

MNO RELEASES RESULTS OF REGISTRY REVIEW:
**The hard work we have done
will serve us for generations**
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ISSUE NO. 106, AUGUST 2021

MÉTIS VOYAGEUR



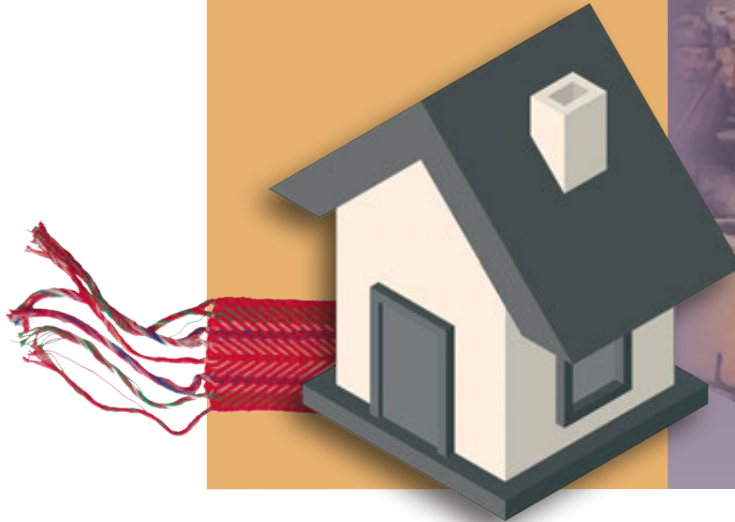
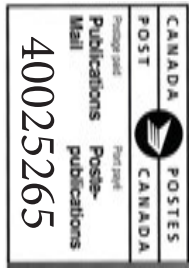
LET'S NAVIGATE MÉTIS SELF-GOVERNMENT TOGETHER!!!

Rights-bearing members of Métis communities have an inherent and constitutional right to self-government. Our Métis ancestors and past leaders fought for our right to self-govern and determine our collective path. Our people proudly asserted their rights, practiced their way of life, and established thriving communities deeply rooted along the waterways of Ontario. Now we have an historic opportunity to finish the work of our ancestors and build our Métis Government. Every Métis citizen has something to contribute to this process. Let's listen and learn from each other. Let's take this journey together. **MORE ON PAGES 12-13**

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THE
**MÉTIS
VOYAGEUR**
AUGUST 2021 - No. 106

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SUBMISSION POLICY:

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

The MNO does not accept submissions including editorials and letters to the editor that make partisan political statements.

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

The recommended length for a submission is between 400 and 600 words. Submissions longer than that may be edited for length.

Next

**Métis Voyageur
submission deadline:
October 1, 2021**

**Send your stories
and photos to:
CommOps@metisnation.org**



MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Strong Together

As more and more Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizens make the decision to be vaccinated, light is starting to show at the end of our long COVID-19 tunnel and there is real hope for and progress toward a post-pandemic life. While we are close, certain precautions must still be observed to keep our most vulnerable safe.

To that effect, this year's 28th MNO Annual General Assembly (AGA) will again be held virtually on September 18-19, 2021. Our AGA is Métis Self-Government in action and provides an opportunity for MNO citizens to come together, review the achievements of the previous year and chart the direction for the future. There will also be a space for a virtual artisan tradeshow, and of course, our celebrated kitchen party to welcome attendees to the event!

Be sure to keep an eye on our website and social media for future announcements, and I look forward to connecting with and hearing from all of you at the in September!

This year's AGA coincides with Powley Day. Powley Day, September 19, celebrates the anniversary of the landmark Métis rights victory at the Supreme Court of Canada in 2003. The victory in Powley set the stage for a series of achievements for Métis people, not just in Ontario but across the Métis Nation Homeland, including the ground-breaking Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreements signed in June, 2019 by the MNO, the Métis Nation of Alberta, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan and more recently by the Manitoba Metis Federation.

On September 19, we remember the sacrifices made by Steve, Roddy and the entire Powley family, and reflect on how the Powley decision forever changed the world for Métis in Canada—finally securing recognition of Métis as a distinct Indigenous peoples within Canada, and helping open the path forward toward full Métis self-government.

Residential School Revelations

Across the nation, our communities are still reeling from the horrific discoveries at former residential school sites, and losses sustained and substantiated by Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation, Cowessess First Nation, and the Lower Kootenay Band and, unfortunately, we know there will be more heartbreak to come. It is normal to grieve these losses. Not just of the lives, but of opportunities and potential stolen too from the survivors. They should have known fulfilling childhoods filled with happiness and joy, a pride in their culture, and above all, grown up surrounded by family and loved ones. This was not the reality.

In these times, the MNO is increasing the volume of our collective calls for reconciliation, for action and the immediate implementation of the 94 Calls to Actions identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. We also encourage anyone experiencing trauma over these discoveries to reach out to the MNO's 24-Hr Mental Health Crisis line at 1-888-767-7572 or use the Indian Residential School hotline at 1-866-925-4419.

National Matters

Despite our grief over these devastating discoveries, the MNO remains laser focused on advancing the rights of our people, including Métis self-government. At



*With our core Self-Government Agreement in hand, the MNO is **moving forward together** to build a constitution and implement self-government. We are at a critical juncture in our path to self-government and our evolution as a government. MNO is on the cusp of finally realizing a key goal of our ancestors—to be truly self-determining.*

a national level, we have continued to witness the deliberate dysfunction within the Métis Nation Council (MNC). In spite of this, we have continued to work with our sister Métis governments in Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia in order to move forward and advance Métis rights. In building these strong relationships, collectively we have made the Métis Nation stronger and showed that your rights and future should not be left as pawns for others' political gain. We are stronger together, and we will continue to work together for the benefit of all.

Earlier this summer, our court case against Clem Chartier and the MNC was heard by the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, which agreed with our position that the MNO was not suspended from the MNC. We are working with our sister Métis Governments and the MNC to schedule a MNC Assembly this fall where we can finally elect a new MNC President and resolve the issue of our status within the MNC. For more information, we invite you to visit "The Facts" on our website metisnation.org/thefacts.

MNO Registry Review Report

We are also pleased to announce the release of the final report of the MNO's "Registry and Self-Government Readiness Review" (RSRP). Also known as the *Registry Review*, this impressive, multi-year independent review of the MNO's centralized citizenship registration system marks a milestone in the MNO's self-government journey. The results of the review were incredibly strong, proving what the MNO has always asserted—that it represents rights-bearing Métis people and communities across Ontario. And thanks to the review process, we have never had a stronger, more responsive or more professional and competent MNO Registry. This review was a fundamental step forward in our path to self-government and demonstrated, without a doubt, the strength and rigour of our systems. For more on the Registry Review and findings visit www.mtisnation.org/registry/registry-review-report.

PCMNO Update

The MNO continues to share PCMNO recap reports and information bulletins regarding the activity of your elected leadership at the Provincial level—the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO). These can be found here www.mtisnation.org/mno-news/pcmno-recaps. The motion minute reports and minutes of all PCMNO meetings dating back to the start of the term of office of this PCMNO have been sent to all council leadership, and we invite you reach out to your local leadership for more information about the minutes or decisions — their contact information can be found here www.mtisnation.org/governance/governing-structure/pcmno. If citizens every have questions or comments to send to the entire PCMNO please email PCMNO@metisnation.org.

Over the past few years, PCMNO has looked to expand ways for citizens to observe and participate in PCMNO meetings in a fair and secure way, to ensure greater accountability to citizens

and transparency in the decisions taken. The PCMNO exists to serve you, and as your President, I want to reassure all citizens that your concerns are heard and more discussions will be held about how your Métis government will be more accountable and transparent.

Navigating Self-Government Together

With our core Self-Government Agreement in hand, the MNO is moving forward together to build a constitution and implement self-government. We are at a critical juncture in our path to self-government and our evolution as a government. MNO is on the cusp of finally realizing a key goal of our ancestors—to be truly self-determining. To date, we have been focussed on engaging Community Council leadership in all of our regions around how we move forward with self-government, and it is time to begin engaging all of our citizens in this work. Stay tuned for Regional Citizen Town Halls on MNO Self-Government coming this fall.

As Citizens, your voices are so important as we transition from our current state to a fully recognized public Indigenous government with legal status, capacity and resources that support and recognize local, regional and provincial levels of Métis government. We want to ensure that all MNO Citizens, regions and communities are engaged in this process in a way that makes sense for you.

While we are on that path, we are not there yet. It may seem slow for some but there is a clear path set out in our self-government agreement with Canada. It creates processes for us to work together, raise our voices and discuss what we want our government to look like. Check www.mtisnation.org/self-government for more!

Strong MNO Communities and Solid Program and Service Delivery

Finally, I'd like to commend the incredible efforts of all our staff and Community Councils who have worked so hard to support our citizens and communities this year. We continue to build out programs and services to support all age ranges of citizens, ranging from Baby Bundle Kits to tablets and yard services for our seniors. Visit our website and follow the MNO on social media for announcements on future services.

We could not do the work we do if it were not for the individual efforts and ongoing support of our citizens, our leadership and our staff, which is more appreciated than ever. And as COVID-19 vaccines uptake builds and life begins to return to normal, I look forward to returning to our communities in person, and with more good news to share.

Margaret Froh, President
Métis Nation of Ontario

ACROSS THE MNO



MNO RELEASES RESULTS OF REGISTRY REVIEW

The hard work we have done will serve us for generations to come

The Métis Nation of Ontario (“MNO”) has now publicly released the results of its multi-year review of its centralized Métis citizenship registration system. This process is known as the “MNO Registry and Self-Government Readiness Review” (“RSRP” or “Registry Review”). The Registry Review marks an important milestone in the MNO’s ongoing self-government journey as a Métis government.

Background on the MNO and the Powley Case

In 1993, after years of Ontario Métis being represented through pan-Aboriginal organizations, the MNO was created to be a Métis-specific, self-government structure for Ontario Métis, including the descendants of historic Métis communities that emerged in Ontario as well as the descendants from other Métis communities from Western Canada who are also a part of the Métis Nation and now live in Ontario.

In the late 1990s, as a part of its agenda to advance Métis rights, the MNO advanced the first—and only—Métis harvesting rights case to be considered by the Supreme Court of Canada. In 2003, in *R. v. Powley* (“Powley”), the highest court in Canada unanimously confirmed that the Métis are a full-fledged, rights-bearing people. The Court also confirmed that:

a distinctive Métis community emerged in the Upper Great Lakes region in the mid-17th century ... [and that] “[t]he settlement at Sault Ste. Marie was one of the oldest and most important [Métis settlements] in the upper lakes area.

Today, Powley remains the only Supreme Court of Canada decision to confirm the existence of Métis rights protected by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. Based on Powley, as well as other developments within the Métis Nation—including, the adoption of a National Definition for Métis Nation Citizenship in 2002 and the adoption of the MNO Registry Policy in 2009 (interim) and 2014 (final)—the MNO’s citizenship requirements

have evolved over its 28-year history.

Over the last 18 years, Powley has also been relied upon by Métis governments in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, and the Northwest Territories to establish Métis rights in the courts as well as to support the negotiation of Métis rights with other governments.

Within Ontario, Powley as well as various collaborative processes have led to the joint recognition of six additional historic Ontario Métis communities by the Ontario Government in August 2017, the completion of an Independent Review of the MNO’s Harvesters Card system in late 2017, and the signing of an MNO-Ontario Harvesting Agreement in April 2018.

The Purpose of the Registry Review and the Process

In October 2017, based on the MNO’s foundational goal to secure the recognition of the MNO’s self-government from Canada, the Registry Review was initiated at the direction of the democratically-elected Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (“PCMNO”) by Resolution PC171022-08. The objectives of the Registry Review included:

- assessing the “completeness” of all citizenship files based on the MNO’s current definition of Métis and the requirements of the MNO Registry Policy first adopted in 2014;
- providing the MNO with a clear understanding of “who” it represents for the purposes of self-government negotiations and Métis rights claims as well as the number of its citizenship

who descend from Ontario Métis communities or other Métis communities in the Métis Nation Homeland from Ontario westward; and

- ensuring that MNO citizens who hold elected leadership roles and represent Métis communities with respect to Métis rights, have completed citizenship files and are rights-holders themselves.

Based on a review of the MNO’s approximately 24,000 citizenship files conducted by independent firm Know History, each citizenship file was determined to be either:

- “Complete”: These files included all necessary documentation required to meet the MNO’s current definition for citizenship and the MNO Registry

Policy;

- “Missing Documentation”: These files included an identified Métis Ancestor pursuant to the MNO’s current definition for citizenship and the MNO Registry Policy, but were missing supporting genealogical documents linking the MNO citizen to that Métis Ancestor and/or was missing a signed Oath of Allegiance; or
- “Incomplete”: These files did not include an identified Métis Ancestor pursuant to the MNO’s current definition for citizenship and the MNO Registry Policy.

Following the completion of the assessment of an MNO citizen’s file, the individual was sent a letter informing them of the status of their file. If a file was determined to be “Missing Documentation” or “Incomplete”, this letter also included information and potential solutions to help the MNO citizen “Complete” their citizenship file. Individuals with “Complete” files were issued a new MNO citizenship card verifying their status as a Métis rights-holder.

Throughout the course of the Registry Review, the MNO also provided citizens with regular updates and additional information through direct correspondence, the *Métis Voyageur* newspaper, and other MNO communications.

Additional Results and Successes from the Registry Review

In addition to confirming that the overwhelming majority of MNO citizens have completed citizenship files and are objectively verified as Métis rights-holders, the Registry Review has created a “state-of-the-art” registry known as the Secure Archive Source Historical database (the “SASH database”).

The SASH database allows Registry staff to search and process files efficiently and avoids duplicating work for individuals who connect to the same historic Métis family. For example, applicants that link to citizens with “Complete” files need only provide documents to connect to the “Complete” file

“
Today, Powley remains the only Supreme Court of Canada decision to confirm the existence of Métis rights protected by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.
”

LET'S STAY IN TOUCH

UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have moved, changed your name, or if you are not getting communications from the MNO it is important to update your contact information with the MNO Registry! As a citizen of the MNO your voice is important and you are part of ensuring Métis history, culture and way of life remain strong in Ontario.

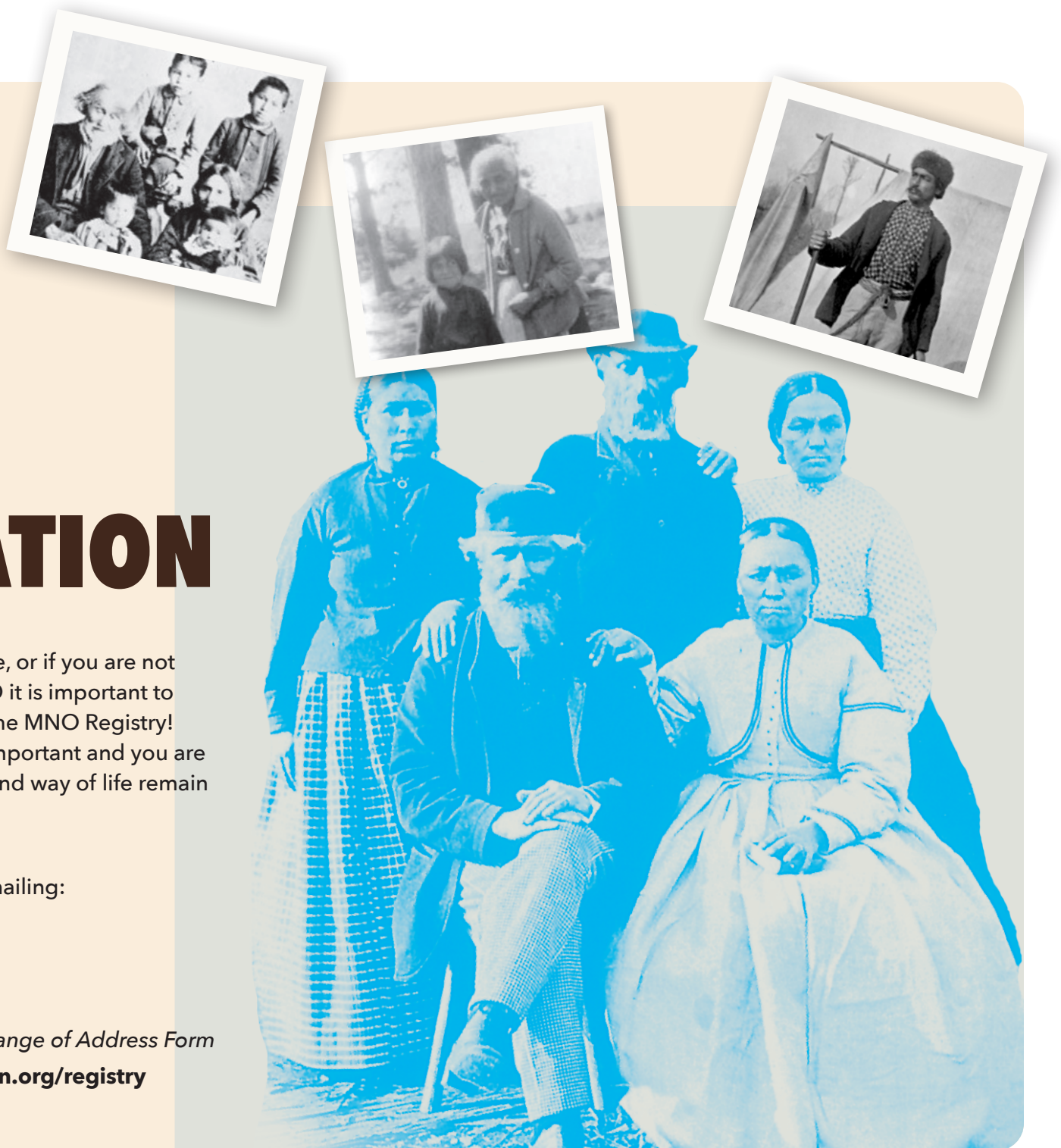
Update your contact information by emailing:

info@mnoregistry.ca

Or by calling the MNO Registry at

1-855-798-1006

Or by filling out and submitting the *Change of Address Form* at the MNO website: **www.metisnation.org/registry**



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for resources and
related sector
businesses

Rates and
security
customized
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MNO releases results of its Registry Review

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Registry Review:

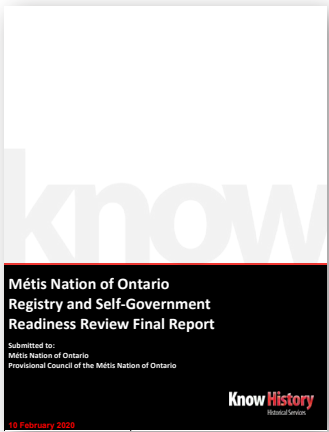
(i.e., the lineage to a Métis Ancestor is already built out and reviewed as “Complete”).

Further, based on the new systems the MNO has put in place through the Registry Review, the MNO currently has no backlog of MNO citizenship applications. Wait times have now been reduced from several years to 60 business days (or five business days for priority files).

**NEXT STEPS:
Province-Wide Consultations
and a “What We Heard” Report**

On May 28, 2021, the PCMNO passed Resolution PC210528-09 approving of and directing MNO administration to implement the following next steps related to the

- Develop and release a series of communication tools in order to engage with MNO citizens on the outcomes of the Registry Review;
- Undertake province-wide consultations with all MNO citizens through a series of virtual Town Hall meetings open to all MNO citizens during the summer of 2021;
- Develop a “What We Heard” report based on the province-wide consultations to be publicly released following review and consideration by the PCMNO; and
- Based on the “What We Heard” report, look towards a province-wide vote (in Fall/Winter 2021) and/or Special Assembly



**Get the full MNO
Registry Review
Report, fact sheets,
FAQs and video at:
www.metisnation.org**

on MNO citizenship (in Fall/Winter 2021 or early 2022, subject to public health and safety requirements) to guide further decision-making on next steps related to the Registry Review final report and/or potential amendments needed to the MNO Bylaws and MNO Registry Policy.

“This Registry Review is an important step in the MNO’s ongoing journey to self-government. Our citizens—who come from our historic Métis communities here in Ontario as well as from other parts of the Métis Nation Homeland—can have faith in the registry system their Métis government has built. The hard work we have done now will serve us well for generations to come,” said MNO President Margaret Froh.

President Froh added, “Our collective successes to date have been grounded on the MNO’s credibility as a Métis government that represents Métis rights-holders. Now, we must extensively and deeply engage with all of our citizens about what we do next to further advance our self-government and Métis rights. I look forward to that discussion. I encourage all citizens to participate in this discussion.”

Beginning in Summer 2021, the MNO will begin a series of province-wide Town Halls as well as targeted meetings with all MNO constituencies.

For further information and questions on the Registry Review and upcoming engagement sessions, please see the MNO’s website and/or contact **613-798-1488 xt. 116** or email **rsrp@metisnation.org**. ∞



1. What is the Registry Review?

The Registry Review—also known as the “Registry and Self-Government Readiness Process” or the “RSRP”—marks an important milestone in the MNO’s ongoing self-government journey as a Métis government. Specifically, it involved an independent review of the Métis Nation of Ontario’s (“MNO”) nearly 24,000 citizenship files by an independent consulting firm, Know History, to determine whether the files meet the current requirements for MNO citizenship as set out in the MNO Bylaws and MNO Registry Policy. The review, which took over three years to complete, was initiated by the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (“PCMNO”) in October 2017. Interim results of the review were publicly discussed in January 2020, with the final results of the Registry Review being publicly released in June 2021.

Throughout the review, the PCMNO and the MNO administration also provided regular updates on the progress of the Registry Review, including: memos to all citizens, updates at MNO Annual General Assemblies (“AGAs”), articles in the Métis Voyageur newspaper, and maintaining a dedicated website with readily-available materials that all citizens can access.

2. Why did the PCMNO initiate the Registry Review?

The PCMNO launched the Registry Review as part of the work needed to prepare the MNO for formal self-government and Métis rights negotiations with Canada and Ontario. As “aboriginal rights” protected by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, the Crown would only negotiate self-government and Métis rights with the MNO if the MNO could establish that it represents rights-bearing Métis consistent with the Supreme Court of Canada’s decision in *R. v. Powley* (“Powley”). In *Powley*, the SCC held, among other things, that:

verifying membership is crucial, since individuals are only entitled to exercise Métis aboriginal rights by virtue of their ancestral connection to and current membership in a Métis community.

It has long been the MNO’s position that all

citizens who meet the citizenship criteria are Métis rights-holders – not just those who hold MNO Harvester Cards. However, it was understood back in 2017, when the Registry Review was initiated, that some MNO citizenship files may not meet the MNO’s current citizenship requirements as outlined in the MNO Bylaws and the MNO Registry Policy as a result of certain legacy issues. For example, similar to other Métis governments from Ontario westward, the MNO’s definition of “Métis”, as set out in the MNO Bylaws, has changed over the last 28 years. In addition, in the MNO’s early years, there was little to no funding or capacity to support the MNO’s centralized registry.

Building off of the momentum of several years of previous work to refine and strengthen the MNO registry system, the Registry Review was an effort to identify and address these outstanding legacy issues head on, in a transparent and accountable manner.

3. What criteria did the independent reviewer use in the Registry Review?

In reviewing each citizenship file, the independent reviewer, Know History, applied the following four criteria for MNO citizenship as outlined in the MNO Registry Policy:

- i. Self-Identification as Métis (i.e., proof that an individual self-identifies as Métis by way of signing the MNO Oath of Allegiance);
- ii. Proof of Historic Métis Nation Ancestry (i.e., establishing an ancestral connection to a Métis Ancestor as described in the MNO Registry Policy);
- iii. Distinct from the Aboriginal Peoples (i.e., not registered with another Aboriginal nation or on another Aboriginal list); and
- iv. Accepted by the Métis Nation (i.e., completion of the MNO citizenship registration process).

The above criteria aligns with the National Definition of Métis approved by the Métis governments that form the Métis National Council, the Supreme Court of Canada’s direction in *Powley* as well as the MNO’s assertions with respect to the Métis citizens and communities it represents in Ontario.

4. Why are the results of the Registry Review significant?

As a result of the Registry Review, the MNO now has further clarity around: who exactly the MNO represents and where those citizens ancestrally connect to. That is, the Registry Review confirms that the MNO represents verified section 35 rights-holders who ancestrally connect to all seven of the Historic Métis Communities in Ontario, as well as to other parts of the Historic Métis Nation Homeland west of Ontario. The results of the review also further confirm the credibility, reliability, and legitimacy of the MNO’s centralized Métis citizenship registry as an objectively-verifiable registration system based on the application of stringent criteria.

5. Hasn’t the credibility of the MNO Registry system already been confirmed through previous independent reviews and audits?

The MNO Registry—which was created in 1994 “to identify and register Métis citizens and harvesters who are eligible rights holders in the province of Ontario”—has undergone several independent reviews and audits since its creation. For example, the Métis Nation Registry Operations—which are national standards to govern Métis registries co-developed by Canada, the MNO, and other Métis governments in 2015—provide that the MNO Registry will be audited every three years. The MNO understands that these audits are critical as they provide third-party confirmation that the MNO Registry is objectively-verifiable and consistent with the SCC’s direction in *Powley*, allowing the Crown to rely on the MNO Registry for the purposes of identifying Métis section 35 rights-holders (e.g., for the purposes of harvesting).

The most recent federal audit of the MNO Registry was conducted in 2017 by an independent auditor selected by Canada (i.e., BDO). This 2017 audit concluded that:

the current MNO registry application process as it presently operates reflects the Powley decision, demonstrates objective verification for citizenship and is maintained with care

and in a professional manner.

The MNO Registry, namely the MNO Harvester Card System, also underwent an objective and independent provincial review (known as the “Independent Review”) around this same time, with the final results being released in 2018. The Independent Review—which was motivated by a commitment made in the MNO-Ontario interim harvesting agreement and conducted by independent consulting firm, InterGroup Consultants—concluded that: 100% of the 88 Métis Family Lines submitted by the MNO were “verified” as being part of Historic Métis Communities, and that 100% of the randomly-selected 328 Harvester Card files were “verified” as meeting the criteria set out in *Powley*. This work paved the way for the MNO and Ontario to negotiate and sign a new Framework Agreement on Métis Harvesting in April 2018, which removed the Harvester Card cap under the previous interim agreement.

6. What’s the difference between “Complete,” “Missing Documentation,” and “Incomplete” files?

During the Registry Review, citizenship files were designated as either: “Complete” (meaning they contained all the documents needed to demonstrate a genealogical connection to a Métis Ancestor and a signed MNO Oath of Allegiance), “Missing Documentation” (meaning they included documented proof of a Métis Ancestor but needed additional documentation to support genealogical connection(s) or, in some cases, were only missing a signed MNO Oath of Allegiance), or “Incomplete” (meaning they lacked a historic document of any records evidencing an ancestral connection to a Métis ancestor as defined by the MNO Registry Policy).

Citizens with “Complete” files were issued a new MNO citizenship card and were also provided with information about which of the seven identified Historic Métis Communities in Ontario they connect to, or where their Métis Ancestor was documented in the Historic Métis Nation Homeland. Citizens with “Missing Documentation” or “Incomplete” files were

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provided with notice of the documentation needed to complete their files, information on how to submit such documentation for re-assessment, and contact information and resources to assist citizens with any questions. All citizens were advised of the status of their file by letter.

7. What are the key findings from the Registry Review?

Of the 23,978 MNO citizenship files reviewed during the Registry Review, the final report concluded that:

- A total of 71% of all MNO citizenship files (17,014 MNO citizens) were confirmed as being “Complete” citizenship files (i.e., their file included all the necessary documentation required to meet the MNO’s current definition for citizenship and the MNO Registry Policy).
- Another 1.4% of MNO citizenship files (330 MNO citizens) could “Complete” their file if they signed the MNO’s required Oath of Allegiance, and another 4.7% (1,132 MNO citizens) could “Complete” their file simply by providing missing genealogical documents. If these outstanding requirements were met, a total of 77% of MNO citizenship files (18,476 MNO citizens) would be confirmed as “Complete”.
- A total of 22.5% of current MNO citizenship files (5,402 MNO citizens) were determined to have “Incomplete” files.

- As a part of the review, 1,061 MNO citizens’ files were determined to be inactive because of death, suspension, or withdrawal and were removed from the MNO Registry. At the end of the review, less than 1% of files reviewed remained “In Process”.
- Of the MNO citizenship files that are “Complete” (17,014 MNO citizens), based on the primary documents provided to the MNO Registry, these files demonstrate the following:
 - o A total of 23% of the MNO’s citizenship (3,904 MNO citizens) ancestrally connect to Métis communities in western Canada through Métis Scrip (2,470 MNO citizens), Métis land grants issued under the Manitoba Act, 1870 (768 MNO citizens), or other historical documentation from 1901 or earlier (666 MNO citizens).
 - o A total of 9% of the MNO’s citizenship (1,522 MNO citizens) ancestrally connect to the historic Métis community in Northwestern Ontario, with 884 MNO citizens being descendants of the “Halfbreeds of Rainy Lake and River” who collectively adhered as a Métis community to Treaty 3 in 1875 and another 638 MNO citizens ancestrally connecting to other historic Métis families and settlements in the region.
 - o A total of 49% of the MNO’s citizenship (8,332 MNO citizens) ancestrally

- connect to the Great Lakes Métis community that was recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada in Powley. This community includes well-known Métis populations and settlements at Fort William (present day Thunder Bay), Michipicoten, Sault Ste. Marie, Killarney, and Georgian Bay/Penetanguishene.
- o A total of 6% of the MNO’s citizenship (1,045 MNO citizens) ancestrally connect to the historic Métis community in the Abitibi-Temiscamingue region.
- o A total of 13% of the MNO’s citizenship (2,211 MNO citizens) ancestrally connect to the historic Métis community in the Mattawa region.
- Collectively, the MNO’s citizens with “Complete” files can be broken down as having a Métis Ancestor from Western Canada (23%), Northwestern Ontario (9%), the Upper Great Lakes Region (49%), and Northeastern Ontario (19%).
- In addition, many of the MNO’s citizens with “Complete” files have Métis Ancestors from two or more Métis communities within Ontario. For example, of the 17,014 MNO citizens with “Complete” citizenship files, 13,110 trace to one Ontario Métis community, with approximately 39% (5,082 MNO citizens) of that number ancestrally connecting to two or more historic Métis communities in Ontario.
- Additional research will be undertaken in the future in order to assess further ances-

tral connections between historic Métis communities in Ontario as well as with those in Western Canada.

8. My file was designated as “Missing Documentation” or “Incomplete.” Is it possible for me to complete my file and, if so, how and by when do I need to do this?

As noted above, as part of the review process, citizens with “Missing Documentation” or “Incomplete” files were provided with a letter notifying them of results of their file review, the documentation needed to complete their file, information on how to submit such documentation for re-assessment, and contact information and resources to assist with any questions. As such, it is possible for citizens to complete their files by providing the necessary documentation to the MNO Registry as outlined in their assessment letter. Re-assessment requests are ongoing.

In 2017, when the PCMNO initiated the Registry Review, it directed that citizens be “provided a fair and reasonable amount of time to provide the necessary documentation to the MNO Registry.” The timeline for doing so has yet to be determined, but may be discussed during the MNO’s province-wide consultations with all MNO citizens (as discussed below). In the meantime, the MNO continues to encourage citizens to complete their files as soon as possible.

9. Did citizens with “Missing Documentation” or “Incomplete” files lose their MNO citizenship?

No. All citizens—regardless of whether their MNO citizenship files have been designated as “Complete,” “Missing Documentation,” or “Incomplete”—continue to be MNO citizens. The Registry Review—as an internal, administrative process that assessed the completeness of all MNO citizenship files based on the MNO’s current citizenship requirements—does not and cannot, on its own, change the fact of whether someone is an MNO citizen. This is because citizens (i.e., currently members of the MNO Secretariat) can only be removed in accordance with the MNO Bylaws, which currently do not authorize the removal of MNO citizens by reason of a “Missing Documentation” or “Incomplete” file designation. Future steps, however, may be determined through the MNO’s province-wide consultations with all MNO citizens (as discussed below).

10. What are the next steps?

On May 28, 2021, the PCMNO passed a resolution approving of and directing the MNO administration to implement the following next steps related to the Registry Review:

1. Develop and release a series of communication tools in order to engage with MNO citizens on the outcomes of the Registry Review;
2. Undertake province-wide consultation with MNO citizens through a series of virtual Town Hall meetings open to all MNO citizens during the summer of 2021;
3. Develop a “What We Heard” report based on the province-wide consultations to be publicly released following review and consideration by the PCMNO; and
4. Based on the “What We Heard” report, look towards a province-wide vote (in Fall/Winter 2021) and/or Special Assembly on MNO citizenship (in Fall/Winter 2021 or early 2022, subject to public health and safety requirements) to guide further decision-making on next steps related to the Registry Review final report and/or potential amendments needed to the MNO Bylaws and MNO Registry Policy. ∞



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above: A virtual signing ceremony took place on May 4, 2021, where leadership from Region 4 signed a Regional Implementation Agreement with the MNO.
below: Signatures of the four "Honourary" witnesses



The Past is Present

Young descendants of 1850 Métis Petitioners witness historic signing in Sault Ste. Marie

Four young Métis people had the opportunity to witness history during a virtual signing ceremony on May 4, 2021 as local leadership of the Huron-Superior Regional Métis Community signed a Regional Implementation Agreement (RIA) with the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO).
Rayden Powley-Mortari, Memphis Powley and Morgan and Eizak Jensen acted as "honourary witnesses" to the signing. All four are descendants of Métis signatories to an 1850 Petition that sought to protect Métis lands at Sault Ste. Marie. For the regional Huron-Superior Métis community, the "honourary witnesses" represent an important connection to the past and a commitment to the future.
In 2019, the MNO and the Government of Canada signing a ground-breaking *Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement* that set out a new government-to-government relationship between Canada and Ontario Métis. The RIA signing on Tuesday is a significant step forward in implementing the hard fought gains secured in that landmark agreement.
"This is a big step forward for us," said Kim Powley, President of the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council. "When our family and community was put on trial, there was a total denial of our rights — this agreement puts that denial to an

end forever. Self-Government has always been the goal, but like they say 'a goal without a plan is just a wish.' We are no longer wishing, we are realizing."
PCMNO Councilor for Region 4 Mitch Case signed on behalf of the Region, MNO President Margaret Froh signed on behalf of the MNO, and Kim Powley and Yvonne Jensen signed on behalf of the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council and the North Channel Métis Council, respectively. The signing was witnessed by Steve Gjos, Todd Showan and Art Bennett as well as the four "honourary witnesses."
"Our communities have always been strongest when we are working together," said Yvonne Jensen, President of the North Channel Métis Council. "The regional approach to self-government in the RIA ensures our whole community is working together to build a strong Métis government. I am excited to see what we will build for my grandchildren, and all the grandchildren in our community."
In the coming months, the regional Métis community will develop a workplan and begin the process of community consultations with MNO citizens — all part of a process to build a stable, responsible, progressive, culturally grounded Métis Government to protect the rights, claims and interests of the generations yet to come. ∞



Métis Baby Bundle Kits now available!

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is pleased to announce a new resource for expectant Métis families, and those with new additions – THE MÉTIS BABY BUNDLE KIT!
The Baby Bundle Kit is a 100% **FREE** resource for any Métis parents or guardians who are expecting, or have a little one 8-months or younger. The Baby Bundle Kit includes an assortment of products for little one(s) that will be sent to families every month. The MNO Early Learning and Childcare Program has secured funds to cover the products and shipping fees so that the Baby Bundle Kit are 100% free.

In the Baby Bundle Kit:

- 'Hello Bello' brand Diapers (32) size 2
- Wipes (quantity 180)
- Diaper Rash Cream (118ml)
- Baby Shampoo & Wash (296ml)
- Baby Lotion (250ml)
- Baby Blanket (30" x 40")
- Infant Socks (1 pair, 0-6 months)
- Infant "I Aspire" Onesie (size 6 months)
- A copy of the Métis Baby Bundle Book

Baby Bundle Kit applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Parents/Guardians must be a MNO citizen
- Be pregnant or have a baby 0-8 months
- Reside in Ontario
- Must not be getting support from another Métis Government

Apply once for each child and a replacement box will be sent monthly until the child turns 8 months. Applications are available on the MNO programs portal page
For additional information or if you need help with the application please contact ELCC Operations Coordinator Melinda Konkle at MelindaK@metisnation.org or 289-213-1338. ∞

ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND HEALTHY CHOICES CANNABIS

Sharing circles for Métis youth

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Healing & Wellness Branch arranged virtual "Sharing Circles" for Métis youth in Ontario earlier this year. These online discussions provided a platform for Métis youth to share their opinions on vital issues, and contribute to the development of future educational resources and tools.
Program facilitators provided background information to attend-

ees and led participants through an open and respectful discussion. Youth participants ranged from ages 16-29 and met via Zoom to take part in the Sharing Circles.
The first two Sharing Circles took place on January 28 and February 24, and included discussions on human trafficking and legalized cannabis, respectively.
"We have found over the past few years that



youth-specific perspective has been a gap in our program development and education planning," says Jason Jamieson, Manager of Program Development. "This year our Anti-Human Trafficking and Healthy Choices Cannabis programs will facilitate youth Sharing Circles as part of their program work plans."
Youth engagement in these sessions will be critical, as their perspective will inform and shape

future program developments, and ensure that available programs and services are holistic, appropriate and culturally sensitive.
"The Métis Youth vision for a healthy future is vital to making sure that we build tools that will stand the test of time and be able to help as many people as possible," said Jason. "At this point the sky is the limit – we'll take what we learn and leverage into the future work plans of our programs." ∞

Statement from Métis Nation of Ontario on recent revelations from the sites of former Residential Schools

Across the nation, our communities are still reeling from the horrific discoveries at former residential school sites, and losses sustained and substantiated by Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation, Cowessess First Nation, the Lower Kootenay Band and, unfortunately, we know there will be more heartbreak to come. It is normal to grieve these losses. Not just of the lives, but of opportunities and potential stolen too from the survivors. They should have known fulfilling childhoods filled with happiness and joy, a pride in their culture, and above all, grown up surrounded by family and loved ones. This was not the reality.

We mourn for the children lost and we support the families eternally hurt by their passing. This news is another example of the unqualified genocide that took place over generations in this country, the ripple effects of which are still felt by Indigenous people across Canada.

Sadly, so many in the Métis Nation have close family members who attended residential and day school institutions and have been affected by the destructive policies that they implemented. The Government of Canada tried to undo and eliminate what made us who we are; our languages, our cultures, our beliefs and the very family and community structures that made our communities what they were. Our very presence here today shows they failed in their ultimate goal. Still, many of our community members were forever hurt and changed, and some never came back to us.

That collective pain did not go away. It continues to resonate today and has manifested itself in many ways. It is compounded by generations of crippling poverty and loss, the 60s scoop, and the ongoing reality of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit people. This is but a glimpse into the profound pain that is still felt by Métis, First Nations and Inuit communities.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Missing Children and Unmarked Burials Project released a full report with over 270 pages of evidence that laid out these facts to all Canadians. It identified 3,200 recorded deaths in the schools. It found that the government and the schools did not record the name of 32% of the students who died. In 23% of the cases, the government and the schools did not record the gender of the student who died. The government and the schools did not record the cause of death of 49% of students. And that doesn't include the thousands more who are estimated to have died with no records at all.

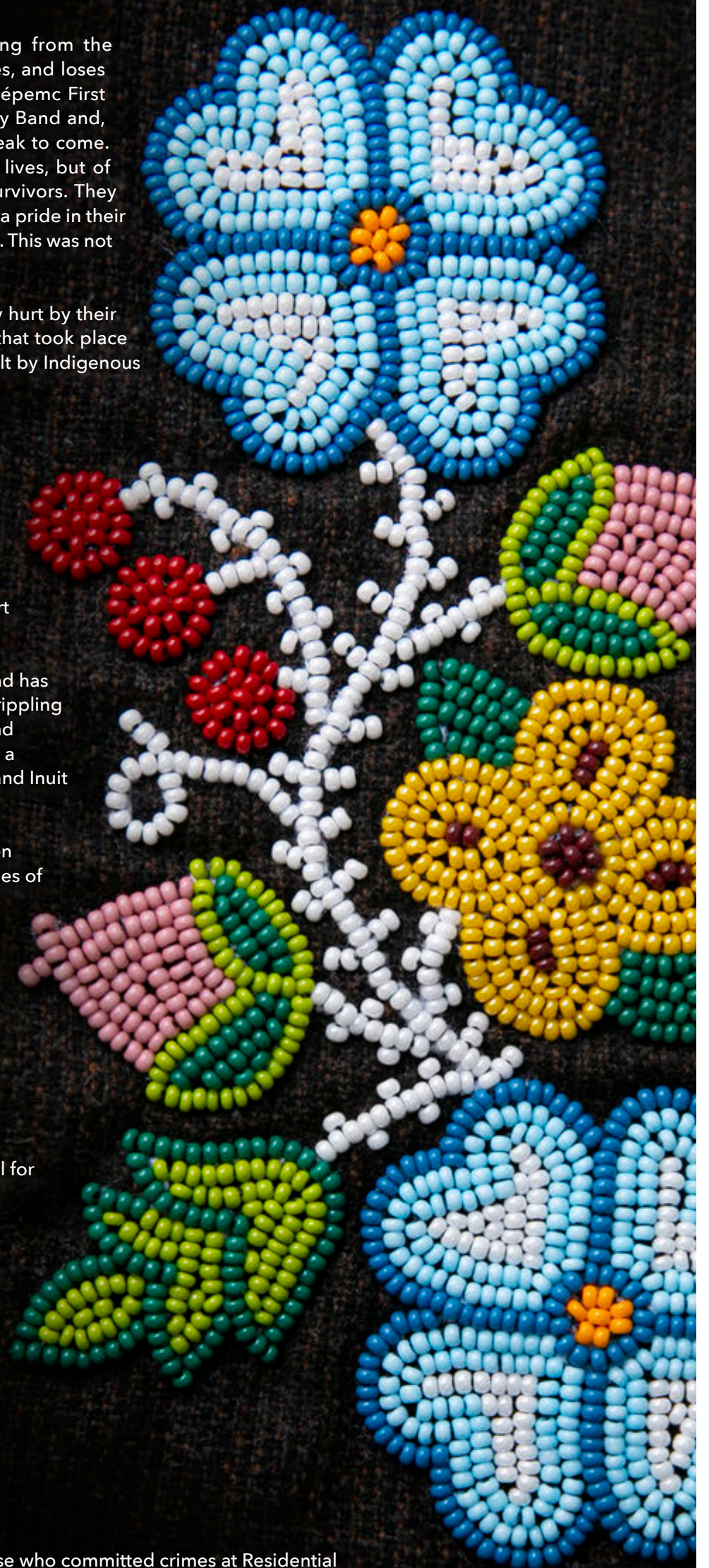
There cannot be reconciliation for families and communities without closure, and there cannot be closure without governments and faith institutions doing their part to help make that happen. We must all call for more action from our elected leaders and civil society. Thoughts and prayers are not enough to bring true reconciliation.

Six years ago, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission concluded its work and released its final report. It made 94 Calls to Action - to date it is unclear how many of those have been completed. In December 2020, the Yellowhead Institute reported only eight Calls to Action are complete. Today, we call on Canada to do the following:

- Immediately implement the remaining TRC Calls to Action - with particular attention to Volume 4 of the Final Report;
- Commit to a process to engage Métis governments across Canada to ensure the Métis experience within residential, boarding and day schools is finally told and addressed;
- Fully implement Jordan's Principle;
- Amend Canada's laws to allow for the criminal prosecution of those who committed crimes at Residential Schools;
- Acknowledge that the purpose of the Residential School system was the removal of Indigenous peoples from their lands in order to make way for settlement and resource extraction - and reform and implement a timely, effective and efficient Land-Back based policy for settling indigenous land related issues, including Métis land claim policy.

Together, we must do more.

SUPPORT: For MNO Citizens who are in crisis or require supports, please contact the MNO's 24-Hr Crisis Line at **1-877-767-7572**. A National Residential Schools Crisis Line has been set up to provide support for former students and those affected. Access emotional and crisis referral services by calling the 24-hr national crisis line at **1-866-925-4419**



MNO WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP GATHERING 2021

Celebrating Community Ties



Early on Sunday, March 21, 2021, Métis women from across the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) logged on to participate in the virtual Métis Women's Leadership Gathering: Celebrating Community Ties.

Over 60 women participated in the online gathering, hosted by the MNO Women's Council (MNOWC), engaging in cultural and leadership-oriented workshops, listening to a variety of presentations, and most importantly, connecting with one another in a safe, socially distanced way.

"It's been a little over a year since we all had a chance to gather and it's been far too long," said MNOWC President Suzanne Jackson. "I'm so glad that we can meet on this platform and learn from each other and share in one another's energy and spirit. We have so much planned and I'm thrilled to see so many people attending this virtual Women's Leadership Gathering!"

"There are many different ways to be a leader, whether it's a leader in your family,

a leader in your community, in your educational institutions, your workplace or your nation," shared MNO President Froh in her opening remarks. "There's many different ways to lead, but when I think of leadership, I look towards the positive. I focus on how we can work together to accomplish amazing things, and always coming from a place of respect."

Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Carolyn Bennett echoed those sentiments and emphasized the importance of collaboration in making true progress, particularly in fully restoring the role of women as leaders within communities.

"Your input today will be invaluable, which is the reasons why days like today are so important," commented Minister Bennett. "[Today] you'll examine what leadership is, and how it may be done in an inclusive way that honours people with expertise and lived experience — which is necessary in order to move forward with the very best policies and practices."

From the Opening Prayer led by Elder Peal Gabona, to the reading of the Four Agreements by Kelly Camacho and video greetings from Senator Yvonne Boyer, many Métis women leaders contributed to the dialogues and conversations taking place Sunday.

Key note speaker and Le Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak (LFMO) President Melanie Omeniho and Lisa Pigeau presented on Gender Based Analysis (GBA), and, significantly,



Lots of love went into the creation of Kokum Dolls during a workshop at the 2021 Women's Leadership Gathering.

actions to address and respond to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG).

"We should all be able to live in a place where we don't have to worry about our young women or 2SLGBT being exposed to the level of violence they've had to experience," said President Omeniho.

The afternoon sessions began with a presentation on inclusivity and the MNO Two-Spirit Working Group led by Benny Michaud; and

later Métis Veterans Lisa Tessier, June Smart, Sharlene Lance, and Shelly Claus discussed the role of Métis veterans within the community. MNO staff and leadership spoke of new supports related to Covid-19 and mental health; and facilitator Joan Riggs led a discussion on strategic planning.

The Gathering agenda also ensured participants had fun, cultural activities woven throughout the day. MNOWC President Suzanne Jackson led a workshop on apron embroidery, speaking to its symbolism and historical significance in Métis culture; and Berni Picco taught attendees how to create their own Kokum dolls.

The virtual experience proved to be a great success, and attendees came away from the event with an enhanced sense of inclusivity, community and sisterhood. Women appreciated having a safe space to share and gain traditional knowledge, promote a sense of wellbeing, and benefit from a network of strong Métis women leaders.

"We wanted the community to feel like a community, especially during these challenging times," shared Breena Johnson, MNO Project Coordinator. "Even if Citizens are self-isolating or in quarantine, we want them to feel included."

The MNO extends its gratitude and appreciation to the hard work and valued insights of all who organized and participated in this year's Women's Leadership Gathering. ∞



Online Bannock-making demonstration at the 2021 March Break Camp.



MNO Infinite Reach March Break Camp 2021

Métis youth culture camp a *virtual* success

Métis youth from across the province were immersed, digitally, in their culture learning beading, finger-weaving and even taking a virtual nature walk as part of the Métis Nation of Ontario's (MNO) annual March Break Culture Camp on April 12-14, 2021.

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, for the second year, the camp has moved online.

Participants of the camp, Métis high school students between Grades 10-12, spent three days learning about their Métis culture and post-secondary education and programs offered by the MNO to help them in their post-secondary journey.

"This was great!" said Andrew (Maurice), a participant in the camp. "I liked learning about post-secondary school. Even if I don't have an idea of where I'm going quite yet I have an idea of resources the MNO offers that I can go to if I need help."

On day one of the three-day event the participants had a meet

and greet with MNO President Margaret Froh.

"These camps are one of the most important ways we try to help our young citizens learn and experience their culture," said President Froh.

"One of our main goals has always been to help Métis youth to succeed and the Infinite Reach March Break camp is the perfect avenue for that."

The camp was also attended by facilitators from the MNO's Infinite Reach program, current upper year post-secondary students, who introduce the high school students to what post-secondary is all about. The Infinite Reach Network is designed to ease the transition of Métis high school students to post-secondary by creating a community where Métis students can share experiences and support one another in their academic pursuits.

On day two the students got a bit of culture—learning about traditional Métis beading, winter survival skills, and finger weaving. And, on the academic side, they received instruction in resume and cover letter

writing.

On the final day MNO staff walked the participants through the different programs and services offered by the MNO and its various branches.

They also learned how to make bannock and syrup, as well as facts about fur trapping and its importance to Métis culture. The March Break Camp finished strong with a virtual nature walk through the Canadian Ecology Centre and traditional Métis games.

It has become tradition at the March Break camps to present the students with their very own sashes. The tradition continued online as a Métis sash was included in the package of materials they received in the mail prior to the Camp.

There are several culture camps hosted by the MNO throughout the year, visit metisnation.org for more information on when the next one will be held. ∞



Let Us Help! MNO Mental Health & Advocacy

The Métis Nation of Ontario is offering access to Métis culturally specific mental health supports for adults, youth and families in Ontario. Delivered in person where possible or via videoconference or telephone, this program connects Métis people to specialized professionals in French and English:

**24hr
CRISIS LINE
1-877-767-7572**

For non-urgent matters or help navigating mental health and addictions supports contact: **613-549-1674 x.307** or **1-800-263-4889** (toll free) or via email: **video@metisnation.org**

Métis Nation
of Ontario ∞

TWO-SPIRIT (LGBTQ+) LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM

A Place in the Circle

For Two-Spirit identifying Métis folks, having a place in the circle is a historically significant and cherished right. Our Indigenous ancestors had long celebrated 2SLGBTQ+ individuals for their unique gifts and contributions; and today Métis continue to find ways to honour this “community within a community” for their valued insights and perspectives.

Earlier this year, 42 individuals from across the province and the rainbow, met virtually to take part in the first annual Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Two-Spirit LGBTQ+ Leadership Symposium: A Place in the Circle. The day-long online event on February 20, 2021 featured several notable speakers, from MNO President Margaret Froh, to singer-songwriter Amanda Rheame and Métis author Cherie Dimaline.

“I’m so glad we’re in a world now, where we can have a gathering like this,” said President Froh in her welcoming address. “Where we can see ourselves reflected, where we have the space to articulate who we are, what our challenges are, and a space where we can share all of that with one another.”

Sharing her own personal journey, President Froh also reflected on the value of leadership, a theme that underscored discussions that highlighted how, for Métis, true leadership doesn’t come from power or titles, it comes from a place of compassion, motivation, and a desire to help others in your community.

The symposium began with welcoming remarks by MNO Citizen Benny Michaud, who spoke to the incredible efforts of the MNO



Speakers MNO President Margaret Froh, Benny Michaud, Amanda Rheame, and Cherie Dimaline.

Two-Spirit Working Group and allies, whose hard work made the event possible. The MNO Two-Spirit Working Group was born out of a 2016 AGA resolution that sought to establish a safe space for 2SLGBTQ+ Ontario Métis to meet, discuss and advance important issues impacting the community.

“Over the last three years, we’ve been bringing Métis Two-Spirit and LGBTQ folks from across the province together, and we’ve been having conversations about what resources our communities need to support our health and well-being,” shared Benny. “And we’ve been able to work with folks within the MNO to

create opportunities for learning and building awareness. It’s been a fantastic journey so far.”

“This is the coolest thing ever!” remarked singer-songwriter Amanda Rheame. Amanda, who penned the MNO song “We Aspire”, shared some of her own journey navigating her Indigenous, queer and artistic identity. “After talking to [organizers] I feel so empowered, inspired and encouraged to share a bit of my story.”

The power of story-telling was also explored by Cherie Dimaline, Métis author of the Governor-General’s Award winning *The Marrow Thieves*, who discussed the value of queer nar-

ratives in literature.

“[When writing *The Marrow Thieves*] I wrote what I knew—a love story between two Indigenous men. It was the best thing that I could think of to share with community,” explained Cherie. “I think a lot about the queer community and the Indigenous community in terms of literature, separately and also, of course, where we intersect.”

The afternoon featured a panel discussion, “A Return to the Circle,” which focused on Two-Spirit resilience and reclamation with insight from a variety of speakers. Other highlights from the event include a video on Two-Spirit Awareness and a presentation on services provided by MNO Healing & Wellness. Following the formal conference, a beading workshop was held for 2SLGBTQ+ folks to keep the conversations going into the evening.

Participants shared how meaningful it was to develop and participate in a space that both empowers and fosters leadership within the 2SLGBTQ+ community. Everyone looked forward to future events. Organizers expressed gratitude for all attendees, especially those who had the courage to speak openly about their experiences:

“There is nothing more powerful than the gathering of voices,” shared Benny. “We haven’t had an opportunity like this in the past to come together as a community within a community and share our experiences. We are once again being valued in the way that we once were within our communities. We’ve come a long way, and Two-Spirit people are again, part of the circle.” ∞

MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO

Métis Child, Youth & Family Services Project

The MNO Métis Child, Youth & Family Services Project Team hosted virtual engagement sessions for citizens in Regions 2-9 in February and March 2021. The purpose of these sessions was for citizens to inform the creation of a vision of wellbeing for Métis children, youth, families and communities across Ontario. They were asked to consider the challenges their communities face as they interact with the current child welfare system. In addition, participants were asked about the types of supports that could prevent negative outcomes for Métis children, youth and families as related to child welfare. They were asked to engage with the questions with the aim of informing a new, or reimagined system, to meet their unique needs.

The Project Team received great feedback from citizens who were enthusiastic about this topic and expressed interest in being included



in future sessions. Information sessions were hosted from June 23-25 to summarize the project activities and “what we heard” at the last sessions.

A summary report was also created and is accessible on the MNO website, titled,

“Nothing About Us Without US”. The report includes a broader Vision of wellbeing that is informed by citizens that attended the sessions. The next steps of this project includes the design phase which will include engagement sessions to focus on assisting communities with achieving this vision; for example, what are the elements of system(s) design that should be considered to achieve this vision? Examples of the elements will be presented for feedback and further discussion.

Questions about this project or upcoming events can be sent to Alisha Kaba at Alishak@metisnation.org. ∞

Find more information here:
bit.ly/2VE5bwv



Good Governance & Best Practices Training session for MNO Councils

On Saturday March 27, 2021 Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Community Councils, MNO Advisory Councils, MNO Regional Consultation Committees and members of the PCMNO participated in a day-long Good Governance and Best Practices Training Session via Zoom with Bob Plamondon and Associates.

Key topics included:

- Council Mandate and Purpose
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Fiduciary Duty Relationship to the MNO
- Ethics and Conflicts
- Financial Management Planning
- Oversight and Risk Management
- Delegation of Authority and Use of Committees
- Strategies for Effective Meetings
- Conflict Resolution and Personal Conduct

A video recap of the Good Governance and Best Practices Training session is available on the MNO website and Métis Nation of Ontario YouTube channel: bit.ly/3Ancpnd or www.metisnation.org and search “Good Governance and Best Practices”

MNO Statement to Citizens regarding litigation

APRIL 1, 2021 -- The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) has initiated court proceedings against the actions of Clément Chartier when he was the Métis National Council (MNC) President, as well as actions he has taken in the name of the MNC since the expiry of his term almost a year ago.

We want you to know that the decision to go to the court was not taken lightly. As we have reported to the MNO Annual General Assembly, during town hall meetings and discussed many times during meetings of the Provisional Council of the MNO (PCMNO),

we have made every effort to exhaust all other options in order to work to address these matters in an appropriate forum. Based upon recent developments, it has become apparent that we have no other option.

We know that following our court filing, the Chartier/Chartand communications machine, paid for by the millions of dollars the MNC receives, will kick into full gear with further misinformation and spin. These sort of media spectacles embarrass all of us, but some Métis leaders seek and relish this spotlight. The MNO’s leadership does not.

Instead, the MNO has and will continue to rely on information and facts. Please feel free to share and circulate this information to anyone who may have questions about the MNO and its history with the MNC: metisnation.org/thefacts.

Available online is a letter that was sent out of respect to our fellow Métis Governments and MNC General Assembly members providing them with notice of the upcoming court proceedings.

We will keep our leadership and citizens updated as the litigation advances. ∞

MNO shortlisted for Housing Supply Challenge

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) recognizes that we all have a right to affordable housing, and MNO's Housing & Infrastructure team is working diligently to make this a reality. So, when a unique opportunity to work with Canada on targeted housing strategies presented itself, the MNO's Housing & Infrastructure branch sprang into action.

Earlier this year, MNO's Housing & Infrastructure branch submitted an application to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) Housing Supply Challenge, a competitive, national initiative that aims to remove and reduce barriers to affordable housing. This month MNO was thrilled to learn they had been selected as one of 21 shortlisted organizations.

As a shortlisted applicant, the MNO receives \$200,000 in funding for the exploratory stages of the Housing Challenge; and, if selected as a finalist, will share a pool of \$22.5 million in additional funding to further develop and implement their proposal.

The MNO's application recognised that the lack of Métis-specific housing data makes developing targeted strategies for Métis challenging. To address this problem, the MNO will mine and update available data to generate a Métis-specific strategy that will ultimately increase the housing supply for Métis across Ontario.

The Housing Supply Challenge consists of six rounds spanning the next five years, each with a unique focus; such as Northern Housing, Construction Technology, and Public Perception

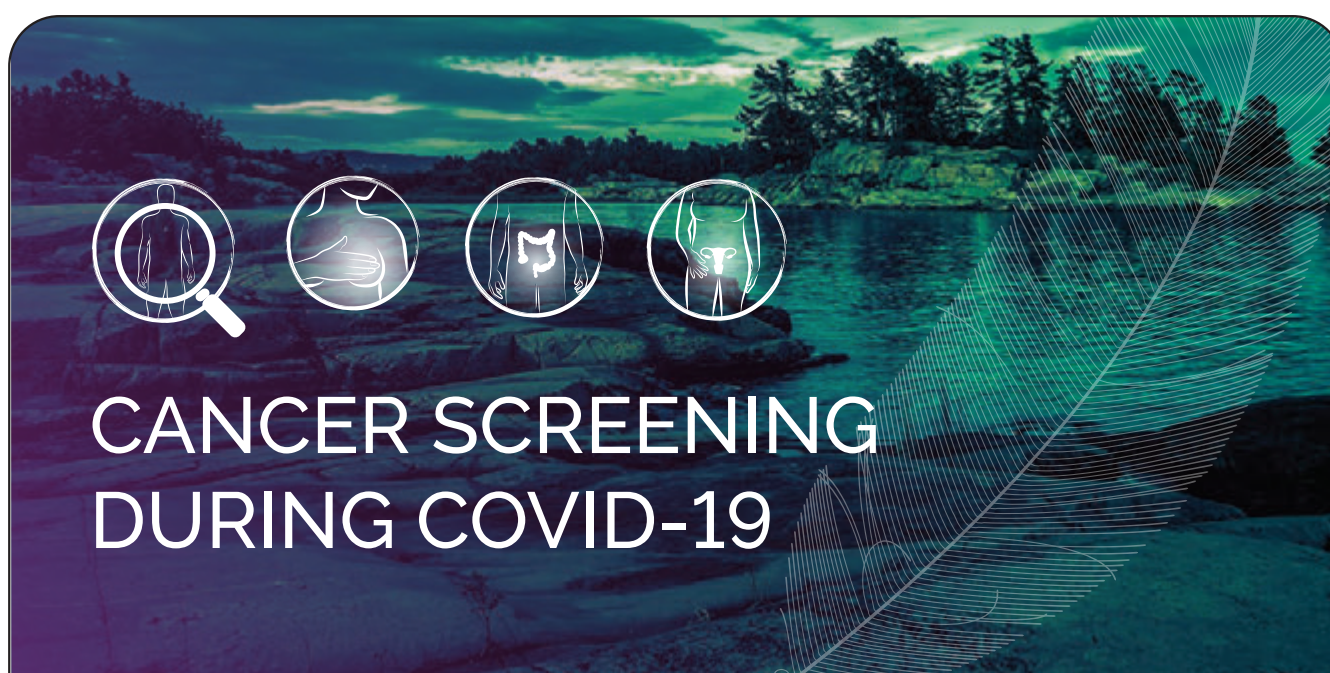
of New Developments.

Having made the shortlist for stage one, the MNO now turns its attention to the challenge's second stage. In this predevelopment stage, MNO Housing & Infrastructure will develop local solutions to remove barriers to the development of affordable housing.

By taking advantage of CMHC resources and engaging in critical new research, the MNO is on a path towards developing a comprehensive, data-driven system to inform Métis housing strategies, policies, and investments. Access to safe, affordable housing

benefits us all. By building partnerships and making strategic investments, the MNO is continuing its work to ensure all Métis Citizens have a place to call home. A huge thanks and marsii to all involved in making affordable housing for Métis both accessible and a priority. ∞

Visit our website (metisnation.org) to learn more about [MNO Housing & Infrastructure](#) and supports such as the [Métis Housing Stabilization Program](#) and [Home Improvement Pilot Program](#).



Cancer Screening Tests are Starting Again

Healthcare providers are gradually resuming routine cancer screening tests. The gradual re-start is to ensure the safety of the public and healthcare staff during COVID-19.

There may be delays in resuming screening due to COVID-19 safety measures that may limit the number of people who can be screened each day and to allow healthcare providers to rebook any appointments that were cancelled while services were on pause.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Breast Screening: Contact your local Ontario Breast Screening Program site

Colon and Cervical Screening: Contact your family doctor or nurse practitioner. If you do not have a family doctor or nurse practitioner, you can contact Health Care Connect by calling 1-800-445-1822 or visiting ontario.ca/healthcareconnect

If you have any questions, you can call Ontario Health (Cancer Care Ontario) toll-free at **1-866-662-9233** from Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. or email cancerinfo@ontariohealth.ca

For information about COVID-19, please visit Covid-19.ontario.ca



MNO Citizen Matt LeMay named Canadian Geographic filmmaker-in-residence

Congratulations to award-winning filmmaker and MNO citizen Matt LeMay, who was recently selected as Canadian Geographic's inaugural "Filmmaker-in-Residence!"

Matt has a long-standing history of working alongside the MNO to bring Métis stories to life on screen. His unique talents and story-telling flair will be an asset to this new program, and we wish him luck as he continues his work elevating and amplifying Indigenous voices through film! ∞

Find out more here: bit.ly/3Az0HpH

NAVIGATING MÉTIS SELF-GOVERNMENT

With our core Self-Government Agreement in hand, the MNO is moving forward together to build a constitution and implement self-government. And we want to ensure that all MNO regions and communities are engaged in that process in a way that makes sense for them. Join the journey!

1 GET STARTED

Each of MNO's 9 Regions draft and sign a Regional Implementation Agreement (RIA). The RIAs are customized to the unique needs and concerns of each Region. They also include common principles that ensure all voices will be heard and all MNO communities are properly supported.

2 GET ORGANIZED

Next, Regional Implementation Committees (RIC) will be formed with representation from each MNO community council in the Region. The RICs will develop work plans to build capacity and engage MNO Citizens within the Region, and address any unique concerns the region has when it comes to self-government.

3 RECOGNIZE OUR SUCCESSES

As MNO communities and citizens work together to build our vision for the future, the Government of Canada will pass a new federal law ('federal recognition legislation') that recognizes and cements our Self-Government Agreement in Canadian law.

4 WE BUILD IT TOGETHER

Community by community, all MNO citizens will be engaged to contribute their ideas, ask questions and, importantly, listen to one another. Through collaboration and consensus, we will build a Métis Government that is fair, worthy of respect, and true to our values.

5 CRAFT A MÉTIS CONSTITUTION

With the contributions and ideas of all MNO citizens, and inspired by the values and traditions of our ancestors, a Constitution will be drafted.

6 BUILD OUR CORE MÉTIS LAWS

We will build Métis Laws on citizenship, leadership selection and internal operations to provide a strong foundation for our Métis Government and future generations of Métis in Ontario.

7 RATIFY AND MOVE OUR MÉTIS GOVERNMENT FORWARD!

With our Métis Laws in place and all other Self-Government Agreement requirements met, we will hold a province-wide referendum to approve our Constitution and the Self-Government Agreement. Once ratified by the Métis Citizens, we will move forward with Métis Self-Government in Ontario!



More info and updates at the website:
www.metisnation.org/self-government

LET'S NAVIGATE MÉTIS SELF-GOVERNMENT TOGETHER!

On June 27, 2019, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and the Government of Canada (Canada) signed the MNO-Canada Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement (the “Self-Government Agreement”).

The signing of the Self-Government Agreement was an historic victory for Métis citizens and communities represented by the MNO. In the Self-Government Agreement, Canada recognizes — for the first time in history—that

the Métis communities represented by the MNO hold the inherent right to self-government and self-determination.

The Self-Government Agreement also provides a clear path for the MNO to transform into a recognized public Indigenous government. After this transition, the new Métis Government will have recognized law-making powers in the areas of citizenship, leadership selection, and internal operations.

The Self-Government Agreement “locked in” these steps, so they cannot be swept away by changing political winds or circumstances. In this way, the Self-Government

Agreement “sets the table” for the next steps that the MNO will take to implement the agreement. The very first step in this process will be extensive consultation and engagement with Métis citizens and communities on the Self-Government Agreement and the development of a Constitution.

The time is now to be a part of this historic journey and continue the work of our Métis ancestors and leaders.

Get ready to join the conversation and help build our future Métis government together! ∞

**WHY DOES MÉTIS
SELF-GOVERNMENT
MATTER?**

**WHAT MÉTIS VALUES
SHOULD GUIDE US IN
SELF-GOVERNMENT?**

**HOW DO WE ALL
WORK TOGETHER?
WHO DOES WHAT?**

*Alo, I will be your Métis
guide on this journey.*

MEET OUR MÉTIS GUIDE!

In the shape of the infinity symbol and full of joie de vivre, our guide will be sharing Self-Government information and updates on the journey ahead. Like this tidbit! Did you know that our Métis guide was inspired by artwork created by Métis artist and illustrator Jeff Wilson. Jeff also illustrated *The Tiny Voyageur* and *Story of the Tamarack*.

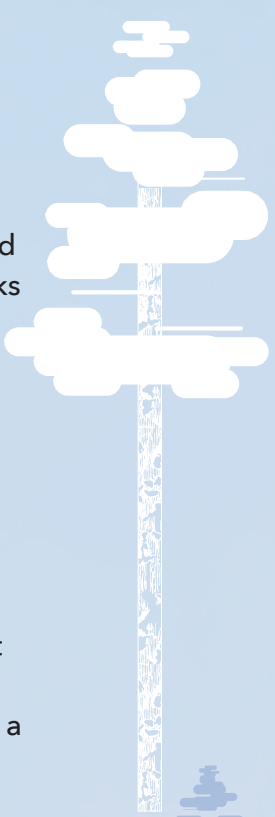
NAME OUR MÉTIS GUIDE!

Help us name our Métis guide by dropping us a line at our email address **Self.Government@metisnation.org**. Watch our social media for more from our guide!

THE LOBSTICK

In the days of the fur trade, lobsticks were used as a tool by Métis to navigate the complex waterways of what is now Ontario. The tallest pine, tamarack or spruce trees made the best lobsticks. The lower branches would be stripped to make them into a kind of traffic sign. Lobsticks could mark a portage, harvesting area, food cache, warn of rough water ahead or signal safe harbour. They could also be climbed and used as a lookout, and in certain circumstances would be crafted as gifts to honour important people.

The lobstick is deeply embedded in fur trade culture and symbolizes our rich Métis past. That is why we included a lobstick in the MNO Self-Government logo. The lobstick is a beacon and a guide on our journey to Self-Government...and will remain so well into the future.



OUR MÉTIS HISTORY, OUR STORIES

This is one of a series of historical vignettes that highlight Métis history in Ontario. Look for more in upcoming issues.

Moving Lives

Georgian Bay and Environs Historic Métis Community

As the ice melted on Lake Huron in spring 1829, the Drummond Island Métis packed up their belongings and crowded into bateaus, destined for Penetanguishene.

Michael Labatte, a Métis voyageur, made the two-week journey along the northern shore of Georgian Bay. "Several families started together," he remembered. "We camped at Thessalon River, Mississauga River, Serpent River, La Cloche, She-bon-aw-ning, Moose Point, and other places along the way." For the Laramée family, the trip took nearly one month. Rosette Laramée described traveling with her parents and siblings "in a large bateau with two other families and a span of horses."

When they reached Penetanguishene, travelers were greeted by the sight of the British military post overlooking the harbour. Angelique Longlade, just thirteen years old at the time of the migration, remembered setting up camp beside the post: "We come Gordon's pinte; mak wigam cedar bark, stay dare leetle tam; wait for land."

Families began to reknit threads of their community, living and working together as they had on Drummond Island. Men found work in fishing, lumbering, and guiding, while other families farmed. Even as these economic opportunities called later generations to Georgian Bay's eastern shores, the descendants of the Drummond Island Métis remained connected, living in neighbouring households and acting as godparents and witnesses for important life events.



Four Voyageurs, 1895

The descendants of Drummond Islanders such as Lewis Solomon, John Brissette, James Laramée, and Francois Dusome, pictured here, have remained in Penetanguishene and the Georgian Bay region for generations. Today, 85 percent of Métis in Georgian Bay trace their ancestry to this Historic Métis Community.

Credit: A.C. Osborne

Penetanguishene Harbour, 1818

Credit: Simcoe County Archives



Port Collier at Drummond Island

Métis and their forebearers lived on Drummond Island for 14 years before migrating to Penetanguishene. They had been uprooted several times before as Britain and the United States struggled for dominance in the region, subjecting the Métis who resided there to constant upheaval and dispersal.

Credit: Toronto Public Library, 902-1-20 Call IV

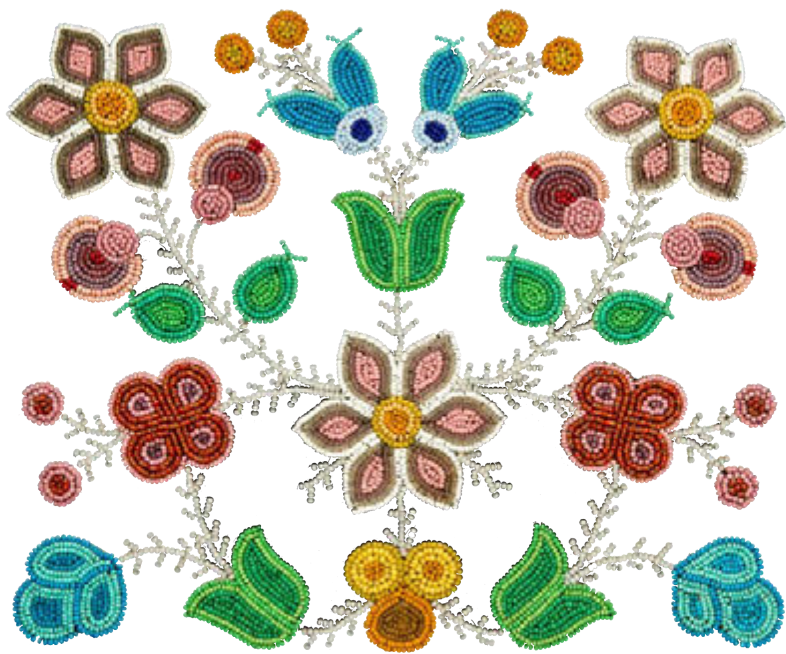


Unloading Bateaux

Bateaus (or batteaux, batoes) were a familiar mode of travel for the Drummond Island Métis, many of whom would have used them for long hauls of goods in the fur trade. The bateau's stability on rough waters and capacity for heavy loads made them well-suited to carry the uprooted Métis and their belongings to Penetanguishene.

Credit: Library and Archives Canada, Acc. No. R9266-330 Peter Winkworth Collection of Canadians

MNO EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE



MNO EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE

MNO’s second annual ELCC Professional Learning Conference

Over 110 educators, professionals, and community leaders gathered for three days of workshops and conversations during the Métis Nation of Ontario’s (MNO) second annual Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Professional Learning Conference.

Delivered through a distinctly Métis lens, the online conference helped ELCC professionals gain a better understanding of the Métis people in Ontario.

“There is a knowledge gap with regard to Métis in the field of Early Learning,” shared Amanda Pont-Shanks, MNO Early Learning and Child Care Manager. “Many educators have said that they do not feel comfortable teaching Métis content as they do not have knowledge on who the Métis are, or they worry about presenting incorrect information. We hope to provide educators working in the field an opportunity to learn more about the Métis people, MNO programs and services and to connect them to resources,

Community Councils, MNO staff, Métis artisans and vendors.”

The conference agenda featured a blend of information on programs and supports for educators and early learners, Métis cultural activities, and targeted discussions on navigating the virtual learning landscape. Participants were invited to Breakout Room Learning Workshops, “*Incorporating Métis Culture in (Virtual) Learning*,” with topics ranging from Métis beadwork, to mental health supports, and Métis books, educational resources, and cultural items.

“Even given the virtual setting, participants felt they were in a welcome and open space to share experiences and ask questions,” says Alison Tryl, ELCC Program Coordinator. “People really loved the Métis 101 and are looking forward to the resources in development under the MNO ELCC Program.”

The MNO ELCC program is continuously working to inform local, provincial and federal initiatives on Early Learning and Child Care so they better reflect the diverse and

distinct needs of Métis early years’ youth (0-12 years) in Ontario by:

- Addressing existing gaps in services
- Assessing the inclusivity of those services for Métis children and youth,
- Determining ways to make mainstream programming more culturally appropriate, and
- Exploring opportunities for new program involvement and delivery

The ELCC program offers many services for Métis families including: the Child Care Subsidy Program; Extra Curricular Support Program; and Early Learning Educational Support Advocates (coming soon!). ELCC staff can also make referrals to the MNO Mental Health team so children can access assessments or other supports, such as speech or occupational therapy. ∞

To learn more about the MNO ELCC supports and programs, visit the MNO website: bit.ly/3lUpXCN

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE

Community Engagements

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is conducting research and engagements to inform the future of early learning and childcare (ELCC) for Métis families across the province. The goal of this initiative is to provide MNO with information to enhance their understanding of MNO Citizens’ needs as they relate to ELCC and of the current trends in childcare across Ontario.

As part of this initiative, DPRA Canada has been hired by MNO to support two forms of engagement (virtual town hall sessions

and online survey) on ELCC services in MNO communities. From January to March 2021, engagements were held across MNO’s 9 regions. The engagements included MNO Regional and Community Council leadership, Métis parents and families, and MNO Citizens.

Information will be collected on the accessibility of services, desired services, and challenges and opportunities for providing services; and will be used to inform future ELCC initiatives within the MNO. ∞

MNO helps families navigate the school system

Early Learning Education Support Advocacy Program

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is pleased to offer the Early Learning Education Support Advocacy (ESA) Program. This program provides support to Métis children ages one to six (1-6) through advocacy and navigation services for families seeking support within the Early Years system and transitioning from kindergarten to Grade 1. In the childcare setting, the ELCC ESA capitalizes on the opportunity to support the Métis child through collaboration with the child’s early years’ educators. The ELCC ESA brings together parents or guardians of the Métis child to discuss the recommendations for resources and supports made by either the external community-based partners or internally through the MNO.

The Program is offered to Métis families across Ontario who are experiencing issues or challenges in the following areas:

- Developmental needs
- Social isolation
- Individual Education Planning
- Behavioural Planning
- Specialized placement for children with exceptionalities
- Mental health or learning disabilities
- Communications within early years’ settings

For more information on how to qualify for this new program, visit the MNO website or contact Madison Frias, Supervisor of Early Learning and Child Care by email at: MadisonF@metisnation.org. ∞

MNO launches online Métis Early Learning Family Socials

Earlier this year, the Métis Nation of Ontario Early Learning and Child Care (MNO-ELCC) team was happy to announce a new online initiative for Métis early learners (ages 0-12) and their families: *Métis Early Learning Family Socials!*

The first Métis Early Learning Family Social event took place on Family Day, February 6, 2021, with a focus on family and the importance of spending time connecting with one another. Families learned about Métis culture, history and way-of-life from an early learning perspective; and children took part in hands-on play-based cultural activities in a safe and engaging manner.

In addition to the cultural activities and quality

time spent with their families, Métis parents also had the opportunity to learn more about the MNO’s available programs and services; including new supports for early learners.

The Virtual Family Socials returned again in May 2021 for a special “Parent Appreciation” workshop which focused on healing blankets and their histories. Similar to other ELCC workshops, all materials are provided to Métis families free of charge.

Be sure to check the MNO website and social media for announcements on future ELCC Virtual Family Socials! ∞





MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO

COVID-19 RELIEF PROGRAMS & HOTLINE

Find out more or apply:

www.metisnation.org/covid-19
NEW

COVID-19 RENT SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

Due to new funding from the Social Service Relief Fund (SSRF), the MNO through the COVID-19 Rent Supplement Program is able to provide short-term rent supplement support to help cover 3 months of rent up to \$1500 as a one-time payment. This service is available to any Indigenous person in need of support as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information please contact: adrienneb@metisnation.org or phone at **1-807-355-9062**

COVID-19 PROGRAM

COVID-19 HOUSING STABILIZATION PROGRAM

The MNO has launched a housing stabilization program to provide aid to those: facing eviction and have received an eviction notice from their landlord; who are precariously housed and need short term shelter support (e.g motel stay); who are homeless. Contact: housingstabilization@metisnation.org or phone at **1-800-263-4889** xxt. 350

COVID-19 PROGRAM

EMERGENCY INCOME RELIEF BENEFIT

MNO Citizens who have lost income due to COVID-19 can receive \$2,000 or \$2,750 per Métis family to assist in paying for expenses (mortgage payments, utilities, etc.). To learn more: covid.metisnation.org

COVID-19 PROGRAM

TABLET SUPPORT FOR SENIORS

To support our Senior Citizens during these unprecedented times of isolation the MNO is pleased to announce electronic device support services for seniors who are experiencing isolation from family and friends. Contact: **(705) 722-5022** Ext. **302** or by email at housingprograms@metisnation.org

COVID-19 PROGRAM

CHILD CARE SUPPORT

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is pleased to offer the COVID-19 Child Care Support Program to help Métis families access safe high-quality child care during the COVID-19 pandemic. All Métis families who meet the qualifications are encouraged to apply. To apply: covid.metisnation.org

COVID-19 PROGRAM

COVID-19 CARE KITS

In an effort to manage and mitigate the spread of the coronavirus in our communities, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is offering COVID-19 Care Kits to Citizens and their families who are currently caring for a sick family member, or are considered a high risk household.

COVID-19 PROGRAM

SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT

Through the Special Needs Support Program, MNO Citizens with children aged 0-21 years with special needs can receive a one-time benefit of \$500 per child up to a maximum of \$2,000 per family to provide assistance during this time of physical distancing. To learn more: covid.metisnation.org

COVID-19 PROGRAM

BENEVOLENT FUND

The Métis Nation of Ontario is pleased to announce the establishment of a Benevolent Fund. This fund is intended to provide financial support to Métis families who have experienced a loss in their family as of March 15, 2020 or later.

For more information please contact: benevolentfund@metisnation.org or phone at **1-800-263-4889** Ext. **277**

COVID-19 PROGRAM

EMERGENCY FAMILY SUPPORTS

For MNO Citizens with children aged 0-12:

MNO Emergency Family Fund. Families may be eligible to receive a one-time benefit of \$500 per child, to a maximum of \$2,000.

MNO Food Security Fund for Children. Families can receive up to \$600 (\$200 monthly for three months) to purchase food to support child nutrition.

MNO Technology Fund for Children. A one-time benefit of \$500 to assist in purchasing technology for children to support learning at home.

To learn more: covid.metisnation.org

We are still here to help! MNO COVID-19 Hotline

If you have COVID-19 related concerns, need help accessing supports, or have questions regarding the MNO's response to the pandemic contact:

Email: covidhelp@metisnation.org Phone (Toll Free): **1-800-263-4889**

COMMUNITY

NORTH BAY MÉTIS COUNCIL

MNO Council seeking submissions for Métis time capsule

Louis Riel urged us to: “cherish our inheritance ... to preserve it ... for the youth of the future.”

The North Bay Métis Council is setting out to do just that with a Legacy Preservation Project.

The Council is **inviting submissions of items to be included in a Métis Nation of Ontario time capsule.** MNO Community Councils and Citizens from all Regions are invited to participate in a movement that will help protect and preserve our heritage.

Submissions of items to be included:

- letters;
- books;
- artwork;
- crafts;
- photographs;
- recordings; and
- whatever else you would like to share.

Write about our accomplishments, current events or give well wishes to future Métis generations.

The time capsule will be set in place on Louis Riel Day--November 16th, 2021--and will be opened on the 200th anniversary of the tragic execution of Riel that the 16th marks -- in the year 2085.

We are living through an unprecedented time that will make its way into history books. Let's add an inspiring chapter to our history by coming together to build a gift of hope and inspiration - a gift that demonstrates the resilience of the Métis Nation of Ontario! ∞

To help us protect and preserve our Métis culture, mail in your submission with submission form to:

**Legacy Preservation Project
P.O. BOX 1410
North Bay, Ontario
P1B 8K6**



Left to Right: **Councillor Cheryl Hooker; President Kathleen Anderson; Chair Steve Shales; Senator Gloria Thomson; and Treasurer Carol Gemme.**

THAMES BLUEWATER MÉTIS COUNCIL

Council delivers harvest hampers

Over 120 Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Citizens and their family members have benefited from the “Winter Harvest Hamper Giveaway” recently organized by the Thames Bluewater Métis Council (TBWMC).

Thanks to the efforts of the Council, more than 40 food hampers were distributed to the community on March 13, 2021. The Winter Harvest Hampers in-

cluded oats, maple syrup, chicken, pork chops, hamburgers and other canned goods.

“Many people are struggling financially and emotionally right now due to the pandemic, and so it's nice to be able to help our Citizens in this meaningful way,” said TBWMC President Kathleen Anderson.

The TBWMC hopes that giveaways like the Winter Harvest

Hamper can help Citizens feel connected and supported.

“For some, like our elders, the hampers make a big difference in what they can afford to eat. It's also a bright spot in the days of our Citizens to have someone come by for a visit, even if just for a short period of time,” says President Anderson.

Big thanks go out to the TBWMC for their efforts and service to the Métis community! ∞.



Left to Right: **Georgian Bay Métis Council members distribute Mothers Day gifts to community members.**

GEORGIAN BAY MÉTIS COUNCIL

Mother's Day on the bay

Submitted by
Greg Garrett, President
Georgian Bay Métis Council

Mothers day 2021 GBMC organized a dual event of conservation and remembrance. The harvesting committee ordered trees from Severn Sound Environmental agency. Fish was sourced from Manitoulin trout farms who donated so much to our Christmas hampers last year as well as a generous donation from Bernie and Sandi of B LePage fishery, potatoes again from Cim Maurice and Fer-Mar farms and calendars produced by the council with past events and program contacts and much more.

Citizens were lined up in a safe manner to pick up a DIY Métis fish

fry and chips for mom as well as a tree to plant in her honour on mother's day. It was a gift seen every day for appreciation for all she means in your heart and a great conservation effort as well. Over 120 citizens showed up and a few unable to get out, were surprised with gifts delivered to them.

We also had an unexpected visit from the OPP doing their job. Hats off to them as well as it was a most pleasant encounter and comments afterwards were “what a great job we were doing for the community”

GBMC wishes to thank the MNO for the calendar help, Cim and Fer-Mar farms as well as Bernie and Sandi LePage. ∞

MNO Citizen appointed to Minister’s Impact Assessment Advisory Council

President of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Peterborough & District Wapiti Métis Council (PDWMC) Christa Lemelin was among those appointed to the Impact Assessment Advisory Council on December 14, 2020.

The newly established Advisory Council consists of 13 members who will provide non-partisan advice and recommendations on the Impact Assessment Act (IAA), its implementation, and regional and strategic impact assessments to the Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

The IAA was enacted in 2019 as a means to strengthen environmental protection in Canada, promote cooperation with other jurisdictions, foster sustainability, restore trust in how decisions are made, and grow the economy. It also aims to investigate broader impacts of potential projects (such as environmental, economic, social, and health considerations), while ensuring a spirit of reconciliation and respect for Indigenous communities.

Christa Lemelin, President of the PDWMC, will serve as one of several Indigenous appointments.

“My role, along with the Council, will be to provide advice to the Minister on whether Canada is achieving the purposes set out for it in the Act, including increasing transparency and predictability for proponents and the public, helping to identify issues early, and

creating efficiencies to best support decision-making in the public interest.” stated the PDWMC President Lemelin.

“I am very excited to be part of this dynamic team and look forward to contributing and sharing the knowledge that I have gained throughout my career, as well as throughout my time as an elected member of our local Métis Council.”

Additionally, the Advisory Council will be responsible for:

- Engaging in thoughtful and deliberate study of IAA implementation
- Examining the governance of the impact assessment regime, including the early planning phase for impact assessment and regional and strategic assessments
- Advising the Minister on the efficacy of the impact assessment regime; and its efficiency, transparency, identification and resolution of potential issues, and support of public interest
- Submitting biennial reports to the Minister (beginning June 2021)

The MNO extends its congratulations to PDWMC President Christa Lemelin on her recent appointment to the Impact Assessment Advisory Council. ∞



Christa Lemelin, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Peterborough & District Wapiti Métis Council (PDWMC).



No Small Potatoes: GBMC provides popular starch to the local community

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Citizens from the Georgian Bay community had their eyes peeled this year for an exciting roll out featuring everyone’s favourite starch, potatoes!

The MNO Georgian Bay Métis Council (GBMC), in partnership with MNO Citizen Cim Maurice and Fer-Mar Farms, distributed 1500 ten-pound bags of potatoes to the community over the last few months. These nutritious and versatile pantry staples serve as a welcome addition to anyone’s kitchen and were available to the community until the supply was exhausted.

“This initiative will be on-going until all 1500 bags are gone, or until the spring-summer as we are able,” said Greg Garratt GBMC President last winter. “It is open to all of GBMC Citi-

zens and we hope they take advantage of this service.”

Interested Citizens were able to call and arrange a curbside pick-up at 22 Peel Street in Penetanguishene.

Additionally, an offer was made to MNO Programs that were delivering food hampers to the community to request multiple bags of potatoes

While the potatoes were being distributed all necessary Covid-19 precautions were followed to ensure the safety of all.

Many 1,000s of pounds of potatoes have been donated and distributed to the community.

The MNO GBMC thanks Cim Maurice, Fer-Mar Farms, Heather Garratt and the GBMC Council members for their efforts in coordinating this nutritious initiative! ∞

MNO Citizen receives Guthrie Award for community work

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Citizen and Senator, Verna Porter-Burnelle has been honoured as a recipient of the Law Foundation of Ontario’s 2020 Guthrie Award.

The Guthrie Award is an annual recognition that showcases exceptional access to justice champions and contributions to the community. This year the award was given to the Elders’ Council, an all-Indigenous panel made up of 13 Elders and knowledge-keepers, including MNO Citizen and Honourary Senator Verna Porter-Burnelle.

Like her fellow Council peers, Verna Porter-Burnelle was selected to serve on the Elders Council due to her well-established personal leadership strengths, specialized knowledge, and her ability to lend a Métis perspective to the discussions and deliberations.

The Elders Council engages Indigenous approaches to support the work of the Indigenous Justice Division (IJD) of the Ministry of the Attorney General; with a long term goal of repairing the relationship between the Ministry and Indigenous communities.

“The Elders bring a compelling truth and integrity to their work,” said Linda Rothstein, the Law Foundation of Ontario’s Board Chair. “By sharing their knowledge and lived experiences directly with those within the justice sector, the Elders Council is helping to transform not just opinions but policies and laws that could bring about meaningful change and improve access to justice for Indigenous people across the province.”

Senator Porter-Brunelle was one of the founding members of the



Honourary MNO Senator Verna Porter-Burnelle sits on Elders’ Council for Indigenous Justice Division who were recipients of the 2020 Guthrie Award.

MNO Moon River Community Council, where she served as Chair, Women’s Representative and Senator. She also served as Senator to the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) and spent three years as an Elder at the Aboriginal Education Center at Georgian College in Midland, Ontario.

Her efforts on the Elders’ Council help to guide Ontario in its mission to reclaim Indigenous legal systems, strengthen supports, and provide better access to justice services for Ontario’s Indigenous peoples.

The MNO extends its congratulations and sincere gratitude to Verna Porter-Brunelle, and all of her Council colleagues, for their continued efforts to create a more just system for Métis, and for Ontario. ∞

News from the **GRAND RIVER MÉTIS COUNCIL**

Grand River Métis Council hosts Feast Bundle Workshops

Submitted by
Senator Leslie Anne Muma and
President Jennifer Parkinson

After being given Feast Bundles by Upper Grand District School Board for our work on the Math Collaboration projects, Senator Leslie Anne Muma and President Jennifer Parkinson decided to share this gift with our community by hosting Feast Bundle Workshops.

You may ask, “What is a Feast Bundle?” A Feast Bundle is a washable cotton bag with a cotton cutlery roll. The bundle holds re-useable

dishes and cutlery that can be taken to gatherings and feasts. A bundle can be kept in your car so that you are never without a cup, plate, bowl or cutlery when it is time to eat. This also reduces waste going into landfills.

On February 1, 2020, GRMC hosted a Feast Bundle Workshop at Parkhill Farm, just North of Guelph. Pat Parkinson created the pattern and facilitated the workshop. Jeanie’s Quilts was our supplier for the beautiful, brightly coloured cotton materials which resembled Métis beadwork. Chair Alicia Hamilton and President Jennifer Parkinson

assisted Pat Parkinson with all of the measuring and cutting of the materials to make individual Feast Bundle kits. A small group of GRMC Citizens and community members joined us to make their own bundles. Some had never sewn before and gained knowledge from the experienced sewers in the room. Sewing machines hummed all afternoon. Coffee, tea, cookies, cheerful conversation and laughter made the work go fast. New friends were made, and the day ended with completed feast bundles for everyone. ∞



Summer & winter youth Goody Bags

Submitted by
Diane Kilby
GRMC Treasurer

Like many other MNO Councils, Grand River Métis Council had planned to use the ELCC funds to provide our Métis families with on-the-land cultural adventures. Instead...Covid-19. Fortunately, the MNO supported our need to change plans quickly.

A Family Survey allowed us to identify youth in our area and to learn what activities interested families. Council provided additional funding for families with children who were 13-15 years of age.

During the summer, Council distributed “Summer Fun Goody Bags” to 33 families and 70 children. These bags contained books, bug catchers, nets, magnifying glasses, a compass, Christi Belcourt’s book “Medicines to Help Us: Traditional Métis Plant Use”, crayons, pencil crayons, Birch bark paper, colouring book and sidewalk chalk which gave families the opportunity to enjoy activities on the land, learn about Métis traditional plants, track animal prints and scat and to use a compass; along with other fun activities for families to enjoy.

Families (and children) have told us they welcomed the packages with emphasis on Métis pride.

In December, Council distributed “Winter Youth Goody Bags” to 42 families and 74 children. The Winter Youth Goody Bags gave families the opportunity to make ‘healing’ blankets with/for their children, read English/Michif stories from books given to the children, learn about trees and how to do knots, or learn finger weaving for the older youth. Sharing an excellent idea from other Councils, we have provided snowshoes and Ontario Park Winter passes letting youth and their families enjoy being on the land together.

We heard many stories from families on how much they appreciated activities to do with their children. ∞

GRMC hosts Kitchener Family and Child Services for Métis Cultural Training

Submitted by
Leslie-Anne Muma, Senator

Earlier this year, the Grand River Métis Council partnered with Kitchener Family and Child Services (FACS) for a two-day Métis cultural training. President Jennifer Parkinson and Senator Leslie-Anne Muma were joined by 45 participants from FACS. Both days began with a greeting circle and prayer by Senator Muma, followed by a lot of learning and fun. MNO Regional Employment & Training Coordinator, Daniel Woods, did a presentation on Education & Training and Labour Market Re-entry Programs & Services. Madison Frias, talked about MNO’s Early Learning & Child Care programs and services. Family Wellbeing Coordinator, Tori Denby presented on more programs and services available.

President Parkinson and Senator Muma then got everyone up to do a little bit of Métis jigging. President Parkinson showed everyone some basic steps then on came the music. We then broke the groups in half and showed them the Rabbit Dance which everyone thoroughly enjoyed. By the time we were done everyone had worked up an appetite. So, we broke for lunch.

After lunch President Parkinson did a presentation on Métis 101 and Governance. There were lots of questions which led to great discussions. We were joined in the afternoon by Chair Alicia Hamilton and Councillor Angie Coture to assist in a session of Métis beading. Everyone was excited to learn, and the day ended with a positive and fun learning experience.

The routine changed a bit on the 14th. We were joined by 43 participants from FACS. Following a welcome circle and prayer by Senator Muma, President Parkinson started the day with the Métis 101 and Governance presentation. Then everyone got up to learn some Métis jigging. We were graciously joined by MNO Citizen April Lacroix-Bellinger who partnered up with a lone rabbit for the Rabbit Dance. There was lots of laughing and everyone enjoyed themselves. After lunch MNO staff members Madison Frias, Daniel Woods and Tory Denby made their presentations, followed by Q&A’s. In the afternoon, Treasurer Pandora Wilhelm and Councillor Angie Coture joined in to assist in the beading workshop. Everyone was so interested in beading that no one wanted to take their afternoon break.

Both days ended with circle for the closing prayer by Senator Muma. We were greeted afterwards by the participants, thanking us for well-planned and informative days. ∞

CELEBRATING MÉTIS CULTURE Snowshoes & Park Passes



Submitted by
Diane Kilby
GRMC Treasurer

Borrowing an excellent idea from other Councils, Grand River Métis Council (GRC) decided to use the last of their ELCC funds to provide 71 pairs of snowshoes and 37 Ontario Park Winter passes allowing Métis youth and their families to enjoy being on the land together. Not wanting to leave the 13-15 year old youth ‘out in the cold’, GRMC provided the funds to support this age group as well.

Even though part of the winter was in lockdown, many families told us how much the youth enjoyed their snowshoes. ∞

MÉTIS ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Métis small business laser focused on awareness, education & design

Recognizing a need for culturally appropriate, early childhood educational products for Indigenous youth and early learners, Métis business owner and MNO Citizen Pandora Wilhelm launched her unique laser cutting company, Mulberry Design & Engravings, in July 2020.

This expedition in entrepreneurship began when Pandora was accepted to the First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI) as an Early Childhood Education student. While in the program, she was challenged to research culturally-appropriate early childhood educational products. To her surprise, there was almost nothing available. Pandora began thinking about how she could help close this gap by

creating fun and culturally-appropriate activities -- and Mulberry Design & Engravings was born.

Pandora got started out of a small home office with a used laser she purchased from Kijiji. She focussed in on creating laser cut products, puzzles, Red River carts, and custom engravings featuring Indigenous languages, reintroducing our languages into homes, child care centres and schools.

Pandora says she receives many custom requests, from MNO Community Councils as



Pandora Wilhelm

well as school boards and other Indigenous communities across North America. She has recently decided expand her growing business to include a retail storefront which is opening soon.

With the demand she's seen, Pandora has been able to invest in a new state-of-the-art laser. And, as one of only 10 business owners recently accepted into the Communtech Fierce Founders Uplift program, Pandora is receiving one-to-one business mentorship as well as a grant of \$10,000 to continue building her business and her products. She is now developing an iOS language app to accompany her learning puzzles and games.

Along the way, Pandora has benefitted from various MNO supports, including Covid-19

funding from the Métis Voyageur Development Fund (MVDF), the MNO Child Care Subsidy Program, and financial aid as she pursues and earns her early childhood education diploma. She has also forged strong relationships with the MNO Early Learning and Child Care team, and has produced high quality products for a variety of MNO Community Councils for their use and workshops.

This September, MNO Citizens will have the opportunity to view and interact with Mulberry Design & Engravings at the 2021 Annual General Assembly, where Pandora will return to showcase her wares in the virtual tradeshow. ∞

www.mulberrydesign.ca

What to Expect When Working with an MNO EDUCATION SUPPORT ADVOCATE

Get help navigating the K-12 school setting!

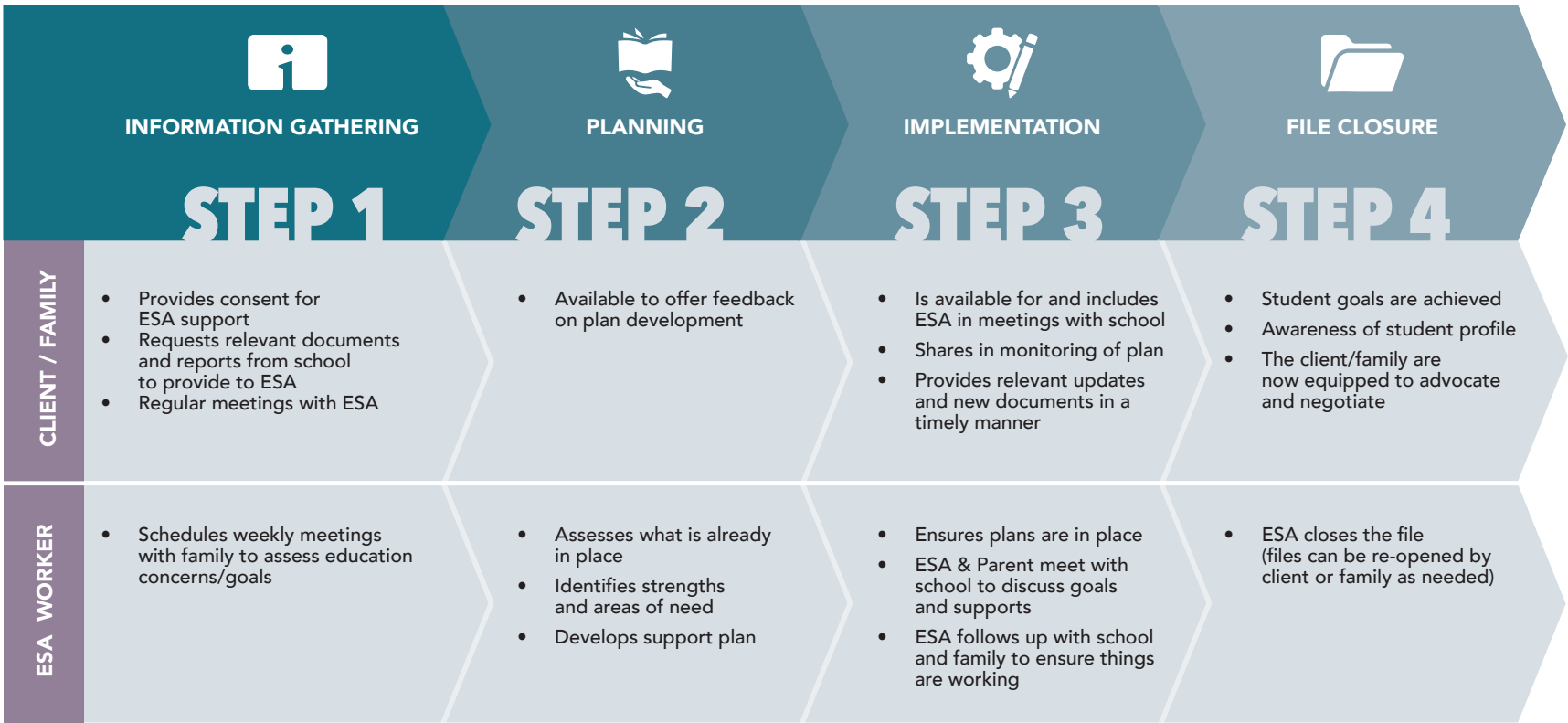
The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is pleased to offer the Education Support Advocacy Program. The MNO's Education Support Advocates (ESA) are available to help families with youth in the K-12 school environment. The program helps identify and provide supports for Métis students and their families as they progress along in their learning

journeys with the aim of helping to improve their learning outcomes.

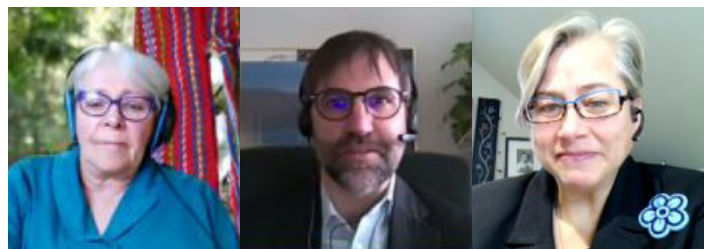
The program is offered Ontario-wide for Métis children/youth and their families who are experiencing issues/challenges in the following areas:

- Attendance
- Suspensions

- Social isolation
- Individual Education Planning
- Behavioural Planning
- Specialized placement for children with exceptionalities
- Mental health or learning disabilities
- Communications with the school
- Reaching academic potential



To access the program's services or if you'd like to know more information please contact us by email at educationadvocacy@metisnation.org



MNO leadership discuss language revitalization with Minister

On March 16, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) leadership met with the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Canadian Heritage to discuss Métis led efforts to reclaim, revitalize, maintain and strengthen the Michif language.

The MNO aims to preserve and expand knowledge of the Michif language by delivering a Michif language and culture camp immersion program for 40 participants; producing over four hours of interviews with Michif speakers; and translating online resources such as posters, flashcards and stories from English and French into Michif.

Present on the call were MNO President Margaret Froh and PCMNO Secretary-Treasurer Jo Anne Young.

“We want to acknowledge Canadian Heritage’s support of the MNO’s efforts to protect, preserve and revitalize the Michif language,” stated President Froh. “The MNO welcomes continued partnership with Canadian Heritage around this important work and strengthening a respectful government-to-government, bilateral relationship that can positively impact the lives of our Métis children, grandchildren and future generations.” View the press release at: bit.ly/3vQc1er. ∞

MNO GOVERNANCE:

PCMNO Appoints Paul Devillers as MNO’s Chief Electoral Officer

Paul Devillers is the newly appointed Chief Electoral Officer for the Métis Nation of Ontario. An MNO Citizen, Devillers also Chairs the Métis Voyageur Development Fund (MVDF).

The Chief Electoral Officer is an independent, nonpartisan entity selected and appointed by the Provisional Council of the MNO (PCMNO) through a vetting process, pursuant to MNO Electoral Code Part A who is charged with operating Elections for the MNO.

As Chief Electoral Officer, Devillers will work with the MNO’s Community Relations team to facilitate and oversee the MNO Community Council election process. The Chief Electoral Officer’s relationship with MNO is not one of employee, but of independent contractor.

Due to COVID, the MNO Secretariat, through the Community Relations team, will be working with third party agencies that have the capability to provide electronic and telephone voting options in order to effectively conduct Community Council elections.

Be sure to follow the MNO website for updates on Community Council Elections. ∞



Paul Devillers

MNO GOVERNANCE

Preventing Workplace Harassment & Violence

As an employer, the Métis Nation of Ontario is committed to providing a work environment in which all employees are treated with respect and dignity. Over the past 18 months, we have consulted widely with employees about their level of engagement and satisfaction, and about our workplace policies and practices. The feedback we heard from employees has been, and continues to be, reflected in how we work, including how we support a positive and inclusive workplace culture.

The Métis Nation of Ontario does not condone workplace harassment or violence of any kind. We take all necessary and reasonable steps to meet our obligations under our policies and Ontario’s Occupational Health and Safety Act. Beyond our basic obligations, workplace harassment and violence is not culturally acceptable to us and does not align with who we are, or who we want to be.

Our Statement of Prime Purpose states: The strength of our society is based on democracy, freedom, fairness, equality, generosity, justice and the customary and written law of our people. Above all, we cherish harmony and peace.

To be clear, workplace harassment or violence is not tolerated in the workplace, or at work-related activities or events that occur outside the workplace. We have a proactive and effective policy in place to prevent workplace harassment and violence, and when it does occur, we take action. We are proud of this.

For more information, the full policy on Prevention of Workplace Harassment and Violence, Policy 3.030, can be found on the MNO’s website: www.metisnation.org.

Please contact humanresources@metisnation.org with any questions. ∞

ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST INDIGENOUS WOMEN, GIRLS & 2SLGBTQQIA+ PEOPLE

National Action Plan released

Canada’s National Action Plan (NAP) to end the violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQ+ peoples officially launched during a virtual ceremony held June 3, 2021.

This NAP was developed in response to the National Inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), whose final report was released exactly two years ago. Open to all, the virtual ceremony featured live statements from prominent leaders including Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Minister of Crown Indigenous Relations Carolyn Bennett; and Indigenous leaders and organizations, such as the National Family and Survivors Circle (NFSC) and Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak (LFMO).

Métis leaders from across the homeland contributed to the NAP’s development, including represen-

tatives from the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), who served on the Métis Nation working group to ensure a Métis distinctions based approach to addressing the MMIWG2S+.

“The Métis Nation Working Group picked up the heavy burden of respectfully gathering relevant information, and then with a dedicated determination, contributed to and prepared our own Action Plan,” shared MNO Women’s Council (MNOWC) President Suzanne Jackson.

“The report prepared by LFMO titled Métis Perspectives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and LGBTQ2S+ People includes 62 Métis specific Calls to Action. The leadership and team at LFMO worked tirelessly to ensure Métis MMIWG and 2S+ families and loved ones would be heard and further that Métis will have a voice and representation on our implementation plan.”

The Métis Nation Working Group, led by the LFMO and its President Melanie Omeniho, included MNO representatives MNOWC President Suzanne Jackson, MNO Chief Strategy Officer Jennifer St. Germain and MNO Project Coordinator Breena Johnson. The group was tasked with collaborating with community Elders, knowledge-keepers and other Métis Nation governing body representatives, to co-develop a distinct Métis Nation specific action plan.

“The Métis action plan is called Weaving Miskotahâ, which means change,” explained LFMO President Omeniho in her remarks at the ceremony. “This plan will lay out actionable changes that are required to specifically address the realities faced by Métis women and girls and 2SLGBTQ+ peoples. This plan reflects the ongoing contribution of our Métis Nation Working Group over the past 18 months of

collaboration, engagement and co-development.”

Métis leadership announced that the Weaving Miskotahâ plan will be a living “evergreen” document; developed, adjusted and ultimately released in a timeline that works best for the Métis Nation. A summarization of the action plan, titled Li Shmayn, or “the trail,” can be found on the NAP website.

“The journey to get here today to the release of the NAP to end MMIWG AND 2S has been a long one,” shared President Omeniho. “The development of this plan has been difficult, but through perseverance, commitment, and collaboration a pathway has been defined. Our work has only just begun.”

If you were unable to attend the launch, the 2021 National Action Plan and Métis contributions are available online: mmiwg2splusnationalactionplan.ca. ∞



SUPPORT FOR MÉTIS-OWNED SMALL & MICRO BUSINESSES AFFECTED BY COVID-19

Métis Nation of Ontario ∞

The Métis Nation of Ontario & the Métis Voyageur Development Fund are committed to supporting Métis-owned small, home-based and family businesses negatively impacted by Covid-19



For more information including documentation requirements and how to apply, visit: microgrant.metisnation.org

FAMILY & MILESTONES

Remembering Bridget

North Bay Métis Council establishes scholarship award with Canadore College

Submitted by
Susan van der Rassel
President, North Bay Metis Council

In October 2020, the North Bay Métis Council's Women's Representative Bridget Brown, succumbed to Stage 4 cancer (see page 23). In honour of Bridget's life and work -- Bridget was a Board Member at the Near North Palliative Care Network in North Bay -- a student scholarship was set up at Canadore College.

The "Bridget Jocelyn Brown Métis Wellness Memorial Award" will be presented annually to a Métis student enrolled in any year of a full-time healthcare diploma program or the Indigenous Wellness and Addictions Prevention program at the college. Applicants must submit a written response indicating how they demonstrate the following qualities: determination and strength of spirit; honesty and truth in their heart and their words; strength in adversity; compassion; and service to others.

The Award's first recipient is MNO Citizen, **Alexandra Boyer**, a first-year Registered Practical Nursing Student. Alexandra presented her essay demonstrating her compassion for people while being sure that she promotes her own self-care. She also presented her determination to meet adverse situations that come her way.

Congratulations Alexandra! ∞



MNO Citizen Alexandra Boyer from North Bay is the first recipient of the Bridget Jocelyn Brown Métis Wellness Memorial Award.

Below is a letter from two personal friends, **Jennifer Parkinson and Leslie Anne Muma** paying homage to their dear friend **Bridget Brown**:



Bridget Brown was a strong, courageous Métis woman. No matter what life threw her way, she met it head on, with her head held high and a smile on her face. Bridget never let circumstances defeat her determination and spirit. She was always honest in her words and true to her heart. No matter what challenges she was facing, Bridget looked for ways to serve others. She loved Mother Earth and all it had to offer. She loved people and was always open and kind. Bridget freely offered insight and advice when asked and was always willing to listen to others. Bridget left us with many gifts. She showed us: how to handle adversity through her own actions, how to stay the course, no matter the obstacles in your path, and how to love and appreciate life itself.



A photograph of Connor Cozens, a young man with short blonde hair, seen from the side. He is wearing a purple t-shirt with the words "CONNOR ASSOCIATE ORIENTATION" printed on the back. He is standing in front of a large, colorful crowd of people.

Congrats Connor Cozens!!!

Proud parents Chris and Denise Cozens, grandparents Ed (past GRMC Senator) and Lisa Hass, would like to announce Connor's graduation with an Honours Bachelor of Science Degree from Western University. Connor graduated with an Honours Specialization in Computer Science with a minor in Software Engineering. Connor also graduated his final year on the Dean's honour roll and has accepted a position at Royal Bank of Canada's Indigenous People's Development Program in Technology and Operations. The family would like to thank the Metis Nation of Ontario for awarding Connor with a full scholarship for his last year of study. ∞



Integrity, honour and respect

Submitted by
Tony and Anne Huguenin
Penetanguishene

During these unprecedented times our community as a whole has relied on the multitude of essential workers whose selfless dedication, every single day, keeps us healthy and safe.

To express our deep gratitude and to fully recognize these devoted front line workers, we spent several days in our yard this winter building two inspirational snow sculptures. One of these sculptures is a cheery polar bear and the other is an uplifting snowy owl that stands five and a half feet tall. The owl symbolizes wisdom, good judgement, and endurance. The owl also has sharp vision and keen observation, great insight and intuition. The huge bear represent strength, courage and symbolizes the time for healing.

The attributes of both the bear and the owl are demonstrated by the countless men and women who serve

all of us as essential workers. They deserve our whole-hearted support and thanks.

Our snow sculptures were created in representation of our own integrity, honour and respect for all front line workers. The sculptures made people smile, lifted their spirits and gave them hope during these challenging times.

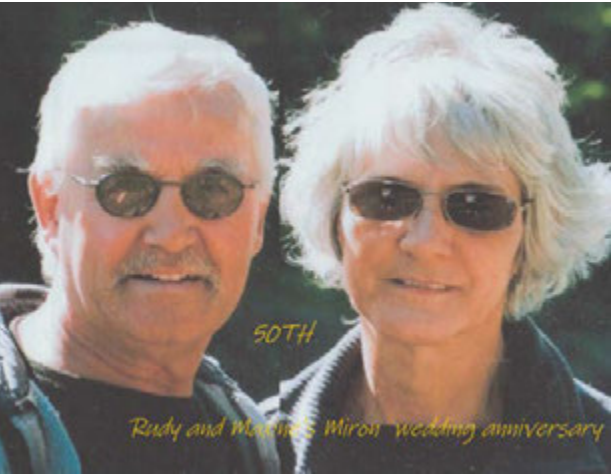
We wish to thank all those who supported us and cheered us on in our efforts to build our bear and owl. Our sculpting endeavours certainly provided us with lots of fun, exercise, fresh air and rosy cheeks.

Most importantly it was an accomplishment in showing tremendous support to all our essential workers, and in their honour we have made a charitable donation to the Cancer Society. We would also like to thank our friends, who we consider family, who matched our donation to the Cancer Society with a gift of their own.

Thank you and Miigwech everyone! ∞

Happy 50th Rudy and Maxine!

Rudy and Maxine Miron marked their 50th wedding anniversary on April 3, 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic put a damper on the celebrations so Rudy and Maxine asked to be included in the *Métis Voyageur*. Rudy is a member of Blind River North Channel Métis Council. ∞



Rudy and Maxine Miron



Bridget Jocelyn Brown

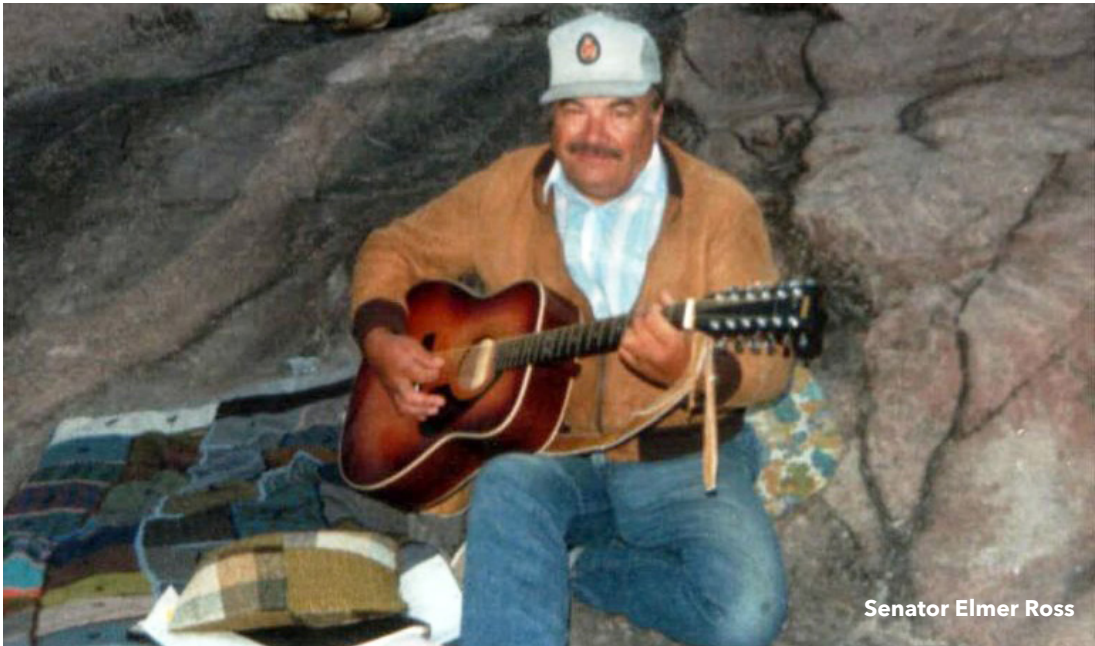
March 24, 1961 - October 22, 2020

We pray for the repose of the soul of Bridget Jocelyn Brown, Board Director of Near North Palliative Care Network, where she served as Métis Liaison. She died at North Bay Regional Health Center after a long battle against cancer—from 2012 to 2020. Bridget was a gentle, kind soul, always facing her challenges with deep humility, dignity, a sweet smile, and an extraordinary positive attitude, focused on her wellbeing, and helping others. She will be missed, and we pray that God receives her in His Heart. ∞



MNO deeply saddened by passing of Danielle Choquette

Passed on to the Spirit World on February 18, 2021. She is survived by her loving husband, Tony (Anthony) Belcourt (Almonte, ON); her stepdaughters, Christi Belcourt (Espanola, ON) and Suzanne Belcourt (Picton, ON); stepson, Shane Belcourt, and his wife, Amanda Greener (Toronto, ON); step-granddaughters, Jeana Peltier and Claire Belcourt. Danielle is also survived by her brother, Michel Choquette, and his partner, Erika Eriksson Ciment (Montreal, QC), and by the latter's daughter, Ilanit Michele Woods, and her family (London, GB). Danielle was preceded in death by her father, author and diplomat Robert Choquette, and by her mother, Marguerite Choquette (née Canac-Marquis), of Montreal, QC. Danielle was born on June 27, 1941, in Montreal. Danielle had a life-long passion for languages and studied in Montreal, Washington, Madrid and Leningrad. With an ability to converse in many languages, Danielle worked as a professional interpreter for 45 years in French, English and Spanish. Danielle was employed by the Canadian House of Commons for 10 years, then became a partner in Conference Interpreters of Canada and retired from the firm in 2015. For the past 25 years she participated actively in the work of a private foundation she had created with her brother to keep their father's literary legacy alive. Danielle will always be remembered as a remarkable person of incredible beauty, grace and intelligence. She was endlessly loving, tender and generous. Danielle was constantly enlivened through her inquisitiveness and fervour for music, animals and plant life. She was devoted to the dignity of all Peoples and for the expansion and recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples of the Americas. The magic she left us in her smile is a blessing to all who knew her. The presence of Danielle will forever remain in the hearts of her loving husband, brother, family and friends. Danielle will be eternally missed. May her journey to the Spirit World be peaceful as she is welcomed into the arms of her ancestors. A celebration of life will be held this summer. ∞



Senator Elmer Ross

Métis Nation of Ontario mourns loss of Senator Elmer Ross

The Métis Nation of Ontario would like to extend its deepest condolences to the family and friends of Elmer Ross. A long-serving and much-loved member of the MNO Veteran's Council (MNOVC). Passing peacefully with his wife by his side at Tabor Manor in St. Catharines, on March 13, 2021 at 92 years of age. Beloved husband of Vera (nee Tindall) for almost 70 years. Loved dad of Valerie (Paul) McLean and Terri (Greg) Panas and the late Gary (1984). Proud grandpa of Allysa and Rachel McLean (Robert Turenne) and Alex and Miranda Panas. Elmer Ross was born in a small country community south of Hubbard, Saskatchewan at the outset of the Great Depression. His family has strong Métis roots, being descendants of Cuthbert Grant acclaimed for leading his people to victory at the Battle of Seven Oaks during the Pemmican Wars. Métis traditions were the focal point in the home of his grandparents where Elmer was raised and at a very young age he learned to play the fiddle, even before he could read. Elmer left a job in a Saskatchewan creamery, where he was a champion butter-maker, to pursue opportunities in Ontario. Elmer worked as a heavy-equipment operator, bus driver, and on the railway before joining the Ontario Provincial Police force in 1955, fulfilling a deep desire to serve the public. During a long and distinguished career, Elmer had the opportunity to provide motorcycle escorts for Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, on three separate occasions as well as Pope John Paul II on one of his visits to Canada. After retirement, Elmer served as a Senator on the MNO Veteran's Council for many years. Our thoughts are with Elmer's family and he will be greatly missed. ∞

Métis Lament

Take kindly to the council of years and experience of our elders, gracefully surrendering our youth and many things of the past. We would not be here without them. We will continue to build our strength and spirit to protect and shield us when grief arises as we encounter any sudden misfortunes throughout our lives. A clear, strong and nurtured mind will overcome and conquer many of our fears, which are often the origin of our unhappiness, fatigue and loneliness. We will discipline ourselves to be outstanding and proud people who will leave our mark of excellence in today's society, to carve a path to guide our siblings and the next generation of Métis. We must stand together as a nation and be proud of our heritage and be kind and gentle to our brothers and sisters. We are a family of Métis in this great universe who stand equal to all others on this earth. We give thanks to our great creator for all the great gifts and wisdom he has given us. We will continue to follow our guiding light and carry forth our sign of infinity into the future because we have a God-given right to stand tall as proud Métis.

Métis Lament is a poem written by Elmer Ross

AUGUST 14, 1948 - MAY 14, 2021

Randolph Joseph Whalen passes

With great sadness, the family announces the unexpected passing of Randy Whalen at the age of 72. Loving husband and best friend of Phyllis Eleanor Whalen (nee Garson) for 51 years, Phyllis was his purpose and truly the love of his life. Now reunited with his parents Victor Peter Whalen & Delphine Whalen (nee Grisdale), Randy was the loving and devoted father of Randolph Allan Whalen (Tracy) and Kevin Michael Whalen (Ann), loving and fantastic Grandpa of Collin Kevin Whalen, Braedon Alexander Whalen, Cameron James Whalen, Paige Zoe Whalen and Step Grandpa to Dustin Scott, Jo-Ann Nicole, and Ethan Matthew Graham. He was the brother of Francis (Bernice), Shirley Loubert (Florian), Terry (Marilyn), Nancie Willis, Joseph (Suzanne), Cindy Maki (Donny) and JoAnn Taranto (Frank); brother-in-law of Helen St. John (late

Charlie), late Marg MacDonald (late Jack), late Jack Garson (Penny), Lois Oliver (Robert), Bob Garson (late Anne), Jim Garson (Wendy), Gladys Cameron (late George), Glen Garson (late Wilma) and Harold Garson (Theresa). Randy will be sadly missed by many nieces, nephews and great nieces and nephews. Randy retired from The Algoma District School Board after 25 years as a Custodian. He was known as the Custodian with the toothpick. He was an avid hunter and angler and enjoyed sharing his love of the outdoors with his boys and grandkids. You could always find Randy working in his yard or on small projects, this of course was after he found his many treasures in the garage sales around the neighbourhood.



Those who love Randy will fondly remember his quick wit, wisdom, sense of humour and infectious laugh. Randy and Phyllis had the once in a lifetime opportunity to take a trip for their 50th Anniversary across the Canadian Rockies. Other memorable vacations included a fantastic, scenic trip through the Smokey Mountains and to Dollywood, a visit to Nashville and the Grand Ole Opry and to the East Coast of Canada. Phyllis will cherish these memories forever. The family would like to thank the First Responders for their sensitivity and kind attention during this difficult time. The family requests, in memory of Randy, take a day and spend it hunting or fishing with someone you love. ∞

CELEBRATE **ONLINE** WITH THE MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO**AGA 2021**THE 28TH MNO ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY • **SEPTEMBER 18-19, 2021**

28th MNO Annual General Assembly will pay tribute to the Powley family

The Metis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is pleased to announce that the 28th MNO Annual General Assembly (AGA) will take place September 18-19, 2021!

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of MNO citizens, families and communities during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this year's AGA will once again be held virtually.

Our AGA is Métis Self-Government in action! The AGA provides an opportunity for MNO citizens to gather together, review the achievements of the previous year and chart the direction for the future.

Together, we have accomplished so much over the last 28 years. Through our shared values and collective interests, we have made incredible advances on behalf of Métis citizens and communities in Ontario with more to come. The AGA is the

perfect time to gather and celebrate these successes. We cannot wait to see you this September.

Welcoming delegates and attendees with live music and performances is a celebrated AGA tradition. Like last year, the 2021 AGA will open with a **Virtual Kitchen Party** and President's Welcome to welcome guests, friends and family to the event. ∞

REGISTER for the 28th MNO Annual General Assembly here: **bit.ly/3jvHYEC** or visit **www.metisnation.org** and click the appropriate image in the big banner!

September 19 POWLEY DAY

Now known as "Powley Day", September 19 celebrates the anniversary of the landmark Métis rights victory at the Supreme Court of Canada in *R v Powley*.

As Métis, we are nation builders; we stand up and stand strong for the rights, respect and recognition of our families and communities. It has been 18 years since the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) celebrated Canada's highest court's unanimous decision alongside the Métis Governments in Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, ending a ten-year legal battle and ushering in a new era recognizing Métis rights in Canada.

In *Powley*, the courts recognized and affirmed what the MNO had been saying all along—that there were distinct Métis people and communities on the land before Canada became Ontario, with a culture and identity all their own, and that their rights were entrenched within Section 35 of Canada's Constitution.

While other Métis rights cases had been fought in the courts before, *Powley* was the first to be appealed all the way up to the Supreme Court. It was led by the MNO, the Powley family and the Métis community around Sault Ste. Marie, but all Métis communities across Canada have greatly benefited from it.

The victory in *Powley* set the stage for a series of achievements for Métis people, not just in Ontario but across the Métis Nation Homeland, including the ground-breaking Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreements signed in June, 2019 by the MNO, the Métis Nation of Alberta, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan and more recently by the Manitoba Metis Federation.

Today, we remember the sacrifices made by Steve, Roddy and the entire Powley family, and reflect on how the *Powley* decision forever changed the world for Métis in Canada—finally securing recognition of Métis as a distinct Indigenous peoples within Canada, and helping open the path forward toward full Métis self-government. ∞

