. I use that phrasing, “part Indian”, because that is what I remember him saying when I was a child. As a young girl and into my teenage years I knew that I was “part Indian” because of my father and his pride in his heritage. I was in my teens when he and one of my older sisters found another family and shared with us this new identity; there was a name for this proud feeling of being “part Indian”: Métis!

Over the past several years I have become involved with the Métis family, learning who I am and helping others to learn who they are. Unlike myself, my boys

Ottawa. A week or two passed and I went looking for this email; for some reason it was calling. And again, after reading it I put it in the deleted box. It was not until it called me the third time that I knew it was meant to be and I needed to attend this event. I put the plan in motion and by the end of the day, it was done; I was going, and within a few days my dearest friend was going with me.

When we arrived at the event on Friday evening I could feel the ‘electricity’ in the air during the opening ceremonies. The words the Grandmothers were sharing with us were quite powerful and moving. I was excited to be there and anxious to find out what had called me here. The event started that night right after the ceremonies and before I knew it we were in our first of several workshops for the weekend: Tobacco Protocol and how to make a tobacco tie. In no time at all, the hour-and-a-half was up. I took so much away just from that first session of the weekend that I was eager to get to sleep so we could begin the schedule for the following day.

fire with a group of other early risers. The morning was greeted with tobacco offerings to the Creator and more drumming and singing. I knew from other events like the Canadian Aboriginal Festival that I was attracted to the drums and singing, but this weekend was my first experience hearing the drumming and singing being done by women. I recognized this as more than an attraction. There was something inside me calling me to the drum. It was a lovely morning and I could not have asked for a better way to start our day.

After breakfast we signed up for a sweat lodge with one of the Grandmothers. I had heard other women talk about the sweat lodge but I had never experienced one before as it is not known to me as being a Métis tradition or teaching. Still, I knew I wanted, or should I say, needed to take advantage of this opportunity. There are few words that can help me share with you this profound experience. I left the sweat lodge feeling light headed. I found myself the rest of the day reflecting several times on what happened to me during my experience. I knew that this was something that would become a part of me from that day forward.

I need to share with you something that happened to me during this profound experience. At one point I was starting to become overwhelmed by a headache. I was beginning to disconnect with the sweat lodge experience and think about my headache and how I needed to get out to deal with it. I went into my own little world inside the world in the sweat lodge. Off in the distance I could hear a group of women drumming and singing. As I listened to this it became louder and louder, almost as if I were sitting right beside them. I could feel my body starting to relax from this headache that was trying to over take me. I felt my heartbeat start to calm as I let myself fall into this place the drumming was taking me. I real-

It was dark as we walked to our tent. As we crossed the grounds we could hear a group of women drumming and singing, their voices carrying across to us—enchanted almost. It sounded like they were singing my name over and over again as they were drumming. We needed to stop and listen. It was a beautiful little song called “Nessa”. We were invited into the circle and participated in a couple of rounds of singing this song, an honour song to Grandmother Moon. It was absolutely beautiful and I could not have asked for a better way to end our first night.

The next morning I was up with the dawn. Before long, we were sitting around the sacred



ARTS:

Winners of Aboriginal Writing Challenge announced

On June 17th, the Dominion Institute announced the winners of the 2009 Canadian Aboriginal Writing Challenge – Our Story. This year, the winner of the 14-18 age category was Trevor Jang, of Telkwa, BC. Howard Adler, of Ottawa, ON, took first place in the 19-29 age group.

Jang’s story, *The Hiatsk*, tells of a troubled teenager, struggling with his self-worth. Through the guidance of his Chief and the chance to represent his community at the First Nations Basketball Tournament, the young boy comes to take responsibility for himself and see himself as independent from problems his family faces at home.

Adler wrote a video-script, *Johnny Seven Fires*, in Ojibwa with English translations which touched on Aboriginal legends and historical places. His main character, Johnny, is a young man who, through a series of strange experiences, realizes his strong connection to his history and the value it can bring to his life.

The Canadian Aboriginal Writing Challenge is a national initiative for Aboriginal youth, organized by the Dominion Institute. Participants between the ages the ages of 14 and 18, and 19 to 29 are invited to pen a piece of creative writing about a defining moment in Aboriginal history. The winning entries are selected by a jury of esteemed Aboriginal authors and leaders.

The first place winners in each category receive a \$2000 prize and a trip to Calgary for the Awards Ceremony. The two first place entries are published in *The Beaver: Canada’s History Magazine* and the top ten entries posted on the website:

www.our-story.ca.

“**WHEN I LAY AWAKE THIS MORNING LISTENING TO THE DRUMMING AND SONGS IN MY HEAD IT ALL CAME TO ME: THIS CALLING I HAVE BEEN FEELING FROM MANY ASPECTS OF MY LIFE IS MY SPIRIT TRYING TO GET ME TO LISTEN.**”

at their young age can share with their classmates and teachers and extended family who they are. They are proud Métis children and they have a lifetime ahead of them to embrace and learn about their people and their history.

Through this time of learning I had felt something calling to me or within me, but had not figured out just what it was. This past weekend I found this “something” and need to share it with you.

Several weeks ago I received an email that contained an invitation to a “Women’s Gathering 2009”. I was quite interested in the event but sent it to the “deleted” box once I saw that it would be held six hours away in

ized my heart had actually started to beat to the beat of their drums. I am not sure how long I was in this other place, but when I came out and back to the present within the sweat lodge, the headache had subsided and the urgency to get out was gone, but the drum beat, even though the women had finished, was still with me.

I enjoyed the afternoon sun on a medicine walk, learning about the plants and medicines that Mother Earth offers us at different times of the year. This touched very close to home for me because our youngest son is being helped by a naturopathic doctor after general medicine said there was nothing physically wrong with him. (I will leave it at that because his story will take us down a different path.) However, over the past two years, while we have been healing our son, I have felt that this natural medicine was calling to me. It was not until this walk that I realized I had such a deep passion and need to learn about these medicines that Mother Earth has for us. I left this workshop with another part of me feeling fulfilled or on the path to being fulfilled.

During all the meals we met and talked with so many interesting women. After each conversation of sharing and listening, I knew I would take something from that time home with me. It was no different at supper; as we sat outside in different groups enjoying yet another fine meal that was provided; I was overcome by the feeling that I did not want this weekend to end.

As the supper turned into evening we took part in our last workshop: making a medicine bag. After the events of the day it was a relaxing way to end the evening. The group of women worked together while sharing little stories and comments as each one of us created our own piece to take home with us.

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Victory at Last

By DENIS TREMBLAY

With eager hearts and will on fire
We fought to win our great desire.
“Peace shall be ours,” we cried,
But life grew bitter with endless sorrow.
Our bodies and souls were weary
and wounded.
We prayed, “Lord grant us peace or we die,”
But the stars glittered with no reply.
Broken we lowered our heads and cried
Forgetting who we are and silently fled
Until a hundred years passed by.
Then an adjustment to the law was fired.
We rose again to be remembered.
Mended we live and stand with pride
No more pain, no more sorrow.
We felt the touch and all was well,
For victory came at last; victory at Last.

Education & Training


Temiskaming Métis man completes Heavy Equipment training

Congratulations go out to Joey Ethier of Temiskaming, who graduated on June 29, 2009, from the Heavy Equipment Operator course offered by 5th Wheel Training.

Without the help of the Métis Nation of Ontario Education and Training branch Joey would not have been able to take the course.

WAY TO GO JOEY!

Joey Ethier on the grader



SUCCESS STORIES:



▲ From left to right: James Logue Ramsay, Louise Logue, John Logue Ramsay, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada, Helene Logue (Louise's mother).

Métis lawyer joins Ottawa Crown Attorney's office

The MNO can proudly boast yet another major accomplishment in one of our own. Having been supported by the MNO Training Initiatives Fund, throughout his studies in Law, John Charles Logue Ramsay was successfully hired as a full time Crown Attorney with the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General.

In June, 2009, John Ramsay was named the successful candidate for a full-time Crown Attorney position after a stiff competition was held in the Ottawa Crown Attorney's Office.

John's story is a unique one. Along with his younger brother James, John was raised by his single mother, Louise. Being a one-income family meant both great times and hardships for this close-knit family. However, throughout all their challenges, this Métis family kept a promise to each other and that was to reach their educational goals in addition to maintaining their family's morals, values and

ethics.

Though times were often difficult, and finances hard to come by, especially for post-secondary schooling, nothing could stop this dynamic family from reaching those goals.

After long days at her regular work as a nurse and youth counsellor, Louise cleaned homes to make extra money, and younger brother James contributed by limiting his requests for material goods enjoyed by his peers--like name brand clothing and sports gear or travel.

Never shying away from any of the challenges related to his university studies, John also worked very hard. He established his reputation as a dedicated and hard working student. With the assistance of the Métis Nation of Ontario, John was able to both attend and complete the University of McGill's Law School. John obtained his Baccalaureates in both Common and Civil Laws in 2007 and has been gainfully employed as a lawyer ever since.

Today, John is a very successful young lawyer, who can proudly say that he earned his full-time position within the Ottawa Crown Attorney's Office.

His brother, James, who was also a recipient of the MNO Training Initiatives Program, joined the ranks of the Ottawa Police Service where he is presently a respected patrol officer.

Having long ago, chosen to lead by example, Louise Logue, the matriarch of this family, a registered nurse was awarded the Governor General of Canada's Award, Member of the Order of Merit. She has been employed with the Ottawa Police Service as Coordinator of Youth Intervention and Diversion. Additionally, this single mother has been awarded the Woman of Distinction Award for Public Service as well as the Ontario Women in Law Enforcement Award for Community Service.

The Métis Nation of Ontario salutes the Logue family for its many accomplishments.

NATURE WARRIOR

Tracy Boese is a young Métis citizen who has completed a two year course at Niagara College with the help of the bursary that she received from the MNO. Tracy is the daughter of one of the Niagara Region Métis Council's councillors, Valerie Boese. We are very proud of Tracy's accomplishments.

It is a privilege for me as Senator of the Niagara Region Métis Council to see Métis youth, like Tracy, getting a chance to achieve their dreams. Our youth are our future and we must do everything that we can to help and encourage them to be all that they can be. I have attached a letter from Tracy, along with her graduation picture.

— Stephen Quesnelle

All I wanted to do was get a higher education. I pondered for years on what my options were and what I actually was interested in. One day I looked at what I enjoyed most, the outdoors, and decided to find a program that would get me closer to nature. I had a knack for science and a connection with the natural world. The Environmental Technician program at Niagara College seemed to be the perfect fit.

I found my program but then realized the cost. It would be impossible for me to afford the cost of school and living on my own and I felt my dream was never to be. I then remembered a booklet given to me at an MNO event and it mentioned funding for Métis students. I dug that book out and contacted my Regional Employment and Training Coordinator, Kathleen Lannigan. She helped me every step of the way to apply for the MNO Bursaries Program. Then, one day I got the phone call I was waiting for. I was accepted in the program and the MNO would help me with the cost of my education. That was the best day of my life!

From that day on I made a commitment to do the best I

could in school to prove that Aboriginal students can make a difference and I tried my hardest to show appreciation for what the MNO did for me. I was proud to tell everyone I met that I was a Métis, and I always said I wouldn't be there if it weren't for the support of the MNO. I am proud to say I graduated in my field and plan to work hard to protect what is important to me and all Aboriginal people; you could almost say I am officially a new warrior for Mother Nature!

I want all Métis, young or old, to consider their options. It is never too late to start on the path of your dreams; there is always something out there that will make sure your path is clear before you start on your new journey. — Tracy Boese



Tracy Boese

MNO helps Métis welder upgrade after auto industry meltdown

By PATRICK LANNIGAN

I recently completed a two week training course sponsored by the Métis Nation of Ontario. I have a nine year old daughter, Ciara, and worked for Euclid Hitachi. I started there in 1994 as a welder and have held several positions with the company. Back in 2000, a position became available for a "supervisor of welds" and I successfully applied to the MNO for \$500 to take a course to increase the skills I would require to compete for the position. At that time, my co-workers told me I would not get the position as the company had never hired from within for supervisor of welds. I passed the course and got the job.

Over the past two and a half years I have been upgrading my skill levels in the field and last year got a promotion to management, responsible for training the supervisors and other staff. My work at that time paid for any training relevant to the field and

I took the opportunity to go to Mohawk College for several training courses from CINDE. These courses are generally filled with students at a higher level of education than I have, (grade 12) but my marks were all in the 90s.

Last year, the bottom fell out of the auto industry in Canada and my bosses informed me that they could no longer cover the cost of my training. At the same time my wife was laid off from her job due to the recession in that industry. She worked for a company that makes brakes. I applied to Elaine Jeffery at the MNO and was able to use my vacation time to do the training. I have completed the training and have been accepted for a job in the Bruce Peninsula region with a very healthy salary.

I want to thank the MNO and Elaine Jeffery for all their support, my wife and daughter who supported me emotionally, and my mother who has always told me I could do anything.

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Métis Education

Seeking a new labour market agreement for Métis

By **CHRIS PACI**

Last year, the Conservative Government of Canada announced an Economic Action Plan aimed at stimulating the Canadian economy. The package promised to put Canadians back to work by investing in infrastructure and jobs. While the new plan is being rolled out, several older successful programs are ramping down. One such program that has proven its value is Human Resources and Skills Development Canada's very successful Aboriginal Human Resource Development Strategy (AHRDS). The MNO, along with the other Métis governments successfully delivered the Métis Human Resource Development Agreements (MHRDA) to create opportunities and good jobs throughout the Homeland.

According to a study by the

independent Ottawa-based Centre for the Study of Living Standards, MHRDAs produced permanently higher incomes for Métis, brought income tax revenue to the provincial and federal governments, and lead to a decline in transfer and health care costs. The MHRDA holders, like MNO, have demonstrated that program devolution to Métis governments bring benefits not only to Aboriginal communities, but to Canada as well.

While the AHRDS is sun setting, interim bridge funding is in place for 2009. In April, the government announced an interim measure, the \$75M, two-year Aboriginal Skills and Training Investment Fund (ASTIF). HRSDC was overwhelmed with project submissions and was reviewing proposals as recently as early September. MNO had four proposals accepted for review. It is being reported that HRSDC's Minister

Diane Finley has Cabinet policy authority to replace the AHRDS with a new five-year Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) commencing April, 2010. The Minister is set to announce a new \$2B program,

tive labour market agreements are in place that will benefit all Métis. Past labour market and training agreements have provided Métis with greater control and therefore enabled the MNO to make the programs more rele-

“Will new business planning with HRSDC, other federal government departments, and the provinces be as collaborative and successful or will we return to fighting for scarce resources that do not serve Métis interests?”

which will include many of the principles and lessons learned from the ASTIF process. The new program will be demand driven with a focus on skills development, training and partnerships. ASETS will focus on enhanced accountability and results.

MNO and the other Métis governments and MHRDS agreement holders will lobby and work with our partners to ensure effec-

tant to Métis in Ontario. Will new business planning with HRSDC, other federal government departments, and the provinces be as collaborative and successful or will we return to fighting for scarce resources that do not serve Métis interests? Barring a fall-winter election, we will have to wait and see if ASETS will improve on the past performance of the MHRDAs.



CIBC renews support of National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation

Funds will provide bursaries & scholarships to build brighter futures for First Nations, Inuit and Métis students

On June 18th, CIBC announced that it is continuing its support of the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation's education program with a donation of \$100,000. The program's annual bursaries and scholarships are provided to more than 600 First Nations, Inuit and Métis students enrolled in full-time post-secondary studies in a broad range of fields. This donation brings CIBC's total support of this program to \$900,000.

Applicants for NAAF bursaries and scholarships are assessed by juries of First Nations, Inuit or Métis professionals using criteria such as financial need, academic performance, connection to the Aboriginal community, and commitment to field of study. NAAF scholarships are allocated to students of health sciences programs, such as medicine, nursing, dentistry, biology, chemistry, physiotherapy, pharmacy, clinical psychology, laboratory research and technology, and any other health field in which a study of the hard sciences is a pre-requisite.

“We are very grateful to CIBC for their continuing support of our education program,” said Roberta Jamieson, NAAF's President and Chief Executive Officer. “Every year the jury selects an extraordinary group of recipients who reveal such outstanding talent and dedicated service. I know that by honouring their achievement we will continue to inspire many others, just waiting to demonstrate their potential - that's why the work of the Foundation in providing bursaries to First Nations, Inuit and Métis students is so essential.”

The NAAF is a non-profit organization dedicated to raising funds to deliver programs that provide the tools necessary for First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, especially youth, to achieve their potential. For more information visit: www.naaf.ca.

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION



Education improvements in Ontario for Métis

While Métis students were completing the remaining days of their summer jobs, soaking up the last home-cooked meals and registering for school in September, the MNO was set to sign an historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Education.

The ground-breaking agreement provides Métis with the basis for greater cooperation with the Government of Ontario on education issues.

It is anticipated that there will be a lot of work ahead, including putting in place a work plan and the resources to implement the agreement.

.....

A Métis Education Framework

In other news, MNO is working with a multi-party group of postsecondary representatives to draft a *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Postsecondary Education Framework*. The framework, once drafted, will be brought by the MNO to the Métis Homeland for input from concerned Métis citizens, students, parents, and educators.

The new framework will compliment the work started in 2005 and lead to the development of the Kindergarten to grade 12 Agreement.

SPECIAL MÉTIS HEALTH CAREERS BURSARY AWARDS

Deadline to apply to the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation is NOVEMBER 2, 2009

- Program eligibility and criteria are available in the application package
- Eligible Métis students in recipient of a NAAF 2009-2010
- Aboriginal Health Careers can apply
- Métis students recognized by the Métis National Council are eligible to apply

If you have questions, please contact the Education Department of NAAF
Telephone at 1.800.329.9780
Email: education@naaf.ca

naaf.ca

Responsible Gambling

Notes from a Gambler

The Dark Side of Gambling..

By **GLENN LIPINSKI**

I am Métis. I used to be uneasy about stating that; now I find strength in it. The following is my story that I wanted to share with other Métis.

I first started gambling when I was in my late 50's, still working, had a wife and three grown children, had a decent income, responsible job, life was rolling along OK.

I had been purchasing lottery tickets religiously for a number of years at a rate of 2 to 4 tickets per week--all in fun, everyone did it. I won several small prizes, but nothing substantial, just enough to keep me buying more tickets.

When the casinos became popular I decided to check them out and immediately was hooked by the dazzle, the glitter and lights, drawn like a moth to the flame.

At first, I used to go with my wife and often another couple to make an evening or an outing of it. After about the first eight months of our "outings" once or twice each month, I began to feel I needed more. I had a bit of an emptiness inside that going to the casino seemed to be able to fill. The casino has its own unique way of making you feel special, as though the glamour, the pomp and pageantry were all just for you.

My first few solo visits to the casino were kept under control. I spent only the money I had brought in with me and left once it was gone. After all, I was an Aboriginal person; I was Métis, strong and determined, (many called me stubborn). I did what I wanted, when I wanted and controlled my own destiny.

On my third solo visit of that first solo month, I hit a nice jackpot on my favourite \$1 slot machine, \$2,500 just like that! It was so easy; I could finally see why so many people kept going back again and again and at the very least I could now play for awhile on the casino's money!

I quickly increased the number of my "outings" per week. I was now at least "stopping by" nearly every day. It was great; staff knew me (almost by name); they knew my favourite drink at the bar, and courteous special treatment surrounded me.

My life was changing, gone were the family outings, the evenings spent around a bon fire, the times we would go out berry picking or sneak off to that great fishing spot. There was not enough time anymore; the casino and my outings were more important.

Almost before I realized it I started doing some silly things, the classic no-no's.

I remember the awful guilt I felt the first time I lied about being in the casino because I had missed going over to friends for dinner. The lying and evasiveness became easier, but the rapid and steady drain of cash was beginning to cause difficulties.

The more I gambled the more tense I began to feel. I was becoming very embarrassed about my actions, fearful someone would find out how much I had been losing. I began using cash advances from one credit card to pay another and managed to advance a "few dollars" to try once again for the "big win".

The pressure of the mounting debt and subsequent interest payments on several maxed-out credit cards was starting to make me feel sick. I was getting increasing numbers of heart palpitations and my blood pressure was steadily going up and up. My health was definitely being affected by my gambling.

I had to start borrowing from my (adult) children just to make the monthly bills (\$100 here or \$100 there). I re-mortgaged the house (carefully saving a little for that big win); paid down some bills and started again.

I was now feeling very trapped, desperate for a way out. At all costs no one could know how I had spent my money so foolishly. To this point I had managed to keep most of my over spending a secret from my wife. My deceit was becoming very difficult to hide. I was convinced that some of the do-gooders might even think I had a gambling problem and would put it out there for the whole world to know--make it public that I might need help.

After many months of juggling and struggling with bills and mortgage payments I began to think of a way out. My solution was to begin selling whatever I could: the boat; the four-wheeler; the riding lawn mower, and then on to the smaller items like the golf clubs, etc. All got sold with the proceeds going to pay charge cards and bills, with of course some going to the casino to pursue that goal of a big win.

By this point my wife and I were living apart. My three adult children and I kept an uneasy distance from each other, almost as if we all knew something was terribly wrong but we still pretended it was just one of life's rough patches.

I BEGAN USING CASH ADVANCES FROM ONE CREDIT CARD TO PAY ANOTHER AND MANAGED TO ADVANCE A 'FEW DOLLARS' TO TRY ONCE AGAIN FOR THE 'BIG WIN'.

Watch for these signs which could indicate potential gambling problems:

- Gambling to support yourself or supplement your income
- Frequent or regular attendance at a casino
- Making excuses about attending gambling outings
- Lying about your gambling practices
- Financial difficulties resulting from overspending on gambling
- Health issues arising from gambling/financial worries
- Embarrassment surrounding gambling practices

I was drinking every night (just a few beers). Occasionally I would get totally drunk on hard stuff, until my stomach began to burn all the time and I was forced to cut back.

Four and a half years after I began going to the casinos (during a particularly challenging day) I finally sat down with a friend, told him everything and a week later spoke with someone (at a problem gambling facility) about gambling issues.

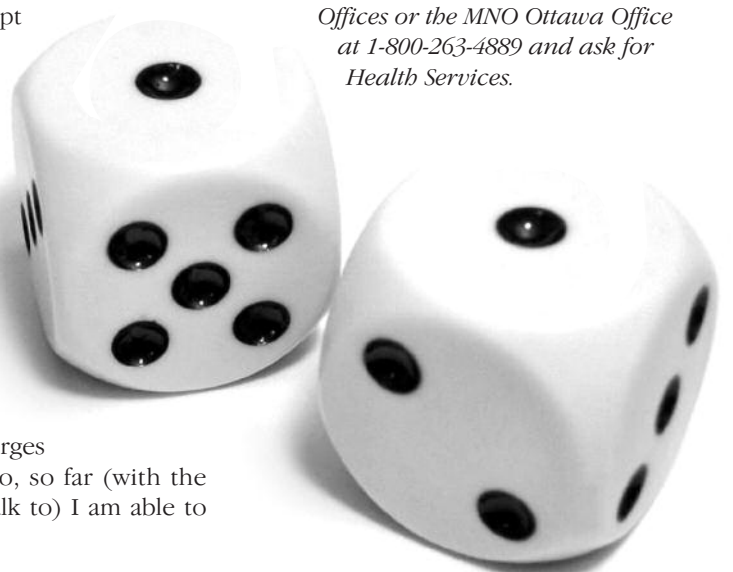
They treated me with dignity and respect, were non judgmental and provided much needed support, alternatives and solutions. It was an easy going relationship, one that I felt I could participate in and it kept me coming back for more support, referrals, and ultimately solutions that assisted me in getting going in the right direction.

That was one year ago. Today I still struggle with my bills but it gets better each passing month. I still occasionally have very strong urges to return to the casino, so far (with the help of someone to talk to) I am able to resist.

My wife and I are working on re-building our relationship and my children and I have resumed more normal interaction. It is still very tough and I continue to have to work at it to keep my "normal" life. I am getting better and growing stronger all the time; after all, I am Métis.

If you can relate to my story or know someone who seems to be following in my footsteps, please read and heed; talk to someone--anyone, and always remember, there are no problems only solutions.

For assistance or information on Responsible Gambling you can contact any one of your local MNO Health Branch Offices or the MNO Ottawa Office at 1-800-263-4889 and ask for Health Services.



Métis Health

NINTENDO WIIS DELIVERED TO THE HEALTH BRANCH

Couch potatoes no more

By **LYNNE SINCLAIR**

Just in time for summer, each Health Branch site was told that we could expect a Nintendo Wii with accessories! We were all very excited as we awaited our new bundles of joy. While we waited, we prepared a space to house our new additions when they came home. Now, our Wiis have arrived!

Like good caretakers, the Health Branch has been researching how to make the most of our Wiis. We knew that the Wiis were significant to us because of the associated health benefits. The Nintendo Wii is a gaming system

“
What makes the Wii so different is its “exergame” quality. You are required to use different kinds of physical gestures to move the on-screen characters.
”

like no other.

What makes the Wii so different is its “exergame” quality. You are required to use different kinds of physical gestures to move the on-screen characters. This is done through a sensor in the controller that the console reads and your movements are then translated to the TV screen. You can even create your character to look very much like yourself, now referred to as a mii.

There are many games and different sports to play. A Wii “Fit” was part of the package. You can learn yoga, aerobics, strength-training and balance games. There is a virtual trainer, who,

very much like the real thing, keeps you on your toes. Your progress is tracked with graphs and charts so you can see if improvements have been made in your fitness routine.

The Nintendo Wii has been the subject of a lot of research. There are many benefits and some of them quite surprising. The makers of the Wii stress that it is not meant to be a complete physical workout but to complement a healthy active lifestyle. Nevertheless, the Wii does offer physical benefits. The activities help to burn calories and subsequently can help you to lose weight. As for the surprising findings, it has

been proven that the Wii can help to relieve stress because it teaches breathing techniques and has been shown to have a positive impact on heart rates. Balance is greatly improved and it helps to tone muscles and build stronger bones. The Wii is even used as a therapeutic tool. It is useful for rehabilitation because of the visual displays about weight and body function. There are many health gains to be had by playing the Wii.

The new additions can be seen at your local office. Watch for upcoming groups and sessions for your opportunity to come and dote on our Wiis.

REFLECTIONS ON COMMUNITY HEALTH

Walking for health

By **DESNEIGE TAYLOR**

AANII. My name is Desneige Taylor and I am introducing myself as the new Community Wellness Coordinator for the Sudbury Métis Council.

I am looking forward to being a new team member in the Sudbury office. Everyone here has given me a very warm welcome.

Your health is important to us at the MNO; physical activity promotes healthy living and decrease stress. Walking is the best known exercise. Here are some pointers from the web site www.fitpunch.com.

1. Walking relieves depression, stress and anxiety because it releases endorphins, (the body’s natural tranquilizers.)
2. A good brisk walk can stimulate your thinking.

3. When people are less stressed and decrease symptoms of depression it can promote healthy choices which can affect the whole family in more positive ways.

Some of the services the MNO Community Wellness worker will be offering this fall are: a Diabetic lunch and learn/ foot care clinic; poverty support/ shelter presentation followed by a pot luck dinner; a language circle and a harvest feast.

I look forward to seeing new faces and meeting new people. Remember, to stay healthy this fall go for a walk, play chair basketball, or do some fishing and have fun.

Desneige Taylor can be reached at the MNO’s Sudbury office 705-671-9855.

MÉTIS CULTURAL OUTREACH:



MÉTIS ROOTS

Hands-on Métis cultural exhibit promotes community

By **JOAN PANIZZA**

The Thunder Bay Métis Council recently had the pleasure of hosting a Métis Roots presentation.

The presenter, Scott Carpenter, of the MNO’s Education and Training office in Midland brought his enthusiasm and wealth of knowledge to a number of groups during this three

day event. School boards, city employees, children, and the Métis community were entertained by his lively presentations.

Anything and everything Métis seemed to be in this hands-on exhibition. Scott, like many Métis citizens discovered his heritage as an adult. His curiosity about his roots has led Scott to become a collector of Métis artefacts, collectables, and history.

The quest to learn about oneself and the road to self-discovery is an important part of wellness. This exhibition helps to bring the community together in a real and meaningful way.

We are lucky to have such a curious and insightful citizen among us.

Joan Panizza is the Community Wellness Coordinator for the Thunder Bay Métis Council.



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Finding My Spirit cont’d

from page 20

It was past dark when it was over and as much as we wanted to sit in on one of the circles that were slowly forming around the sacred fire and at the individual camp sites and continue to share with all of these women, we listened to our bodies and the call of our pillows and headed to our tent.

We woke to a still, misty morn-

ing with the sun just rising. I was eager to get dressed and make my tea. I had signed up for a two hour shift as the sacred fire keeper and it was almost that time. What a way to start my final morning! As I sat watching the fire, feeling the wet of the morning air on my skin being warmed by the rising sun I knew I was where I was supposed to be.

Over the next two hours some of the women and Grandmothers

began to gather around the sacred fire sharing stories, teachings and feelings. It was so powerful. It was around the fire that I shared with some of the women my attraction to the drum before this weekend and how it had changed during the weekend, especially my experience with the drum during the sweat lodge. It was after sharing this that one of the women helped me to understand this calling.

“As my senses started to awaken as a young spirit in my mother’s womb, the drum I heard was a calming presence. It was

there constantly as I developed from a young spirit into a baby that carried this spirit. This drum was comfort, warmth and security for me. This first drum that I heard was my mother’s heartbeat. I need to answer this call from the drum for my spirit.”

I was speechless. The talk around the fire fell silent for a brief time. I thanked her for sharing this with me and helping me to understand this calling that I was feeling from the drum. Within a few minutes the little circle grew into many women carrying their drums and rattles. My time

around the fire was concluded with drums beating and many voices singing to the beating of the drums as the sun made its journey above the trees.

As the closing ceremonies began I realized how “high” I was feeling, high as in “on top of the trees”. Again the Grandmothers shared powerful words with us. Knowing how each one of us was probably feeling, one of the Grandmothers suggested that we put some cedar in our shoes to help keep us grounded as we

continued page 27

OUR MEDICINES:



DRUGS: Mother Nature's gift

Plants supply a good portion of our medicines. Why then do we abuse plant medicines like tobacco? Why don't we do more to preserve our knowledge of special plants?

By **GLENN LIPINSKI**

Aboriginal people have been using drugs for hundreds if not thousands of years—drugs from Mother Nature that is—remedies from nature that help us when we are not feeling well. For instance, aspirin, (acetylsalicylic acid) originally came from the bark of the willow tree. An early, original prescription likely went something like this: “cut one willow twig and chew on it, ‘til headache or pain is gone”.

Times have changed, but more than half of the world's population still relies entirely on plants for medicines, and plants supply the active ingredients of most traditional medical products. Plants have also served as the starting point for countless drugs on the market today. Researchers generally agree that natural products from plants and other organisms have been the most consistently successful source for ideas for new drugs; nature is a master chemist.

Around 70% of all new drugs introduced in the United States in the past 25 years have been derived from natural products, reports a study published in the March 23rd issue of the *Journal of Natural Products*. The findings show that despite increasingly sophisticated techniques to design medications in the lab, Mother Nature is still the best drug designer.

Many of us believe that nature has as much to offer, if not more, as the pharmaceutical companies. Herbal medicine is the basis of most traditional healing systems. The judicious use of plants has eased human ills in the past and continues to do so. Many of our most important medicines have come from plants; yet we don't usually think of trees as important sources of medicinal



An extract of Pau D'Arco bark is used for its antibacterial, antifungal and immuno-stimulant properties.



The best known tree bark medicine is tamoxifen, derived from the Yew tree.



Aspirin, (acetylsalicylic acid) originally came from the bark of the willow tree.



The South American Graviola has shown promise in cancer and arthritis treatment.

products.

Some of our most significant natural drugs come from trees. The development of the anti-malarial drug quinine from the bark of the Cinchona tree—a native of South America, had a profound influence on human development. Today, the best known tree bark medicine is tamoxifen, which comes from the Pacific Yew tree. It was originally used to treat ovarian cancer but now is the main weapon in the prevention of the recurrence of

breast cancer.

There are lesser known medications which derive from tree bark. An extract of Pau D'Arco bark is used for its antibacterial, antifungal and immuno-stimulant properties. The bark of the Neem tree is used in Indian traditional medicine for its curative properties. Pygeum, a substance used primarily to combat prostate problems, comes from the bark of the African tree *Pygeum africanum*. Yohimbe tree bark is believed to have beneficial effects in relieving anxiety disorders.

Other tree bark derivatives are now under scrutiny. One from a Samoan tree, used in their traditional medicine, is under investigation by the US National Cancer Institute. It may prove valuable in combating HIV. The South American Graviola tree is being investigated as its bark contains a group of phytochemicals called *annonaceous acetogenins*. Some of these substances have now been patented, because they are believed to have anti-tumor and pesticidal properties.

Today there are at least 120 distinct chemical substances derived from plants that are considered important drugs currently in use in one or more countries in the world. Several of the drugs sold now are simple synthetic modifications or copies of the naturally obtained substances.

So, with plants supplying a good portion of our natural medicines, two things come to mind:

Why do we abuse some of our natural plants/medicines like tobacco, marijuana, opium, etc?

Why don't we do more to preserve our knowledge of identifying these special plants as they occur in nature?

The special medicinal plants were placed in nature for our use, not abuse. Those of us who abuse nature's gifts need to be reminded of where these special plants and medicines come from and what their original uses were. Knowledge, awareness and support may assist our substance abusers in their quest to reduce or eliminate the cycle of abuse.

A few generations back Aboriginal people routinely entered the forest to gather plants for medicines. We must continue that tradition with more workshops, more field trips and more instruction from our elders to ensure we do not lose this most valuable knowledge. Modern medicine at one point gathered these medicines, but now copies them (chemically) and puts them in a pill bottle. Let's preserve our knowledge and graciously accept these gifts from Mother Nature.

The Métis Nation of Ontario Building Systems Technical Advisor Internship Program (BSTAIP)

Are you interested in working in a job that challenges you—that involves travel and working with people? Our two-year internship pilot project may be for you! The Métis Nation of Ontario's Housing and Education & Training Branches are pleased to announce the launch of the first ever MNO Building Systems Technical Advisor Internship Program (BSTAIP) pilot project, scheduled to begin late fall 2009 in Thunder Bay.

Students enrolled in the state of the art program will learn about:

- construction materials and techniques, energy efficiencies and building system and components related to the retrofit of existing residential buildings
- project and contract management
- invitational and public tender development processes
- client service
- Métis culture
- green technologies
- energy audits

Prigram highlights include:

- advanced learning tools like video streaming, virtual tools and power point
- applied learning in shops, labs and the workplace
- building science and energy conservation retrofit concepts
- supervised inspections and mentoring
- unsupervised inspections with final evaluation by mentor

Minimum requirements for application:

- Post secondary education in related Building Sciences field OR Grade 12 diploma or recognized equivalent PLUS
- Min. 5 years work experience in trades/construction industry
- Verification of Métis ancestry

Financial assistance available to selected participants who qualify.

To apply submit a résumé and cover letter to

Jean Mc Isaac-Wiitala,
Director of Housing, MNO
jeanm@metisnation.org
or aprilh@metisnation.org

April Head, *Admin. Assistant*,
MNO Education & Training
226 South May St.
Thunder Bay, ON P7E 1B4
Fax: 807-626-9030
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Métis Culture

Ontario Métis are a People and a forgotten Nation in Confederation

By **CHRIS PACI**, Ph.D.
and **ERIN STRACHAN**

The main work of the Métis Nation of Ontario’s Education and Training Branch is ensuring the integrity of Métis education in Ontario. We take particular care to ensure the kindergarten to grade twelve system is responsive and reflective of Métis values and needs. In addition to education activities, our branch is responsible for delivering labour market programming.

One way we accomplish this work is in partnership with the Ministry of Education and other agencies. Our branch is actively researching to support our Nation. There are a lot of different kinds of research but almost always we start with a search of existing reports, books and articles, what is formally known as a “literature search”. Researching existing literature comes with benefits and limitations and is one method in our ever evolving tool box.

The Métis Nation of Ontario is working on a number of initiatives related to postsecondary education, for example, the establishment of a Métis Studies Research Chair at the University of Ottawa. Across Canada academic Métis research is growing and we have great expectations for Métis researchers across the disciplines here in Ontario.

In our work on Métis postsecondary education we hear a num-



ber of personal testimonials, some of which are from citizens who recently learned they are Métis. We are struck by the complexity of becoming Métis. One article that speaks about this is by Cathy Richardson (2006) titled “Métis Identity Creation and Tactical Responses to Oppression and Racism.” Richardson is a little known Métis scholar from Alberta who wrote this article while at the University of Victoria, British Columbia. In it she interviews “key Métis” who are engaged in what she calls “creating a ‘sense of Métis self’” through tactical responses. For Richardson, tactical responses differ from strategic

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Canadians need to remember Métis contributions to Ontario and other provinces or risk the blind ignorance that leads to Métis as the ‘forgotten people’ in Confederation.”
”

ones as, “distinctions between oppressor and oppressed in colonial societies. Political strategies and strategic responses tend to be developed for long-term use by those in political positions of relative power, on secure ground whereas tactical responses tend to be developed ‘on the move,’ as short-term acts to attack political oppression.” We agree that tactical responses form a great deal of the work of MNO and other Aboriginal governments and will until such a time that Canada makes a serious effort to decolonize both their policies and departmental operations.

Richardson reaches a number


of interesting findings. For example she notes: “experiencing well-ness and creating a vibrant and evolving sense of Métis is dependent upon the enactment of prudent and tactical responses in a climate where reprisals and punishment are possible.” This certainly characterizes Ontario before the release of the Ipperwash Inquiry. Unfortunately, while efforts are being made to improve the “climate” in Ontario there is still room for improvements.


Richardson talks about creating a “third space where Métis-ness, Métis community and Métis knowledge can be shared. In this Métis space, history can be retold from a Métis perspective; a Métis-centered analysis can be refined.” This space gets us beyond “being a White person with some Indian blood or a Native person with some white ancestors”. What we like most about Richardson’s approach is the possibility that it will get Canadians remembering, that is to get beyond selective memory to a fuller understanding of the fabric of Ontario. Through this endeavour, we expect a more developed appreciation of the Métis as a unique Indigenous people. Canadians need to remember Métis contributions to Ontario and other provinces or risk the blind ignorance that leads to Métis as the “forgotten people” in Confederation.

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Employment and Training Programs for MÉTIS

The Métis Nation of Ontario offers education, employment & training services and support to Métis across Ontario





Tel: 1-800-263-4889
www.metisnation.org

ARTS | “Medicine for my people”

By **LINDA LORD**

MNO citizen and artist, Ken Rollinson, has just begun a one man show at the Lawson Museum of Ontario Archaeology, in London, Ontario. The show, titled “Medicine for My People”, is comprised of both paintings and sculpture, and runs until August, 2010.

Ken studied fine arts at Georgian College in Owen Sound for three years and for an additional year at Fanshawe College in London, under the supervision of Eric Atkinson, the former Dean of Fine Arts. He then studied privately under Atkinson for another two years.

Ken says: “My work is representative of the mixing of the European and Aboriginal cultures that are part of my ancestry. My wife discovered my Mi’kmaq/Abenaki heritage while researching my genealogy, and recently I claimed my status as a member of the Métis Nation of Ontario. I have always known there were Native people in my ancestry through family rumours and photographs, but it wasn’t until my genealogy was researched that I found out exactly what tribe we came from.

“Not only do I draw on my Native heritage



Sculptures by Métis artist Ken Rollison

for inspiration, but also my European ancestry. I am proud to be a direct descendant of many Acadian pioneers, who were expelled from their homes. This is commonly referred to as, ‘The Great Expulsion’ or ‘The Acadian Deportation’, which occurred in the mid 1700’s when many of my ancestors were forcibly removed from their lands. My family tree

includes the Acadian surnames LeJeune, Martin, LeBlanc, Dugas, Petitous, Pellerin, Bourg, Savoie, Boudrot, Landry and others. You can read more about the Acadians and the tragic events they endured through visiting the ‘acadian-ancestral-home’ on-line.”

Ken discovered that he is a direct descendant of Nicolas Perrot (1644-1717), a famous French explorer, diplomat, fur trader and translator. Nicolas Perrot, one of Canada’s famous French pioneers is his 8th Great Grandfather. Perrot first came to Canada with the Jesuit priests at which time he visited many of the Native tribes and learned their languages. Later he dropped out of the Jesuit order and became an explorer, fur trader and interpreter for the Native tribes and the French authorities of the time. He is said to have been France’s best representative among the Indians in

the western territories of French North America. He was able to learn languages and customs of Native tribes and earned their esteem and confidence. You may find out more about Nicolas Perrot, at the “Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online”.

To see a sampling of Ken’s work visit his web site: www.kenrollinson.viviti.com

A Clear Métis Voice

By LINDA LORD

Born Margaret Elizabeth Burgie on Burgie Pt., Victoria Harbour, Marg Raynor was raised along with her brother, Danny, and sister, Joyce (Bednar), on a farm in Tay Township by her parents, Margaret and Dan, whose Métis family had lived in the area for three generations. The Burgie’s arrived as part of the Drummond Island migration to Penetanguishene in 1828.

Marg attended St. Theresa’s High School and Midland Secondary School, as well as the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. From here she moved on to McMaster University and the Hamilton Teachers’ College, where she obtained additional qualifications in vocal music.

Between 1972 and 2000, Marg worked as an elementary school teacher in Hamilton, London, and Penetanguishene. During this same time, Marg attended Wilfred Laurier University, where she received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in sociology; York University in the Education Program, where she became a “primary specialist”; and Georgian College in Barrie. Then, in 2000, Marg moved on to Brock University where she obtained her Bachelor of Aboriginal adult education degree.

While Marg was working and furthering her education, she was also raising a family. She is the mother of two daughters: Jennifer, born May 5, 1975, and Evelyn Elizabeth born February 21, 1986.

As a citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario, Marg held a variety of positions on the Board of Directors of the Georgian Bay Métis Council (GBMC) in Midland from 1995 to 2009. She was actively involved in many activities: Aboriginal Day festivities from 1999 to 2009; First voyageur expedition pot luck supper; Métis Shoppe grand opening and operation; Representative for GBMC at the Midland powwow; Member of the archaeology committee on behalf of GBMC when items were discovered at the Midland Recreation Centre site; Representative on the Georgian Bay Métis Corporation; Volunteer at every Métis Rendezvous, doing workshops, performing, or just assisting wherever she was needed.

As a delegate of the GBMC on the board of education Marg ensured that the Métis voice was heard loud and clear, and as liaison she brought First Nation



Mist upon the Water, released in October, 1997, includes original songs and stories of Georgian Bay

Keeper of Stories, released in August, 2000, and including original songs and Aboriginal stories, (supported by a cultural grant from the Métis Nation of Ontario).

Drum song for Site 41, called *Keepers of Water*, is available free to download via link on Marg’s website: www.margraynor.com

Marg Raynor performing.

and Métis people together for the good of many causes.

It is hard to separate Marg’s personal life from her professional life as an educator, or, to separate either from her activities on behalf of the Métis Nation and the environment. With the passage of time her various passions have run together like water colours on a palette.

She was the person who made it possible for Brock University to have an adult Aboriginal teacher’s course and it was Marg who facilitated this course that saw so many Métis students become leaders.

Included in Marg’s many services to the community are the two years she spent as President of the Georgian Bay Native Friendship Centre, the four or five years as a Director of the Georgian Bay Métis Development Corporation, and another five years as Financial Secretary.

Along with GBMC past-president Kirk Hebner and past-Senator Allan Vallee as well as Pete Lefebvre, Don Fiddler and Erin Moe of the MNO, Marg redrafted a proposal and presented it to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation. After six trips to Ottawa the proposal was accepted and received a grant of \$314,000 to help residential school survivors in the area. For the next three years Marg Raynor was a director for the administration of this money.

The endless hours of Marg’s volunteering have made her an elder in the community and a strong Métis leader. Her intense immersion in her Métis culture prevails in such songs as, “Métis Man”, and many others. She has inspired those fortunate enough to cross her path to find their own strengths and to pursue the dream of helping the Métis Nation to move forward.

Marg never hesitated to protest the site 41 dump in an effort to ensure that the water was protected and that Métis were represented.

Most recently, Marg Raynor has enrolled in a Masters program at York University. As a result, she has had to reduce some of her activities in the local community, including resigning her position as Chair of the GBMC. We wish her well in her future endeavours.

Métis Poets Corner

The Trapper They Called “Skin”

By LAURETTE MARION

There is a northern valley called “Mattawa”
Which means “where the waters meet.”
The surrounding mountain reflects its beauty
In the rivers at its feet.

A rustic church in majesty
Stands high upon a hill.
Granting benediction on the inhabitants below,
In accordance with God’s will.

The heart of Mattawa is justly reserved
For the people that named it so.
Here the Ojibwa Indians live in the valley,
As they did so long ago.

White man and Brave stand tall and proud,
Their friendship for all to see.
For the beauty encased in this tranquil valley
Deserves that this should be.

I listened in awe at the tales being told
By one who was old and wise.
Happy memories of his long lost youth
Were reflected in his eyes.

His weathered skin was etched with age,
Though it held a healthy glow.
He had earned his living off God’s land,
The only way he did know.

The Trapper “Oscar Groulx” wore a name befitting
When dubbed with the nickname “SKIN”.
No jest was intended in the loving tribute
Bestowed upon him by his kin.

He chose a hard and lonely life
Braving bitter winds and snow.
Evenings found him alone in his cabin
Being warmed by the fire’s glow.

His only companion was the treasured violin
He’d so talentedly learned to play.
The music he drew from it with his bow
Overwhelms me to this day.

He’d descend the mountain and return to the valley
In springtime, when all was green.
Being lovingly greeted by his wife and family
Became a heart-warming, annual scene.

In autumn when the mountain became a masterpiece
Of crimson, orange and gold,
He’d return to his cabin again to endure
Raging winds and bitter cold.

Many winters did he walk his trap lines,
Ignoring the loneliness he felt within.
For the chosen trade demanded more than strength
From the trapper they called “SKIN”.

One spring when he came down from the mountain,
He knew he would return no more.
The endless workload once performed with ease
Had become an impossible chore.

He handed down trap line rights to his son, Victor,
Whom he lovingly calls “P’tit ga”.
The son now climbs the mountain in autumn,
Leaving the valley called Mattawa.

Like his father before him, his loneliness is eased
By his friend, -the violin.
And the skill with which he draws its music
Was inherited from “SKIN”.

I return to the valley whenever I can,
For when I feel forlorn,
I find comfort and consolation
In the valley where I was born.

The bond that ties me to Mattawa
Comes from deep within.
Like the love and admiration I feel
Towards the Trapper I call “Uncle Skin”.

Finding My Spirit cont’d

from page 24

departed and headed on our journey home. Yes, they knew exactly how we felt and I thought I might just have to do that. As the ceremonies concluded I was overcome with so many emotions and knew I would be back the following year and many more years to come.

Throughout the weekend, during our drive home and sharing with my family that night, I knew that this weekend was meant to be. So many things happened for a reason, and were planned long before I knew, such as:

My dearest friend, who is not Métis, came with me on this life changing journey and it was meant for her to be there with me because she has been one of the constants in my life for 25 years. She may not be of Aboriginal descent but she definitely has a beautiful spirit that needed to experience this weekend with me and for me.

Stopping at the little store in town on

Friday morning and having a friend bring a book to my attention, “Edible and Medicinal Plants of Canada”. It was meant for me to buy it and bring it along.

Sitting at one of the tables at lunch sad that the workshop for the medicine walk was full and at that moment having one of the women come and cross her name off the sheet. This left a spot for my name to go, it was meant to be.

Being disappointed that all of the night shifts at the sacred fire were taken, I thought that would have been the most powerful time to experience the fire. Boy, was I wrong, for this weekend anyway, it was meant to be.

Joking with one of the women on Sunday morning about not leaving to go to the tent to get her drum because since she had sat down I wasn’t being bothered by mosquitoes because they were biting her instead, then having her stay and be the one to share with me the reason the drum was calling me. It was

meant to be.

I could go on but I am sure you are getting the picture; this weekend was meant to be and it was life altering. It was meant to be long before I got that email with the invitation. Overcome by everything I have experienced I felt the need to write it down.

When I lay awake this morning listening to the drumming and songs in my head it all came to me: this calling I have been feeling from many aspects of my life is my spirit trying to get me to listen. There is something it wants me to know. I now realize that it is my Ojibwa spirit. Yes I am Métis, that is who I am, but without the Ojibwa blood in me, I would not be Métis! As I strengthen and continue to learn and gain more Métis knowledge and teachings in the time to come, I will not deny my Ojibwa spirit this awakening. I will take time to listen to my Ojibwa spirit and learn about that part of the Métis in me as well.

Annual General Assembly • August 22-25, 2009 • Sudbury, Ont.

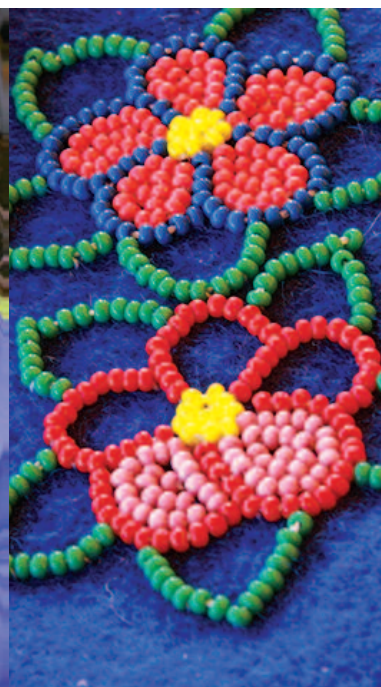
What is this AGA all about anyway?

By **JULIE MERAW**

As a first time AGA attendee I had no idea what to expect. Everyone I talked to about their Annual General Assembly experiences had different things to say. The head office became a flurry of activity prior to the big event and tensions mounted as all plans were made and changed and explained. Suddenly, on Wednesday, there was an eerie silence as most head office employees were already gone. Those who did not leave Wednesday, left on Thursday. I was in an office that was almost deserted as my colleagues and superiors made haste to attend this monumental event, and their aim--perfection.

As I entered Sudbury I could tell there was something different about it. I found myself looking around at people everywhere with the same dark hair that I was born with. I am usually surrounded by bleached blonds and instead I was seeing men with long dark braids, women with dark hair and dark skin. I actually felt the difference and finally understood what living in a Métis community must be like. The people that we met were not only friendly but seemed to relish welcoming all of us to their hometown. Those staff members who work in Sudbury did a great deal to prepare for our arrival and then enjoyed us while we were there. What better hosts could you have?

My daughter joined the day-care and had tons of fun with the other children. On Sunday, Bobbi was raved about for her story



▲ left to right: Métis gather around the campfire on the shore of Richard Lake in Sudbury; Andy Lefebvre concentrates during the bannock-making competition; Katelyne Stenlund at the cornhusk doll-making workshop, Métis beading.

reading talents as she read the children a story complete with various voices for her different characters. She was exciting and expressive and the children had a great time. The weekend was definitely a time for family and I was encouraged to see so many smiling faces. People were browsing through the merchandise displays and trying on shirts or tasting a healthy kind of chocolate. Watching a woman making her sashes with the help of another person was fascinating. A strong Métis flavour was given to the entire experience as one gentleman periodically sang impromptu while being accompanied by the drum fashioned by his own hands.

“ This entire event was one that this newcomer to the Métis Nation community won’t forget for a long time and one that had to be experienced to really be understood and appreciated. ”

I especially liked the relay games at the campground on Monday. I was recruited by Laurie to help a little and watched in wonder as teams formed with complete strangers pulling together to complete their challenges. I collected beautiful pictures as each team brought to us their painted health branch flower. Teams made and ate ban-

nock after starting their own fire to cook it on, had their skills tested at archery and had physical abilities judged at jiggling.

I think the highlight of all was the talent that we enjoyed and that will be remembered for a long time. Who does not like the music of Creedence Clearwater Revival? No one I know. So to find out that there was a group cover-

ing their well known songs was exciting news. Not all of us were aware that Loma Rowlinson was packed with such talent but when she joined the band to sing “Run through the Jungle”, I think she brought the house down. Everyone that I talked to enjoyed the comedic talent a great deal. Stunningly, all of this was packed into four days.

This entire event was one that this newcomer to the Métis Nation community won’t forget for a long time and one that had to be experienced to really be understood and appreciated.

Julie Meraw is the MNO Registry's Registry Intake Officer in the Ottawa office.

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www.nwmo.ca



22 St. Clair Avenue E., Sixth Floor, Toronto, ON
M4T 2S3, Canada
416.934.9526
contactus@nwmo.ca

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