

# MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

## Métis share stories of hope and survival with Pope Francis ahead of Canada visit

In April, a delegation of Métis residential school survivors, Elders, youth and community members met with Pope Francis in Rome to share their stories of survival and hopes for the future. The delegation, led by the Métis National Council (MNC), had the opportunity to share with the world the experiences of the Métis in residential schools. Although, at times, the trip was emotional and difficult it ended with long-overdue words of apology from Pope Francis.

“[The Pope’s] apology is historic,” explained MNC President Cassidy Caron, who led the Métis Nation’s delegation, “it opens a door for the Métis Nation to continue moving forward on our healing journey and it opens a door for us to continue to fight for action.”

During the General Audience with Pope Francis, the Métis delegation presented the Holy Father with a book of stories, photographs, and other documents collected from across the Métis Nation homeland. Alberta Métis fiddlers Alex Kusturok and Brianna Lizotte shared a song with Pope Francis, as well as fellow delegates from the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) and Assembly of First Nations (AFN) in attendance at the General Audience.

Earlier in the week the Métis delegation had a private audience with the Pope, during which residential school survivors Angie Crerar, Antoinette Laffleur and Emilien Janvier shared their experiences and stories of resilience.

“There is a whole lot of unfinished business that we as Métis have with Canadian society,” said MNO Delegate Mitch Case. “This was an opportunity for those three survivors to bring their stories forward not only to Pope Francis but also to the world.”

This summer the Pope will visit Canada. Watch our website and social media for news. ∞

-- with files from Métis National Council



MNC President Cassidy Caron addresses the media at Vatican City.



Métis fiddlers Brianna Lizotte and Alex Kusturok play the delegation into St. Peter’s Square.



Elder Angie Crerar, a Residential School Survivor from Alberta, meeting Pope Francis.



MNO VETERANS' COUNCIL GATHERS

Page 11



MNO is launching its very first HOUSING CENSUS

Page 7

MNO holds its first-ever CLIMATE CHANGE FORUM

Page 12





# THE MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

JULY 2022 - No. 107

**Produced by the  
Métis Nation of Ontario  
Communications Branch:**

Christopher Whan  
Lauren McCartan  
Jasmin Pettie  
Madison Burns  
Marc St. Germain  
Yoana Ilcheva

## Contributors:

Greg Garratt  
Jerry Gervais  
Karly Wilson  
Kathleen Anderson  
Megan Ellis  
Susan Van Der Rassel  
Ishmael Van Der Rassel  
Christa Lemilin

## Submissions:

Marc St. Germain  
Métis Nation of Ontario  
1100-66 Slater Street  
Ottawa, ON K1P 5H1  
marcs@metisnation.org

**Publication #:** PM40025265

## RECENTLY MOVED OR MOVING SOON?

Don't miss an issue! Be sure to change your address with the MNO Registry. Call: **1-855-798-1006** or send an email to **info@mnoregistry.ca**

## 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.

## MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# Celebrating Métis, celebrating each other

It has been a very busy time at the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO). From ramping up COVID-19 programs, to celebratory news of the restoration of transparency and accountability at the Métis National Council, a historic visit to the Vatican, and taking steps on our journey to self-government.

I want to acknowledge the incredible efforts of everyone at the MNO who has spent the past two years working hard under difficult conditions. From the beginning of the pandemic, they have hustled to get our citizens the supports they needed to see this thing through. Here's just some of the highlights:

- The MNO and the Métis Voyageur Development Fund established the Métis Micro-Business Fund to relieve financial pressure and support Métis-owned small businesses.
- We processed more than \$9.9 million in emergency aid for Métis families with 5600 citizens and families receiving aid
- We developed and distributed COVID-19 Care Kits to high-risk homes and families.
- We launched a K-12 education support fund to help families offset the costs related to virtual schooling.
- We asked our citizens to give us their feedback about vaccines – their worries, fears, questions, and hopes.

As we hope and pray to see the end of this awful pandemic, we remain grateful for the ability to help our people throughout. As the government for Métis citizens in Ontario, it is our responsibility and our privilege to do whatever we can to help.

The good news is that 2022 is looking up and there is much to celebrate.

## A RENEWED MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL

We were pleased to have seen the election of Cassidy Caron as President of the Métis National Council (MNC). She is a fearless leader who has renewed people's spirits. Her dedication to the values of transparency, accountability and community are a breath of fresh air and have given the MNC real purpose once again.

2022 marks the 40th anniversary of the Constitution of Canada, when Indigenous rights were made official. And next year will see the 20th anniversary of the watershed Powley Decision at the Supreme Court of Canada when our Section 35 Métis rights were affirmed. The MNO played a critical role in securing that decision, fighting back every time our



Above: **MNO President Margaret Froh and others recently took part in the Serpent River First Nation second annual Pride Parade.**

rights were denied to us. We will continue to fight for the rights of our people whenever they are questioned.

## ACKNOWLEDGING THE HARD WORK OF OUR PROVISIONAL COUNCIL

I want to recognize the hard work of the Provisional Council of the MNO. The past two years have seen them make difficult but necessary decisions in the advancement of Métis rights.

Over the past 18 months the PCMNO embarked on a process to review and modernize the *Métis Rules of Order* so they might better support the MNO's work and make MNO meetings -- at all levels with-in our governance structures -- more inclusive and respectful, as well as efficient and effective.

The MNO will now engage councils and citizens to get feedback on this work. And, it will be forwarded to a future MNO Annual General Assembly (AGA) for ratification.

## REALIZING OUR DREAMS OF SELF-DETERMINATION AND SELF-GOVERNMENT

As you recall, in 2019, on behalf of the MNO, I had the honour of signing the Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement (MGRSA) with the Government of Canada. In

that Agreement, Canada recognized — for the first time—that the Métis communities represented by the MNO hold the inherent right to self-government and self-determination.

This year we will be taking the greatest strides on that journey.

Your voice is key to how things move forward. As we develop our Constitution, we are asking all MNO Citizens to share their feedback and participate in this historic event.

## KEY POLICY UPDATES

You will have seen that we are updating some key policies to ensure that Rights-bearing Métis citizens in Ontario are getting the resources, supports and programs they need from the MNO. And that going forward, only rights-bearing Métis citizens have access to these limited resources.

We know and acknowledge that there are some legacy issues with our Registry, as there are with many other Métis governments. We did the hard work and conducted a full, independent review. In fact, we are the only Métis government to have publicly released the results of an independent third-party review of our registry.

We have more work to do and we will continue to come together to debate, discuss and make decisions that will continue to strengthen the MNO as a government. We will work together at all levels to move the MNO forward consistent with the MNO Statement of Prime Purpose in honour our ancestors and future generations.

At our upcoming AGA we will talk business, self-government, and the strategic plan. And, most importantly, we will celebrate our Métis culture, our way of life and each other.

Marsii

**Margaret Froh**  
President  
Métis Nation of Ontario



**The Next  
Métis Voyageur  
submission deadline:  
September 1, 2022**

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



# MNO NEWS



## MNO moves into Next Phase of the Registry Review Process

**O**n February 24, 2022, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) announced it is moving into the next phase of consultations and engagements on the results of its multi-year review of its centralized Métis citizenship registration system, known as the “MNO Registry and Self-Government Readiness Review” (RSRP or “Registry Review”).

In 2017, the MNO initiated the Registry Review based on the MNO’s foundational goal to secure the recognition of the MNO’s self-government from Canada, consistent with the MNO’s aims and objectives as outlined in the *Statement of Prime Purpose*. Additional information on the Registry Review, including a copy of the final report, is available at: [www.metisnation.org](http://www.metisnation.org).

As of May 31, 2022, MNO citizenship file statuses are as follows:

**78% Complete:** contains signed Oath of Allegiance and all documents needed to demonstrate a genealogical connection between a citizen and a documented Métis Ancestor;

**4% Missing Documentation:** has a documented Métis Ancestor, but is missing documents to support a genealogical connection to that ancestor and/or the file is missing a signed Oath of Allegiance;

**18% Incomplete:** lacks a historic record identifying any of the citizen’s ancestors as Métis in the Historic Métis Nation Homeland.

Beginning in Summer 2021, at the direction of the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO), the MNO held a series of province-wide town halls, as well as targeted meetings with MNO constituencies, to engage deeply about the results of the Registry Review. Throughout this process, the MNO has been gathering citizens’ views on how to implement the findings to further advance self-government and Métis rights.

As of December 2021, a total of seven province-wide consultation sessions have

been held and attended by over 400 MNO citizens, who had the opportunity to ask questions and provide comments and feedback. In addition to these consultation sessions, the MNO has also provided additional updates and information to citizens through direct correspondence and the Métis Voyageur, as well as set up a designated webpage specific to the Registry Review.

“The MNO has always fought to protect and advance Métis rights and has tirelessly worked to move toward full self-government for its people. The Registry Review is just one example of that continued forward progress,” stated MNO President Margaret Froh. “We have come a long way, and we’ve reached a point in our journey where we can consolidate and secure our achievements in advancing Métis rights for the benefit of future generations of MNO citizens.”

### **Continuing the Dialogue: Launch of Online Feedback Portal (now closed)**

Based on the feedback received from citizens to date, the PCMNO has directed the MNO to move into the next phase of the Registry Review consultation process. As part of this next phase, the MNO launched an online feedback portal to provide all MNO citizens with an additional opportunity to provide feedback on and have their voices heard in relation to the Registry Review. The online feedback portal was open from February 24, 2022 to April 4, 2022.

The results of the seven consultation sessions and feedback received through the online portal, will be compiled into a “What We Heard Report” that will be publicly posted on the MNO’s website in the future.

### **Responding to Citizen Feedback: Release of Supplemental Registry Review Report & Policies**

In response to citizens’ requests for further information and details related to “Incomplete” citizenship files, the MNO is public-



*The MNO has always fought to protect and advance Métis rights and has tirelessly worked to move toward full self-government for its people. The Registry Review is just one example of that continued forward progress.*

ly releasing a Supplement Registry Review Report (“Supplemental Report”) as part of this next phase of engagement. In particular, the Supplemental Report includes updated statistics, as well as a breakdown of the rationale for why certain citizenship files have been deemed as “Incomplete” (e.g., missing documentation evidencing a connection to a Métis ancestor, missing a completed genealogical chart, etc.). Based on preliminary feedback from citizens regarding the need to limit certain programs and services, appointments, and awards or other benefits to citizens with “Complete” MNO citizenship files (i.e., verified Métis rights-holders), as well as questions raised by other governments and third parties regarding the MNO’s new citizenship cards, the PCMNO is concurrently working on implementing and considering a series of related interim policies. Further information related to these policies will be made available on the MNO’s website in the future.

### **Other Potential Steps: Province-Wide Plebiscite & Special Resolution**

Further to the PCMNO’s direction, and pending the findings of the “What We Heard Report,” the MNO is also considering the

possibility of holding a province-wide plebiscite vote in Spring 2022, which would give all MNO citizens an opportunity to provide direction as to what, if anything, the MNO should do to implement the results of the Registry Review. Pending the results of the potential plebiscite, the MNO is also considering potential process options that may be needed to implement citizens’ direction through Special Resolution. Further information related to these potential options will be made available if and when pursued. ∞

A copy of the *Supplemental Registry Review Report* can be downloaded here:



Additional information on the Registry Review, including a copy of the final report and the *Supplemental Registry Review Report* are available at: [www.metisnation.org](http://www.metisnation.org).





ARE YOU AN MNO CITIZEN WHO LIKES TO

# FISH

*in the*

## GREAT LAKES?



ÊTES VOUS CITOYEN DE LA NMO ET AIMEZ-

# PÊCHER

*dans les*

## GRANDS LACS?



Take a few minutes to fill out the Great Lakes Fish Consumption Survey by **August 22**.

Link: [arcg.is/5K0uz](https://arcg.is/5K0uz)

Paper copies of the survey are available.

Prenez quelques minutes pour participer à notre enquête sur la consommation de poisson dans les Grands Lacs d'ici le 22 août.

Lien vers l'enquête : [arcg.is/5K0uz](https://arcg.is/5K0uz)

Des copier papier de l'enquête sont disponible.

**GreatLakes@metisnation.org**  
**705-528-2630**

# A Place in the Circle 2

## MNO hosts 2nd Annual Two Spirit & LGBTQ+ Symposium

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) hosted its second annual Two-Spirit and LGBTQ+ Symposium this past February using the Zoom platform. The symposium, called "A Place in the Circle", was designed to create safe spaces for queer identifying Métis citizens to share and learn from one another's experiences and advance positive change for Métis Two-Spirit and LGBTQ+ peoples.

In her opening remarks MNO President Margaret Froh said, "For Two-Spirit Métis folks, having a place in the circle is a historically significant and cherished right. Our ancestors long celebrated 2SLGBTQ+ individuals for their unique gifts and contributions; and today Métis continue to find ways to honour this 'community within a community'."

Hosted by the MNO Two-Spirit Working Group, the symposium included a community panel as well as two keynote speakers: Lori Campbell from Saskatchewan and Charlotte Nolin from Manitoba. Lori and Charlotte spoke about erasure, resurgence, how culture keeps community strong and Two-Spirit and LGBTQ+ roles within Métis communities.

MNO Two-Spirit Working Group chair Benny Michaud led the group through a medicine bag making activity while participants had an opportunity to share their stories, experiences and hopes for the MNO's Two-Spirit work in the future.

The MNO has long recognized that



identifying 2SLGBTQ+ Métis peoples play an integral role in society, bringing unique insight and perspective to the wider community. The MNO's Two-Spirit Working Group was born out of a 2016 AGA resolution that sought to establish a safe space to discuss and advance issues impacting the 2SLGBTQ+ Ontario Métis community.

Participants in the symposium enjoyed the opportunity to gather, share knowledge and feel a sense of belonging and community. They also hoped that at the next symposium they will be able to gather again in person.



## PCMNO meeting open to citizen observers

The Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) has passed a resolution to ensure that MNO citizens can observe PCMNO meetings. As a result the business meetings of the PCMNO are open for MNO citizen observers.

Watch the MNO website and social media channels for announcements of upcoming PCMNO meetings. The announcements will include registration links. When registering please keep in mind:

- Meeting access is for MNO citizens only and is not open to the general public. Please do not share your personalized link as it is unique to your registration.
- Only one login at a time per person will be permitted.

- *In-Camera:* There may be times during any meeting when business is taken "in camera" for the PCMNO to discuss confidential items privately. (For example, this might happen if PCMNO discusses legal or HR matters.) If it is determined that the meeting will go "in camera," citizen observers will be required to leave the meeting while the PCMNO is in-camera.
- The PCMNO encourages all MNO citizens to attend and observe its meetings! As this is not a town hall, the Q&A and chat features will not be available for citizen observers, and advance questions will not be entertained.

Thank you for your understanding related to the points above.



IMPORTANT MNO POLICY UPDATES

# MNO announces policy updates based on preliminary feedback from MNO citizens under the Registry Review engagement process

On March 27, 2022, the Provisional Council of the MNO (“PCMNO”)—which is the democratically-elected and province-wide governing body of the Métis Nation of Ontario’s (“MNO”)—passed resolutions related to three policies aimed at ensuring that, where appropriate, certain resources and benefits intended for and/or negotiated on behalf of rights-bearing Métis citizens are being directed to verified Métis rights-holders.

The three policies, which are further explained below, were developed based on preliminary feedback received from MNO citizens during the “MNO Registry and Self-Government Readiness Review” (“Registry Review”) engagement process regarding the need to limit certain programs and services, appointments, and awards or other benefits to MNO citizens with “Complete” citizenship files (i.e., verified Métis rights-holders), as well as in response to questions raised by other governments and third parties regarding the significance of the MNO’s new citizenship cards.

Specifically, the PCMNO approved amendments to *MNO Policy #2021-001: Eligibility for Direct Benefit Programs and Services* (originally adopted by the PCMNO on November 24, 2021); approved *MNO Policy #2022-002: Verification of MNO Citizenship File Status to Other Governments and Third-Party Institutions*; and, approved in draft for the purposes of further engagement *MNO Policy #2022-001: Eligibility for Internal and External MNO Appointments*.

The policies confirm—or are expected to confirm, in the case of MNO Policy #2022-001 adopted in draft—that they will be brought to the MNO Annual General Assembly (“AGA”) for formal consideration and potential approval. ∞

NEW POLICY INFO:

MNO POLICY#2021-001:  
**Eligibility for Direct Benefit Programs and Services**

As of April 1, 2022, the updated Eligibility for Direct Benefit Programs and Services policy, requires MNO citizens who wish to apply for certain MNO programs and services (referred to as “Direct Benefit Programs & Services”) to provide proof that their MNO citizenship file has been designated as “Complete” by the MNO Registrar (i.e., that they have been verified as a Métis rights-holders).

Proof can be provided by way of a letter from the MNO Registry and/or a valid new MNO citizenship card—both of which would have been issued to eligible citizens as part of the Registry Review process. For clarity, MNO citizens with citizenship files designated as “Incomplete” or “Missing Documentation” must complete their citizenship file before being eligible to apply for Direct Benefit Programs & Services.

“Direct Benefit Programs & Services” is defined in the policy to related to programs and services delivered by the MNO from funding that: (1) has been negotiated or provided to the MNO on the basis that it represents rights-bearing Métis communities and Métis rights holders and (2) provides the MNO with discretion on how it designs, develops, and administers the funding. In many cases the funding under these programs and services is limited and insufficient to cover the needs of all MNO citizens, and may have the potential to provide significant financial benefits to individuals totaling thousands to tens of thousands of dollars (e.g., school tuition, assistance with down payments on the purchase of new homes, etc.).

The policy does not apply to funding that the MNO receives to deliver programs and services to: all Aboriginal peoples, self-identifying Métis, support the MNO’s self-government work, provide initial crisis supports for marginalized individuals (i.e., individuals who may be experiencing homelessness, suffering from mental health and addictions, or involved in the child welfare system) or to eligible reimbursement of authorized travel or expenses.

At this time, the policy relates to benefits provided under the MNO’s Early Learning and Child Care, PostSecondary Education, COVID Support, Home Improvement, Mental Health and Addictions, and Housing Stabilization programs. Ongoing supports under these programs will not be affected by this policy (i.e., no citizen will stop receiving services mid-programming); however, changes will take effect on future applications. New application windows for the Early Learning and Child Care Programs and PostSecondary Education Support Program will launch in early April 2022, and for the Home Improvement Plan in early May 2022. All future MNO programs launched will indicate clearly whether they fall under this new policy or not.

A complete list of all Direct Benefit Programs & Services will be maintained on the MNO’s website at: <https://www.metisnation.org/dbps>

For questions about Internal/External Appointments please e-mail: [directbenefits@metisnation.org](mailto:directbenefits@metisnation.org)

MNO POLICY #2022-002:  
**Verification of MNO Citizenship File Status to Other Governments and Third-Party Institutions**

The Verification of MNO Citizenship File Status to Other Governments and Third-Party Institutions policy provides a mechanism for other governments (e.g., Canada, Ontario, Métis Nation governments) or third-party institution (e.g., universities, businesses, organizations, etc.) to confirm the citizenship file status of an MNO citizen applying for and/or potentially receiving an award, benefit, or recognition that requires proof that an individual is a Métis rights-holder. Such “awards, benefits, or recognitions” may include scholarships, bursaries, grants, honours, employment, loans, etc.

Based on questions received from other governments and third party institutions, as well as concerns raised by MNO citizens, this policy is aimed at helping to ensure that the MNO is not put in a situation where an MNO citizenship number or older MNO citizenship card are relied upon to verify an individual is a Métis rights-holder when that individual’s MNO citizenship file is “Incomplete.”

Under the policy, another government or third-party institution seeking to verify an individual’s MNO citizenship file status, must make a request in writing to the MNO Registry or designated MNO staff. The MNO Registry or designated MNO staff would then contact the MNO citizen directly to authenticate the request and obtain their consent for the MNO to confirm their citizenship file status with the requesting other government or third-party institution. Potential responses from the MNO Registry or designated MNO staff are limited to simply confirming that a citizen’s file either does or does not meet the current requirements for MNO citizenship, or that the citizen has not provided their consent to the status of their file being released.

No additional details specific to an MNO citizen’s file will be shared with the requesting government or third-party institution. Citizens with “Incomplete” files may also be provided with an opportunity to try and complete their file prior to the MNO Registry or designated MNO staff responding to the request.

To help facilitate its operationalization, the policy authorizes the MNO administration to inform other governments and third-party institutions of the existence of the policy, as well as to enter into potential agreements or arrangements related to it.

For questions about Internal/External Appointments please e-mail: [appointments@metisnation.org](mailto:appointments@metisnation.org)

MNO POLICY #2022-001:  
**Eligibility for Internal and External MNO Appointments**

In addition to the two policies noted above, which have been formally adopted by the PCMNO, the PCMNO also adopted in “draft form” the Eligibility for Internal and External MNO Appointments policy for the purposes of future engagement with MNO Community Councils.

As currently drafted, the policy contemplates limiting the eligibility requirements for appointments (within and outside of the MNO) to MNO citizens with “Complete” files, where the appointment would place the individual in a representative capacity in relation to the MNO, MNO citizens, Métis rights, and/or the rights-bearing Métis communities in Ontario. The intent of the draft policy is to ensure that MNO citizens appointed to such positions are themselves verified Métis rights holders.

As per the PCMNO’s direction, this draft policy will be further discussed with MNO community leadership prior to its potential formal adoption and implementation. Similar to the two other policies, the current draft of this policy also contemplates it being brought to the MNO AGA for formal consideration and potential adoption.

MORE INFORMATION:

For questions about **Direct Benefits** please e-mail: [directbenefits@metisnation.org](mailto:directbenefits@metisnation.org)

For questions about **Internal/External Appointments** please e-mail: [appointments@metisnation.org](mailto:appointments@metisnation.org)

You can also reach out to your elected MNO representatives at: [PCMNO@metisnation.org](mailto:PCMNO@metisnation.org)

The new policies are available at [www.metisnation.org/governance/reference-documents](https://www.metisnation.org/governance/reference-documents) or via the QR code below.

If you are uncertain of the status of your citizen file, please contact the Registry Office at **1-855-798-1006** or email [info@mnoregistry.ca](mailto:info@mnoregistry.ca). Citizens who do not have complete files are encouraged to continue working with Registry to try and complete their file.







Steve Powley's iconic hat.

## Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council receives Indigenous heritage grant

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is proud to announce that the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council, with support from Know History Inc., has been awarded \$200,000 from the Museum Assistance Program – Indigenous Heritage Grant, funded by the Government of Canada. The program supports projects that preserve, manage, and present Indigenous cultural heritage.

The funds will be used to develop an exhibition at the Sault Ste. Marie Métis Cultural Centre and an accompanying documentary, to commemorate the legacy of the landmark 2003 Supreme Court of Canada decision in *R v. Powley* and its importance to the Métis community in Sault Ste. Marie and the broader implications for Métis communities across the Métis Homelands.

In 1993, Steve Powley and his son Roddy were charged for hunting a moose without a license, and unlawful possession of a moose contrary to the *Ontario Game and Fish Act*. The Powleys with the support of the Métis Nation of Ontario took the case to court, arguing that, as Métis, Steve and Roddy had Aboriginal harvesting rights protected in Section 35 of the *Constitution Act*. After several appeals, the Supreme Court of Canada unanimously ruled in favour of the Powleys on September 19, 2003, confirming the existence of Métis rights under Section 35.

The proposed exhibit will commemorate this historic victory by showcasing important artifacts such as Steve Powley's sash; hunting notebook; his iconic hat; the rifle presented to the Powley by Manitoba Métis Federation President David Chartrand; the original copy of the Powley Decision; and the hide from the first moose "legally" harvested by the Métis community after the 2003 ruling. The exhibit will give these and other unique items a permanent home, where they can be viewed and enjoyed by visitors and community members.

The permanent exhibit will be housed at the Sault Ste. Marie Métis Cultural Centre — one of the three buildings in the former St. John's Anglican Church Complex which was returned to the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council in 2017 by the Anglican Diocese (see more on page 22).

A short documentary and a traveling exhibition will also be created and circulated across Canada, in order to share this important story with as wide an audience as possible. The documentary and both exhibits will launch on September 19, 2023, to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Powley Case. ∞

## MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO

# COVID-19 RELIEF PROGRAMS

Find out more or Apply:  
**[www.metisnation.org/covid-19](https://covid.metisnation.org)**



### COVID-19 INCOME RELIEF BENEFIT

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) has extended some COVID-19 financial support programs at a reduced capacity to MNO citizens affected by COVID-19. Individuals may be eligible for the Income Relief Benefit if they are unemployed or have lost income due to COVID-19 as of April 1, 2022, and are not receiving other social assistance. This could be as a result of layoff, job loss, loss of self-employment, reduction in work hours, requirement to quarantine, self-isolate, caring for children due to school daycare closures, or caring for someone who is sick due to COVID-19. Benefits are based on availability of funds and will be given on a first-come, first serve basis. Apply at: <https://covid.metisnation.org>

### COVID-19 FOOD SECURITY FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) has extended their COVID-19 Financial Support Programs at a reduced capacity to continue to provide supports to MNO citizens currently affected by COVID-19. Individuals and Families who have lost primary income since April 1st, 2022 or have income below \$35,000 if they are single or income below \$50,000 if they are couple may be eligible for \$200 per citizen and child in the household to a maximum of \$800.00. Only one person per household can apply. Supports are based on availability of funds and will be given on a first-come, first serve basis. Apply at: <https://covid.metisnation.org>

### COVID-19 FOOD SECURITY FOR SENIORS

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) has extended their COVID-19 Financial Support Programs at a reduced capacity to continue to provide supports to MNO citizens currently affected by COVID-19. Seniors who are 61 years old or older may be eligible for \$200 per citizen if their income is below \$35,000 if they are single or below \$50,000 if they are a couple. Apply at: <https://covid.metisnation.org>

## "I'm not doing it for me, I'm doing it for everybody else"

Plans, thoughts, and feelings on the COVID-19 vaccine directly from MNO citizens

By **Abigail Simms** and **Noel Tsui**

Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) team conducted multiple surveys and interviews. In spring 2021, the MNO COVID-19 Vaccine Intention and Hesitancy Study looked into vaccine hesitancy in Métis populations. MNO citizens were invited to complete an online survey with a total of 4,405 participating.

As part of the survey, 16 MNO citizens shared their thoughts, feelings and opinions on the COVID-19 vaccines that were just then rolling out. As part of this group there were MNO citizens who didn't plan to be vaccinated ('no'), some who were still not sure ('unsure') and some who planned to or already had been vaccinated ('yes').

MNO citizens shared the sources they got their COVID-19 vaccine information from and which ones they trusted; the thoughts and feelings of their kin networks about vaccines; whether they saw the virus or vaccine to be more harmful to their health; and if they had any concerns specific to being prioritized for vaccination as a Métis person.

Most MNO citizens were willing to be (and are now) vaccinated. Also, a couple of 'unsure' and 'no' participants decided to accept a COVID-19 vaccine prior to their interviews. These participants changed their minds for a variety of reasons but mainly for their protection and the protection of others. 'No' and 'unsure' participants had more

doubts about the COVID-19 vaccines than 'yes' participants. These doubts included concerns about the ingredients of the vaccines, and how quickly the vaccines were produced among others. These participants also mentioned young age and a lack of other health conditions for not wanting to get a COVID-19 vaccine. It is important to note that vaccination is a collective action that not only supports our own health but our family's, Elders', children's and others around us.



*One of the biggest reasons for me to get my vaccine was that I can spend time with Elders and not have to worry as much about the impact that will have on them, especially like my grandparents and older family members.*

- Survey participant 16



'No' and 'unsure' participants were more likely to mention COVID-19 misinformation in their interviews as a reason for not getting a vaccine. The pandemic was happening at the same time as a COVID-19 'infodemic'. An infodemic is the excessive creation of content, some true but most false, that is shared quickly and widely over social media and mass media. This causes information overload and feelings of anxiety and fear in many. Because COVID-19 vaccine misinformation is often written to elicit

strong emotional reactions from readers, the more you are exposed to this kind of false content the less confident you may feel in COVID-19 vaccines. A way to help with the ongoing infodemic is to work on health literacy to feel more confident that the information you are reading is trustworthy and accurate. Here are some resources:

**COVID-19 Misinformation Watch**  
<https://covid19misinfo.org>

**WHO COVID-19 Mythbusters**  
[bit.ly/3yHmGwM](https://bit.ly/3yHmGwM)

**Tool for Spotting Fake News:**  
[bit.ly/3up3H7z](https://bit.ly/3up3H7z)

The MNO website also has frequently asked questions on the vaccines and other information related to COVID-19, and it has run webinars where experts like Dr Janet Smylie, a Métis physician, presented links to trusted sources of information. If you're still unsure as to whether to get vaccinated, consider reaching out to your family physician or nurse practitioner. ∞

*Abigail Simms and Noel Tsui were graduate students completing their Masters of Public Health. This work was completed during their practicum with the MNO. Practicums are where students apply the knowledge they learn in courses and hone their research and professional skills in their areas of interest.*



The Métis Nation of Ontario  
is launching its very first

# HOUSING CENSUS

**The MNO needs your help compiling data  
on Métis households in Ontario and  
their housing conditions.**

By participating in this important census, you will help us to know what housing supports are needed and how to improve the housing conditions of MNO citizens. We don't want to have to rely on other governments for this vital information. Participating households will have a chance to win prizes!

To take the survey visit **[bit.ly/3zFq4ZH](https://bit.ly/3zFq4ZH)** or scan the QR code below:



#### HOW TO SCAN A QR CODE:

- 1** Open your camera
- 2** Point the camera at the QR code
- 3** Wait for the code to scan
- 4** Touch the pop-up link

For more information contact:  
**[HousingCensus@metisnation.org](mailto:HousingCensus@metisnation.org)**

Métis Nation  
of Ontario 



*Suzanne Rochon-Burnett*

# VOLUNTEER of the YEAR AWARD

**Every year since 2006, the *Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award* has been presented to a Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen who has made ongoing contributions to their community and the MNO as a whole.**

The 2021 Volunteer of the Year Award was presented to **Marie-Louise Perron** from the MNO Ottawa Region Métis Council (see story below).

This year's Volunteer of the Year Award will be presented at the 29th MNO Annual General Assembly planned for August 19-21, 2022 in Toronto. If you know of a dedicated MNO citizen who deserves to be considered for the award please read the information below and complete the nomination form.

**OBJECTIVE:**

The objective of the Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award is to recognize individuals who contribute as a volunteer to the MNO year-round and have done so for a number of years. Each year a volunteer meeting the criteria is named as the recipient of the Suzanne-Rochon Volunteer of the Year by a selection committee.

**CRITERIA:**

Individuals nominated must exemplify the kind of volunteer contribution demonstrated by Suzanne Rochon-Burnett. They will have: given generously of their time and effort; been strong advocates of the Métis Nation; have a firmly established record of selfless commitment; and be seen as caring, giving individuals that others look up to and admire. The candidates will have provided an extended period of service as a volunteer.

**PROCESS:**

Any MNO citizen can nominate a volunteer by sending a completed nomination form to: **[AGA2022@metisnation.org](mailto:AGA2022@metisnation.org)**

**DEADLINE:**

**August 10, 2021**

**Marie-Louise Perron** named 2021 MNO Volunteer of the Year

## A champion of Métis culture and history

Since 2006, the Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award has been presented to a Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen who has made ongoing contributions to the MNO and their own community. Congratulations go to Marie-Louise Perron who was announced as the recipient of this year's award on day one of the MNO's 28th Annual General Assembly on September 18, 2021.

Marie-Louise is a key part of the Métis community in the Ottawa region. She is a leader and very active volunteer. She has had, and continues to have, an impact on her community, the MNO and the Métis Nation as a whole.

Marie-Louise was born on her grandfather's land in Saskatchewan and is a descendant of the Red River Métis and early French newcomers. She has been an MNO citizen since 2004. She is a Métis knowledge keeper and has been an educator, mentor, author, archivist and public servant at the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, Library and Archives Canada and the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

Marie-Louise has maintained, and promoted, the traditions and cultures of indigenous peoples throughout her life. She continues to maintain her Métis roots in Saskatchewan and also to the Francophone Archives in that province whose activities include working on reconciliation and promoting indigenous history and culture.

Marie-Louise has volunteered as a member of the MNO Ottawa Region Métis Council (ORMC) since 2016. She currently serves as the Chair. As Chair, she manages all meetings

in a fair, professional, inclusive, efficient and constructive manner. She has played a key, leading role in ensuring strong and effective governance. She also volunteered to take on the extra responsibility of being the acting Council President when the President was sick. She used her Métis knowledge in a leading role to develop and present a Métis 101 presentation which is aimed at broadening the knowledge and awareness of the Métis culture and community.

Marie-Louise took the lead for the ORMC for all things related to COVID-19 support. She also demonstrated leadership and adaptability in moving to the virtual meeting format during the COVID-19 pandemic. Marie-Louise is also one of the key members in MNO Region 6 developing the Self-Government Regional Implementation Agreement.

Marie-Louise volunteered to attend a number of meetings with Ottawa Public Health officials to ensure that public health services were responsive and inclusive of the local Métis community. She continues with this vital initiative. She recently met with Dr. Vera Etches, Medical Officer of Health for Ottawa Public Health (OPH), to discuss continued COVID-19 support and establishing community ties for the longer term.

When founding MNO President Tony Belcourt was downsizing his home, Marie-Louise gave countless hours helping him prepare hundreds of boxes of records pertaining to the history of the MNO and the modern Métis political movement and prepared them for their new home at Library and Archives Canada. Marie-Louise's work to help our founding president helped the entire MNO

**“Marie Louise epitomizes selfless commitment to her heritage and continues to give generously of her time and knowledge”**



Marie-Louise Perron is Chair of the Ottawa Region Métis Council.

to ensure our story was protected.

Marie-Louise has volunteered in support of all the major post-secondary institutions in the Ottawa Area, including Carleton University, the University of Ottawa, and Algonquin College. Marie-Louise's work has directly benefited many Métis Students to feel seen, heard and supported in their educational journey.

Marie-Louise pursues historical and genealogical research projects and offers workshops on tracing Indigenous ancestry. These volunteer initiatives have strengthened her reputation as a champion of Métis culture and history. She has presented, and published, in both

English and French, for national and international audiences, on subjects including the French/Métis songs and stories of the Perron-Laderoute-Marion-St. Arnaud families, instruction on tracing one's family history, and the value of archives to society.

In the words of one of her nominators: "Marie Louise epitomizes selfless commitment to her heritage and has, and continues, to give generously of her time and knowledge. She is a caring individual that the citizens in our community look up to."

Thank You Marie-Louise for all you do. ∞



## MÉTIS RIGHTS IN COURTS

# MNO and MNA successful in joint intervention before Supreme Court of Canada

Last fall, the Supreme Court of Canada released its decision in *City of Toronto v Ontario (Attorney General)*. This case was about the fairness of a municipal election in one city, but the decision also raised the issue of how Canada's Constitution is to be interpreted and the role of unwritten constitutional principles in protecting the rights of all Canadian citizens, including the unique rights and interest of Indigenous peoples.

The Métis Nation of Ontario ("MNO") and Métis Nation of Alberta ("MNA") jointly intervened in the case to protect the unwritten constitutional principle of the honour of the Crown that is owed to Indigenous peoples. While the 5/4 majority of the Supreme Court held that "unwritten constitutional principles cannot serve as the basis for invalidating legislation," the majority went on to recognize the unique nature of the honour of the Crown and held the following:

The unwritten constitutional principle of the honour of the Crown is sui generis. As correctly noted in submissions of the interveners the Métis Nation of Ontario and the Métis Nation of Alberta, the honour of the Crown arises from the assertion of Crown sovereignty over pre-existing Aboriginal societies, and from the unique relationship between the Crown and Indigenous peoples. We need not decide here whether the principle is capable of grounding the constitutional invalidation of legislation, but if it is, it is unique in that regard.

*"The honour of the Crown is extremely important in advancing reconciliation and its must be given full legal force so Métis governments and other Indigenous peoples can rely on the promises governments make to us every day."*

The dissenting opinion, written by retiring Justice Rosalie Abella, went even farther, noting that "of course, the unwritten constitutional principle of the honour of the Crown has been affirmed by this Court and accorded full legal force."

"We are pleased the Supreme Court of Canada recognized that not all unwritten constitutional principles can be painted with the same brush. The honour of the Crown is extremely important in advancing reconciliation and its must be given full legal force so Métis governments and other Indigenous peoples can rely on the promises governments make to us every day," said MNA President Audrey Poitras.

MNO President Margaret Froh added, "The honour of the Crown is extremely important in advancing reconciliation and its must be given full legal force so Métis governments and other Indigenous peoples can rely on the promises governments make to us every day."

Métis lawyer Jason Madden, who represented both the MNA and MNO noted, "The honour of the Crown, as a constitutional principle, is playing an increasingly important role in the development of Aboriginal law generally as well as moderating the relationship between governments and Indigenous peoples as the national project of reconciliation continues."

"We are pleased that the entirety of the Supreme Court of Canada recognizes the unique purpose of the honour of the Crown, as a constitutional principle, and that its full legal force has been once again confirmed and protected by the highest court in Canada," concluded Madden. ∞

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

# MNO President joins Premier in welcoming Governor General to Ontario

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Margaret Froh and MNO Chair Hank Rowlinson were pleased to be invited by Premier Doug Ford to meet with Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada, as she made her first official visit to the Ontario legislature on March 31, 2022 in Toronto.

The meeting was an opportunity to foster the government-to-government, nation-to-nation relationships between the MNO, Ontario, and Canada and to discuss important issues of shared interest.

The day was capped with a reception at the Royal Ontario Museum, where the Governor General highlighted the importance of working together towards reconciliation. Simon was accompanied by Indigenous and community leaders as she explored Indigenous art and culture on a walk through the First Peoples Gallery. ∞



MNO President Margaret Froh and Chair Hank Rowlinson meet with Ontario Premier Doug Ford and Governor General of Canada Mary Simon in Toronto on March 31. - Photo provided by Alexandra Adamo



# MNO President Froh appears on APTN Face-to-Face

On March 22, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Margaret Froh appeared as a guest on APTN's Face-to-Face segment with Dennis Ward.

The interview covered a range of topics: including the Métis National Council (MNC) meeting last fall, the election of new MNC President Cassidy Caron, and a recommitment to ensuring the MNC moves in a new direction focused on transparency and accountability.

President Froh provided clarification on MNO's history and relationship with the MNC, and spoke to the context surrounding key decisions to release Registry review findings.

The interview also touched upon the MNO's current self-government journey and engagement with MNO citizens:

"We are very excited to move forward to implement MNO's historic Self-Government Agreement," shared President Froh.

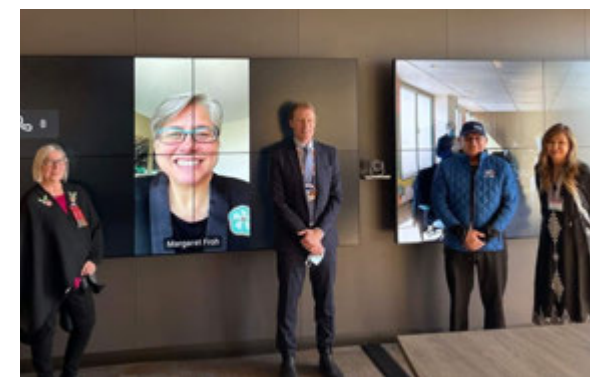
"Today within the MNO we are focused on moving forward, on building capacity at our local, regional and provincial levels of government and continuing to engage all Métis citizens on issues that matter to them, their families and communities."

To see the full Face-to-Face interview with President Froh visit: [bit.ly/3OCVnyU](https://bit.ly/3OCVnyU). ∞

# Presidents of Métis governments of Alberta, Ontario, Saskatchewan meet with Minister

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Margaret Froh and the Presidents of the Métis Nation of Alberta and Métis Nation—Saskatchewan met with Marc Miller, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations in March 2022.

Given the shared priorities of all three Métis governments related to the Self-Government Agreements, key topics discussed included moving forward on the federal recognition legislation as well as advancing on Métis claims. The parties also discussed the intention of the MNC affiliate governments alongside the Métis delegates who travelled to the Vatican to meet Pope Francis, to lobby the Catholic Church to release records related to their role in the Residential School system as well as Métis artifacts. ∞



# MNO and GenPGM sign agreement to protect Métis rights on copper project

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and Generation PGM Inc. (GenPGM) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for the Marathon Palladium Copper Project located in Northwestern Ontario within Lakehead, Nipigon, and Michipicoten Métis traditional territories to fund consultation activities in February 2022.

The MoU solidified the ongoing relationship between the MNO and GenPGM which places consultation as a primary commitment. The MNO has seen first-hand during meetings, site vis-

its, and field work that GenPGM values transparency in planning and assessment of impacts to rights, environmental concerns, including water, noise, water and air quality, and endangered and invasive species.

The protection of the Métis way of life, cultural values, and environment and community benefits including training, jobs, business opportunities, and financial participation through a Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) will be the next steps in the ongoing relationship.

"I look forward to working with the

staff of GenPGM into the future and seeing the GenPGM mine benefiting all of the region and the company long into the future," said Regional Councilor Tim Sinclair of the MNO.

Jamie Levy, President and CEO of Gen Mining, commented "We value the relationship with MNO and are very pleased to have them as a partner in our Marathon Palladium Project." ∞



## MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO

# ONE CENTRALIZED POINT OF ACCESS

The Métis Nation of Ontario's ONE MNO team is a centralized point of access, where you can connect with one of our Navigators and be guided through everything MNO has to offer.

- A single point of access
- Enhanced community experience
- Info on **ALL** MNO services and supports available across the province
- Facilitated coordination of supports and service for those in need

p: **1-800-263-4889 x7**  
e: **ContactUs@metisnation.org**  
w: **www.metisnation.org**

Métis Nation  
of Ontario 

## MEET OUR NAVIGATORS:



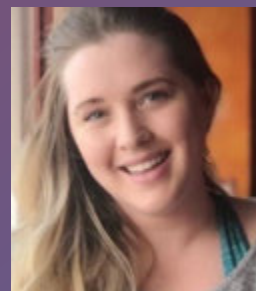
**Dana O'Donnell** started her career as chair of the MNO Regional Advisory Committee for the Education and Training branch in Region 1, gaining insight into provincial projects and initiatives. As a MNO Community Development Officer, Dana helped organize regional training projects in the Northwestern Ontario MNO offices. Throughout 25+ years of MNO public service, Dana has guided numerous Métis people to start and expand businesses and has provided pathways to education and training to many more. From the early days Dana has contributed to the growth and success of MNO. The OneMNO Navigator Team, is a perfect opportunity for Dana to share her knowledge. Dana enjoys hunting, fishing and bonfires on beautiful Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods, with her husband Darren, their three grown children, their spouses and grandson Caleb.



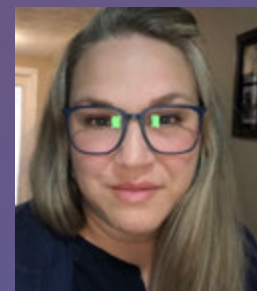
**Joel Tarantini** has a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Laurentian University. Prior to joining the MNO, Joel has worked in sales and sales management, most recently as a branch manager with Discount Car and Truck Rentals. He served as a District Sales Manager with Coca-Cola, where he had a successful track record managing an entire operation, including sales, fleet, warehousing, HR, and payroll. Joel believes in building strong teams, and treating everyone with respect and compassion. When not at work, Joel has spent his time coaching his son and daughter in a variety of sports, and enjoys camping, fishing, reading and most recently, making syrup!!



**Deanna (Dee) Dillabough** has a Bachelor of Arts degree, with a major in Social Development Studies, a Minor in Political Science and a specialization in Social Work from the University of Waterloo. Prior to joining the MNO, Deanna spent time working with Community Living Mattawa and the Mattawa Women's Resource Centre. In 2017, she travelled through Western Canada, Central America, Southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand while simultaneously working in the restaurant industry. Upon returning home in 2020, Deanna spent one year in the role of Métis Family Wellbeing Coordinator. When not at work, Deanna enjoys spending time outdoors, making jewellery and playing guitar.



**Amy Duquette** has a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Philosophy from Nipissing University and a diploma in Mental Health and Addiction from Canadore College. Prior to joining the MNO, Amy spent most of her career in managerial positions building, mentoring and managing various teams. Amy has spent the past 3 years as a Métis Family Wellbeing Coordinator and is really looking forward to continuing to support our Métis community and MNO staff as a OneMNO Navigator. When not at work, Amy enjoys visiting her parents farm with her daughter and fiancé, reading, cooking and watching TV.



OneMNO Supervisor, **Tracy Bald** has a B.A. in Psychology from Nipissing University and a Post-Graduate Diploma in Fundraising and Resource Management from Georgian College. Before joining the MNO in 2004 Tracy worked in youth programming and for the United Way. Tracy started at the MNO as the Community Wellness Coordinator in Midland. Since then, she has been a supervisor in the Healing and Wellness branch and now works in the Community Wellbeing branch, supervising the OneMNO Navigators. When not working Tracy has her hands full with her son, Drew, and dog, Bruce. They all share an interest in cooking, spending time outdoors and watching movies (mostly ones with superheroes).



## MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO VETERANS' COUNCIL



Métis Nation of Ontario veterans gather at the National Indigenous Veterans Monument in Confederation Park in Ottawa this past March.

# Veterans' Council gathers in Ottawa

March meeting first in-person gathering since the COVID-19 pandemic began

The Métis Nation of Ontario's Veterans' Council (MNOVC) held its first in-person gathering since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The meeting took place March 19 and 20, 2022 in Ottawa.

During the meeting, MNOVC members deliberated the future of the MNO Veterans' Council, and celebrated new, returning and former members.

"On behalf of the Métis Nation of Ontario, I am so pleased to see this gathering of Métis veterans and express our gratitude for their service," said MNO President Margaret Froh.

"Gatherings like this are so important -- for not only for our veterans -- but for the MNO as a whole."

The gathered veterans shared their stories, their concerns and their goals going forward. Including increased awareness of the MNOVC. Twenty-two veterans made their way to Ottawa for the gathering, though MNOVC President Brian Prairie says that number could easily grow

exponentially.

"Conservatively, I believe this council should number 500 Métis Veterans in Ontario," said Prairie.

"One of our most important jobs going forward is to grow the council to meet that number and make sure our Métis veterans are fully represented."

While in Ottawa, the council toured the Canadian War Museum and the Canadian Museum of History.

At dinner the first night, the newest members of the MNOVC were bestowed Louis Riel medals -- since 2009 the MNOVC has given these medals to Métis Nation of Ontario citizens who served in the military.

The gathering ended with a ceremony at the National Indigenous Veterans' Monument that stands in Confederation Park in Ottawa. The ceremony performed by Paul E. Pirie and was done to cleanse the statue after it was allegedly profaned during the occupation in February.



MNOVC members tour the National War Museum in Ottawa, ON.



clockwise from top left: **MNO President Margaret Froh and MNOVC President Brian Prairie present MNOVC Louis Riel Medals to recipients: Ralph Rienguet; Andrew Bouchier; Lynne Gouliquer; Mike Perry and; Delena Benson.**

### APPLYING FOR MEMBERSHIP MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO VETERANS' COUNCIL (MNOVC)

To apply for membership in the MNO Veteran's Council, MNO citizens can complete and sign the application available at the MNO website and send it and substantiating documents verifying military service to **MNOVC@metisnation.org**. Once reviewed and approved, the Council will inform the applicant, and alert the MNO Registry so that the applicant's citizenship record can be updated to reflect MNO Veteran status.



LANDS, RESOURCES AND CONSULTATIONS

# MNO holds its first-ever Climate Change Forum

*We need to work together  
to make a better future*

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) held its first-ever Climate Change Forum on March 19, 2022. The event, hosted virtually over Zoom, included guest speakers, trivia, prizes and more. The focus of the forum was on climate change and its impacts on Métis health and well-being. In addition to the presentations by knowledgeable guest speakers, MNO citizens were able to provide feedback on their climate change concerns. Great discussions among the 130+ attendees provided direction for the MNO to help better advocate for its citizens. MNO President Margaret Froh opened the forum with remarks about the important role Métis people can play in the fight against

climate change: “Environment and climate change is hugely important to us as a people that are tied and connected to the lands and waters,” said President Froh. “We have skilled people working within the MNO, and we’ve got such knowledge out at a community level – bring all of that together and we are able to have some really good dialogue, not just this afternoon, but in the work that is undertaken in our communities across the province.” The event featured speakers from several environmental and cultural disciplines including youth climate activist Sophia Mathur, who has been lobbying politicians to act on climate change since the age of seven.

“Climate change is hugely important to us as a people that are tied and connected to the lands and waters,”

“Climate change is the biggest threat to human health,” said Sophia in a video address. “It will lead to malnutrition, food insecurities, floods and droughts that can lead to diseases and loss of human lives. That is why I’ve decided to take action on this climate crisis. I’ve gotten involved in [lobbying and] lawsuits, and I’ve stood up for my future ... we all need to work together and make a better future for all of us.”

The MNO has already begun to monitor and protect our environment in our communities with programs and partnerships which include a community-based water quality monitoring program, ongoing policy and project reviews, energy efficiency improvements through the Home Improvement Program, bio-monitoring training and a MNO-specific carbon footprint calculator among other initiatives.

Participants in the Forum were entered into a draw for door prizes -- including a fiddle and a pair of Manitobah Mukluks. Keep an eye out for future forums to be eligible for prizes like this! This successful event helped bring awareness of the MNO’s climate change programming and kept citizens informed about the health of our waters and opportunities to get involved.

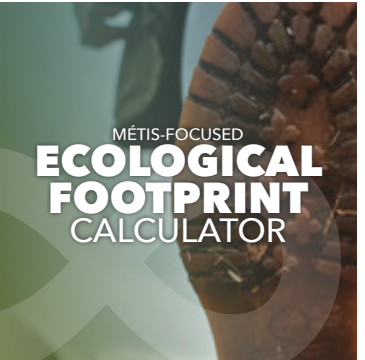
## MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO • LANDS, RESOURCES AND CONSULTATIONS BRANCH ONGOING & UPCOMING PROGRAMS



Many MNO citizens have expressed an interest in stewardship-oriented actions that go beyond the scope of climate change monitoring, in order to improve the sustainability of natural resource development in their areas. As a result, the LRC branch created the Community-Based Water Quality Monitoring Program in 2021 to document the effects of climate change on Métis communities, as well as empower citizens through training and experience in environmental monitoring.



Our monitoring program is expanding to include **Ontario Benthos Biomonitoring Network** (OBBN). MNO LRC staff will be collaborating with Fleming College to offer a training course that will teach citizens how to identify benthic-invertebrates, which are bottom dwelling aquatic invertebrates, and collection techniques to use in the field so that data can be used as an indicator of water and habitat quality. OBBN training will be available to interested citizens during the 2023 field season.



An ecological footprint is a measure of a person’s demand on the supply of nature. We are collaborating with consultant, Shared Value Solutions (SVS), and contacts from York University’s Ecological Footprint Initiative to develop a web-based, Métis-Focused Ecological Footprint Calculator -- one that includes culturally relevant questions and express carbon emissions in terms of an ecological footprint aligned with Métis culture and way-of-life.



Carbon offsets are reductions of greenhouse gas emissions made to compensate for emissions produced from a human activity. The MNO LRC branch has **purchased carbon offsets** that meet industry standards for measurable and verified emissions reduction. For example, our water monitoring program has consumed 1,394 litres of gas or energy equivalent. We have contributed 3.20 tonnes/CO2 emissions in 2021. Offsets were purchased in support of the Ontario Biodiversity Afforestation Project to make the program carbon-neutral.



The MNO Lands, Resources and Consultation team has secured funding to support MNO Community Councils in Regions 1 to 9 for initiatives that incorporate land-based conservation and restoration. MNO Community Councils will have the opportunity to undertake land-based activities locally, such as: garbage cleanups, planting trees or traditional medicines, rain gardens, bee hotels, butterfly gardens, or invasive plant species removal and replacement with native plant species.



# Our GOVERNMENT Our TASK Our TIME

The Métis Nation of Ontario, founded in 1993, is the modern-day manifestation of the Métis communities that emerged in the area surrounding the Upper Great Lakes and along waterways and fur trade routes of what is now Ontario long before confederation.

On June 27, 2019, the MNO and Canada signed the historic Self-Government Agreement. In this agreement, Canada recognizes for the first time in history what the Métis have always known—that the Métis communities represented by the MNO have an inherent and constitutionally-protected right to self-determination and 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 Citizens, regions and communities are engaged in that process in a way that makes sense for them.

## Why is Self-Government important to our families and communities?

Self-determination and Self-Government are inherent rights of all indigenous people prior to Canada becoming Canada. We govern ourselves in keeping with our own customs, practices and traditions. Our communities asserted their rights, practiced their way of life, and were deeply rooted and thriving along the waterways and the lakes of Ontario.

Canada's colonial policies and institutions held us back and held us down and, collectively, our citizens and communities have struggled, dreaming from the very earliest days to have our inherent right to self-government recognized and respected.

With full recognition of our inherent right of self-government, we will fully support the needs and the aspirations of our families and communities throughout this province and we will build a better future for our generations to come. We'll be fully empowered and entrusted to create meaningful change in our communities. We will truly be Otipemisiwak, the people who govern themselves. The time has come for the full recognition of our inherent right to govern ourselves. ∞

## Why is the Self-Government Agreement important?

The signing of the *Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement* or core Self-Government Agreement on June 27, 2019 was a monumental milestone for the MNO. It was the first ever Self-Government Agreement signed between Canada and any Métis government. Previous Canadian governments refused to participate in any meaningful self-government discussions or negotiations with the Métis. The Métis Nation—Saskatchewan and Métis Nation of Alberta and the Manitoba Metis Federation have signed similar agreements.

Now the core Self-Government Agreement explicitly recognizes our Métis communities within Ontario as having the inherent and constitutionally protected right to Self-Government, we will be denied no more. Our struggle for respect and recognition is not over and we have much more work to do to see our dreams fully realized. We must do this work together. ∞

## Why does the Métis Nation of Ontario need a Constitution?

A Constitution is an essential tool for self-government. A constitution acts as a rule book, the supreme law, clearly defining how any government, Métis or otherwise, will operate and what authority and responsibilities it has.

When constitutions are recognized by other levels of government like the federal and provincial governments they provide the legitimacy and the tools we need to respond to our citizens' needs and provide appropriate services. We have heard the call from our citizens and our communities for a constitution and it is a necessary step in our path to self-government.

As we build our constitution we want to hear from every citizen. We want to hear from you, so reach out, ask questions, provide your feedback, raise your voice. Your voice matters. ∞

Email Us:  
**Self.Government@metisnation.org**

website:  
**www.metisnation.org/self-government**

Métis Nation  
of Ontario ∞  
—SELF-GOVERNMENT—





# NAVIGATING TOGETHER Self-Government 101

## The Métis Inherent Right of Self-Government

- As an Indigenous Peoples, the Métis have always possessed the inherent **collective** right of self-government
- The strength of our self-government is based on our citizenship registry, democratic elections, Métis law, justice and accountability
- This is what sustained Métis self-government for generations and what will sustain our Métis government into the future



George McPherson and his family at North West Angle, 1872

## Métis Nation of Ontario

- MNO was founded on the will and determination of Métis people and communities, and it is the only Métis-created and legitimate representative government of rights-bearing Métis citizens in Ontario
- In 1993, the Métis Nation of Ontario ("MNO"), was created. The MNO is the modern-day manifestation of the Métis communities in Ontario's inherent right to self-government.



MNO Founding Meeting in Toronto in fall of 1993

## ADVANCING MÉTIS RIGHTS

For almost 30 years, the MNO has successfully advanced Métis rights, including self-government on many fronts:

- The **POWLEY CASE** was fought all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada, where the highest court in the country recognized Métis section 35 rights for the first time
- MNO has negotiated **two MÉTIS HARVESTING AGREEMENTS** with Ontario and now regulates the Métis harvest in the province through the *MNO Harvesting Policy* and MNO Harvesters Cards system
- MNO has established well-run **PROGRAMS AND SERVICES** to improve the lives of MNO Citizens, in areas of health, education, housing, healing and wellness, etc.

### DID YOU KNOW? MNO is the **only** Métis government in Ontario with:

- objectively verifiable **registry**
- democratic **elections**
- governance structures and institutions at the **local, regional and provincial** level

### The Powley Case

In 2003, in *R. v. Powley*, the highest court in Canada unanimously confirmed that the Métis are a full-fledged, rights-bearing people.

## STATEMENT OF PRIME PURPOSE

The MNO continues to be guided by its *Statement of Prime Purpose*.



In 1993, the MNO asked individuals who support the vision set out in the *Statement of Prime Purpose* to join. The MNO's *Statement of Prime Purpose* was founded on the following principles:

- to ensure that Métis can exercise their Aboriginal and Treaty rights and freedoms and in so doing, act in a spirit of cooperation with other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people;
- to establish democratic institutions based on our inherent right of self-government;
- to gain the recognition and respect of the Métis as a Nation and a people

See the *Statement of Prime Purpose* at the MNO website: [www.metisnation.org](http://www.metisnation.org)





## THE ROAD TO SELF-GOVERNMENT

As part of this work, the MNO has negotiated various agreements with Canada and Ontario that establish negotiation processes, set out priorities for those negotiations, and/or outline implementation steps related to Métis self-government, including the:

- **MNO-Canada Memorandum of Understanding on Advancing Reconciliation** (2017): established an exploratory discussion process to “develop a mutually-agreeable framework agreement to serve as the basis for negotiations”
- **MNO-Canada-Ontario Framework Agreement on Advancing Reconciliation** (2017): established a formal negotiations process and included development of a self-government agreement as one of its key purposes; and:



### Historic Self-Government Agreement signed

On June 27, 2019 the MNO signed a historic Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement (MGRSA) with Canada



## THE SELF-GOVERNMENT AGREEMENT

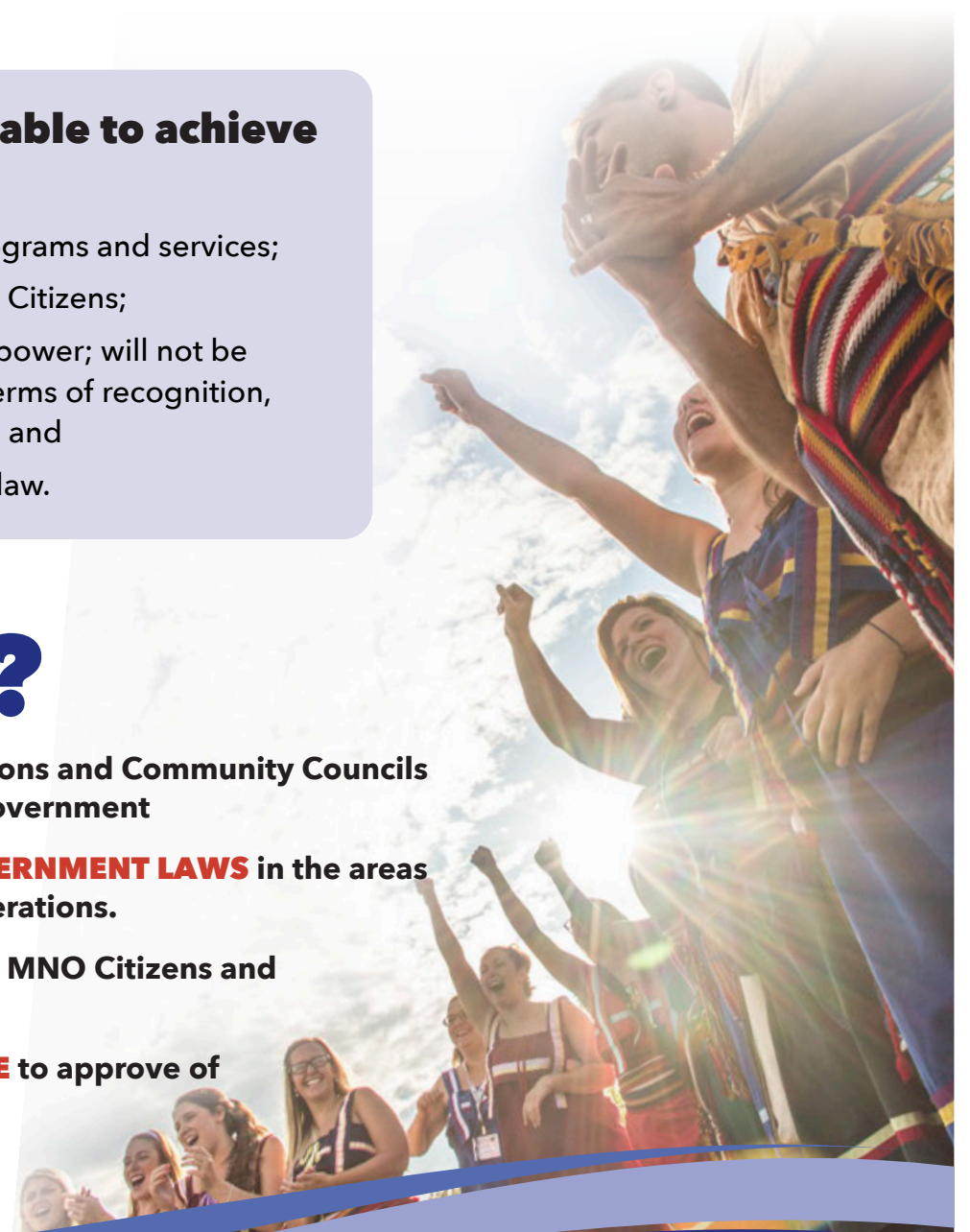
Put simply, after the Self-Government Agreement is fully implemented, it will not be only the MNO's citizens who recognize and believe in the MNO as a Métis Government, but Canada, as well as Canadian courts and other governments, will also do so.

### The future Métis Government will be able to achieve additional successes, including:

- having stable funding for governance as well as programs and services;
- delivering even better programs and services for its Citizens;
- passing laws in relation to key areas of law-making power; will not be subject to the whims of changing governments in terms of recognition, funding, or ability to access negotiations processes; and
- will no longer be restricted by provincial corporate law.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

- ∞ MNO will work with MNO citizens, Communities, Regions and Community Councils to develop the **CONSTITUTION** for the future Métis Government
- ∞ MNO also will work to develop the **CORE MÉTIS GOVERNMENT LAWS** in the areas of: Citizenship; Leadership Selection; and Internal Operations.
- ∞ The very first steps in this work will be consulting with MNO Citizens and developing **MNO-wide CONSULTATIONS**
- ∞ Consultations will lead towards a **RATIFICATION VOTE** to approve of our Métis Government Constitution





## OUR MÉTIS HISTORY, OUR MÉTIS STORIES

Thi

## People In Be

*Abitibi Inland Historic  
Métis Community*

**The Métis families of Moose Factory resisted entering Treaty and instead petitioned the Canadian government for scrip. This was a rare case of Métis almost receiving scrip east of the English River.**

Growing up in Moose Factory, Métis filled key roles in the fur trade, acting as middlemen, guides, and interpreters. They were known for their skill and their unique ability to bridge cultures. Neither First Nations nor European, Métis were a distinct people.

"We have been born and brought up in the country, and are thus by our birth and training unfit to obtain a livelihood in the civilized world." With these words, the Abitibi Métis asserted their place in between cultures.

When the government decided to expand the railroad to northern Ontario and Quebec, it began negotiating with First Nations to extinguish their Aboriginal Title. But the Métis also had rights. They petitioned the government for scrip that would entitle them, like their relatives in the West, to 160 acres of land or a one-time payment of \$160.

The government recognized their rights and promised 160 acres of land to each of the "half-breeds at Moose Factory." The promise went unfulfilled, however, forcing many of the Métis families to enter into Treaty.

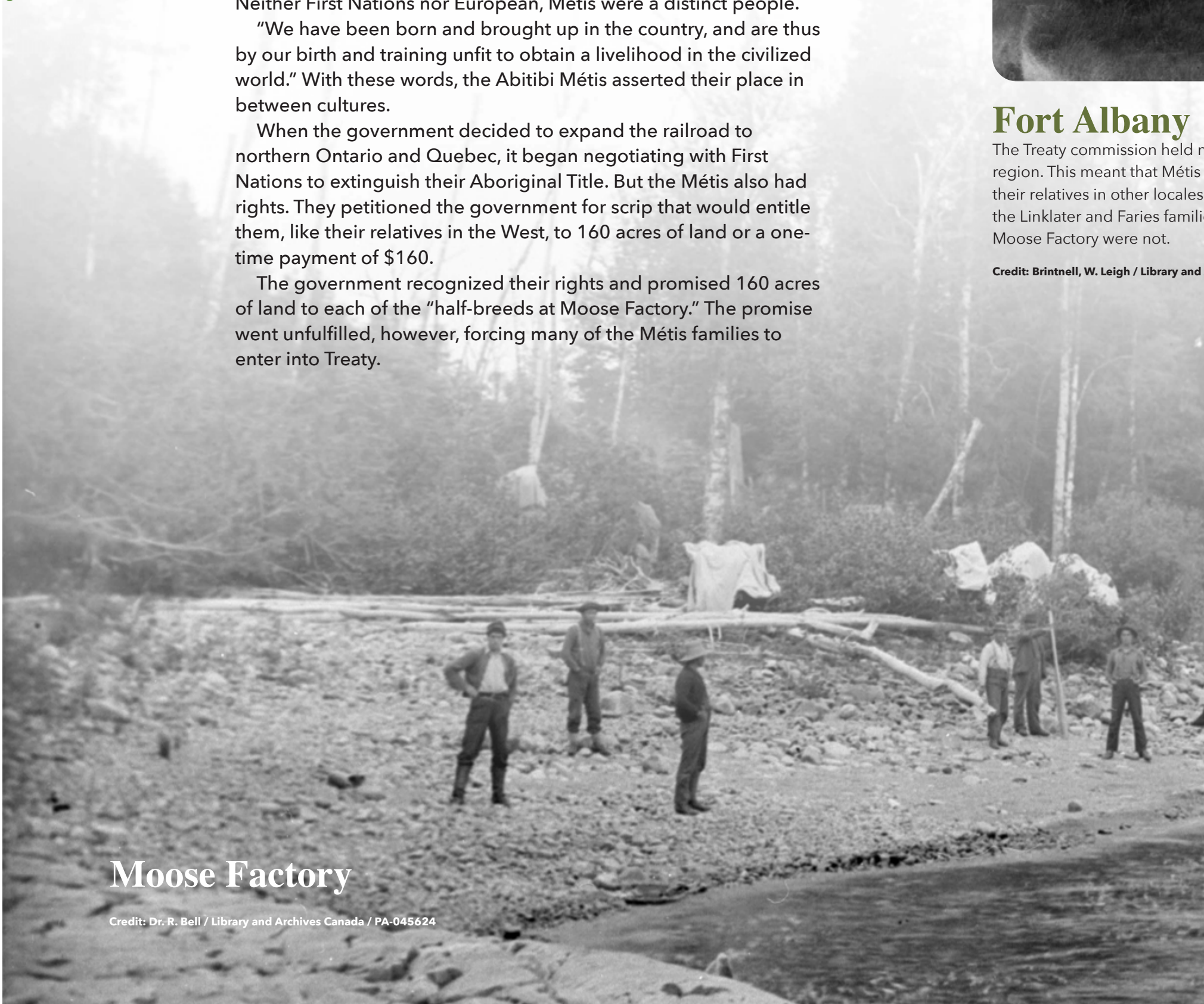
**Fort Albany**

The Treaty commission held n region. This meant that Métis their relatives in other locales the Linklater and Faries families Moose Factory were not.

Credit: Brintnell, W. Leigh / Library and

**Moose Factory**

Credit: Dr. R. Bell / Library and Archives Canada / PA-045624





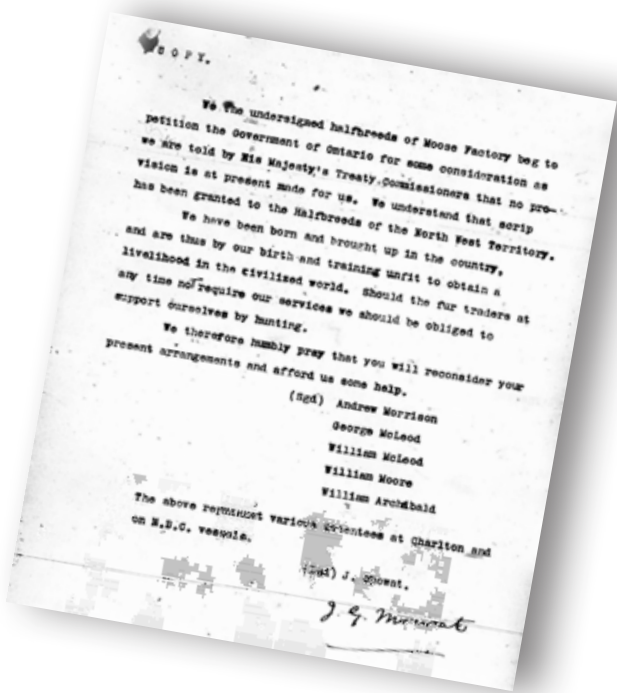
is one of a series of historical vignettes that highlight Métis history in Ontario. Look for more in upcoming issues.

# etween



negotiations at multiple locations across the  
in some places were admitted to Treaty, while  
were excluded. In Fort Albany, members of  
es were recorded on paylists, but their kin in

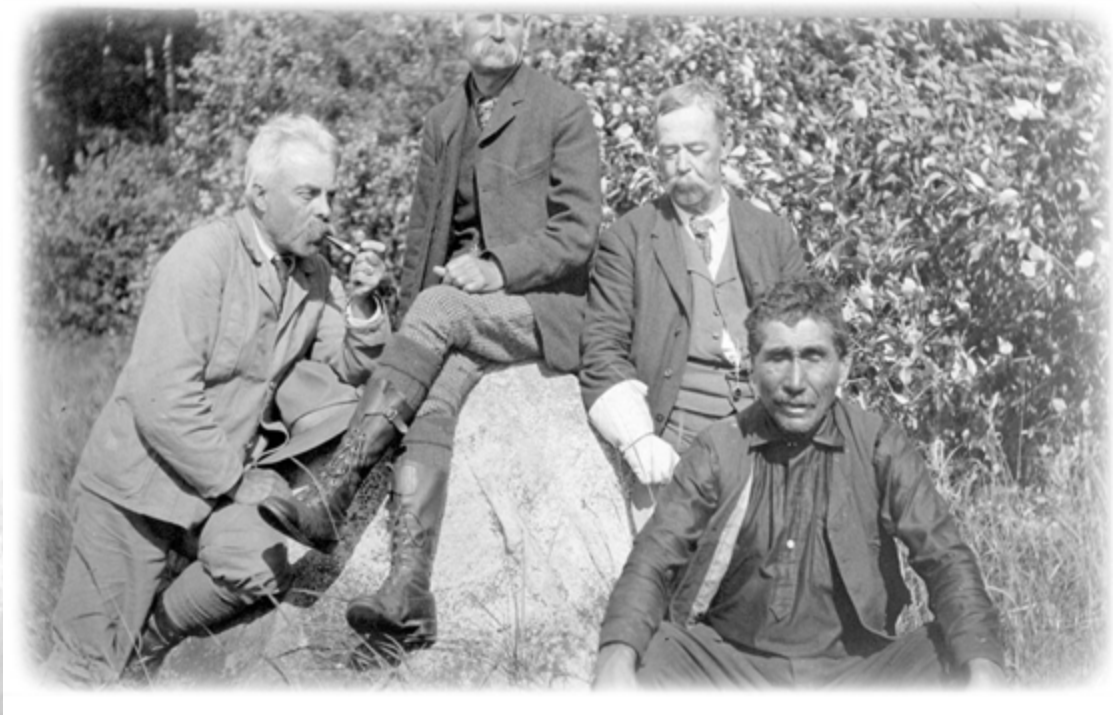
Archives Canada / PA-103464



## Moose Factory Petition

Petitioners reminded the government that scrip had been granted to “the half breeds of the North West Territory.” This demonstrated the community’s political will and self-identification as Métis, as well as their sense of connection to Métis in Red River.

Credit: Library and Archives Canada



## Treaty 9 Commissioners with Guide

Métis such as Jimmy Swain, pictured on the far right, frequently acted as guides and interpreters in Treaty negotiations. Though commissioners relied on Métis for their ability to bridge cultures, government policy’s narrow definition of “Indian” excluded Métis from Treaty benefits.

Credit: Canada. Dept. of Indian Affairs and Northern Development / Library and Archives Canada / PA-059535







# Building Ontario's future together

OPG is dedicated to making Ontario the best place to live and work. This includes addressing climate change by committing to reaching net-zero by 2040. It also includes building lasting prosperity and strong relationships with Indigenous communities and working to preserve our shared tomorrow.

**ONTARIO**POWER  
GENERATION

Where a brighter  
tomorrow begins.

[opg.com](https://www.opg.com)



## EDUCATION AND TRAINING



# MNO holds its first-ever Post-Secondary Resiliency Gathering

The Métis Nation of Ontario held its first-ever Post-Secondary Resiliency Gathering on March 12 and 13, 2022.

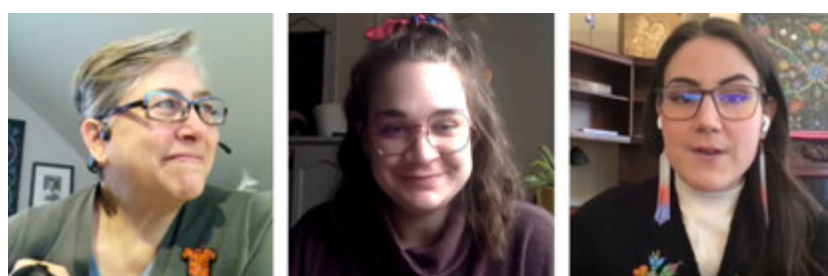
The virtual event sought to equip current and aspiring Métis post-secondary education students with the knowledge and confidence to respond to situations they may face as they move through the education system—precarious housing, domestic abuse, and potential legal issues.

The fact that the event was virtual allowed the MNO to reach a larger audience than may have occurred if it was in-person with over 100 participants attending.

The gathering involved peer-to-peer sharing sessions, workshops and presentations from Rent Smart, Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto and MNO programs including Victims Services, all with a focus on recognizing and celebrating the resilience of Métis people. Participants also received a “conference kit” that included Métis literature and items that are to help tie back into the culture.

“Resiliency is such an important and integral part of the Métis experience,” said MNO President Margaret Froh in her opening remarks to the gathering.

“Throughout our history Métis have shown that adversity is something we must face head on and while the challenges have changed the fact remains that we are a people who thrive in the face of adversity and I am so proud we are continuing that legacy with our



**MNO President Margaret Froh, PCMNO Post-Secondary Rep Hannah Bazinet and MNC President Cassidy Caron at the MNO’s first-ever Post-Secondary Resiliency Gathering.**

young Métis. Whether you’re looking at leadership today, or over the course of the last 100 years or more it’s something that I think is hardwired into our DNA as Métis people.”

On day one of the gathering, Métis National Council President Cassidy Caron gave a special key-note address in which she shared aspects of her post-secondary experience and talked about her deep connection to her people.

“Growing up outside of the homeland, I was really fortunate to be connected to who I was, and to my roots in Saskatchewan knowing who I was as a Métis person,” said President Caron. She also remarked on resiliency has moved Métis people forward as a nation.

“I have a vision of a future where we’re all building together, where we are all making space for everybody to contribute to the things that matter to you, and in ways that build the entire nation up.”

Previous to that, the day was dedicated to learning how to navigate the rent-

al market, how to live with roommates, how to keep an eye out for rental scams and what their rights are as tenants. The gathering was also given information and resources they could use if they are even in a domestic violence or abuse situation, including resources provided by the MNO.

Day two featured cultural offerings — the participants learned about finger weaving and the spiritual, cultural and historic significance of it to the Métis people. The day ended with a discussion on what resiliency meant to them and their paths going forward.

The gathering covered topics critical to Métis health and well-being and this workshop will provide the knowledge, healing and resources required to help diminish the need for emergency supports. A healthy, educated youth population will facilitate a strong, vibrant, viable future for Métis in Ontario by strengthening the likelihood of successful outcomes for citizens.



## POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION TUTORING PROGRAM

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) has partnered with Tutor Ocean, a dedicated global online tutoring platform, to provide citizens with access to thousands of qualified tutors to support them while they are enrolled in Post-Secondary Education up until March 31, 2023. To qualify for the MNO Post-Secondary Education Tutoring Program applicants must:

- Currently be a Métis student attending or accepted into an accredited post-secondary program at a recognized Canadian University or College. Grade 12 students looking for academic support will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Be a MNO citizen or has a letter of eligibility from the MNO Registry
- Reside in Canada

For more information on this program and to apply please visit: [www.metisnation.org](http://www.metisnation.org) (see under Programs and Services). Please direct any questions to [PSsupport@metisnation.org](mailto:PSsupport@metisnation.org)



## POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION TRAVEL SUPPORT PROGRAM

The MNO is pleased to offer eligible students access to the MNO’s Post-Secondary Education (PSE) Travel Support Program. This initiative provides eligible applicants with a one-time travel subsidy to assist with the costs of travel to school. To be eligible for this program an applicant must:

- Currently be a Métis student enrolled into an accredited post-secondary program at a recognized University or College in Ontario
- Be required to travel more than 300 kilometers, one way, to their Post-Secondary Institution
- Be a MNO citizen or have a letter of eligibility from the MNO Registry

For more information on this program and to apply please visit: [www.metisnation.org](http://www.metisnation.org) (see under Programs and Services). Please direct any questions to [PSsupport@metisnation.org](mailto:PSsupport@metisnation.org)

# Remembering good, the better ... and the funny

Elaine Jeffery, longtime MNO Education and Training employee, retires after 25 amazing years

By **Tammy Webb**  
Labour Market Manager  
MNO Education and Training

After working for the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) for 25 years, Elaine Jeffery retired in June 2022.

Elaine has been a dedicated and loyal employee throughout her years with the MNO, supporting Métis clients in the Region 6 area. Elaine says she is truly honoured to have been with the MNO these past 25 years and to have had the privilege of being a part of the MNO’s growth.

Elaine began her journey at MNO as an administrative assis-

tant at an office on Brock Street in Kingston. That office eventually closed, but Elaine was provided with an option to stay on and work from home, which she did for five years until she moved to an office in the Alcan building in Kingston. During this time, Elaine was promoted to Acting Regional Employment and Training Coordinator and she has worked with MNO Education and Training ever since.

I recall meeting Elaine for the first time at an event at the Nottasawaga Inn in Alliston. Elaine walked into the room and sat at the table, and from that moment, a friendship started. Recently, Elaine and I



**Elaine Jeffery recently retired from the MNO after 25 years.**

reminded about the past, we both recall when the MNO Education

and Training branch was known as MNOTI -- the Métis Nation of Ontario Training Initiatives. There were about twelve of us working in the branch then.

Elaine and I would sit next to each other at meetings. We usually got in trouble for whispering to one another during sessions. We laugh about it today.

Elaine recalls the first time she had to take the train to Ottawa and confessed that she was terrified, but she made it.

We reminisced about the “good old days” when the Annual General Assembly was a whole week long and held under a big tent. At

the 2003 AGA in Elk Lake, Elaine brought nun costumes so that we could compete in the talent show with other branches – we were the “singing nuns”. We had a Hawaiian party, and some of us wore funny blow-ups around our waist—while Scott Carpenter served beverages and snacks out of the trunk of his car. A blast from the past!

Having known Elaine for such a long time, I want to express my extreme gratitude to her. I am proud to call her a friend and I consider her a part of the extended family.

We will miss you dearly, Elaine. Enjoy retirement, but please keep in touch.



# Connecting the generations

MNO’s first-ever Grandparent Kit received with overwhelming response and interest

By **The MNO Early Learning and Child Care Team**

We have been hard at work with the development and launch of our first-ever Grandparent Kit. We received an overwhelming response and interest when it was launched in the winter of 2022.

Over 550 Grandparent Kits were delivered and are being enjoyed across Ontario. The kits were developed in conversations with members of the “Gathering of the Wise Ones” and Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Special Projects team members. Items in the kits were carefully chosen to cover multiple age ranges and stages of development. The kits included books, games, cooking materials, recipes, and outdoor-focused activities.

The kit provides opportunities for grandparents and grandchildren to come together and support the critical relationship between the generations while acknowledging the vital role that grandparents play in children’s early learning

and development. The hands-on learning activities for early learners alongside their grandparents create an opportunity to share knowledge and deepen their connection to Métis culture.

Kit items can be used over many years as grandchildren grow and revisit the memories they created with their grandparents. We are overwhelmed by the outpouring of thank you emails, and pictures shared:

*“Everything in it is so special and well thought out. This will give my grandson and me lots of activities to do together while learning about Métis cultural heritage.”*

*“Thank you for making this package available for grandparents to bond with their grandchildren. I know my mom and daughter will enjoy their time together completing the activities.”*

*“The quality and content are outstanding. We are looking forward to doing these activities with our three youngest grandchildren ages 3, 6, and 9 years old.”*



Clockwise from top: **MNO grandparents Darlene Lent; Nancy Juby and Kevin Ellsworth having fun with their grandchildren while exploring the possibilities of the MNO Grandparents Kit.**

## Meet the new Director of MNO Education and Training

Dr. Bryanna Scott-Kay joined the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) in September 2021 as the Director of Education and Training.

As an MNO citizen, she was born and grew up in Fort Frances and later moved to Thunder Bay to attend post-secondary studies. Bryanna holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology, an Honours Bachelor of Social Work degree, and a Master's degree in Public Health. She is a registered member of the Ontario College of Social Work. In 2021, Bryanna obtained a Ph.D. degree in Educational Studies and takes pride in being an alumnus of Lakehead University.



**Bryanna Scott-Kay**

Bryanna has worked in various roles, including as a consultant for the Public Health Agency of Canada, a manager of programs and services at Confederation College, and the coordinator of Indigenous education programs at Lakehead University. Bryanna has taught a variety of Indigenous content at Lakehead, Laurentian, Trent, and the University of Toronto.

Bryanna is a board member at Shkoday Aboriginal Head Start, a Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board Indigenous Education Council member, serves on the Ogimaawin Indigenous Education Council at Lakehead University, and is currently part of the search committee looking for the Northern Ontario School of Medicine's first Chancellor.

She has also been the president of the MNO Community Council in Thunder Bay.

Bryanna currently lives in Thunder Bay with her daughter Lily, husband Jeff, and sons Jonah and Camryn.

## NEW TEAM: MNO Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure and Partnerships

This past fall, the MNO Early Learning and Child Care division grew to include a new team of individuals under **Infrastructure and Partnerships!** The newly formed group will work towards developing early learning and child care infrastructure and partnerships to support Métis children and families. A manager, supervisor, four advisors, and two infrastructure developers comprise this team. ELCC Advisors facilitate relationship-building to enhance the partnership between the MNO and service providers, municipalities, organizations, and other potential partners.

Advisors also coordinate the Council Camp Funding Program and collaborate with and support MNO Community Councils to enhance their capacity to develop culturally appropriate activities for children and families.

ELCC Infrastructure Developers are exploring the feasibility of making a capital purchase of land or a campsite that can host MNO-related camps and programming. The project will support activities like land-based teachings, harvesting, and

being on the water. Having a permanent location for Métis citizens and children will allow deeper connections to their culture and way of life.

For information regarding ELCC Infrastructure and Partnerships, please contact the manager, Louise Humphreys, at [LouiseH@metisnation.org](mailto:LouiseH@metisnation.org)

Meet the team: Supervisor: Amanda Cox, Advisors: Jennifer Boston, Melissa Bradley, Christopher Darton, Sherry Lance, and Infrastructure Developer: Amanda Labatte-Dawe

Manager Profile: A Registered Early Childhood Educator, Louise has experience working with children, families, and early years educators in education, social services, and children's mental health. Since obtaining an Early Childhood Studies degree at the University of Guelph Humber, Louise has been a Child Care Manager at North Hastings Children's Services and a Child Care Services Manager with the Toronto District School Board before joining the MNO in October 2021. Louise and her family currently reside in Bancroft.

## NEW TEAM: MNO Métis Language Initiatives

The Education and Training Branch is pleased to announce the creation of the Métis Languages Initiatives team. This newly formed team (March 2022), funded through the Department of Canadian Heritage, will work to provide programs and services, along with resources and gatherings that support the reclamation, revitalization, maintenance, and strengthening of the languages of the Métis people in Ontario. Historically, the MNO has offered this type of programming sporadically for several years. With the dedicated resources provided through Canadian Heritage, our newly acquired team of fluent speakers is committed to delivering services within our community.

The MLI Staff works closely with our Métis Languages Advisory Committee. This committee is comprised of MNO citizens who are fluent speakers. Together, they endeavor to revitalize the languages of Métis people in Ontario and introduce them to Métis youth and a new generation of speakers. Some examples

of programs and services offered through the Métis Languages Initiatives include:

- opportunities and supports for Métis Citizens and communities to access resources to deliver activities that incorporate Métis language dialects in Ontario
- opportunities for translation services
- opportunities for Métis Citizens and communities to engage in activities that strengthen Métis language dialects in Ontario
- opportunities for Métis Citizens and communities to share their language with other Canadians

For general inquiries please contact us at: [MLIsupport@metisnation.org](mailto:MLIsupport@metisnation.org)





MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO

# EMERGENCY REPAIR PROGRAM

Are you a Métis Nation of Ontario citizen and own your home? Is your home in need of health and safety repairs and the cost is not in your budget? Do you need assistance with the cost of repairs or modifications for accessibility?

The MNO can provide eligible MNO citizens with a forgivable loan for qualifying repairs and modifications. This forgivable loan does not require repayment unless you move or sell the home within a 5-year period.

More info at: [www.metisnation.org](http://www.metisnation.org) and search: *Emergency Repair Program*  
Email: [ERP@metisnation.org](mailto:ERP@metisnation.org)

Métis Nation of Ontario 



 Fisheries and Oceans Canada Pêches et Océans Canada



## The Canadian Coast Guard College

### Where Learning Becomes Life Changing

Our national bilingual training institution provides all marine training for Coast Guard Officers in marine safety, security and environmental protection specialists.

### Officer Training Program

The Canadian Coast Guard Officer Training Program is an exciting opportunity to serve your country while making a difference on Canada's waters.

The 4-year Officer Training Program is one of the best marine training programs in the world, producing both Marine Engineering and Marine Navigation Officers.

The program is delivered through:

- in-class learning
- modernized marine simulators
- hands-on training at the College
- practical experience aboard Coast Guard vessels at sea

### WHY CCGC?

Experience the adventure:

- see our great country as you serve with us
- make lasting friendships
- solve unique marine challenges
- get physically active and fit

As an Officer Cadet you will receive:

- benefits of being a public servant
- your bachelor of Technology in Nautical Sciences
- paid education and a monthly allowance
- accommodations and meals
- textbooks and uniforms





 1-888-582-9090

 @CanadianCoastGuardCollege

 @CGCCollege

 CGCRegistrar@dfo-mpo.gc.ca



## Want to run as a School Trustee in the upcoming election? Here's what you need to know

Ontario's school boards have demonstrated time and again, that through the collective efforts of creative and committed trustees, they are making a difference for our kids.

Ontario's Municipal and School Board Elections are coming up fast! Election Day is Monday October 24, 2022 and the Nomination and Campaign periods closes on August 19.

The Ontario Education Services Corporation (OESC) is coordinating a series of resources to support trustee candidates and communities on behalf of the provinces school board and trustee associations, including the English public, English Catholic, French public and French Catholic school boards.

Please see the following resources now available online for those interested in these positions:

- *Making a Difference: Running for Election as a School Board Trustee*
- Printable public awareness posters to encourage nominations and get out the vote
- Ontario Municipal and School Board Elections website

School Board Trustees are democratically elected officials responsible for identifying the education needs and priorities of their community. Local trustees makes sure that the community has a direct way to express its views on education decisions. You have the right to vote for who represents you in these important matters.

For more on how to vote visit: [elections.ontarioschooltrustees.org](http://elections.ontarioschooltrustees.org)





# COMMUNITY



134, 136 and 138 John Street in Sault Ste. Marie -- a former church, a meeting hall and office space -- now comprise the new Sault Métis Centre.

## Something of our own to build on Sault Ste. Marie Métis Centre holds Grand Opening

**T**he Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council cut the ribbon on their new Métis Community Centre during a activity-packed grand opening ceremony on May 28, 2022.

“Today we celebrate the incredibly rich history of this community both historically and today. We know this is such a beautiful beginning and I know we are going to be up here having many more celebrations at this community centre,” said Margaret Froh, President of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO). “It’s creating spaces like this not just for our community but for others as well to come in and be engaged in relationships. That’s what reconciliation is all about.”

Several events were held throughout the day. Starting with a sunrise ceremony honoring the historic moment. Speeches by dignitaries from the local council, the PCMNO and the diocese were held followed by an official ribbon cutting ceremony. Games like archery and hatchet throwing were also held and award-winning Métis fiddler Alicia Blore played traditional Métis for all of those in attendance.

An open house featuring of the programs offered by the MNO and the Registry was on hand to assist anyone still in the process of receiving their citizenship.

“The feedback has been extremely positive from the community, council and the citizens. This place is something that the community has wanted for a long time. A place that means so much to us and can be that home.”

The project began in 2017 when the land was first returned to the council by the diocese. Located not far from the historic river lots owned by 54 heads of Métis families in Sault Ste. Marie that were accounted for in 1850, or roughly 400-500 people.

“They called us the forgotten people for a reason,” said Steve Gjos, chair of the Historic Sault Ste Marie Métis council and Captain of the Hunt for Region 4.

“Now we have a land base, we have a cultural centre. Something of our own that we can build on.”

The new Sault Ste. Marie Métis Centre is located on land returned by the Anglican Diocese of Algoma and will serve as a meeting place, cultural centre and information office for all MNO citizens in region 4.

The three buildings located 134, 136 and 138 John Street consist of a former church, a meeting hall and office spaces in the former pastoral residence. The grounds are also the location of several Métis graves whose area have been cordoned off in respect.

“I’m so happy that so many people came out today,” said MNO citizen Art Bennett who attended the grand opening.

“And not just Métis but dignitaries from the community, they are proud of being part of this community and those are the people who will help us move forward.”

The church building will be repurposed to serve as a museum for local Métis artifacts collected by the Council. Its official opening isn’t until 2023. The hall will be used to hold council events and meetings and has its own kitchen and through partner funding and fundraising has been updated with accessibility ramps so that everyone of all mobilities can enjoy the space safely.

The former pastoral residence has been renovated into office space to serve MNO citizens where program officers will be on hand to assist citizens. The offices also have been updated with accessibility ramps.

“I want to acknowledge our Métis ancestors who are buried on this land and recognize our connection to this land,” said Kim Powley, President of the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council. “I also want to take this moment to thank the Anglican Diocese for making the decision to return this Métis land back to the rightful owners in reconciliation.”



Historic Sault Ste Marie Métis Council (HSSMMC) Steve Gjos, and PCMNO Councillor for Region 4 Mitch Case, HSSMMC President Kim Powley, and Senator Brenda Powley.







Above left to right: **HSSMMC President Kim Powley speaks during the ribbon cutting ceremony to officially open the centre; Alicia Blore provides some Métis fiddle music to the festivities; attendees practice archery as part of the entertainment during the events of the day.** Below: **A crowd looks on during the ribbon cutting ceremony outside the meeting hall at the new Sault St. Marie Métis Centre.**



## RASAWMB NO VIYEU: Gathering of Our Wise Ones

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Healing and Wellness branch is hosting Rasawmb no Viyeu: Gathering of Our Wise Ones, a platform for community, support, activities, and cultural connection for MNO Seniors (55+).

The sessions will focus on creating a welcoming space for our senior citizens to engage with each other. Particularly, during the Covid-19 pandemic, we are not only missing out on cultural events that would bring opportunities for connection and sharing, but we are experiencing limited connection with our own families and friends.

If you have stories, skills, wisdom, writings, topics for discussion/learning, recipes, or ideas that you would like to share (or would like us to share

for you) please let us know. We will work with you to make it happen at your comfort level. If you are not comfortable providing a session activity/topic, you are welcome to join and just enjoy the planned presentation and discussion sessions as a participant.

An email will be sent out on the day of the session with the topic of day and will include a Zoom link for easy access. Each presentation or activity will be 30 minutes to 1 hour in length, followed by an hour open-discussion.

We hope to compile an archive of topics/projects, such as recipes and story-sharing, in order to share them with other Métis who are not seniors, or who are unable to join these sessions. ∞

**Weekly sessions every Monday**  
Alternating between afternoons (2:00–3:30 PM EST)  
and evenings (5:30–7:00 PM EST)

**Please email:**  
**LaurenJ@metisnation.org**  
for information or to register and added to the email list.

New Video Gamer Support. Is Gaming Taking Over Your Life?

# RESPAWN

VIRTUAL GAMER PROGRAM

A PROVEN STEP-BY-STEP VIRTUAL PROGRAM ON HOW TO  
QUIT GAMING AND GET YOUR LIFE BACK ON TRACK.

Contact:  
P: 613-340-2714  
E: ggap@metisnation.org

GAME QUITTERS

Métis Nation of Ontario ∞

Is Gaming Taking over your life? New Video Gamer Support.

# RECLAIM

VIRTUAL FAMILY PROGRAM

FOR FAMILIES WITH GAMERS OF ALL AGES.  
DEVELOPED BY WORLD-RENOWNED GAMING EXPERTS,  
THERAPISTS AND PARENTS.

Contact:  
P: 613-340-2714  
E: ggap@metisnation.org

GAME QUITTERS

Métis Nation of Ontario ∞



NORTH BAY MÉTIS COUNCIL



North Bay Métis Council Youth Representative Ish Van Der Rassel and Women's Council Representative Lise Hughson with the time capsule just before it was buried on November 16, 2021. The time capsule will be unearthed in 2085!

TIME CAPSULE: North Bay Métis Council looks to future while preserving past

**O**n November 16, 2021 -- Louis Riel Day -- the North Bay Métis Council buried a time capsule as part of the Métis Nation Preservation Project.

The time capsule, containing submissions from Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizens and community councils, is scheduled to be opened 64 years from the day, November 16, 2085 as a symbol of preservation to future Métis.

"All I can say is wow, it's actually here. It came true," said Susan Van Der Rassel, President of the North Bay Métis Council. "In the words of Louis Riel, we cherish our inheritance, we must preserve our nationality for the youth of the future. The story should be written down to pass on."

The project was a passion project from the entire council but was especially important for Women's Council Representative Lise Hughson who spearheaded the project along with youth representative Ish Van Der Rassel.

"Well, today is the beginning of a 64-year long project. And we've been really, really excited to get to today," said Lise.

The ceremony saw local and provincial representatives speak to the importance of preserving the Métis identity, including representatives from MPP Vic Fedeli, MP Anthony Rota, Mayor of North Bay Al

Macdonald, PCMNO Chair Hank Rowlinson and Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell.

"I'm just delighted to join members of the North Bay Métis Council and the broader community to commemorate Louis Riel Day and the launch of the legacy preservation project," said Dowdeswell.

"These remembrances are so much more. I think that they're all symbols of hope, because together they form a gift of inspiration that's really addressed to the future. But, as well, they hold important questions for us today."

Following the speeches, the dignitaries used the shovels provided to ceremoniously shovel the first bit of dirt into the hole. The capsule, a stainless-steel barrel to prevent corrosion, was then buried and covered with a stone and plaque to lay in wait to resurface in 64 years.

"The MNO is made up of many unique communities and citizens working together to create something beautiful, enduring and completely our own," said MNO Chair Rowlinson.

"Today's Métis time capsule is further evidence of our beautiful and



Clockwise from top left: Ceremonial shovels at the ready. The time capsule is made of stainless steel to stand the test of time. Métis fiddling for the special occasion. Lt-Governor of Ontario, the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell throws the first shovel of dirt. Past NBMC President Susan Van Der Rassel addresses the crowd. PCMNO Region 5 Councilor makes his remarks.

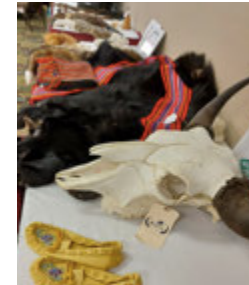


## MNO COMMUNITY COUNCILS: THE HEART AND SOUL OF OUR MÉTIS COMMUNITY

# A VERY BUSY YEAR FOR THE Peterborough and District Wapiti Métis Council



11/16/21 - Wonderful gatherings and Louis Riel Day flag raising ceremonies with the folks at the Municipality of Port Hope (left), City of Lindsay (top) and the City of Peterborough (above).



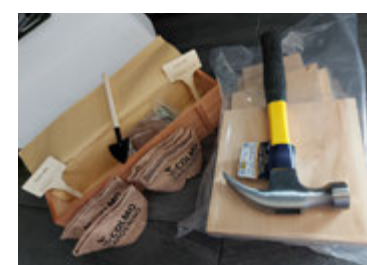
11/14/21 - A very successful Métis cultural celebration in honour of Louis Riel day. Our first in-person event in a long time! All Our Relations Métis Drum Circle of Oshawa joined us and shared their beautiful music. We also enjoyed crafts, cultural items on display such as bison fur and bear fur, as well as snacks and refreshments.

## Canoe Museum



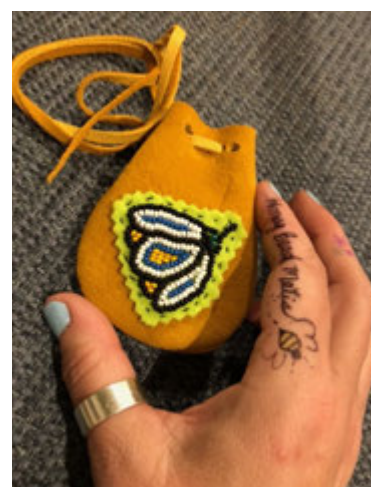
10/16/21 - Regional Councillor Dufrane and President Lemelin participated in the Canadian Canoe Museum's groundbreaking ceremony at their new location.

## Youth Herb Garden



05/30/21 - Local Métis youth preparing their herb garden kits that we handed out.

## Beading workshop



A Virtual two-part Medicine Bag and Beading Workshop. The workshop was facilitated by Jenn Honey of Honey Bead Métis in June 2021.

## Cultural Items Display

11/17/21 - The Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board beautifully displayed our cultural items.







# FIGHTING FOR CANADA

## BEFORE THERE WAS A CANADA

*Ontario Métis Veterans  
pass the torch*

The Métis Nation of Ontario Veterans' Council recognizes Métis veterans both past and present, and celebrates those who continue to serve today. The MNOVC hopes this latest volume of Ontario Métis veterans and their stories will serve as a lasting record of their achievements and an educational resource for young people, schools, libraries and MNO community councils.

These stories must not be forgotten -- we must pass them on to new generations. It is our mission to keep the legacy alive.

The MNOVC supports, promotes, advocates and recognizes Métis veterans in Ontario. For more information email [mnovc@metisnation.org](mailto:mnovc@metisnation.org) or contact Brian Prairie [brianprairie@me.com](mailto:brianprairie@me.com)

Financing up to  
\$1,000,000 for  
resources and related  
sector businesses

Rates and security  
customized to  
promote Métis  
business success

Contributions  
for business plans  
and ongoing  
support

The financier of Choice for

# Métis

Entrepreneurs in Ontario



[www.mvdf.ca](http://www.mvdf.ca)



# BATS!

MNO citizens in Region 7 act as community scientists

The Georgian Bay Traditional Territory Consultation Committee and the Toronto Zoo recently teamed up to help save endangered bats. Volunteers are learning how to use acoustic monitoring equipment to identify the different types of bats living in an area and receive custom reports. Once collected, the data from all volunteers will be compiled, analyzed, and shared. The project runs from May to September 2022. If you are interested or would like more information, contact [HopeH@metisnation.org](mailto:HopeH@metisnation.org).



Heather Legge receives the Ottawa Region Métis Council's Outstanding Citizen Award.

## Heather Legge recognized by ORMC Outstanding Citizen Award

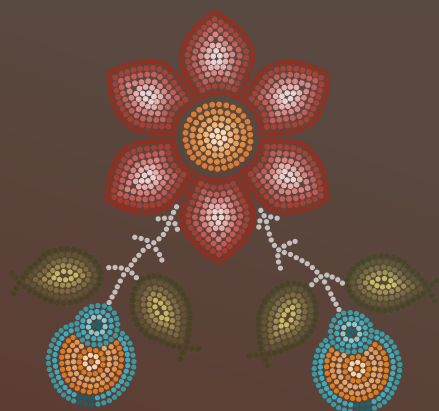
Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) citizen, Heather Legge, was awarded the Ottawa Region Métis Council (ORMC) 2021 Outstanding Citizen Award at the virtual ORMC Annual General Meeting.

Heather was recognized for her incredible efforts in creating and donating over 3,000 children and

adult face masks to protect the Ottawa community from the spread of COVID-19. Her masks were donated far and wide, including to various Indigenous communities, several hospitals, schools, fire stations, Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind, and to the ORMC for Métis citizens in the Ottawa area. The Ottawa Region Métis Council is very grateful to Heather for her hard

work and are pleased to recognize her for her incredible generosity.

ORMC President, Erik Gjos and ORMC Senator, Parm Burgie visited Heather Legge this summer to present her with the award, a women's sash, and book to show their appreciation for her contributions to the Ottawa Métis community. ∞



## 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 video-conference 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:  
**1-800-263-4889 x.7** (toll free)  
or email: [MHA@metisnation.org](mailto:MHA@metisnation.org)

Métis Nation  
of Ontario ∞



L-R: Treasurer Carol Gemme, Chair Steve Shales, President Kathleen Anderson, Youth Rep Kaitlyn Anderson-Mitchell, Colleen Reiners, Riley Handsor, Jennifer Handsor, Myrna Slater

### THAMES-BLUEWATER MÉTIS COUNCIL

## The Harvest Hampers return

The Métis community came together for the Thames Bluewater Métis Council's (TBWMC) largest ever Fall Harvest Hamper giveaway on this past fall.

Over 175 people and 53 families claimed food hampers from the community project, which included fall harvest staples such as potatoes, onions, carrots, oats, honey, apples, chicken and ground beef. Much of the food was purchased from local

small businesses.

"This is our fourth community hamper project since the start of COVID-19," commented TBWMC President Kathleen Anderson. "Community members were most appreciative with the help given that food prices continue to rise, some are living on small pensions, and COVID-19 continues to cause problems for our citizens."

The fall harvest hamper success

was a collective effort, but special thanks goes out to the TBWMC, including Councillor Hooker, Secretary Rath, Chair Shales, Youth Rep Anderson-Mitchell, Treasurer Gemme, President Anderson, and the MNO citizens who came out to show their support and volunteered for the event. ∞





NORTH BAY MÉTIS COUNCIL

# Dot art session for 2SLGBTQ youth

Working in partnership with OutLoud North Bay, a local organization for 2SLGBTQ+ youth in North Bay, North Bay Métis Council Youth Representative Ish Van Der Rassel put on a dot art workshop and a Métis 101.

The session taught participating youth about Métis culture, history, art and way of life along with showing historical items and history behind the Métis sash.

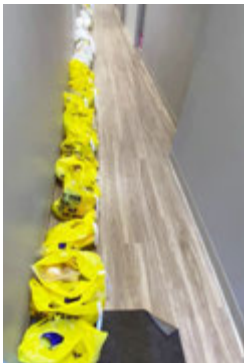
The participants had an opportunity to ask questions about what they learned and were also given the opportunity to participate in a dot art workshop where the participants painted on rocks in a style

inspired by Métis dot art.

As a token of appreciation, the owner of OutLoud North Bay was presented with a Métis sash.

Drawing inspiration from Métis beadwork, dot art is a modern interpretation of the style.

Each dot of paint represents a bead and, much like bead art, is done so as to show a larger image derived from the dots. The Métis were famous for their beadwork often woven into floral shapes and used to adorn clothing. This art style uses dots of paint to mirror these beading styles. ∞



Successful day with today's food bag giveaway to citizens and families! A total of 117 citizens given food bags. Shout-out to all councils members who helped organize everything, prepare and handout bags to citizens.

NORTH BAY MÉTIS COUNCIL

# Food giveaway

Submitted by  
**Susan van der Rassel**  
North Bay Métis Council

Last year as the pandemic raged on, the North Bay Métis Council members gathered to sort and bag fresh produce for a Food Package giveaway in their local community. To ensure everyone's safety, COVID-19 Protocols were

in place and practiced.

The Council reached out to the North Bay Métis citizens sharing the news of the Food Giveaway. Several families responded and registered with their MNO number to receive the package.

Each package included fresh produce and a mixture of moose/pork frozen patties from a local farm. Additionally, gift cards were provided

for the giveaway packages. The pick-up was performed as a drive-through while following COVID directives such as masks and social distancing.

The day was filled with beautiful smiles, tons of gratitude, waves from friends not seen during this lockdown, and best of all a continuous feeling all around of love, good humour, and kindness. ∞

## MNO Region 4 SSM region leadership meets the PM

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau met with Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) regional leadership while visiting the Sault Ste. Marie community last August.

Mitch Case, Region 4 Councilor for the Provisional Council for the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO), was pleased to receive the Prime Minister and represent the Huron-Superior Regional Métis Community in their discussions, where he shared the unique history of the community, its recent achievements, and future direction.

"In our talks, I told him of the history of this community," says Councilor Case. "The promise the Crown made to our ancestors in 1850 and of the burning of the Agawa Bay Village in 1968. I told him we need more than words, we need action. We need a process. The Prime Minister understood our message and committed to further dialog on these important issues."

Councilor Case also spoke with the Prime Minister about progress being made to improve and build upon the nation-to-nation relationship between the MNO and

Canada, which included signing the *Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement* (MGRSA) in 2019, as well as the signing of new accords and supports in key areas like early learning and child care, housing, post-secondary education, and COVID-19 aid, among others.

Following their discussions, the Prime Minister was gifted a MNO Youth Council (MNOYC) beading kit and letter detailing the history of the community and the critical need for a Federal Policy to address historic grievances of Métis communities in Ontario.

"I am proud to represent this amazing community and have the opportunity to work everyday for the good of the people here," shared Case. "I'd also like to extend a special thank you to our Member of Parliament Terry Sheehan for arranging this important discussion."

In addition to meeting with Métis leadership, the Prime Minister also made stops at Algoma Steel and Shingwauk Kinooomaage Gamig Centre of Excellence in Anishinaabe Education. ∞



MÉTIS YOUTH

# North Bay Métis youth meet online

by **Ish van der Rassel**  
North Bay Métis Council  
Youth Representative

I hosted my first ever virtual event for North Bay and Area Métis Youth last June. I organized a Youth Gathering with President Margaret Froh as a special guest, where youth participants had the opportunity to share their ideas on what cultural workshops they would like to be put on, share input on Métis self-governance and opportunity to ask President Froh

questions as well.

There was opening remarks from President Froh on Métis self-governance, importance of youth leadership and encouraging participants to participate in the MNO Legacy Preservation Project by submitting. All participants who came got a \$10 Tim Horton's card and Métis flag face buff as a small token of appreciation and thank you for attending. ∞







# FAMILY & MILESTONES

## Welcome Aurora!

Jennifer St. Pierre and Kurtis Morin are happy to announce the arrival of Aurora Selene St.Pierre-Morin born on June 27th and weighed 7 pounds 9 oz. Her very proud parents are excited to raise her steeped in the rich Métis culture and traditions. As you can tell by the pics, this very happy, healthy and contented little baby girl is already quite comfortable wearing the Métis sash. ∞



### Baby influencer **Dianna rocks her MNO swag**

**K**arly Wilson is sharing pictures of her baby daughter Dianna while sharing a thank you message for the Baby Bundles program: “The programs available such as the Baby Bundles packages of diapers, various baby supplies and MNO baby swag has been so amazing and I’m so grateful! “ More information about MNO programs are always available on our website: [www.metisnation.org](http://www.metisnation.org) ∞



Left to right: **Dan and Linda LaCroix - married 50 years! Rick and Lorraine LaCroix - married 53 years! Mary and Orten Crawford - married 58 years! Congrats to all.**

## Marriage agrees with these Métis!

**C**ongratulations to the happy couples, Dan & Linda LaCroix (50 years), Rick & Lorraine LaCroix (53 yrs), and Mary & Orten Crawford (58 yrs). Between the couples, there is a total of 150 years spent together. Giving “better together” new meaning, the MNO wishes this bunch many more years of marital success! ∞

**Dan & Linda LaCroix celebrating 50 years anniversary ▶**



Left to right: **Emma La Belle and sister Kaileigh.**

### MÉTIS GRAD IS OFF TO UNIVERSITY **Emma LaBelle**

**E**mma La Belle is off to Laurier University for Indigenous Studies & older sister Kaileigh is back for her 3<sup>rd</sup> year at Carleton with a 12.0 in her major & an overall CGPA of 11.75. Many thanks to the MNO for your assistance. ∞



### Council Kindness **Métis friends in need**

**W**hen a series of severe storms blew through some of our Métis Nation of Ontario communities this spring, intrepid Community Councils came to the rescue. In the photo Oshawa Durham Region Métis Council President Helen Giacchetta is seen delivering care packages to Métis families in Uxbridge. Councils can always reach out to MNO’s Community Relations teams via [CommunityRelations@metisnation.org](mailto:CommunityRelations@metisnation.org) for assistance supporting their citizens. ∞

### As Good as Gold **Joseph & Suzanne 50 years together**

**J**oseph Whalen, a proud citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario, met his wife, Suzanne Cormier in Sault Ste. Marie when they were 16 and 15 years old respectively. They were married three years later on June 17, 1972. They had two children; Leslie Whalen in 1973 and Michael Whalen in 1976 and now have seven grandchildren and four great grandchildren all of whom have been raised in the Métis way of life. Congratulations Joe and Suzanne on your 50th wedding anniversary. ∞



# MNO's "first employee" retires

## Thanks for everything Rose Ann!

After 26 years of dedicated service to the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), Rose Ann Cormier, Regional Operations Manager and a pillar of the MNO Housing Branch and infinity Property Services (IPS), is retiring.

In her time spent with the MNO, Rose Ann has built both a name for herself and an impressive team. Considered the first "official" MNO employee, she was instrumental in the development of the MNO's Housing Branch, essentially building it from the ground up.

"We are so grateful to staff like Rose Ann, whose determination and grit over the years has helped make the MNO what it is today," shared MNO President Margaret Froh. "This whole journey has always been all about our people, and Rose Ann has been there supporting our communities since day one."

Rose Ann recalls her start date with the MNO fondly and with ease, as it was the same date as her wedding anniversary: July 22, 1995. She also recalls her interview with past MNO President Tony Belcourt, which took place at an unusual venue: the Toronto airport. After that, her career with MNO took off with roles that include property manag-



Rose Ann Cormier back in the day!

er and inspector, Senior Business Advisor, and Regional Operations Manager.

We celebrate Rose Ann for her passion and dedication to the housing cause. Throughout her career, which included previous experience working with the federal government, she has been drawn to helping families find homes. As one of 16 siblings, she understands the struggles facing many families and

the importance of providing safe, affordable housing. Rose Ann's personal approach and determination has made a real difference in the lives of many.

Rose Ann's colleagues know her as a passionate and impeccable leader, describing her as a hard worker who never backs away from a problem, but tackles it head on. Staff who know her well say her experience, knowledge, and story-telling abili-

ties will be missed.

"Rose Ann has been a great mentor to me over the years," says Robynn Sadler, MNO Director of Housing and Infrastructure. "We'll miss her and her sense of humor – she has this exceptional ability to always turn a negative or stressful situation into one that you are laughing about in the end."

But it wasn't always easy. Rose Ann recalls a time when she had her

*"We are so grateful to staff like Rose Ann, whose determination and grit over the years has helped make the MNO what it is today,"*

doubts, going as far as drafting and mailing out her resignation letter. But when her letter was returned for insufficient postage, she took it as a sign that her work was not quite done. Her preservation benefited many Métis families, and for that, we are all grateful.

As Rose Ann enters this next chapter in her life, MNO staff want her to know that her legacy will continue to be honoured even after her retirement.∞

### OBITUARY

## Donna Labbé

On August 20, 2021 we lost an incredible person, a truly caring individual that gave so much to not only our local community in and around the Welland/Niagara area but also to all of our Métis community through her constant, always-giving nature.

Donna Labbé was an outstanding dedicated volunteer for many years for the Métis Nation of Ontario for well over 20 years! Donna's home base is and always has been Welland and area working out of the Welland office in the early days then on to the Thorold office for the last 7 or 8 years. Donna would always ask you how you were and how your family was, then move on to a new story usually about history. Family was very important to Donna, not only her own family but her Métis family.

Donna volunteered for the Healing and Wellness branch making well-being check in calls every week and continually helping with events and community gatherings throughout the years. It was Donna's nature to give tirelessly of her time, provide help wherever and whenever it was needed. She always volunteered with a smile and a positive, friendly attitude. Everyone knew and loved Donna, she was a standard at all MNO Program and Community Council sponsored events.

My early recollections of Donna go back to around the year 2000 or 2001 when I was new to the Niagara area having relocated from North-western Ontario. I learned early on that Donna was a very important part of the Niagara community, her friendly nature was the first thing you noticed but Donna also commanded respect, decency and a strong work ethic. Over the years Donna was an integral part of our office atmo-

sphere, always there watching, listening, greeting and making conversation.

I can recall a number of times when I may have been delayed a bit and not arrived at my normal 8:30 start time on a Donna in the office day and in her friendly, but stern, sort of way Donna would make a comment about the time, holding the tenseness for a couple of minutes then break out laughing and carry on telling a story, usually related to Welland history. Donna was that kind of person, fun to be around, she made going into the office so much more enjoyable.

A regular routine for Donna was to bring me in newspaper clippings about anything to do with the Métis or Indigenous stories, she never missed a headline and made sure to bring it to my attention with a reminder to make sure that the leadership in the MNO knew about what the clipping referred to and make sure they took appropriate action.

Donna was Mom to long-time MNO employees Tammy Wintle and Rebecca VanderSanden and "Grama" to Brianna Zynomirski, all currently working out of the Thorold office.

I know it is a bit cliché to say of someone who has passed that they were a remarkable and incredible person but in Donna's case she lived what she preached and I think she truly was remarkable. The countless hours she dedicated to the Métis Nation as a volunteer will certainly be missed. The world and more directly the Métis community is a better place thanks to Donna's volunteering. I think it is important to recognize people when they do a lot of good for people other than themselves, I know Donna will be missed, I am thankful for the memories she gave me. ∞



Donna Labbé

### OBITUARY

## Conrad Gelinas

It is with heavy hearts that the family announces the peaceful passing of Conrad Edward Gelinas ("Corky") at Lakeridge Health in Oshawa, Ontario on May 29, 2022, at the age of 80.

He was the second eldest son of the late Roland Gelinas and Bella Gelinas (nee Romain). He was predeceased by his loving wife Marilyn (nee Willits). He leaves behind his children Raymond Gelinas (Carolynn), Francine Gelinas, and Christa Lemelin (Peter), his grandchildren Amanda (Tyson), Alexandra (Jeff), Ethan, Nathaniel, Sebastien and Hannah, his great grandchildren Owen, Rowan, Isaac, and Alexander, his sister Lucille (Doug) Corbett, his brother in law Lloyd Willits (late Joanne), his wife Marie-Ange Laurin-Gelinas and her sons Patrick (Pamela) and Richard, her grandchildren Hayley (Yanik) and Zackary, her great granddaughter Violet, and her sweet puppy Bella. He will also be missed by many nieces, nephews, other relatives and so many good friends.

Corky will be joining his siblings; late Linda (Leon) Germain, late Donald (Esther) Gelinas, late Gaston (Lynda) Gelinas, late Simon (Christine) Gelinas, late Normand (Maria) Gelinas, late Jackie (late Bob) LaBrash, and late Robert (Lynn) Gelinas. He will also be joining his sister-in-law Fran Willits, and his nephews Roger Gelinas and Ted (Joanne) Labrash. His dog Tiny will also be waiting for him.

Corky was a retired papermaker, and spent all of his life in Iroquois Falls. After losing his wife Marilyn to cancer in 2014, Corky was lucky to find love once again with his childhood friend Marie-Ange, and they were wed in 2017. His last 9 months were spent in Whitby, where he could be closer to his children while he progressed with dementia. He was a man of the land, a skillful angler and hunter. He enjoyed fishing and hunting with his children and grandchildren who will continue to pass on his knowledge and traditions for generations to come. He also enjoyed travelling, and spending time relaxing at his trailer. He was humble, caring, resourceful, creative, and an inventor of anything you needed. He enjoyed puttering around his garage or yard, and could make something out of anything!

We will all miss his Pepecan. His silly jokes. His entertaining stories. His creative culinary inventions. His laughter and infectious smile. His soothing whistling. And his "ca c'est quechose".

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association or to Youngtimers ([www.youngtimers.org](http://www.youngtimers.org)). ∞



Conrad Edward Gelinas "Corky"

- Submitted by Christa Lemelin  
President, Peterborough & District Wapiti Métis Council





# THE MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY IS OPEN TO ALL MNO CITIZENS

Citizens are encouraged to complete the online registration in advance so that we have an idea of numbers of citizens to expect for meals, meeting space, etc. The MNO AGA is open to all citizens, whether or not they have been designated by a local Community Council to attend.

The venue for this year's AGA will be the Intercontinental Hotel, located at 225 Front Street West in Toronto, Ontario steps away from downtown attractions.

*PLEASE NOTE:* All attendees 5 years of age and older will be required to provide proof upon arrival that they are fully vaccinated (as per the Government of Ontario's definition of fully vaccinated, is currently defined as two shots).

If you have any questions about the AGA, please email: [AGA2022@metisnation.org](mailto:AGA2022@metisnation.org)

THURSDAY AUGUST 18, 2022 @ 6PM EST  
**MNO PRESIDENT'S WELCOME  
& CANOE ARRIVAL**

As has been MNO tradition, prior to the start of the AGA, delegates will gather to cheer on the arrival of MNO leadership, special guests and other dignitaries via canoe. This year, the canoes arrive on the evening of Thursday, August 18 at Toronto Island Park at 6PM EST where there will also be a community BBQ and an outdoor "Kitchen Party" with live music.

THURSDAY 18 August	FRIDAY 19 August	SATURDAY 20 August	SUNDAY 21 August
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early evening President's Welcome, Canoe Arrival, Community BBQ &amp; "Kitchen" Party @ Toronto Islands</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• AGA Business Meeting @ Intercontinental Hotel</li><li>• Evening MNO Women's Council AGM</li><li>• Explore Toronto - free evening</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• AGA Business Meeting @ Intercontinental Hotel</li><li>• Evening Banquet &amp; Métis Entertainment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• AGA Business Meeting @ Intercontinental Hotel (morning only)</li><li>• Travel Home</li></ul>

AUGUST 19-21, 2022  
**AGA BUSINESS MEETINGS**

The AGA will begin its business agenda on Friday August 19, 2022 at 8:30 AM EST and continuing to 4:30 PM EST. The business agenda for Saturday, August 20 will similarly take place from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. On Sunday, August 21 business starts at 8:30 AM and is scheduled to end at Noon.

AUGUST 18-21, 2022  
**TRADE SHOW & CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES  
AND DAYCARE "CAMP AGA"**

A trade show will be held at the Intercontinental Hotel, starting on Thursday, August 18 and running through to the end of the AGA on Sunday, August 21. Adult-supervised children's activities will be available for delegates starting on Friday, August 19, 2022 through to the end of the AGA on Sunday, August 21, 2022.

