

FALL 2007

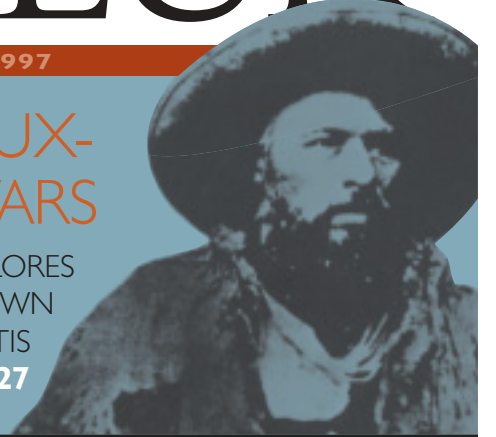
MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

THE PUBLICATION OF THE MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO SINCE 1997



THE SIOUX-MÉTIS WARS

NEW BOOK EXPLORES THIS LITTLE KNOWN CHAPTER OF MÉTIS HISTORY **PAGE 27**



SPECIAL SECTION

AGA 2007

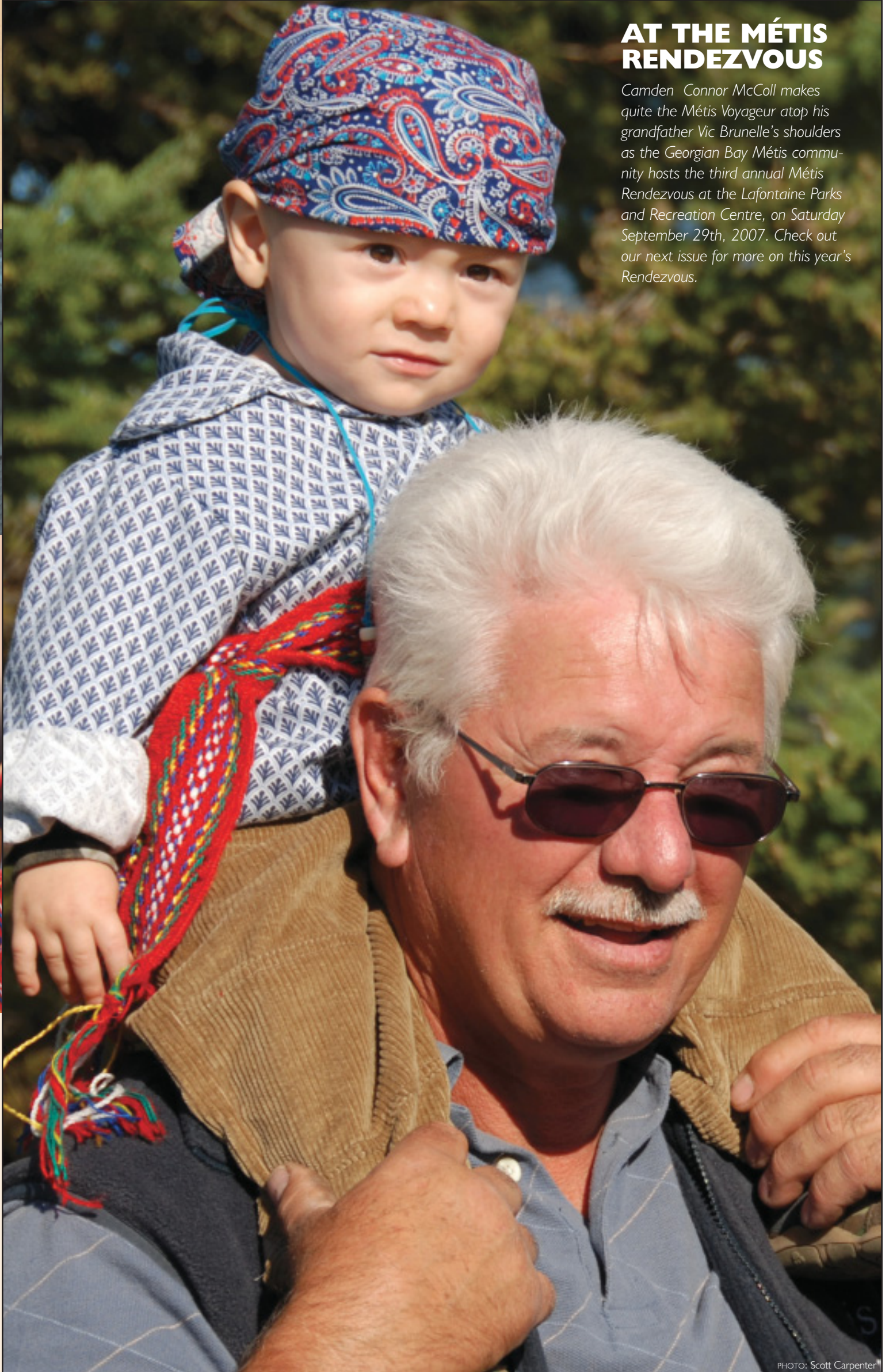
IT'S BACK TO THUNDER BAY FOR ANOTHER GREAT MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLY **PAGES 11-22**

BRENDA POWLEY

INTERVIEW WITH A PROUD FIGHTER FOR MÉTIS RIGHTS. **PAGE 9**

MÉTIS FAMILIES LEARNING TOGETHER

MNO INTRODUCES NEW LITERACY PROGRAM. **PAGE 3**



AT THE MÉTIS RENDEZVOUS

Camden Connor McColl makes quite the Métis Voyageur atop his grandfather Vic Brunelle's shoulders as the Georgian Bay Métis community hosts the third annual Métis Rendezvous at the Lafontaine Parks and Recreation Centre, on Saturday September 29th, 2007. Check out our next issue for more on this year's Rendezvous.



PHOTO: Scott Carpenter

Captain's Corner

BY KEN SIMARD
CAPTAIN OF THE HUNT, REG. 2

ATTENTION MÉTIS HUNTERS!

Many Métis Citizen harvesters still have not reported their harvest for the year 2006. **PLEASE DO SO NOW!** This is very important for our records. Our negotiating team has spent a lot of time on our hunting rights. The least we can do is to comply with the annual harvest report. Send your report to the Captain of the Hunt in your region now. It's not to late. Thank you for your co-operation.



Sahayma

Parker and Isaac Omenye are proud to announce the arrival of their baby sister, Sahayma Orillia Sarah, born on July 13, 2007, weighing 8 lbs. 1 oz. Proud parents are Kelly and George Omenye of Timmins. Sahayma's proud aunt Laurie Fonjong works in the Registry Branch at head office.



Gabrielle

Gabrielle Christine Guerin was born August 29, 2007, to Melissa Lemieux and Mathieu Guerin. Weighing in at 6 lbs. 10 ozs, she is welcomed by proud grandparents Roger and Angele Lemieux and great-grandparents Emile and Yvette (Prevost) Lemieux.



Hailey

Tammy Webb, the Regional Employment and Training Coordinator in Sault Ste. Marie, is a very proud grandmother—again. Her son and daughter-in-law had a beautiful 6 lb. 4oz. baby girl, Hailey Howson, on May 18th. We would like to congratulate Tammy and her family on their wonderful new addition!

WEDDING BELLS



We are happy to join Judi Trott in announcing the marriage of **Melissa Cabezas** to Mr Jason Button on March 9th, 2007. Best of luck to the new family of five—Mr and Mrs Button and their three little Buttons, Jessica Button, Angus Button and of course Seth Cabezas. Melissa is the daughter of Judi Trott, Region 9 Employment and Training Officer.

ROOTS



Senator Leroux and cousins from NY, ON, QC and beyond.

Leroux Family Rendezvous

In Cornwall, Ontario on August 3rd, 4th and 5th the Leroux Family Rendezvous drew more than 200 family members to the Cornwall Civic Centre Complex. They came from such diverse places as Texas, Florida, New York, Boston, British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec. The activities opened with a traditional Métis blessing and smudge by MNO Senator Jacques Leroux. A French Canadian banquet and dance followed.

These families, Leroux, Hamel and Gadbois originated from the Cornwall Glengarry area. — *Senator Jack Leroux*

OBITUARY: DONALD "DON" GUSSIE HASS

Métis man hoped to thank Métis Nation of Ontario LTC worker

Donald "Don" Gussie Hass passed away on May 23rd, 2007, at the Sudbury Regional Hospital-St. Joseph Health Centre. He was 61 years young.

Don was the beloved husband of Marie (Lacasse) Hass of French River; loving father of Elizabeth and Leona (husband Timothy Dineen); and devoted grandfather of Nathaniel William and Isabelle; dear son of Alice (predeceased) and Gus Hass; dear brother to



Doreen (predeceased), Doug and Debbie (husband George Agowissa) all of French River. He is sadly missed by Kody his faithful "canine son" and all those who knew him.

Donald was born in Toronto and raised on the French River where he was an integral part of the daily running of Hass Camp and Trailer Park. During his life he took part in many different activities.

CONTINUES PAGE 32

OBITUARY



Marie-Claire Dorion-Dumont 29 November 1938 - 18 August 2007

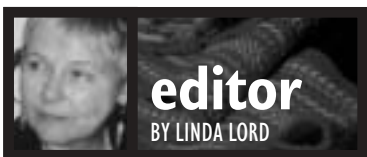
It is with deep sadness that the Dumont family announces the passing of Marie-Claire Dorion-Dumont, resident of Woburn, QC, on August 18th 2007. Claire was the beloved wife of 50 years of Renald Dumont and the beloved mother of Karole (Glen Beckett), Colette (Marc Hallé), Robert (Lise Roy), Michel (Carmen Maheu), Réjean (Guylaine Isabel), Mario (Nancy Robert), Liette and Stéphane. She was born in Mattawa on November 29, 1938, daughter of feu Lena Matte-Meilleur and feu Jean-Baptiste Dorion, sister of Mathilde Meilleur-Sarrazin, feu Doris Meilleur-Sarrazin, feu George Meilleur JR, Robert Meilleur, Theresa Dorion-Bastien and John Dorion.

The memorial service was held at the Jacques & Fils Funeral Home in Lac-Mégantic, QC on August 25, 2007. Pallbearers were her four oldest grandsons: Patrick, Jean-Francois, Ken and Billy.

Claire was the revered grandmother of 22 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren and twin great-granddaughters expected in September. She also leaves numerous cousins, nieces and nephews, brothers and sisters-in-law and friends. She will be remembered always by her family and the Métis community for her devotion and deep love for her family, her generosity and her artistic talents which resulted in countless handmade gifts for her loved ones.

Carl Mason Adelard Storry

Carl Mason Adelard Storry, age 73, died on June 10th, 2007, in Thunder Bay. Carl is survived by daughter Becky (George) Walker, son Carl Jr. (Jo Anne), daughter Beth and great granddaughters Janelle and JoHanna Walker. Cremation has taken place and a private family service will be held. A public memorial service will be announced at a later date. Donations may be made to the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Mr. Storry was the uncle of Bill Smith, President of Thunder Bay Métis Council.



editor

BY LINDA LORD

I've had a love-hate relationship with fall for most of my life. I hate fall because it means the end of summer, and summer is my true love. Some people look at the changing trees and see glorious colours. I see dead trees. Yes, I know, the trees are not really dead, but that's what I see and I slump into a period of mourning.

However, even as I lament the demise of summer, on some other level I feel that fall is the beginning of the intellectual year. In summer we Canadians goof-off as much as possible. Even when we're punching the clock, as it

were, we are thinking about fishing and swimming, and boats. We are clad in light-weight clothing and anticipating the weekend.

Then, Labour Day rolls around and some invisible switch is flipped. It's "everybody out of the pool!" Summer is over and it's time to start a new work year, or school year, or training program—time to get serious.

Even though I hate to see leaves changing colour and falling to the ground, there is something exciting about fall. I have often been called "a professional student", and I make no apologies for that. When fall comes around I sign up to take some course or other. There is always something that I want to learn; the problem is making a choice.

I began by putting myself through university two or three

times and by then I had built up so much momentum that I couldn't get stopped. The more I learned the more I wanted to learn and my curiosity has spread like ink on a blotter. (Some of you will remember ink and blotters.)

You name it and I have probably taken a class in it. Beginning with "A" there is astronomy and art—water colours, oils, acrylics, life drawing, still life, Chinese watercolours, theory etc. Under 'C' you will find a broad selection of computer courses. Then there are various types of design—clothing, graphic etc. For about the past ten years I've been wood working, wood carving and wood turning. Of course there are also the academic courses. I once took a

class in "Ancient Humour" as part of my degree in Classical Studies. And then there are all of the courses that I taught, but that's a different story.

The point is: learning is fun! It doesn't matter whether you are upgrading for your job or standing out in a field looking at stars. Learning is limitless; it's ageless; it's satisfying, and you are almost bound to be better off for having done it.

And in case you are wondering—yes, I am taking another course this fall. My level of furniture making wasn't being offered so I'm taking some more Spanish. You never know, I may need it some day, and in the mean time, it's fun!

"Learning is limitless; it's ageless; it's satisfying"

THE MÉTIS VOYAGEUR

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





The Paddle of Hope sets off from Buckhorn, Ontario.

PADDLE of HOPE

Métis take to the rivers to support families affected by cancer

BY KIM SICKER

The Paddle of Hope 2007 was a 35.7 km paddle through the eastern portion of the Trent Severn Waterway. Ten Métis and First Nations people came together to support those living with cancer, and in memory of loved ones who have lost the battle against this terrible disease.

Stephanie Cruise's (Employment & Training Coordinator for Region 8) father was diagnosed with lung cancer in March of 2007. After their first trip to the traditional healer Stephanie was inspired by an idea to show her support for her dad. Stephanie says: "People living with cancer are challenged every day, if we can challenge ourselves for three days, after our trip our challenge is over, but for these people living with cancer they can't just walk away from their challenge". She wanted her dad to know that no matter what, as a family, they were going to stand together through this challenge.



Paddlers of Hope '07: Back row, left to right: Jamie Taylor, Jordan Godfrey, Kevin Frost and Raymond Godfrey. Front row, left to right: Stephanie Cruise, Kim Sicker, Lesley Frost, Cara Frost, Dean Wood and Samantha Stevens.

The *paddle of hope* started on August 23, 2007, in Buckhorn, Ontario. We loaded our canoes with what we would need until we reached our first destination of Burleigh Falls and away we went. Through thunder storms, rain, bugs, and burnt food, I realised that I could not challenge myself more, but, at the same time watching my team mates and listening to their stories of family and friends that

they have lost, I felt that it was a very emotional and healing trip. As Jamie Taylor said, "cancer is not prejudiced; you can be black, white, red, or yellow, and beyond the human race, how many have lost their beloved pet to cancer as well?" We reached each of our destination points to cheers from our loved ones on shore, as our ancestors would have done after coming home from a harvesting trip. We arrived at our final desti-

nation—Lakefield, Ontario—on August 25th, exhausted and full of pride. Tears flowed; smiles glowed; we were happy to finally be finished our challenge.

We would like to thank Adventure Outfitters of Lakefield for their generous donation of three of the five canoes that we used in the *paddle of hope 2007*, along with the Trent Severn Waterway for their continued support, and all the paddlers (below). We could not have done this without the amazing support system that was in place, from hot meals to cheers of delight. We are grateful to everyone who submitted the name of a loved one. We proudly flew our flags with each person's name during the entire trip.

See you again next year!

Supporters: Sharon Stevens, Art Stevens, Cathy Frost, Butch Frost, Amber Seager, Tim Doughty, Jennifer Godfrey, Tayler Cruise, Bill Taylor, Suzie Cruise, Anna McLaughlin, Ron Johnson, Joey Stevens, Adventure Outfitters, Trent Severn Waterway.

MÉTIS FAMILIES LEARNING TOGETHER

BY BONNY CANN

This past summer the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) announced an important new learning program. With the goal of bringing Métis families and communities together in recognising the importance of literacy, and in an

effort to raise literacy levels, the "Métis Families Learning Together Program" was launched in two pilot areas, North Bay/Sudbury and Toronto/Hamilton.

In partnership with Frontier College (a national literacy organisation), the MNO submitted a successful proposal to the Ontario Trillium Founda-

tion and received approval for a two year funding commitment.

Métis-specific resource materials and a training program have been established to engage community volunteers, peer tutors and families in literacy initiatives. Eventually these services and resources will be brought

to Métis communities across Ontario.

For more contact Bonny Cann, Provincial Education Initiatives Coordinator (bonnyc@metisnation.org or call 888-466-6684, in GTA 416-977-9881). Please check www.metisnation.org for details on the program and to access community volunteer application form.

LITERACY | Reading does a Métis mind good

BY BOBBI AUBIN

Training for the Métis Nation of Ontario's new literacy program, "Métis Families Learning Together", took place in August at Frontier College in Toronto.

In attendance were numerous volunteers, as well as Bonny Cann, MNO Provincial Education Initiatives Coordinator and Literacy Project Supervisor; Philip Fernandez, Manager Aboriginal Programs Frontier College; Natalie Wilson, Frontier College Community Coordinator; MNO Program Coordinators, Heather Purdon (Toronto/Hamilton), and Bobbi Aubin (Sudbury/North Bay). A big "thank you" to all the volunteers who dedicated their time and

wisdom to the training.

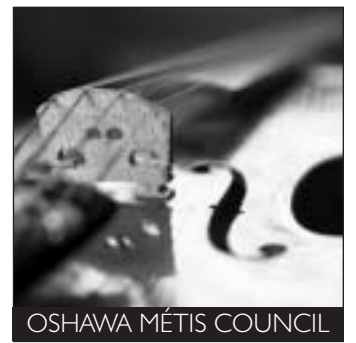
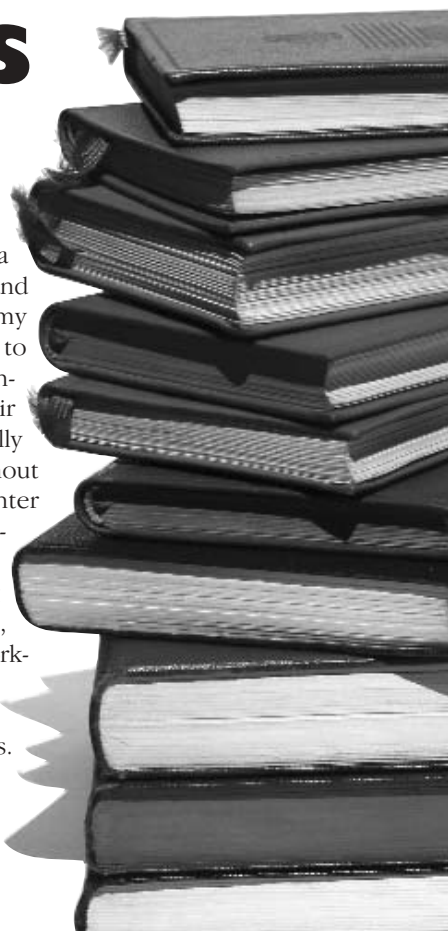
The training saw us put ideas together as to how the reading circles and homework clubs would work. Philip, who taught us how to run the programs and set them up, was a great motivational instructor. All participants were encouraged and given the opportunity to incorporate their knowledge, skills, education and experiences throughout the training.

Personally, I found the training satisfying in that it enabled me to pick up new skills and knowledge, as well as affording me an opportunity to learn from all participants. I am pretty excited about this new project as it will allow children to benefit from the programs and increase literacy.

The training gave me a chance to recognise my role and responsibilities, where my strengths lie, and what I need to learn more about. The volunteers shared a lot of their strengths and we had a really good working group throughout the training—a lot of laughter when needed as well as seriousness when required.

I look forward to working with the volunteers, parents, community members, co-workers, supervisors and most important the children who will be accessing our programs.

Bobbi Aubin/MNO Literacy Program Coordinator
Sudbury/North Bay
Ph: 705-919-3253



OSHAWA MÉTIS COUNCIL

Beadwork & bannock in Brooklin

BY CECILE WAGNER

A Métis Heritage Celebration 2007 took place in Brooklin, Ontario, on June 23rd. Guest speakers included Tony Belcourt, Métis Nation of Ontario President; Pat Perkins, Whitby Mayor; and John Gray, Mayor of Oshawa.

The event was hosted by the Oshawa Métis Council in conjunction with other *Celebrate Canada* events across the country. There were Métis games, displays and demonstrations of traditional leather work, beadwork, bannock making, fiddling and a fiddle display by Senator Ruth Wagner-Millington of the Métis Nation of Ontario. Those in attendance were also treated to a dramatisation of Louis Riel's wife's life by Amy White; a visit from Trapper Bob; a jigging workshop and performance by Lawrence "Teddy Boy" Houle; a jigging contest; silent auction and a 50/50 draw.

First Nation and Métis tales and legends were also featured along with live music by Charlie Fife, the Shwa Drummers of Oshawa, a potluck dinner, and much more. This fun event gives the Oshawa Métis Council an opportunity to expose family, friends and the general public to Métis culture and history. ∞

CREDIT RIVER MÉTIS

A Métis Christmas celebration

Make plans to attend our **Family Fun Day** on at Saturday December 1st, 2007, at Central Public School auditorium from 1-4 PM. There will be something for the whole family: catered food; Christmas carolling; storytelling; raffles; crafts; dancing; a possible visit from Métis Santa Claus and much more. Refreshments and admission are FREE.

To register contact:
Siobhan Marie Laverdiere
PH: 905-454-8951
siobhanl@metisnation.org

Note: Children's book donations for the MNO's new Family Literacy Program would be much appreciated.

Discovering Métis history

2nd Annual Métis Day at Discovery Harbour - A Growing Success!

BY SCOTT CARPENTER

The second annual Métis Day, a partnership between the Métis Nation of Ontario and Huronia Historical Parks, was held on Saturday, August 11th, and it was another huge success. The event, hosted at Discovery Harbour in the historic Métis community of Penetanguishene, saw more than 500 visitors join Métis artisans, demonstrators, and Discovery Harbour costumed interpreters to celebrate the story of the Métis people who moved to the Penetanguishene area in the 19th century.

The present day Penetanguishene Métis community shares a rich history with Canada's famous voyageurs and with the British navy and military who were stationed there in the 19th century. One of the compelling stories told at Discovery Harbour is the migration of the military troops from Drummond Island, in Lake Huron, to the Penetanguishene Establishment in 1828. Many of the people involved in the transfer were Métis who provided supplies to the soldiers.

The many visitors enjoyed a horse and wagon ride and the entertainment provided by the following list of Métis artisans and performers. A big thank-you goes out to everyone who so ably demonstrated our cul-



Victoria Spiers plays the fiddle at Discovery Harbour near Midland during Métis Day celebrations.

ture throughout the day.

Thanks to Joanne Parent for her assistance and a special thank you to the costumed youth volunteers, Karly, Alexis and Brittney Chapman and Parker Befort for their enthusiasm and the pride they show in their Métis heritage. See you all next year!

Scott Carpenter is the Regional Employment & Training Coordinator for Region 7.

DISCOVERY HARBOUR-MÉTIS DAY VOLUNTEERS

ARTISANS:

- Shelley Moore (Salve Making)
- Ruth Quesnelle (Historic tailoring)
- Louise Goulding (Commercial Fishing)
- Sharon McBride (Candle-making)
- Karen Lediard (Rug Hooking)
- Eric Quesnelle (Fire Starting)
- Renee Laurin (Michif language)
- France Picotte (Finger weaving)
- Tracy Bald (Bead work)
- Senator Roland St. Germain (Traditional tobacco usage)
- Deborah Crawford (Food preservation)
- Michael Carpenter (Traditional Games)
- Scott Carpenter (Métis Roots exhibit)

PERFORMERS:

- Roger Giroux & Family (Fiddling)
- Victoria Spiers (Jigging)
- Marg Raynor (Singing)
- Rudy Couture (music)

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY 2007:



A Moon River Métis take over

BY SHARON M. BOYUK

It's June 21st 2007, a beautiful sunny summer day to be out and about enjoying the weather. But? It's also National Aboriginal Day, and Muskoka Heritage Village is buzzing with excitement.

The Moon River Métis took over the whole village with magnificent displays of their heritage and shared it with over 300 students from Huntsville, Dwight and Mactier. As well, many folks came to walk the grounds to learn about trapping, beading, fiddle-making, moccasin-making, drum-making or to see how Métis people fished, then and now.

If you happened to get a bit of a hunger on your journey, you could stop at the fish chowder and bannock display and have a bite to eat, then top it off with a bit of pure maple syrup and bannock for

dessert. YUMMY!

If you were in the mood for some toe tapping music, you could wander over to listen to Laurie Miller and Carl Tuzs play the fiddle and watch eight year old Victoria Spiers do a Métis jig.

However, the highlight of the day was when the then Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, the Honourable James Bartleman came to show his support to the Moon River Métis. A short ceremony took place in the museum, in honour of a Métis plaque that will be permanently displayed (see page 5) and afterwards Mr. Bartleman gave a speech. He also cut the cake and toured the grounds. It was a great honour to have Lt. Governor Bartleman show his support for the Métis.

Many other dignitaries were present: Senator Ruth Wagner-Millington; MNO Chair, Gary Lipins-

ki; Mayor, Claude Doughty and Councilor, Frank Coleman; Norm Miller, MPP; Sondra Read, representative for Tony Clement, and Elder and teacher Stuart King.

All in all it turned out to be a special day. However, none of it would have been possible without the hard work of Verna Porter, (see page 23) Chairperson for the Moon River Métis Council, who lives in Huntsville, and who dedicated so much of her time to keeping on top of all the meetings and arrangements. Verna was assisted by the rest of her council, (President, Louise Goulding; Treasurer, Lisa McCron; councillors, Larry Duval, Dan Quesnel, Irene Peel and Senator Ruth Wagner-Millington) as well as Teri Souter of Muskoka Heritage Village.

Thanks to all the volunteers who came out to help. It was a great day. Your efforts paid off!

Moon River publishes again!

BY LOUISE GOULDING

The Moon River Métis Council has published another important and interesting report on the Métis in our area: *The Settlement of Penetanguishene by the Voyageurs and Métis (1825-1871), The French Settlement in Huronia.*

This particular document is actually a master's thesis in history, written by Micheline Marchand of Lafontaine. It was accepted by Laurentian University in 1988 and was originally published in French, under the title, *Les Voyageurs et la Colonisation de Penetanguishene (1825-1871), La Colonisation française en Huronie.* The Moon River Métis Council had the document translated and has now published the English version.

In her preface, Micheline writes: "It is Huronia's unique character and rich human dimension that inspired this research. The first White and Métis inhabitants of Huronia, the voyageurs, and their fascinating heritage remain little known despite the wealth and the diversity of their contribution to the development of this area situated in southeastern Georgian Bay. My reasons for undertaking this study of the Penetanguishene voyageurs were, in large part, to fill as much as possible the void regarding the research in this field.

"Even today, as it was the case in the 19th century, the descendants of the first voyageur settlers remain, to a certain degree, neglected in Huronia's local francophone history. It is my hope that this thesis will, to some extent, help to underscore the key role played by the voyageurs and Métis in the area's history and, by the same token, acknowledge the contribution of the ancestors of the people who live in Huronia today and whose roots go back to the voyageurs, an illustrious group in their own particular way."

Micheline is a local historian of the Penetanguishene area, born and raised in Lafontaine. She has a master's degree in history from Laurentian University in Sudbury. She is a descendant of Francoise Clermont and Francois Dusome and a citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

The Moon River Métis Council is proud to have worked with Micheline and her partner, Daniel Marchildon, who translated the document for us. We look forward to working with them again in the future.

One of Moon River's next projects is to record the oral history of the area's Métis. Stay tuned!

Anyone who would like a copy of Micheline's thesis can contact Louise Goulding by phone **705-746-4974** or moonisland@hughes.net



YOUTH LEADERSHIP WALK HELD IN MIDLAND

On August 12th, a Youth Leadership Walk was held in Midland. The walk celebrated 50 youths in Simcoe County who are positive role models. The criteria for nomination included: achievements at school, in sports and recreation, the arts and volunteering in the community.

In addition to the walk, participants received awards and certificates. The event was sponsored by Catch a Fish not a Buzz in partnership with Simcoe North MPP Garfield Dunlop, Central Taxi, NEXUS Communication & Design and CFRH.

The Catch a Fish not a Buzz Rehabilitation Education Wellness Centre for Youth is an independent not-for-profit corporation and registered charity, designed to meet the unique needs of young people and family members from diverse backgrounds, to include but not restricted to Aboriginal and Francophone.

CONTACT:
Glenda Mitchell
356 First St., Midland, ON
Ph: 705-526-4600
www.catchafishnotabuzz.com

INDIGENOUS WORLD CELEBRATES PASSAGE OF UN DECLARATION

After 22 years UN affirms Rights of world's Indigenous

In September, 2007, the United Nations adopted the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* at a meeting of the General Assembly at UN Headquarters in New York by an overwhelming majority of 143 votes in favour, four opposed and 11 abstentions.

The Métis Nation, represented by Métis Nation of Ontario President, Tony Belcourt, joined leaders of Indigenous peoples from around the world on this momentous occasion to applaud the Nation States who voted to approve the *Declaration* and to express profound disappointment in Canada and the small number of other countries (Australia, New Zealand, USA) who voted in opposition to its adoption.

Mr. Belcourt said: "This is a truly remarkable milestone in the history of the struggle by Indigenous peoples for the recognition of their rights by the global community of Nation States. It is the result of debate and negotiation between Indigenous peoples and Nation States for more than two decades since it was first drafted in 1985. The *Declaration* is an 'aspirational' affirmation of



our rights consistent with international law and as such provides a framework for the protection of Indigenous peoples and the promotion of harmonious relations within the States where they live. We call on Canada to work with the Métis Nation and other Aboriginal peoples to develop policies and actions which are consistent with the provisions of the *Declaration*

despite its opposition to its adoption. Now that we have achieved this great moment in history, it is incumbent on all states, including Canada, to work in a spirit of co-operation with Indigenous peoples within their borders towards the implementation of the provisions of this historic declaration."

For the text of the *Declaration* and other statements see the MNO web site at: www.metisnation.org.

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY 2007:

MÉTIS HISTORY IN HUNTSVILLE

This story appeared in The Huntsville Forester on June 27th, 2007, and is reprinted with their kind permission

BY JULIA KIRKPATRICK

With shining blue eyes and pale blonde hair, Victoria Spiers doesn't appear aboriginal. But when she starts to dance a jig or play the fiddle, her fingers and toes respond to the rhythms of her Métis ancestors.

Spiers helped teach school-children and visitors about Métis culture during the National Aboriginal Day festivities held Friday at Muskoka Heritage Place.

"Métis people are neither First Nation, nor Inuit, nor are we European immigrants to this land," Ruth Wagner-Millington, senator of the Moon River Métis Council, told the crowd of guests. "We are people born of a marriage between two different worlds. We are the dawn that joins the night and the day."

The Métis nation was founded by the descendents of European men (mainly settlers or fur traders) and aboriginal women, who often guided the men through the Canadian wilderness. Over time, Métis men and women married and started their own families, and a unique culture and heritage developed.

"We have hair that is black, brown, yellow and red, brown eyes and blue, and we speak a variety of languages – English, French, Michif-French, Michif-Cree and Mashkegon, to name some," Wagner-Millington said.

Today, many Métis wear a distinctive woven sash tied loosely around the waist for special occasions. The sash represents ones worn by the fur traders to keep their jackets closed, but they were also used as a rope, harness, scarf or tumpline when carrying heavy loads of furs.

"Look at our sashes we wear so proudly," Wagner-Millington said. "They are a mixture of different colours, all woven together to be a beautiful, artistic sash, just like we Métis are a mixture, all joined together, to make strong, determined, proud peo-



NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY, JUNE 19TH, 2007: James Bartleman, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, applauds as Gary Lipinski, Chair the Métis Nation of Ontario, reveals a new plaque on Métis history for the museum at Muskoka Heritage Place. The unveiling was part of the ceremonies marking National Aboriginal Day on Thursday.

“I think it's really important that we celebrate the Métis people of Canada.... I think that more than any other group, they have helped open up Canada - they were the bridge between the native peoples and the non-native peoples.”

ple.” Part of the Métis' pride in their heritage stems from the conflict they encountered with white settlers during the 1800s. Disputes over land and resources, and the introduction of programs that tried to assimilate the Métis and other aborigi-

nal people into mainstream society, led to a series of violent clashes between the Métis and European authorities in the northwest.

In recent years, official recognition of the Métis' identity and aboriginal rights has fostered a cultural renewal among people of Métis ancestry.

"I think it's really important that we celebrate the Métis people of Canada," said James Bartleman, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, who attended the event after Wagner-Millington scribbled a note on a napkin at one of Bartleman's book signings inviting him to come.

"I would think that more than any other group, they have helped open up Canada – they were the bridge between the native peoples and the non-native peoples. Without their help, the fur traders and explorers never would have made it across the country."

Bartleman, who grew up in Port Carling, said the day had special significance for him.

"I have always felt very close to the Métis people," he said. "My mother is a First Nation person, my father was a non-native person, and so I felt an identifi-

cation with the people who had roots in both worlds."

Gary Lipinski, co-chair of the Métis Nation of Ontario, said that Métis involvement in Canada's history is "worth exploring" for those who are unfamiliar with it.

"The Aboriginal Peoples of Canada are here; we're still a fabric of this great country, (and) we're still contributing in many positive ways," Lipinski said. "We all live and share the same territory and we will all only grow and become better by working together, understanding each other's heritage, where we came from, what we have to offer."

During the festivities, Lipinski and Bartleman unveiled an informative plaque that will be put on permanent display in the Muskoka Heritage Place museum. Proponents said they hope the plaque will help visitors understand more about the vital role Métis people have played, and continue to play, in Canadian history.

"We are not half-breeds," said Wagner-Millington. "We are not half of anything, but double, with the best fruit of not one, but two family trees. Thus we are twice blessed."

Seeking young Métis educators

The Métis Nation of Ontario, Toronto regional office is looking for youth volunteers interested in participating in a "Métis youth travelling education group".

The City of Toronto has funding for a group of youths who (with training) could respond to the needs of schools and corporations who wish to be better educated about Métis culture and history.

Remember, training will be provided so don't worry about what you don't know! It is an opportunity to get together, get involved and to teach others. We are looking for people from age 12-24 who are interested in getting volunteer hours for school or who just want to do something fun.

I looking forward to hearing from you! This is specific to Toronto Métis Youth because of funding requirements, however, if you are outside of Toronto and still interested, contact your local Métis council office.

CONTACT:

Bonny Cann, MNO Provincial Education Initiatives Coordinator
PH: 416 977-9881
bonnyc@metisnation.org

New program for Aboriginal seniors

The Ontario Aboriginal Housing Support Services Corporation (OAHSSC) has recently received information on the **New Horizons for Seniors Program**. This program funds a wide range of local projects and non-profit activities that encourage seniors to contribute in their community. The **New Horizons Program** supports projects led by seniors by providing funding of up to \$25,000. It encourages seniors to lead activities that will benefit other seniors, vulnerable groups and communities where they live by volunteering, mentoring and teaching.

CONTACT:

PH: 1-800-277-9914 (toll free)
TTY: 1-800-255-4786
www.hrsdc.gc.ca

NATIONAL NEWS:

MNA disturbed by Alberta Government's actions on Métis Harvesting

“Just because Alberta's current politics can't accommodate our rights, doesn't mean we will not exercise our rights”

In June, Audrey Poitras, President of the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) expressed deep concern about the Alberta Government's conduct in negotiations with the MNA as well as plans to implement a unilateral approach on Métis harvesting.

“The Alberta Government has not been negotiating in good faith with the Métis people and does

not plan to continue to accommodate Métis harvesting practices throughout this province. Our trust in this government was misplaced. Without question, this is a low point in the history of our longstanding and productive relationship with the Alberta Government,” said Poitras.

Over the last 10 months, the MNA and the Alberta Government

have been engaged in negotiations to arrive at a longer term Métis Harvesting Agreement. This agreement was to replace the Interim Métis Harvesting Agreement (IMHA) that has been effectively accommodating Métis harvesting in Alberta since 2004.

The MNA was participating in these negotiations in good faith, even though Ted Morton, the Minister of Sustainable Resource Development, made cancelling the IMHA one of his leadership campaign promises to the Alberta Fish and Game Association. In

April, the Alberta Government unilaterally terminated the IMHA.

“These types of backroom and heavy-handed tactics are not consistent with Alberta's constitutional obligations to consult and accommodate Métis rights...” Poitras added, “Our people must be aware that it is very likely that the Alberta Government will begin charging legitimate Métis harvesters who are trying to feed their families. This approach flies in the face of the Powley case.”

The MNA is encouraging Métis to contact and write their MLAS. “We

hold out hope that the positive partnerships we have had with the Alberta Government are not things of the past. Premier Stelmach was chosen as leader to build bridges and bring all Albertans together. The politics of division and fear was rejected. If we move forward with honour, respect and co-operation, the Métis Nation remains a willing partner to enable the Alberta Government to fulfil its constitutional imperative on Métis rights. But, Alberta's current approach shows anything but honour, respect and co-operation,” concluded Poitras.



Robert Doucette elected as Métis Nation-Saskatchewan President

In June, the Métis Nation Saskatchewan elected Robert Doucette in a province-wide ballot box election.

On hand in Saskatoon, Métis Nation of Ontario President, Tony Belcourt, extended his personal congratulations saying, “We congratulate the citizens of the Métis Nation Saskatchewan on this very important occasion. We regret that the circumstances of the previous election left the Métis Nation citizens of Saskatchewan without the strong voice they deserve to represent their interests at home, nationally and internationally.

“Our people in Ontario welcome the fact that Métis citizens of Saskatchewan have chosen their leadership in a fair and democratic process and that we can now work together to strengthen our nation throughout our Homeland from Ontario to British Columbia. I look forward to working with the leadership of the Métis Nation Saskatchewan to address the many issues of common concern so that we can build a better place for our people today and for our children tomorrow.”

Métis brothers with a vision for change

BY VIRGINIA BARTER

The Métis Nation of Ontario is proud to congratulate Terry and Jayme Prevost on their recent acceptance for training with the Toronto Police Service. Their story is one of great triumph and victory. Despite negative influences around them, they had the determination and vision to stay in school and make a change in their lives for the better.

Terry and Jayme grew up in a single income family, as only their father worked. Finances were always a struggle for the family. Fortunately, the boys had a close relationship with each other and with their parents, and that kept them strong. However, very little value was placed on education.

At age 16, they were encouraged to quit high school and get a job working with their father at a chemical warehouse—the view being that college was a waste of time. Most of the kids they grew up with came from single parent families and were raised on welfare. Many ended up with serious criminal records, and are either

working at low paying jobs, or collecting welfare. Basically, despite growing up poor and being encouraged to leave school, Jayme and Terry were determined to get a good education.

That's when they decided to become police officers, but first they wanted to gain some life experience. After high school, they enrolled at Seneca College to study legal administration, and began working in the court system as provincial offences court clerks. Finishing high school and getting government jobs has already made them successful and admired members of their family.

One of the driving forces for Terry and Jayme in pursuing police careers was their beloved uncle, Paul Joseph Prevost, who was a very proud member of the Métis Nation of Ontario. Sadly, Paul Prevost was murdered in May of 2007. Although this was a very devastating time for the brothers, they pulled together as always and continued to pursue their dream of joining the police force, because they knew that is what their uncle would have

wanted. Paul was very proud of his two nephews and always gave them lots of encouragement. If it were not for him, as Jayme says, “I don't think we'd be where we are [today].” As well, both Jayme and Terry give special credit to the women in their lives for providing encouragement and support. Terry says, “I couldn't have made it without the support of my loving girlfriend Susan.” Jayme and his wife Karen just had their first child together, a boy. His name is Brandon Paul-Thomas Prevost, and Jayme says, “I can't wait to hoist him up at my police graduation.”

Terry and Jayme Prevost were hired by the Toronto Police Service, and began their training on August 20th, 2007. In January of 2008, they will be sworn in as Toronto Police Service Police Constables—the first ones in the history of their family to enter careers in law enforcement.

On behalf of the citizens of MNO, Congratulations! We are all proud of you! We know your experience will be such an encouragement to other young people to stay in school and pursue their dreams. ∞

The Gabriel Dumont Institute: education with a Métis flair

The Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Research was a follow-up to a Métis Cultural Conference that initiated planning for a then named “Métis Education Institute”. By 1980 the Gabriel Dumont Institute was formed and the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) began its operations.

In 1983 the institute began federally sponsored preparatory, credit skills training, and university programs.

In 1991 the Dumont Technical Institute (DTI) was established.

In 1992 the institute expanded to be included in all provincial community colleges and STASTS for technical and Adult Basic Education (ABE).

In 1993 the institute signed an

Affiliation Agreement with the University of Saskatchewan, thus creating the Gabriel Dumont College (GDC).

In 1995 a two year Métis Teacher Associate Certificate Program was developed by the institute and the University of Saskatchewan.

In 1996 GDC began to offer Arts and Science classes.

Between 2001 and 2003 the institute began branching out. First, by the DTI buying a central administration building in Saskatoon, then, by moving into more centres in Saskatoon and for the first time into Regina.

Some of the other advancements associated with the Gabriel Dumont Institute are the Napoleon LaFontaine Scholarship Foundation (1985); the publication

of the Journal of Indigenous Studies (1989); the first Community Training Residence for female offenders (with Saskatchewan Justice).

The Gabriel Dumont Institute is the only institute of its kind in Canada. It provides a number of services: the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP); Gabriel Dumont College (GDC); Dumont Technical Institute (GTI); Bachelor of Education (SUNTEP, since 1980 about 650 educators trained); Bachelor of Arts and Science (GDC, delivers only the first two years); Adult Basic Education, skills training, vocational and cultural programs; Library Information Services (GDI, Métis Specific library system); Curriculum and Publishing Department (has produced over



This summer, we trekked to Newfoundland and came back with some wonderful recipes. Here are two my husband plans to make often.

Captain Nova's Mussels (from Bonavista)

In a large pot bring to a boil the following:

- 1oz of cut mushrooms
- 1 cup of beer
- 1oz of bruschetta mix
- 1oz chopped green onions
- 1 slice fresh lemon
- Add 1 lb cleaned mussels

Reduce heat to medium and cook for 7 minutes. Serve with crusty bread.

Baked Cod Tongues (from St John's)

- Preheat oven to 450F.
- Wipe cod tongues with a damp cloth.
- Soak cod tongues in milk in which salt has been dissolved for about 10 mins.
- Drain and roll in bread crumbs.
- Place on a greased baking sheet and bake at 450F for 10 minutes. Enjoy!



75 literary, cultural and educational resources) Museum and Archives (Saskatoon centre, arts/crafts, oral histories, print, video and audio archive collection) The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture (to promote the sharing of its archives); Métis Cultural Development Fund (partnership with SaskCulture Inc, funds activities for the community to strengthen Métis culture); Scholarships.

The above information was taken from en.wikipedia.org

GDI

Rm. 210 College West
University of Regina
3737 Wascana Parkway
Regina, SK S4S 0A2
ph: 306-347-4100
www.gdins.org

FORT FRANCES • DRYDEN,
KENORA • SIOUX LOOKOUT

Support & Opportunity for Métis in northwest

Hello from northwestern Ontario! Winter is right around the corner; autumn surrounds us with brilliant colours and you can feel the excitement in the air! We're busy in Fort Frances, Kenora, Dryden, Sioux Lookout and surrounding communities preparing ourselves for the upcoming months.

If you are thinking about education and employment, MNO has a number of programs which may offer support and opportunity to Métis individuals. Some of the programs available through the MNO Training Branch are training purchases, self employment, apprenticeship support, mobility, disabilities, wage subsidies and cultural economic development.



BY DANA O'DONNELL

Our Summer Career Placement program is an excellent example of planning and preparing for the work force. Once again, students in Region 1 acquired skills that will help them prepare for their future employment. They've added skills to their resume and will now continue their education with a better understanding of the workplace environment. Good luck to all our Métis students this school year. Remember, your academic career will give you options and choices in your future employment pursuit.

Recently, the MNO launched the Health Careers Support Program, a program for Métis people working toward a health career. This is a wonderful opportunity for many Métis people. For more information on this program, and for next year's deadline, please visit our web site www.metisnation.org.

A reminder to everyone, through a partnership with the Province of Ontario, the MNO has established the MNO Bursary Program which is a bursary trust fund at 32 colleges and universities in Ontario. (see the MNO web site for a list of partnering institutions.) This perpetual fund allows bursaries to be paid to successful applicants from the interest accumulated annually. The applications, including deadlines and requirements, are accessed by students once they have been accepted into one of the partnering institution's programs.

Stay safe and have a great autumn season!

REGION 1

Dana O'Donnell / Regional Employment & Training Coordinator
danao@metisnation.org
PH: 1-888-793-3334 (toll free)

ACHIEVING THE DREAM

Education and Training News from North Bay - the Gateway City

BY LINDA KRAUSE

Well summer is at an end but here at the MNOTI Region 5 North Bay site things are just a-buzzing.

With a new school year underway lots of students are preparing to settle themselves in for a long winter of studying. We have been hard at work making sure everything goes well for both our clients who are entering school for the first time and for those who are returning. Bursary time is also upon us and I do encourage all students to apply not just for the Métis Nation of Ontario bursary but any bursary that would help Aboriginal students.

I travelled a lot at the beginning of this year to learn how to better help my clients, and it was a very mind nurturing experience.

Now, having had my vacation, I'm looking forward to keeping busy making sure all goes well at the office and supporting as many Métis citizens as I can with schooling, MNO applications or just a chat. Everyone is welcome to stop by the office.

Besides being busy bees in TI, the whole North Bay office has been much occupied this summer and it's not over yet. The health programs have been running all kinds of activities. These were listed in a calendar that was sent out and proved to be very successful.

In July we organised a Family



With a little help from MNOTI, Devin Shank was able to graduate from Seneca College's MNOTI Commercial Diver program.

Fun Day at our local Elks Lodge where we had display booths and fund-raising events (makeshift casino); a delicious spaghetti dinner; kids activities, and MNOTI was there with their program information and display.

The annual Métis Harvester Gathering 2007, was held Octo-

ber 13th, in Sturgeon Falls at Dutrisac Cottages.

A little bit about last year in MNOTI—even though we had a great year there were still lots of clients who needed our help. Of the people we were able to help last year, a very special one comes to mind. A young man in his early 20's came to me with a

vision. With the help of his parents he had started realising that dream in high school. Only one thing could stop him from going on and that was money. Being Métis this young lad approached our office for help. We gave him the encouragement and funding he needed to attend Seneca College, which has the best commercial diver program in Ontario. With no financial worries, he was able to concentrate on his schooling, and I am proud to tell you that he finished first in his class. He is now working as an underwater welder for the City of Sturgeon Falls. He has had many job offers and can go just about wherever he wants. Who is this young man? His name is Devin Shank.

Devin is one of the many MNOTI success stories.

Here at the Métis Nation of Ontario Training Initiatives Region 5 we enjoy seeing all students achieve their dream.

REGION 5

Darlene McIsaac

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235-101 WORTHINGTON ST. E
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PH: 1-888-825-1742 (705 only)

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Métis Families Learning Together



We're looking for Métis families with school aged children who would like to participate in weekly homework clubs or reading circles in four regions across Ontario.

If you feel your child would benefit from one of these programs, or if you would like to volunteer, please contact the Métis Literacy Coordinator in your area for more details:

Toronto & Hamilton:
HEATHER PURDON
heatherp@metisnation.org
ph: 1-888-466-6684 or 416-977-9881

Sudbury & North Bay:
BOBBI AUBIN
bobbia@metisnation.org
ph: 705-669-0866



Another successful Métis grad

Mark and Deliann Forget of Penetanguishene, are pleased to announce the graduation of their daughter, **Amy Jean Forget**, from Nipissing University in North Bay, Ontario, on June 7th, 2007.

Amy received financial assistance from the Métis Nation of Ontario Training Initiatives (MNOTI) to complete her Bachelor of Education degree and accepted a position with the International School of Kootenay in Nelson, BC. Proud grandparents are Stella and Albert Quesnelle, Jeanne Green and the late Phil Forget all from Penetanguishene. Congratulations and great work Amy!

DILIGENT SERVICE

BY COLETTE & NICOLE

Hello everyone, from the Métis Nation of Ontario Training Initiatives in Region 3. Summer has already come and gone. Time sure flies when you're busy. And busy we were, starting in May with our Annual Métis Awareness Day, the Timmins Multi-cultural Festival and ending with our attendance at the MNO AGA.

We also helped Métis students with summer employment. We had students from the construction course at Northern College build beautiful offices to accommodate all our programs in our regional office. We are now working diligently to serve all the Métis citizens returning to school and the work force.

As a regional office we are also preparing for Riel Day and our Annual Christmas Pot Luck.

REGION 3

Colette Risewick

Regional Employment & Training Coordinator

Nicole Charron

Employment & Training Officer

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Owen Sound Métis and well-wishers officially open the community garden on June 26, 2007.

Grey-Owen Sound Métis cultivate Indigenous herb & food garden

BY DIANE OWEN

On June 26 the community garden at the Owen Sound Métis Centre opened. The MNO provided incentive and some start-up equipment and the United Way provided space and enthusiasm. Home Depot, Meridian,

and our friends provided financial donations, and hard-working dedicated men and women provided the ideas, wisdom, experience, and labour to make this happen. The community garden committee is made up of Marie Monette, Adam Brown, Susan Schank, Diane Owen, Jackie Brown, James Morton and Malcolm Dixon.

Our site offered an opportunity to plant, nurture, harvest and use fresh produce. We provided assistance and instruction in all aspects of gardening, with emphasis on teachings about the Aboriginal approach to our plant relatives which nurture and sustain us.

Committed to sustainable environmental practices such as composting, water conservation, and natural pest control, we promote and teach organic and companion planting. We not only grow medicines and



fruits and vegetables, we hope to cultivate a strengthened community for our collective future, as we work, learn and play together.

Our garden is open to everyone, even those who simply wish to come in, sit, and watch the green things grow.

A special note is that our beautiful sign "Li Saydr" was made and given to us by Senator Leora Wilson. Li Saydr (The Cedar).

Métis booth a hit at giant yard sale

BY JEFF WILSON

Senator Leora Wilson and a small, but mighty contingent of local Métis, peopled the Grey Owen Sound Métis booth at the "Hottest Yard Sale Under The Sun" event, in connection with the 2007 Owen Sound Homecoming celebration.

The book, "Historic Saugeen & Its Métis People", edited by Port Elgin resident Pat McArthur, was the centre of interest for

many visitors. Copies of the *Voyageur*, and local Métis community newsletter, "The Outpost", as well as photo albums displaying recent Métis community events caught passing eyes. Displayed also were a number of items relative to the local Métis community. The booth offered give-aways, as well as a small number of items for sale.

Jeff Wilson is a member of the Grey-Owen Sound Métis Council.



Leora Wilson scans "Historic Saugeen & Its Métis People" with Don Williams, a visitor to the Grey-Owen Sound Métis booth, at the "Hottest Yard Sale Under The Sun", July 28, 2007.

GRAND RIVER MÉTIS

New Council looking for Métis in south central Ontario

BY CAROL LEVIS

If you are Métis, or believe you are of Métis origin, and live in the Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge or Guelph area, the Grand River Community Métis Council (GRCMC) wants and needs your help and support.

Your interim council has been working hard to set up the charter for our area since our very first meeting on March 31st. We were thrilled with the turn out for that meeting and we are now looking forward to our first election and the Charter Signing Ceremony taking place on October 29th, 2007. That will be a "don't miss" event.

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President, Tony Belcourt, MNO Chair, Gary Lipinski, and MNO Senior Policy Analyst, Hank Rowlinson, will be in attendance for the charter signing. We are hoping Eric Scofield, our MNO Councillor for Region 9 can also be present. Your attendance would be a great way to show pride in our heritage. The meeting will be held at 7:00 pm at the Doon Campus of Conestoga College at 299 Doon Valley Drive in room 3E19.

Carol Levis is a GRCMC Councillor.

CONTACT:

Ruth Robins, President
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ruthrobins@rogers.com

All aboard the "Atomic"

BY LINDA LORD

Meet Jim Turner and his tugboat. Jim built the boat from scratch—everything except the little rubber tires and the anchor was made by hand. There is enormous detail and it is 1/24 scale.

The tug is the "Atomic" from Amherstburg, Ontario, where he used to work on her and others that McQueen Marine owned in the 60s through the 80's.

It took two years to build, and Jim says that he was lucky to get the scale plans from the captain, Cliff Morrison who now lives in St. Catherines.

The hull was made from a solid block of wood that was laminated together from 3/4 inch pine. Then it was spoke shaved to size and formed and finally sanded. The upper decks are cut pieces of pine and the windows are Plexiglas. The lifeboat is carved from a piece of wood, and all rigging is exact. Everything you see including anchor, windlass, all pulleys etc. were made on Jim's lathe from brass. There is absolutely nothing that is left out and it is complete in every way.

Several museums have been eyeing the tug, but Jim does not want to part with it. Russel Broth-

ers, who built the real thing in 1945, thought this model was gorgeous. The tug was 82 feet in length. The model is 41 inches long—the propeller made of bronze on Jim's lathe. Even the paint is correct.

The full-size tug is now in the Toronto harbour under a new name and just had twin engines installed, "but", Jim says, "the last time I saw a picture of her she

looked a bit beat up."

As a young Métis man Jim Turner was employed on the Atomic for years. "It was a labour of love to build her," he says.

Now that the tug is complete, Jim is making plans for future projects. "Next, I will perhaps do a lighthouse that sits out in front of our home. Right now I am making a Hudson's Bay tomahawk/pipe that was issued to the

factors and people of the Hudson's Bay Company. I will send a picture of that when it is done. The original was cast iron, but I am making this one from steel on the lathe. This is to go with a complete Métis outfit that I propose to make and wear someday."

Jim can be contacted by email at cturner@gusbueone.com.



MÉTIS RIGHTS:

Métis gain justice after a 'long and convoluted journey'

Brenda Powley recalls the struggle, and eventual victory, that led to the recognition of rights for Métis people



BY PATRICIA BAKER

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 2007

This story is reprinted with the kind permission of The Sault Star.

Sault Ste. Marie has been the region's epicentre of trade, commerce and culture since its humble beginnings in the early 1600s.

Historical data describes how aboriginal peoples of the upper Great Lakes region gathered for centuries along the shores of the St. Marys River in celebration of their social and ancestral traditions. The abundance of fish and wildlife in and around the fast-flowing water fed, clothed and housed the people. By the time the coureurs de bois and the voyageurs had reached the area, these resources had become the driving forces behind the fur trade as well as the backbone of the area's economy. When Jesuit missionaries had established a settlement at the site in honour of the Virgin Mary, they named it Sainte Marie du Sault.

By the mid-1750s, Sault Ste. Marie had evolved into a vibrant and distinctive Métis community. Unions between the European traders and the aboriginal women continued and the Métis, or "mixed bloods," developed into a unique cultural entity within the historical community. The Métis, or children of the fur trade, assisted new settlers in adapting to harsh conditions, and today are proudly involved in all aspects of Canadian society.

Regina v. Powley, the Supreme Court of Canada decision of 2003, upheld Métis claims that their ancestors were recognized as a separate people by both aboriginals and non-. Their identity was both distinctive and inherently viable.

"The long and convoluted journey for Métis justice was in some ways just beginning," said Brenda Powley, a Métis and resident of Sault Ste. Marie.

It is ironic that the Crown continued to appeal decisions all the way to the Supreme Court, yet 20 years earlier in 1982 Métis rights were entrenched in the Constitution of Canada and they were recognized as one of the country's aboriginal nations.

Furthermore, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples states that "it is unjust and unreasonable to withhold from the Métis the services and opportunities available to other aboriginal peoples."

Powley knows first-hand how taxing the mental and physical toll can be when faced with having to prove one's aboriginal ancestry.

On Oct. 22, 1993, her late husband Steve and their son Roddy shot a bull moose near Sault Ste. Marie and tagged it with a homemade Métis harvesting card, a note stating the catch was for winter food and their Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association membership numbers.

The pair were charged by Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources conservation officers with hunting without a licence and unlawful possession of moose contrary to the Game and Fish Act.

They fought a 10-year battle through the Ontario Court of Appeal and on to the Supreme Court of Canada, where Powley's claims to Métis ancestry were

“Even though our people evolved from the coureurs de bois, voyageur and aboriginals, we have our own identities and customs.”

found to be both credible and valid, entitling him to the aboriginal right to hunt for food without a licence.

"It was really difficult, because he had to prove who he was," Brenda recalled.

Brenda describes how Steve had to prove that his Métis lineage existed prior to 1850, when the Robinson-Huron Treaty was



Steve Powley at the Supreme Court of Canada in 2003.

signed. "His Métis heritage came from his mother's Ojibway blood and goes all the way back to the original Métis settlement here."

Even though the Crown appealed each victory, "we'd win the round," she said. "Justice was finally served when the Supreme Court ruled that Steve Powley's Métis ancestry could not be disputed, nor would minimum blood quantum be required as his ancestry evolved from an established Métis community."

The ruling also described how aboriginal rights are collective and must be grounded in the

existence of a historic or present community.

Brenda, a senator with the Métis Nation of Ontario, agrees the ramifications of the decision are both profound and far-reaching. "Even though our people evolved from the coureurs de bois, voyageur and aboriginals, we have our own identities and customs."

Sault Ste. Marie's Métis community continued to be a presence despite a decline in numbers after the signing of the Robinson-Huron Treaty, in which reserves were set apart for natives. Court documents clearly define the ongoing existence of the Métis in Sault Ste. Marie, even though many had gone to the reserves or migrated to outlying areas. They did not cease to exist - they survived by virtue of their inherent practices of hunting, fishing, harvesting and trapping.

The Crown continuously appealed "with the intent of discrediting these facts," Brenda said.

Steve's journey toward self-realization had begun years before he ever entered a courtroom.

"Steve found out as an adult that he was Métis. He and his siblings were called Indians as kids, but no one talked about it," she said.

"It wasn't something to be proud of, and in many cases family members who looked Indian were scratched from photos. If they weren't visible, there was no explaining to do."

Brenda agrees pride is once again replacing these feelings.

Sault Ste. Marie Mayor John Rowswell and members of coun-

cil have been very supportive. The Métis flag is flown at city hall for the week of Nov. 16, which is Louis Riel day.

Brent McHale always knew he was native, "but as a kid it was all hidden away."

McHale, a Métis who resides in Searchmont and MNO councillor, says his mother was protective, "and didn't expose us to that side of the family."

She referred to them as friends, "but I started asking questions, and finally my mother relented and admitted to being aboriginal."

He left the Sault in the 1960s and worked in southern Ontario for 30 years, "but when I came back I got involved with the Métis Nation of Ontario."

He has traced his Métis ancestry, through his grandmother Sarah Corbiere of Batchewana First Nation, back to the early 1800s in Sault Ste. Marie's Métis community. In order to prove his Métis ancestry, he searched records at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Roman Catholic Church in Garden River First Nation, and got information from the Corbiere family.

"The Powley decision makes the process of establishing Métis ancestry more precise," he agreed.

On Sept. 19, 2003, Steve Powley wore his Métis sash draped over his right shoulder. Flanked by his lawyer Jean Teillet, great-grandniece of Louis Riel, MNO president Tony Belcourt and family and friends, he said a few words to the press.

"A landmark victory after a 10-year battle was to be celebrated by all Métis from coast to coast," said Brenda.

Steve suffered from the complications of diabetes for some time and was in frail health. "He said he'd get the case to the end of the court battle, and then he'd go," his wife recalled.

He died Feb. 24, 2004, five months after the historical Supreme Court decision, but not before he left a legacy of enormous proportions. ∞



closing night
SELECTION
IMAGINE NATIVE
FILM FESTIVAL
2007

a film by shane belcourt

Tkaronto





melanie McLaren

rhane Murray

lorne Cardinal

Congratulations to Métis filmmaker Shane Belcourt whose feature film, *Tkaronto* recently made its world premiere at the imagineNATIVE Film Festival closing night gala sponsored by the Independent Film Channel (IFC)

ABOUT THE FILM:

TKARONTO is the feature film debut of Métis writer-director Shane Belcourt. The film is a reflective and thought-provoking exploration of two Aboriginal thirty-somethings, who make an unexpected connection at the pinnacle of a common struggle: to stake claim

to their urban Aboriginal identity. This super-indie feature was made in just eight months from script to post-production with a cast and crew of 10 on a meager budget. It is a first exploration of Shane Belcourt's Métis heritage in a narrative work, one heavily influenced by the legacy of the filmmaker's father, Métis Rights leader, Tony Belcourt.

Find out more about and view the film trailer online
www.tkaronto.net

REGION 7

Community Election notice

Georgian Bay Métis Council

Special notice to all Citizens of the Georgian Bay Métis Council the election process is now underway.

Nominations open
September 28th, 2007

Nominations close
October 24th, 2007

Verification by
October 31st, 2007

Advanced Poll
November 17th, 2007

and the Election date is
November 24th, 2007

Please notify your friends, relatives and neighbours of the election! For more information please contact:

Georgian Bay Métis Council
9170 Cty Rd. 93W, Unit 301
RR2, Box 50
Midland, ON
L4R 4K4
Ph: 705-526-6335
Ex: 705-526-7537

Igniting the Spirit

BY JUDY CARDO

The "Friends of Wabano" committee held their gala fund-raiser for Aboriginal children and youth programs on June 21st, National Aboriginal Day.

Titled *Igniting The Spirit*, this Ottawa event enticed patrons with a gourmet cocktail party, that featured Aboriginal foods while First Nation, Inuit and Métis performers entertained.

All proceeds from the *Igniting the Spirit* fund-raiser support programs for urban Aboriginal children and youth. These programs are conducted throughout the year and emphasize fitness, cultural reclamation and artistic expression. This year's event raised about \$52,000.

If you would like further information, or know someone who would be interested in donating to next year's gala, please contact the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health at 613-748-0657 or email jcardo@wabano.com.

Métis Jam

"Métis Jam" is a series of Métis jam nights which began September 1st at The Old Sod at 2936 Bloor Street West in Toronto, between noon and 1am.

The location of each Métis Jam is different in order to allow each area in the GTA a chance to share our wonderful music and culture. This is a family event and all ages are welcome. However, children must be accompanied by an adult and will be required to leave at 9pm whenever the jam takes place at a licensed establishment.

Bring your instruments and join host Charlie Fife for a night of music. For info call 905-763-9840 or email charliefife@rogers.com.

Bronze medal Métis

BY BARBARA HARTMAN

This past August, the city of Thunder Bay hosted the Aboriginal Summer Games in which competitors from across Ontario ran, jumped and played their hearts out. This three-day event showcased the best athletes the Aboriginal community has to offer.

One of these competitors was Debbie Burgess, a Thunder Bay local and an MNO citizen. This was her first year participating in the games and it was evident that her training had prepared her for the physical demands that lay ahead. Her chosen events were the 5000 metre, 100 metre sprint, shot put and javelin.

Representing the Métis Nation of Ontario, Debbie won two bronze medals in the 5000 metre and the 100 metre sprint. Congratulations to you, Debbie, and to all the people who travelled to our fair city to participate.



Pawkar Raymi

Andean ceremony and the sounds of sacred drums

BY VIRGINIA BARTER

In coordination with the Alom Kajolom Maya of Toronto and the Andean First Nations Council-Toronto, (CANO), the sacred Andean ceremony, "Pawkar Raymi" took place at the Project Amik community room on March 24th.

Around 70 people attended the ceremony, representing the four directions--yellow, black, white and red--from Toronto, Markham, Ajax, Brampton, York, Mississauga and Scarborough. They brought drums of all sizes and shapes--Mapuche, Haida, Ojibway and even an Andean 'Wankara', which were played to honour Mother Earth or Pachamama.

The evening began with a traditional smudge by Amik resident Amber O'Hara, who said that it was good to share this native North American practice with other cultures. Then the 'Manitou Kwe Singers' drummed the welcome and healing songs. The native North American songs were a special welcome to Andean friends.

Next, in solidarity with their Andean neighbours, the brothers and sisters of Alom Kajolom Maya, led by Elder Bartolo Alvarez, prayed and danced to the four directions. The Manitou Kwe singers presented Mr. Alvarez with an eagle feather as a thank you. This eagle feather, representing the North Ameri-



left to right: Virginia Barter with friends, Susana, Gabriela and Amber at a Pawkar Raymi ceremony in Toronto last spring.

can indigenous people, was offered as an expression of friendship to our Latin American friends, represented by the condor. The presentation of the Aztec Dance Group, Ixcozauhqui was the highlight of the evening as they conducted a traditional Aztec prayer ceremony to the four directions, then danced in honour of Mother Earth.

After the formal presentations, the audience was invited to participate in a mass drumming circle led by Toronto musician, Rick Monaco. Rick has a great deal of experience working with groups in schools and workshop settings and soon had the room throbbing in a brilliant mix of international sounds--African drums, native hand drums, powwow drums, bongos and an array of percussion sounds. Everyone participated. Even the children joined in.

Drumming is fundamental to all indigenous cultures, and is now reawakening in Métis culture too. The Métis song was brought to the drum in Ontario in a sacred ceremony at Kettle

Point First Nation in 2005 to honour, in a traditional way, the "Nation to Nation" relationship between the Anishinabek Nation and the Métis Nation. Sharing the drum is a way to connect all cultures in a common desire for peace and harmony among all nations.

Susana Condori, Presidente of CANO-Toronto thanked all those in attendance and gave special thanks to sister Violeta Migoya who exhibited beautiful Peruvian handicrafts. Marco Guzman, CANO's Secretary, closed the celebration and invited those in attendance to return for future events.

Finally, a potluck was enjoyed by everyone, and the Manitou Kwe singers led another round of singing to bring this beautiful evening to a close.

MORE ABOUT CANO

The Aboriginal Andean Nations Council, (CANO) or Consejo Andino de Naciones Originarias, was formed in Toronto in 1996 and has branches in Montreal, Ottawa and Quebec. It is a community-based organisation that brings together aboriginal people from the Andean region of South America--territories now known as Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, northern Chile and Argentina, and southern Columbia. This ancestral homeland is called "Tawantinsuyu" meaning "empire of the four directions". The Council is structured on the ancestral basis of Chacha-Warmi, (Feminine-Masculine) Sacred Duality, and the Amawtas--principles of balance and harmony. CANO's mission is to foster and reaffirm the Andean Aboriginal peoples' culture and historical identity in a spirit of unity and self-determination. Their goal is to establish fraternal links with the aboriginal people of Canada and the United States and to raise awareness on a global level of their traditional cultural identity.

If you would like more information on CANO Toronto, contact Marco Guzman at marcoguzmana@hotmail.com or call 416-457-7224.

MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO ∞ 14TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Delegates salute as they arrive at Chippewa Park in Thunder Bay by canoe on the opening morning of the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation Ontario.



Back to the Bay

The Métis Nation of Ontario heads back to familiar ground to hold another great Annual General Assembly

BY MARC ST. GERMAIN

A few hundred metres upstream delegates were starting to gather at the big tent. The MNO Registry team made sure everyone was accounted for and voting cards and kits were distributed while friends and relatives from the four directions of Ontario met again.

Young people from Old Fort William Historical Park dressed in fur-trade era fashion sang and danced in-the-round in anticipation of the arrival of dignitaries. Several assembly delegates were coaxed into their reeling circle.

As though out of the misty past a train of canoes appeared; the three voyageur canoes carried President Tony Belcourt and other dignitaries up the channel to cheers from the crowd along the bank and a salute from

Old Fort William's cannons.

The paddlers disembarked; greetings and a few laughs were exchanged. Then, with colours flying and with Roger Giroux's fiddle keeping the beat, the assembly proceeded into the big tent where Senator Bob McKay offered the opening prayer.

"For many people this may not be a typical business agenda," said PCMNO Chair, Gary Lipinski, in his opening remarks. "This is the launch of a week long schedule of cultural activities AND business for the Métis Nation of Ontario."

At the MNO's AGAS, Monday, Wednesday and Friday are comprised of meetings during which the business of the Métis Nation is discussed and debated. But, as Gary explained, "while conducting this important business we want family, friends and the extended community to join us. So, we combine that with cultural activities on Tuesday and Thursday and in the evenings."

"One of the things that the Métis people have always been good at—a role we played in building Canada—is bringing people together," Gary said. "It is in that

spirit that we continue to do that.

We have a number of leaders from all levels of government...We welcome each and every one of you and we want to say how much we appreciate you giving your time to spend it with us to learn from us, to understand a bit about us and work with us in the future." With that, Gary began inviting the dignitaries to take the microphone and address the assembly.

Alternating between English and Michif, Vice Chair, France Picotte, pointed out that it was from the AGA that the PCMNO receives its mandate—an important celebration of Métis heritage and culture.

Thunder Bay Métis Council President, Bill Smith, welcomed everyone and looked forward to the work at hand and the sharing of Métis culture and traditions during the coming week.

Secretary-Treasurer of the PCMNO, Tim Pile, a resident of Thunder Bay, extended warm greetings.

Thunder Bay City Council Mem-

CONTINUED PAGE 12



ALL PHOTOS IN THIS SECTION BY Marc St. Germain EXCEPT WHERE NOTED

JULY 9-13TH, 2007 ∞ THUNDER BAY, ONT.

left:
PCMNO members
Brent McHale,
Cam Burgess and
Guy Lefebvre



middle:
MNO President
Tony Belcourt
presents a
commemorative
paddle to Métis
Nation of
Alberta President
Audrey Poitras.



**Thunder Bay
Métis Council
President, Bill
Smith**



Ken Boshcoff,
the Federal
Member of
Parliament for
Thunder Bay-
Rainy River



PHOTO: Scott Carpenter

Canoneers from Old Fort William Historical Park in Thunder Bay salute AGA delegates as they arrive by canoe on Monday morning.

FROM PAGE 11

ber, Rebecca Johnson, welcomed the assembly on behalf of the municipality.

The General Manager of Fort William Historical Park, Sergio Buonocore, wished the assembly well. The MNO has had partnerships and positive interactions with Fort William dating back to the first Métis Canoe Expedition in 2003.

Bill Lafontaine, a representative of Friends of Chippewa Park, a local group that worked with different levels of government on the recent restorations, welcomed the assembly to the park.

"I have only had the opportunity to come to two [MNO] assemblies," said Audrey Poitras, President of the Métis Nation of Alberta. "This is the second time I have been in Thunder Bay and it is more beautiful than I remember. Thank you very much for inviting me to be a part of this assembly." President Poitras offered congratulations to the MNO on the recent legal victory in the Métis harvesting case of *Laurin, Laurin & Lemieux (Voyageur, May/June, 2007)*.

Robert Doucette, who had been elected President of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan only a few days prior, took the floor next and offered a gift, saying: "I would like to present this tobacco to the leader of the Métis people of Ontario, Mr. Belcourt. It is tradition to do that—to honour the grandfather and elders and the Métis people of Ontario and also to respect Mother Earth and



all of the things that she brings." President Doucette spoke about the challenges ahead for Saskatchewan and expressed solidarity with Ontario's Métis.

"Although we are rookies, we bring a lot of energy and ideas to the table," said President Doucette. "We ask for your guidance."

Métis National Council (MNC) President, Clem Chartier com-

mented upon the challenges facing the Métis as a nation, such as the hard work being done to obtain justice for Métis veterans; to gain recognition of those Métis who were in residential schools; and to achieve inclusion in the many programs and services available to First Nations and Inuit peoples.

The national president also mentioned that much of the

progress reported in 2005 had been put on hold while the Métis struggled to find ways for the current government to honour the agreements of the past government: in particular, the 2005 Kelowna Accord, and the Canada-Métis Nation Framework Agreement.

President Chartier concluded by saying that he believed that the Métis would continue to per-

severe and would succeed.

Dignitaries and guest speakers were then each presented with an MNO 14th Anniversary AGA paddle by members of the PCMNO.

Related materials distributed under Tab 1 of the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario Agenda package: Report – President's Message from President Tony Belcourt).

Then, MNO President, Tony Belcourt, stepped forward to address the assembly.

"I want to say how wonderful

Thank You

A heartfelt thank you to all the people involved with the many tributes to Marion (Larkman), and thank you for the invitation to this year's AGA.

– Paul Elcombe

it is to follow our traditions and come in by canoe, remembering that historically our people here in Ontario travelled by canoe," said President Belcourt. "It is wonderful to hear the fiddle and see our dancers. I'm sure everyone feels the same way about how privileged we are to be all together in these wonderful facilities."

MORE PAGE 13

AGA Highlights: Tribute to Senator Marion Larkman



A moving tribute to the Grandmother of the Métis Nation was held on opening day of the AGA.

FROM PAGE 13

Tony went on to talk of the rich and often tragic history, the exhilarating and sometimes trying present, and what will surely be a bright future for the Métis Nation.

"When we look back in our history to 1869 and 1870, to Riel and the provisional government," said President Belcourt, "our leaders came forward and said to the government 'you have to deal with us before you can assume that we will be part of Canada'... Sir John A. Macdonald said 'no'.

"And we know what happened....The lands that were promised to be set aside for the children of the half-breeds were soon assumed by others. Our people were dispersed. In 1885 our people again stood up and said we want to be treated with. Mr. Macdonald said 'no' and this time Mr. Macdonald brought the Gatling gun. And I think Mr. Macdonald thought, 'that is the end of the Métis; we won't hear



PCMNO Chair Gary Lipinski (above)
MNO President Tony Belcourt (right)



PCMNO Vice-Chair France Picotte



Secretary-Treasurer Tim Pile

from them again'."

Even though it took another hundred years, the Métis did not go away, and finally, in the Constitution Act, 1982, the Métis were recognised as one of Canada's Aboriginal peoples.

Tony went on to talk about the founding of the MNO in 1993 and its continuous growth since then. The return of the Métis people to their cultural and spiritual roots, including the sacred fire, sacred song, granting of fire and smoke, and the recent introduction of the

Métis Nation Eagle Staff have led to the development of the MNO's nation-to-nation relationship with the Anishinabek Nation and with the Nishnabe Aski Nation.

The president reminded the assembly that the struggle for recognition continued, not just in Ontario, but nationally and internationally. However, he stressed the important role of the Powley Family in this struggle and the significance of the 2003 Powley victory in the Supreme Court of Canada. (See page 9)

Moving forward, Tony

touched on the recent success in the *Laurin, Laurin & Lemieux* case (*Métis Voyageur*, May/June, 2007) and the fact that on June 12, 2007, the courts had ruled that the 2004 agreement was binding on the Government of Ontario. The MNO had won the case and a week later Ontario announced that it would not appeal the decision.

President Belcourt said that he looked forward to working with the PCMNO, and community councils in coming months. He then provided an update on the growing goodwill between Métis and First Nations by inviting all MNO citizens to participate in a pipe ceremony between the MNO and the Anishinabek Nation on August 20, 2007, in Sault Ste. Marie. He went on to say that he and Grand Council Chief John Beaucage had discussed a relationship on harvesting between the two nations.

At the Anishinabek Nation AGA several weeks prior, there was support for moving towards the creation of a treaty on the issue of harvesting. In addition, Grand Council Chief Beaucage had invited the MNO to participate in a meeting on inter-treaty harvesting.

Another item of good news was the recent announcement of an Ontario Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. In June, as a result of the Ipperwash Inquiry it was recommended that a new Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs be established. The Premier named David Ramsay (MPP, Timiskaming-Cochrane, and presently Minister of Natural Resources and Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs) as that minister. It is expected, however, now that the provincial elections are over, there will be a new stand alone minister to advocate on behalf of Aboriginal peoples in Ontario.

With regard to upcoming and on-going negotiations, President Belcourt told the assembly that the MNO would press for resource revenue sharing and for provincial and federal policies on land claims. He also said that Métis were currently seeking to participate in the treaty making process in the Algonquin claim, and emphasised that any land claim process must have room for the Métis people.

The assembly was also told that the MNO was representing to the Government of Ontario that the MNO could no longer be excluded from the opportunity of gaming revenues, while allowing other Aboriginal peoples in Ontario access to those revenues.

Tony went on to speak about new opportunities and endeavours, such as the MNO's rapidly expanding programs and services in various areas including health and housing.

The president also told the assembly that very soon the MNC will hold an assembly at which the election of the national president will occur; meetings will be planned with the Federal Interlocutor, and the MNC will continue to press for inclusion of the Métis in federal treaty initiatives. As well, in the near future the MNC will turn its attention to the building of a Métis Nation Constitution, and other governance issues.

MORE PAGE 14



Bit by the Shutter Bug

BY BONNY CANN

Sixteen youths scattered about the grounds of Chippewa Park in hope of getting that special shot with their disposable cameras.

Bonny Cann and Amanda Strong enjoyed conducting their second annual photography workshop with a group ranging in age from about four years old to their early 20's. Following a brief explanation of the basic principles of light and shadow, close-ups, etc., each photographer-in-the-making was sent off, with supervision, to shoot 27 photos.

Later the pictures were printed and each participant was able to select a favourite photo which was then framed. A photo gallery was set up in the big tent which allowed all participants to display their work proudly.

"There were a number of artistic and creative workshops at this year's AGA," says Bonny Cann, "It was wonderful to see youth and elders involved in learning traditional and contemporary art forms, and that photography is recognized as one of those. We hope to continue to offer these workshops in all future AGA's. Artistic expression has always been a part of our culture so it is great to have an opportunity to pass on the skills to the next generation," says Cann. "I hope to receive donations next year to offset the costs for the photography sessions so if there are any folks out there who have connections with Blacks, Henry's, Kodak, Japan Camera, Fuji Films or framers that would be interested in sponsoring such an event, please contact me."

See you through my lens at AGA 2008!



PHOTO: Bonny Cann

6TH ANNUAL BUILDING BRIDGES MUSIC FESTIVAL



Fiddling phenom Sierra Noble



MNO Telehealth Coordinator/singer Loma



Six Nations blues man Murray Porter

FROM PAGE 13

President Belcourt thanked MNO staff, volunteers and the PCMNO for their work on behalf of the Métis Nation citizens, and his family for their support of him in his role as president.

As for the future, "We are going to be busy," said President Belcourt. "We are going to need the active support of all of our people. To me in my language this is _____, 'New Dawn'".

Following President Belcourt's address the MNO received a cheque in the amount of \$244,300 to enhance the literacy program for Métis in the Province of Ontario. The funds were to be used for capital operations, to hire program co-ordinators and to develop the program itself. This Trillium Foundation Grant was presented by Bill Mauro, (MPP for the Thunder Bay-Atikokan) and Neil Macodrum, a member of the Local Grant Review Team of the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The funds will go to support the new Métis Family Literacy program (story page 3).

A plaque was then presented to MNO Vice Chair Picotte who acknowledged the importance of literacy to the Métis, and

looked forward to including English, French and Michif as part of the literacy program in future years.

"I appreciate very much the work that the Métis Nation does," said Howard Hampton, Provincial New Democratic Party Leader and MPP for Kenora-Rainy River. "It indeed makes our province a richer place to live."

Ken Boshcoff, the Federal Member of Parliament for the Thunder Bay-Rainy River district extended best wishes to the assembly and took a moment to recall the "very emotional send-off" of the first Métis Canoe Expedition in the summer of 2003. This expedition re-traced historic fur-trade routes from Lachine, Quebec to Thunder Bay. Mr. Boshcoff was the Mayor of Thunder Bay at that time and had wanted to be on hand to wish the young voyageurs well on their journey.

Following the preceding individual addresses by dignitaries and guest speakers, members of the PCMNO presented each with an MNO 14th Anniversary AGA gift paddle.

Region 2 Councillor, Cam Burgess, welcomed delegates to the meeting, and acknowledged the substantial efforts of the local community council, staff and volunteers. As well, he expressed appreciation to sponsors and other contributors to the AGA.

(Visit www.metisnation.org to view video coverage)

On that bright note the assembly took a break for lunch. This year, for the first time, as a



PHOTO: TIM PILE



cost saving measure, meals were provided on business days for AGA delegates. Cheryl Pile's Cornucopia Catering crew worked tirelessly all week to supply nutritious and amazing breakfasts, lunches and dinners.

After the break there was business to take care. The agenda was approved and accepted by the assembly. As well, a Resolutions Committee was nominated and approved. The Resolutions Committee helps delegates write and present resolutions to the assembly on the final day of the AGA. Then the Minutes and Resolutions from the 2006 AGA at Sault Ste. Marie were reviewed and accepted. (a complete copy of the Minutes may be obtained by contacting the Ottawa office)

With the business of the day done, the assembly honoured a very special person. Senator Marion Larkman, the Grandmother of the Métis Nation, passed to the Spirit World last December and

this was the first MNO AGA at which she was not present. It was the sentiment of all gathered that day, that she will always be in the hearts and minds of those who were fortunate enough to know her.

Senator Larkman's grandson, Jason Defosse, spoke of having accompanied his grandmother to meetings for 32 years. He called "granny" his hero, saviour and inspiration.

Jason shared a "Marion Moment": when they were in France as part of the Aboriginal Spiritual

table Métis woman. After that no more words were necessary.

The opening day's meeting was adjourned.

Building Bridges Festival

Sierra Noble's incredible skill with the fiddle and charming stage presence took last year's AGA at Ojibway Park in Sault Ste. Marie by storm, to say the least. So, when news spread that Sierra would open up this year's Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission's (MNOCC) 6th Annual Building Bridges Music Festival empty seats were hard to find in the big tent. Of course, Sierra was great again. She had the jiggers pounding the dust out of the dance floor and every toe in the tent tapping.

Then, another AGA favourite took the stage. Loma Rowlinson is the MNO's mild-mannered Telemedicine Co-ordinator, but on stage under the lights, she is "Loma", the MNOCC's Building Bridges Festival emcee and an extraordinary entertainer. Loma's powerful voice threatened to blow the roof right off the big tent, so when Sierra kicked in with her fiddle the tent pegs really had their work cut out for them.

The MNOCC's Building Bridges Music Festival has brought a lot of great acts to the AGA over the past few years, and this year saw one of the biggest acts yet take the stage. Michelle Wright is a multi-award winning country singer who has charted songs on the Billboard Top 40 several times, has been a country radio staple since the early 90's and seems like a real nice person too. Michelle and her band played an incredible two plus hour show. She played all the old favourites (yes, there were few dry eyes in

MORE PAGE 15



PHOTO: BONNY CANN



GREAT ABORIGINAL ENTERTAINMENT



TAKE IT LIKE A MÉTIS: Country music star Michelle Wright performing at the Métis Nation of Ontario Cultural Commission (MNOCC) 6th Annual Building Bridges Festival.

FROM PAGE 14

the house after *He Would Be Sixteen*) and songs off her latest recording. After the show Michelle signed autographs and took photos with her biggest Métis fans. Bet you're sorry you missed that one!

- TUESDAY -

The sun was a no-show at Tuesday's sunrise ceremony as the morning of Day Two brought some gloomy clouds. However, the sacred fire was well cared for and the spirits of the assembly kept burning brightly.

The rain held off until midday, but then it really poured.

The duffers who had made their way to the Strathcona Golf Club that morning for the Mixed Scramble Golf Tournament were forced to pack it in after nine holes because of the deluge. A few die-hards played on, knowing that brave Métis like the feel of nature on their faces.

Back at Chippewa Park the wet weather put the outside activities of the youth's Métis

Voyageur Games on pause, but there was still plenty going on indoors. Chelsea Quirk, acting MNO Provincial Youth Co-ordinator, held a meeting of MNOYC representatives and other youth delegates. Many of the youth had not met before.

Sharon McBride, PCMNO Councillor for Region 8, ran a Métis beadwork workshop. France Picotte gave the ins and outs on how to finger-weave a Métis sash. Sierra Noble led a jigging and fiddle workshop. The MNO's Historical Researcher, Virginia Barter, set up a genealogy information table. There was snowshoe and paddle making and no doubt other activities that haven't been listed here. Cultural days are busy days at the AGA.

They say jigging is bred in the bone for many Métis, and to be sure all Métis like to dance and have fun, and like their voyageur forbears many Métis have a competitive nature. That being said, no AGA is complete without a dust-kicking jigging contest; so that was how Tuesday night's entertainment got started. The acoustic guitars took over after that. Folk/country songwriter Charlie Fife and home-styled duo the Real McCoy's were easy on the ears and kept the crowd mellow. Then Andre Giroux and Julie Lapointe finished off the evening country-style.

- WEDNESDAY -

Beginning with a prayer offered by Senator Alis Kennedy, the assembly was back in business mode again on Wednesday morning. Reports were made by the Senators, the WSMNO, and Veterans. As well, financial and audit information from the Administration Depart-

ment of the MNO were presented. Lawyer, Jean Teillet, a member of the great legal team that took the historic Powley case all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada and won, was then on hand to talk about the MNO by-laws. (Related materials distributed in the Métis Nation of Ontario's 14th Annual General Assembly package can be obtained by contacting the MNO head office in Ottawa).

The MNO's Director of Health, Doug Wilson, introduced Allen Prowse, Vice President of Mental Health Services for Providence Care in Kingston. Mr. Prowse explained that the MNO and Providence Care along with Queen's University were entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This partnership will see Providence Care provide training and certification for all MNO mental health workers. Queen's University meanwhile will conduct a survey of the mental health conditions of Métis in Ontario. Then, together, the partners will plan for the appropriate resources to meet the identified needs.

President Belcourt praised the efforts of the Health Branch managers and France Picotte the PCMNO's portfolio holder for health issues, who, over the last year-and-a-half made this partnership a reality. (Watch for more on this partnership in upcoming issues of *Métis Voyageur*).

At last year's AGA the Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award was created to commemorate the life of Suzanne Rochon-Burnett, a Métis who gave a great deal to her community and also to recognise the tremendous contributions that volunteers make to the Métis



“ THEY SAY JIGGING IS BRED IN THE BONE FOR MÉTIS.”

Nation of Ontario by honouring one exemplary volunteer every year. President Belcourt spoke about the MNO's dependency on its volunteers in running the programs and services that bring so much benefit to Métis in Ontario. The value of the MNO's volunteer contributions in terms of salary and excluding individual financial contributions and donations was determined to be more than \$1.3 million annually, which represented nearly 10% of the amount of government funding that the MNO receives.

This year's recipient of the award was PCMNO Executive Senator, Reta Gordon, who accepted the award to the roar of a standing ovation. Reta offered a tearful thank you for the nomination, and acknowledged that the award was not hers alone, but belonged to all MNO volunteers. She thanked her husband Ron, her son and many friends for having enriched her life.

Related materials distributed under Tab 7 of the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis

Nation of Ontario Agenda package: MNO Youth Branch Glimpse of 2007.

Allison Croft, appointed Chair of the Métis Nation of Ontario Youth Council (MNOYC) in January, reported that the MNOYC had been working hard to establish support and representation in the regions. Ms. Croft concluded with an introduction of the MNOYC members in attendance who stood and were acknowledged by the assembly.

Jean Teillet returned to the stage and briefly discussed changes to the MNO Electoral Code. (Related materials distributed under Tab 2 of the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario Agenda package can be obtained by contacting the MNO head office in Ottawa).

Jean also gave the assembly the "lay of the land" with regard to Métis legal issues from Ontario to British Columbia and outlined some relevant court cases involving First Nations. She discussed the recent victory in the Laurin case and how the MNO won two rulings at the time of the decision on June 12, 2007: protection of negotiations, and that the MNR had breached the terms of the 2004 Harvesting Agreement. Since the ruling the Crown has been withdrawing all charges as they come up.

MORE PAGE 18



Big step forward for Métis education

New Post-secondary Chair in Métis Studies announced at this year's MNO Assembly

On July 13th, the Honourable David Ramsay, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, announced on behalf of the Honourable Chris Bentley, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, that the McGuinty government is establishing a new Research Chair in Métis Studies.

"Establishing the Research Chair in Métis Studies is a step in acknowledging the significance of the Métis contribution to Ontario," said Ramsay in an address to the Métis Nation of Ontario's Annual General Assembly. "The funding announced today provides for ongoing support for this Chair."

The McGuinty government is providing an endowment of \$2 million to the Council of Ontario Universities for the ongoing support of a Research Chair in Métis Studies. The council will ensure the Métis Nation of Ontario is involved in developing the goals



The Honourable David Ramsay, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs at the MNO AGA in July.

and criteria for the Chair, as well as the call for proposals.

This initiative also supports Ontario's new Aboriginal Education Strategy for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. The

strategy is intended to help close the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students and increase knowledge and awareness of Aboriginal histories, cultures and perspectives among all students.

Through the Aboriginal Education Strategy, the Minister's Advisory Committee on Aboriginal Post-secondary Education, and the Ministry of Education's Partnership Table, which includes First Nation and Métis representatives, the Ontario Government continues to strengthen Aboriginal voices and involvement in education.

Métis Nation of Ontario President, Tony Belcourt, said: "We look forward to having a Chair in Métis Studies which will now help to counter the void of information about the culture and history of the Métis people of Ontario in school curriculum and in our libraries. I applaud the Government of Ontario for establishing the Chair in Métis studies which will enable us to increase public



“
...the Chair in Métis Studies will enable us to increase public knowledge about our communities, our people and contributions made by the Métis Nation in the building of Canada.”

— President Belcourt

knowledge about our communities, our people and the contributions made by the Métis Nation in the building of Canada."

Gary Lipinski, the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario Secretary of Education and Training, added: "The MNO is

looking forward to a long-term partnership with the Council of Ontario Universities in establishing the criteria, goals and mandate of the Chair in addition to playing an ongoing role in ensuring that the Métis people are directly engaged in and benefit from the work undertaken. We have been working towards this for many years, and we are truly happy to see this come to fruition."

"The Council of Ontario Universities is extremely pleased that the government has made this important investment to advance Métis studies," said Council President and CEO, Paul Genest. In administering this initiative, the council will put in place a rigorous competitive process to select the host university for the Chair, similar to the process used for the Ontario Research Chairs.

"The Research Chair in Métis Studies will contribute to a greater common understanding of the Métis people, past and present, while enhancing the quality of post-secondary education for Métis students," said Minister Bentley.



Members of the PCMNO during opening ceremonies of the 14th Annual General Assembly of the MNO.

MNO Literacy program gets boost from Trillium

BY THEBREATH.COM

The Ontario Trillium Foundation presented a plaque to the Metis Nation of Ontario in recognition of the "Metis Families Learning Together" literacy program being offered this September in North Bay, Sudbury, Toronto and Hamilton.

The funding commitment of \$244,300, provided by the Trillium Foundation has permitted us to hire two literacy co-ordinators. The co-ordinator for the North Bay and Sudbury literacy program is Bobbi Aubin and for Toronto and Hamilton it is Heather Purdon. These co-ordinators and several volunteers received training through our partner, Frontier College, in early August and are set to go for September.



Neil Macodrum, a member of the Local Grant Review Team, France Picotte and Bill Mauro

The Métis Nation of Ontario is very excited to bring this program to the selected communities as pilots for the next two years. Bonny Cann, Provincial

Education Initiatives Co-ordinator, is confident that the program will be so successful that other funders will want to get on board to assist in getting the program into all Métis communities across Ontario.

"What we need is a great team, and we have it," says Cann. "We

hired excellent co-ordinators and the Metis Nation has always prided its success on a strong volunteer population within the nation; so how could we go wrong?"

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the co-ordinators. Check our web site at www.metisnation.org or call the Provincial Education Co-ordinator, Bonny Cann. If you are a Métis citizen who is interested in starting this program in your community, then call your local MNO office or Bonny. We can provide packages that will assist you and other interested volunteers in your area in getting started. Imagine your children being involved in a culturally appropriate homework club or reading circle. Watch their literacy skills improve and their grades rise while their confidence increases.

Please get involved!

Thank you to our partner Frontier College and our funder Ontario Trillium Foundation for making this program possible. Now watch what we can do!

Bobbi Aubin

Literacy Co-ordinator
(North Bay/Sudbury)
1888-789-0868 705 674-1502
bobbia@metisnation.org

Heather Purdon

Literacy Co-ordinator
(Toronto/Hamilton)
heatherp@metisnation.org

Bonny Cann

Provincial Education Initiatives
Co-ordinator
bonnyc@metisnation.org
1-888-466-6684
416-977-9881 (in GTA)



Lynn Pantuso supervises Italian guests learning two needle beading.

Keeping the art of Beading alive

BY SHARON MCBRIDE

The Women's Secretariat of the Métis Nation in Ontario (WSMNO) celebrated its first anniversary at this year's Assembly. We would like to introduce to you one of our newest committee members, Lynn Pantuso.

Lynn has had her citizenship since 1999 and has been a Women's Rep on the Ottawa Métis Council. Each person is so important to the committee and Lynn brings with her wisdom. Let me quote from her: "I have learned that our elders are the teachers and that one day soon we will be the elders."

Lynn's biggest challenge is being a single mom and raising her three children on her own: "pushing yourself to your limits and do[ing] what ever you have to, in insuring that my children are taken care of." Lynn currently is holding down two jobs and would still like to give back to her community. Lynn I do look forward to working with you and we do need your energy and wisdom. Welcome to the WSMNO.

The WSMNO was invited to par-

ticipate at the Annual General Meeting of the Women of the Métis Nation (WMN), held this year in Vancouver. This meeting was a first for the WMN which held its first cultural event, a two needle beading class. Each of the delegates was given a beading box with all the supplies to continue and teach this lost art. Lynn has been a very active participant within the WSMNO and is one of our leaders in the beading workshop that was held in Vancouver.

The WSMNO held a two needle beading class at this year's AGA to teach how to do traditional flower patterns. It was a great success with Lynn leading the way.

Maurice Sarrazin, Provincial Secretary for the Veterans was given seven eagle feathers; the women stepped in and made seven beaded houses for the feathers. I would like to thank Helen Bradley, Senator Dora MacInnis, Jeannette Brunnelle, Lynn Pantuso and Pauline Saulnier for their wonderful beading. I am very sure that all the veterans who received your beadwork were equally honoured with your gift.

AGA: Images from a great Métis gathering



Métis Nation of Ontario signs groundbreaking mental health agreement with Providence Care and Queen's University

On July 11, 2007, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), Providence Care and Queen's University signed a groundbreaking agreement that will dramatically expand the MNO's access to mental health resources, training and research.

"The health and well-being of our citizens has always been, and continues to be a priority for the MNO. By working in conjunction with Queen's University and Providence Care we are finally going to begin to address the lack of adequate mental health services currently available to our people," said MNO President, Tony Belcourt.

"This relationship started some 18 months ago, when we began to work together to identify the educational needs of the Métis Nation mental health care provider," said Allen Prowse, Vice

President of Providence Care Mental Health Services. "We are proud to sign an agreement today that formalises our commitment to help meet the educational and mental health care needs of the Métis people of Ontario."

Under the agreement, Providence Care will become the mental health training resource, providing training and certification for all MNO health care providers, including annual certification in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills and Non Violent Crisis Intervention training. Additional access to clinical training and mental health expertise will be provided via video conference and on-line education. To increase educational capacity, the MNO and Providence Care will use an internet portal to provide Métis caregivers access to educational materials and clinical education 24 hours a day, seven days



a week.

Researchers at the Centre for Health Services and Policy Research at Queen's University in Kingston will work with Providence Care and the MNO to conduct a survey of mental health conditions among the Métis people. Data from the survey will be used to help plan, access and provide the appropriate resources to meet the identified needs.

"The decision to partner with Providence Care and Queen's University was based on their willingness to embrace and learn about the Métis culture. Providence Care and the MNO have agreed to work together to ensure all training, services and materials are culturally appropri-

ate and sensitive to the needs of the citizens of the MNO," added President Belcourt.

France Picotte, Health Portfolio holder and Vice-Chair of the MNO added, "This agreement is groundbreaking as it will finally allow the MNO to gather very important mental health data which currently does not exist for the Métis of Ontario as well as enhance the capacity of our health care workers across the province."

Providence Care is south-eastern Ontario's leader for specialised mental health, rehabilitation, geriatric medicine and complex continuing and long-term care. Providence Care's Mental Health Services is an accredited

198-bed facility providing a continuum of inpatient, outpatient and community treatment. Affiliated with Queen's University, Mental Health Services is also an important teaching and research facility, where professional staff train students and conduct clinical research to contribute to the understanding of mental illness and the development of new approaches to treatment.

Established in Kingston in 1841, Queen's is one of Canada's leading universities, with an international reputation for scholarship, research, social purpose, spirit and diversity. With 17 faculties and schools, Queen's is also one of Canada's most research-intensive universities. ∞

AGA: Volunteer of the Year, Heavy Weather and



HEAVY WEATHER: The AGA was hit by a little thunder and lightning and a lot of rain on Wednesday. Scott Rowlinson attempts to dry out the big tent after the deluge.

FROM PAGE 15

Jean emphasised that in spite of whatever scepticism we might feel about the MNR's good faith, Métis cannot get so discouraged that we give up or yield. We must continue working with the MNR and Métis across the country, and maintain a sense that it is possible to change things and move forward.

(More information on the Laurin case and the other Métis cases Jean spoke about can be found in the May/June issue of Métis Voyageur and in Jean's Métis Law Summary 2007 that is available on the MNO web site: www.metisnation.org)

Senator Rene Gravelle offered a closing prayer in Michif.

Juno nominated singer/songwriter, Kevin Shaganash kicked things off that night. Kevin plays a killer guitar. The closers were the Sensational Hot Rods, well known across northern Ontario for their inimitable take on the classic rock 'n' roll of the fifties and sixties; they put on some wild sequinned suits and a great show.

- THURSDAY -

The week's second cultural day dawned to much better weather than the first.

The low-handicappers were out early to the Fort William Country Club for the President's Challenge golf tournament.

The Voyageur Games were unfortunately somewhat truncated this year because of insurance issues, but there was a long list of challengers signed up for the slingshot and air rifle competition. In spite of the smaller slate of activities Hank Rowlinson and son Scott did their usual bang-up job running the Youth and Adult Games. (Game results page 21)

In the Marion Larkman room there were assorted

activities for kids (of all ages). Claudette Gingras had a table full of feathers, leather, beads and assorted shiny gewgaws for making talking sticks. Outdoors, John Prud'homme ran a youth archery workshop and competition. The MNO Health Services held their enormously popular fund-raising Bingo in the big tent. There was softball on the athletic field where a team named the "MNO Misfits" took on another team named the "MNO Misfits". The *Misfits* won it in the last inning.

In the afternoon aspiring entertainers and artistes took part in a "Métis Idol" style talent contest for Métis youths. The judges had a very tough time choosing the top three who would perform that evening in front of the entire assembly. Dancers Ashton Desaulniers and Paris Shubaly along with singer Aqua Rennie were the finalists and all received thunderous applause from the assembly when they hit the stage. In the end the graceful and gravity-defying acrobatics of Ashton and Paris took first and second respectively. Aqua's sultry rendition of Etta James' classic *At Last* won the bronze.

Another great night of entertainment: The Jig Fest Band hail from Manitoba and play a version of Métis music laced with a heavy dose of country and rock, or maybe it's the other way around. Either way they do Orange Blossom Special really loud and that always gets the Métis on their feet. They put on a great show

Mohawk blues man Murray Porter out of Six Nations has won multiple Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards as a solo performer and as part of the legendary blues ensemble the Pappy Johns Band. Porter and his piano howled the blues late into the night.

AGA Recipe

Dora's Métis Salve

Georgian Bay Senator, Dora MacInnis, made up pots of this salve, put them into fancy bottles and gifted a bottle to each Senator at the forum. The Senators liked it so much they requested the recipe.

Pick your ingredients carefully with love and caring in your heart. No negativity and no anger can be in the home. Say a special prayer to the Creator that the salve you are making will help the people who use it and it may heal them and cure their ailments.

Let 3/4 of a brick of grated pure beeswax and 2 litres of virgin olive oil melt in a slow cooker. Once melted start adding ingredients:

- 2 handfuls, plantain leaves
- 1 handful, mullein
- 1 handful, raspberry leaves
- 1 handful, elder leaves
- 1 handful, dandelion leaves
- 1 handful, chamomile leaves
- 1 handful, lemon grass
- 1 handful, nettle leaves
- 1 handful, mint leaves
- 5 large grape leaves (fresh)

Cook everything in a slow cooker on low for three hours. Then strain it and bottle it. It will appear dark in colour but as it cools will become a lighter green colour.

This is the recipe used for Dora's Métis Salve given at the Senators' Forum.

Please note: You can add any other kind of leaves that you so desire to it as well (such as blueberry leaves, strawberry leaves, blackberry leaves, etc). You can always make substitutions to any of the leaves as you wish.

- FRIDAY -

It has already been a long week by the time the last day of the AGA rolls around, but there is still plenty of work to do. The day begins with an opening prayer offered by Senator Elmer Ross.

The new Deputy Minister of



GENEROSITY: The Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award was created to commemorate the life of Suzanne Rochon-Burnett and to recognise the contributions that volunteers make to the MNO by honouring one exemplary volunteer every year. This year's recipient of the award was PCMNO Executive Senator, Reta Gordon. Reta offered a tearful thank you for the nomination, and acknowledged that the award was not hers alone, but belonged to all MNO volunteers.

Aboriginal Affairs, Marg Rappolt, spoke briefly before the delegates meeting was adjourned so that the MNOCC and the MNO Development Corporation could hold their annual general meetings.

The delegates' meeting resumed at just after ten o'clock when reports were heard from Finance and Administration; Harvesting; Post-Powley; Health; Housing; Employment and Training; Great Lakes Water Quality Review; Registry, and the Aboriginal Languages Initiative (*Related materials distributed under Tab 6 of the 14th Annual General assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario Agenda package can be obtained by contacting the MNO head office in Ottawa*).

MNO staff reviewed the reports provided in the distributed agenda package.

President Belcourt spoke of the need to develop partnerships with the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs relative to training, apprenticeship, etc. He spoke of

having attended the Gabriel Dumont Institute, (See page 7) which had graduated 1,000 Métis teachers. It was suggested that there should also be a Métis-specific training institute in Ontario, with contributions from the province. As well, he acknowledged that MNO Training Initiative funding was leading to the creation of jobs, and was inherent to the Métis value of self-sufficiency.

In response to a query, it was noted that the Province of Ontario had released an Aboriginal Education Policy, on which the MNO was consulted. As well, the MNO had begun working with school boards on the implementation of a policy allowing students to voluntarily identify as being Aboriginal as there is currently no mechanism for them to do so. Through identification there would be the ability to collect and analyze data on Métis education.

Rod Bruinooge, Parliamentary Secretary to the Federal Inter-

MORE PAGE 19



PHOTO: Bonny Cann



AGA: THE BIG TENT



PHOTO THIS PAGE: Tim Pile

FROM PAGE 18

locutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians and MP for the same riding in which Louis Riel first served, said that although the Métis considered themselves the “forgotten people of Canada”, this was not the case. He felt that the Supreme Court’s decision in Powley was evidence that the Métis were receiving new respect.



“NOTHING CAN EVER DESTROY THE STRENGTH OF THE MÉTIS NATION WHEN WE COME TOGETHER IN THIS WAY.”

The Parliamentary Secretary indicated that his presence demonstrated the federal government’s commitment to and interest in Métis issues. He said that these issues are discussed with the minister on a regular basis and that the minister is eager to work with all Aboriginal Canadians in a constructive way.

Mr. Bruinooge stressed some of the opportunities available to Aboriginal peoples through Human Resources Initiative scholarships and bursaries; Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) providing funding to pursue busi-

ness opportunities; renewal of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy; Aboriginal Workforce Partnership Agreement; and \$105 million in new projects to help Aboriginal Canadians through the development of 9,000 jobs.

Referring to himself, the Parliamentary Secretary said he could not overstate the importance of the education he had received as an aid to his business, (film industry, and software careers) noting that he was the first Aboriginal in Canada to be featured in Forbes Magazine.

President Belcourt presented Parliamentary Secretary Bruinooge with a MNO 14th Anniversary AGA gift paddle.

Chair Lipinski commented on the symbolism of the paddle, noting that when you were in a canoe everyone needed to be paddling in the same direction, or you go nowhere. Dignitaries were encouraged to reflect on that, and the benefits of working towards common objectives.

The Resolutions are the real meat and potatoes of the AGA. Any Métis citizen can bring a resolution to the assembly and have it put to a vote by the delegates. In this way issues important to the Métis people of Ontario can be dealt with by the PCMNO. This year’s resolutions are printed in their entirety on page 20.

Then *the assembly* was visited by the Honourable David Ramsay, (MPP, Timiskaming-Cochrane, and presently Minister of Natural Resources and Minister Respon-



Minister Ramsay announced that the Government of Ontario is providing an endowment of \$2 million to the Council of Ontario Universities to support a research Chair in Métis Studies (see *Big Step* on page 16). He indicated

that this funding which provides support for co-ordinating and sharing research, reflects the government’s commitment to the Métis.

The minister said that Ontario is committed to involving Métis in deci-

greater involvement in this initiative.

“I want to ensure that the aspirations of the Métis Nation of Ontario will be reflected at every step in this process,” said Minister Ramsay.

And suddenly the AGA was all but over. Chair, Gary Lipinski, Vice Chair, France Picotte, and Secretary-Treasurer Tim Pile thanked everyone who had made yet another assembly yet another great success.

President Belcourt offered his closing comments: “It is a great thing that we do in the Métis Nation, coming together once a year to meet, to visit, to say ‘hello’ and to meet new people and share ideas...and above all to share our respect and love for each other.

“As Métis people we have come together as one,” said President Belcourt. “Our people have come together because they care. Our staff work for the MNO because they care. Our people volunteer because they care. Nothing can ever destroy the strength of the Métis Nation when we come together in this way.”

“Miigweetch to everyone,” said President Belcourt. “Safe journeys home.” All present were invited to participate in the Sacred Fire Closing Ceremony and restoration of the location to its original state. Senator Earl Scofield offered the closing prayer.

And with that, many safe journeys began. ∞

ble for Aboriginal Affairs.) Minister Ramsay said he looked forward to renewing and moving ahead with discussion on Métis harvesting, and on the July 2004 *Four Point Harvesting Agreement*.

“We think this *Agreement* continues to be a very strong framework for a future harvesting arrangement,” said Minister Ramsay. “I am confident we can find common ground as we work towards a lasting solution.”

Minister Ramsay also talked about the recent Ipperwash Inquiry. Noting that he, the MNO, and the Premier all want a working relationship in regard to the response to *the Inquiry*, as many of the recommendations are of interest to the Métis.



sions that affect every aspect of their lives, and recognises the need for meaningful engagement to discuss issues. As part of the efforts to encourage ministries to meet their obligations, draft guidelines have been released, on which the views of the MNO and its citizens are welcomed. He announced that Ontario had provided the MNO with \$100,000 to facilitate

RESOLUTIONS FROM THE 14TH AGA OF THE MNO

RESOLUTIONS from the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario, held July 9-13, 2007, at Chippewa Park in Thunder Bay.

Review and Accept Agenda

It was **MOVED** (Eric Scofield) and **SECONDED** (Sharon McBride) that the Agenda for the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario be approved as follows:

- Appoint a Resolutions Committee
- Review Minutes
- Business Arising From Minutes
- Tribute to Senator Marion Larkman
- Meeting Reports
- Senators
- WSMNO
- Veterans
- Finance and Administration
- Treasurer's Report
- Audit 2005/06
- Financial Report
- Appointment of Auditor
- MNO By-Laws
- MOU on Mental Health
- Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award
- Meeting Reports Cont'd.
- MNOYC
- MNO Electoral Code
- Legal Update/Métis Rights Issues
- MNO Branch Reports/Updates
- Intergovernmental Relations
- Parliamentary Assistant to the Federal Interlocutor, Rod Bruinooge
- The Honourable David Ramsay, Minister of Natural Resources and Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs
- Resolutions
- Closing Ceremonies.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-01)

Appoint a Resolutions Committee

It was **MOVED** (Bonnie Cann) and **SECONDED** (Pauline Saulnier) that the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario approve the membership of the Resolutions Committee as follows: Senator Gerry Bedford, Paul Heighington, Jason Madden, and Richard Sarrazin. RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-02)

Review Minutes

It was **MOVED** (Joseph Poitras) and **SECONDED** (Eric Scofield) that the Minutes of the 13th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario held July 10-14, 2006 be adopted as circulated. RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-03)

Financial Report

It was **MOVED** (Sharon McBride) and **SECONDED** (Eric Scofield) that the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario approve as presented the Métis Nation of Ontario Audited Financial Statements for the year ending March 31, 2006. RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-04)

Appointment of Auditor

It was **MOVED** (Lawrence Gladue) and **SECONDED** (Sharon McBride) that the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario appoint the accounting firm of Collins Barrow Chartered Accountants as the MNO Auditors for the fiscal year 2007/08. RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-05)

MNO By-Laws

It was **MOVED** (Cecile Wagar) and **SECONDED** (Louis McCallum) that the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario approve as presented the Métis Nation of Ontario Secretariat By-Laws, as endorsed by the PCMNO on June 1, 2007. RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-06)

MNO Electoral Code

It was **MOVED** (Tim Pile) and **SECONDED** (Leora Wilson) that the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) approve as presented the Métis Nation of Ontario Electoral Code, as endorsed by the Provincial Council of the MNO on June 1, 2007. RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-07)

Appointment of Chief Electoral Officer

It was **MOVED** (Sharon McBride) and **SECONDED** (Allan Vallee) that the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) appoint Lawrence Gladue to serve as the Chief Electoral Officer to oversee the 2008 MNO provincial elections. RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-08)



PHOTO: Bonnie Cann

It was **MOVED** (Earl Scofield) and **SECONDED** (Eric Scofield) that **WHEREAS** the Métis Nation of Ontario Veterans' Committee (MNOVC) is the only legitimate body recognized to represent the interests of Métis citizens in the Province of Ontario; and **WHEREAS** the MNOVC has been invited to join the National Métis Veterans Association (NMVA); and **WHEREAS** the MNOVC sees the value in joining the NMVA provided that the MNOVC is the only representative body of Métis veterans from Ontario; **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the MNOVC apply to become a member of the NMVA. RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-09)

Métis Nation of Ontario Veterans' Committee

It was **MOVED** (Earl Scofield) and **SECONDED** (Eric Scofield) that **WHEREAS** the Métis Nation of Ontario Veterans' Committee (MNOVC) is the only legitimate body recognized to represent the interests of Métis citizens in the Province of Ontario; and **WHEREAS** the MNOVC has been invited to join the National Métis Veterans Association (NMVA); and **WHEREAS** the MNOVC sees the value in joining the NMVA provided that the MNOVC is the only representative body of Métis veterans from Ontario; **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the MNOVC apply to become a member of the NMVA. RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-09)

Publication of Notices within the Métis Voyageur

It was **MOVED** (Pauline Saulnier) and **SECONDED** (Dora MacInnis) that the *Métis Voyageur* be mandated to publish notifications as submitted by Community Councils to advertise Community Council Elections and events. RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-10)

Consideration of Richard Lake as Venue for Future Annual General Assemblies

It was **MOVED** (Eric Scofield) and **SECONDED** (Pauline Saulnier) that **WHEREAS** the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Annual General Assembly (AGA) is a costly event; and **WHEREAS** a significant amount of this cost is attributed to covering travel expenses and accommodation for MNO citizens to participate in the AGA; and **WHEREAS** the MNO has partnered with the Mine Mill Union in Sudbury for use of the Richard Lake site at our request; and **WHEREAS** the Richard Lake site has improved the on-site facilities to accommodate the needs of the MNO; and **WHEREAS** the Richard Lake site could provide each MNO Region and community council an opportunity to host the AGA; **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that Richard Lake be considered by MNO citizens to be an available location for future AGAs, with each region afforded an opportunity to host an Assembly. RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-11)

PCMNO Correspondence to Community Councils

It was **MOVED** (Norm Monaghan) and **SECONDED** (Andre Bosse) **BE IT RESOLVED** that all correspondence between the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) and Community Council presidents be also sent to the Council's Senator or another verified individual of the Community Council Executive. RESOLVED (AGA07-12) (58 delegates voting in the positive, 13 voting in the negative, and 4 abstentions.)

Métis Access to Lands and Resources

It was **MOVED** (Pierre Lefebvre) and **SECONDED** (Brent McHale) **WHEREAS** the Métis people have a spe-



PHOTO: Tim Pile

cial relationship with the land that is fundamental to the Métis existence, culture and way of life; and **WHEREAS** the Supreme Court of Canada in the historic Powley case affirmed that this special relationship must be protected through the recognition of Métis harvesting rights and Métis access to lands and resources; and **WHEREAS** on July 7, 2004, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)

entered into an agreement to accommodate Métis harvesting rights; and **WHEREAS** in June 2007, the Ontario Court of Justice upheld that the July 7, 2004 Agreement was legally enforceable and highly principled; and **WHEREAS** the MNO and MNR have agreed to renew discussions based on the July 7, 2004 Agreement; and **WHEREAS** there are many Métis without access to land and resources, issues that remain unad-

ressed by the MNR, including, forestry, revenue resource sharing, priority allocations for trap lines, etc.;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the MNO Negotiations Team be mandated to pursue negotiations with the MNR on these and other Métis access to land and resources issues in order to arrive at accommodations and agreements for the benefit of the Métis people in Ontario. RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-13)

Establishing Métis Economic Development Fund

It was **MOVED** (Pauline Saulnier) and **SECONDED** (Andre Lefebvre) **WHEREAS** economic self-sufficiency is a priority for the Métis Nation; and **WHEREAS** economic development at the business, community and provincial levels is key to realizing self-sufficiency; and **WHEREAS** the Government of Ontario has rightly set aside resources from gaming to support First Nations economic development throughout the province; and **WHEREAS** the Métis Nation continues to have challenges accessing funds from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to support Métis priorities and self-sufficiency; and **WHEREAS** other jurisdictions, such as Saskatchewan, have established Métis-owned foundations from gaming revenues to support Métis economic development;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Métis Nation of Ontario pursue the establishment of a Métis-specific economic development fund with the Government of Ontario in order to address the current lack of Métis access to gaming resources and the need for economic development support for Métis businesses and communities. RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-14)

Support for Participation in the Sacred Fire

It was **MOVED** (Earl Scofield) and **SECONDED** (Reta Gordon)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Métis Nation of Ontario ensure for the next Annual General Assembly that citizens who are elderly or physically challenged, be afforded transportation and/or support assistance to fully participate in the sacred fire. RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-15)

MNOYC Location at Future AGA

It was **MOVED** (Matt Rouchand) and **SECONDED** (Tammy Griffith)

BE IT RESOLVED that in the planning of the next Annual General Assembly, the Métis Nation of Ontario Youth Council be afforded a fixed location throughout the week to serve as a general meeting place for Métis youth (16-29 years) for youth oriented events or activities, as well as to facilitate a dialogue between the youth and elders. RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-16)

Establishment of a Planning and Evaluation Committee

It was **MOVED** (Christi Belcourt) and **SECONDED** (Shane Belcourt)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) strike a volunteer Planning and Evaluation Committee for future MNO Annual General Assemblies, for the purpose of strengthening cultural exchange and nation building. RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA07-17)

Check your tickets



The Veterans of the Métis Nation of Ontario would like to thank everyone who supported us with the purchase of fish dinners on Tuesday and Thursday as well as the raffle for the drum.

The winning number was 532099 and was unclaimed at the AGA. If you are the owner of the winning ticket, please contact Maurice Sarrazin at 705-897-6079 with the ticket and we will send the drum to you asap.

Thank you to Lorraine Montreuil for the fine craftsmanship in making the drum. A long list would be required to thank the makers of the feather cases presented to our veterans but since they know who they are, I will just say "thank-you ladies".

A big thank-you goes out to all the volunteers who helped sell tickets and prepare the fish dinners. You are a great group of people.

Once again, thank-you all for your support!

Maurice Sarrazin is the PGMNO Councilor for MNO Region 5 and the portfolio holder for Veterans' Issues.

DRUM WINNER

The winner of the hummingbird drum, made, painted and donated by Karen Gellman, AHBHC Toronto, was John Falvo. This event earned \$250 for the Toronto Christmas Hamper fund. Thank-you very much, to all who helped to support this cause.

GAMES RESULTS:

Adult Jigging Contest

1st – Katelin Peltier
2nd – Aline Giroux
3rd – Isabelle Mercier
3rd – Cecile Wagar

Youth Jigging Contest

1st – Dalton Mathias
2nd – Patrick Landry
2nd – Rily MacKenzie
3rd – Dakota Rowlinson

Adult Sling Shot

1st – Brent McHale
2nd – Ken Milland
3rd – Haly Lane

Youth Sling Shot

1st – Dalton Mathias
2nd – Avery Rausch
3rd – Jaymz Hancock

Youth Air Riffle

1st – Joseph Lane
2nd – Alexander Mathias
3rd – Anthony Powley

Youth Talent Contest

1st – Ashton Desaulniers
2nd – Paris Shubaly
3rd – Aqua Rennie

AGA: Being There



PHOTO BY: Virginia Barter

A Senator at the AGA

BY SENATOR EARL SCOFIELD

The AGA in Thunder Bay from the 9th to the 14th of July turned out to be a great event, in spite of the heavy rains at times.

The local people did not complain; they said, "no forest fires!" The countryside was fresh and green but the water levels were low in the lakes and rivers. The temperature was quite cool and my long sleeved jacket felt good against the wind.

On opening day the dignitaries came in by canoes. Led by a colour guard of Métis Elders, a colour guard from the Thunder Bay Legion and a bag piper playing Amazing Grace, they marched up the hill to the big tent where another group was playing Métis music. When everyone was settled in the big top tent, Senator Bob McKay gave the opening prayer and welcome to Thunder Bay and Chippewa Park.

With business and workshops during the days and entertainment in the evenings, the time passed quickly. There were many guest speakers, including the Hon. David Ramsay, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs who announced that the Ontario Government is providing an endowment of \$2 million to the Council of Ontario Universities for the ongoing support of a Research Chair in Métis Studies. (See page 16)

The Veterans Committee put on a delicious fish fry to raise money for future veterans' events. The event raised \$1500—a super job by all concerned, thank you.

I got up every morning at 4:30 to attend the ceremonies at seven o'clock. I am pleased to say that I was there every day right to the closing of the fire. We began with smudging and offering tobacco to the fire; next, water and berries were passed to the people in the circle.

We were blessed by good signs from the Creator, such as a big white-tailed deer that walked a long way on the far shore. We saw four Canada geese, a family of small ducks, a group of pelicans, ravens and sea gulls.

"We were blessed by good signs from the Creator, such as a big white-tailed deer that walked a long way on the far shore."

On the last day, a Friday dedicated to the veterans, I and other veterans were presented with an eagle feather in a blue cloth case with bead work on the folder. What an honour it was for me to receive a feather from our president, Tony Belcourt.

Thank-you to the Métis women who did the bead work and made the cases.

Miig Weetch, Creator of the universe!

AGA: First-hand accounts

Sharing their songs

BY ARLENE LEHTO

This was my first year attending the Métis Nation of Ontario's Annual General Assembly.

As with any organisation that one works for, we always hear both positive and negative stories. Initially I felt some discomfort or uneasiness about what I was getting into. Then I realised; people and events are what we make them. We can choose to see the negative or to see the cherished moments that are always in front of us.

On the first day I felt very welcomed and I managed to keep myself busy and entertained for the entire week. We had an interesting and dynamic trainer who held our interest and made learning fun. My most favourite part of the AGA was meeting and getting to know my colleagues from different locations. I got to connect with a few of them during my shuttle shift. I really enjoyed meeting and visiting with the Senators as well. Many of them shared heart warming stories of their childhood and memories of their heritage and traditions. It really was an honour to meet and spend time with them.

The MNO invited the local women's drum group to participate in our cultural days. It was great to get together with them and to share songs and stories with the rest of our citizens. We had a good turn out of people and our circle was very strong indeed, full of laughter, heart-warming stories and healing songs. We were fortunate to be able to gather a few times during the week at the main hall and around the sacred fire.

As I have mentioned before I am Métis and also a drummer. Since 1998 I have been learning different songs and the teachings that go along with them, mainly in the Ojibway language. It was a great privilege to hear some of our citizens share their songs with us. I was honoured to hear a beautiful song in French. I didn't understand its actual translation; however, I did feel the beautiful energy in the room as I listened to the women singing. I was filled with a feeling of peace, happiness and love. I

also heard there is a Michif song that only a few people know. It was unfortunate no one was able to share this song but if anyone does know it and would like to pass it on, I would be really interested in learning it so I can share it with our citizens.

I met a woman on Tuesday who was hosting a shaker-making workshop for children. She had lots of work to do beforehand and not enough time to do it so I volunteered to help her out. Together, along with a handful of other women we punched holes in the deer hide and sewed the pieces together. Many songs and stories were shared during this time and a lot of good energy was put into these sacred gifts. The next day I assisted with the workshop and the children were eager and excited to make their shakers.

“

I was honoured to hear a beautiful song in French. I didn't understand its actual translation; however, I did feel the beautiful energy in the room...”

It was great to see the children listen intently to the creation story as they learned the teachings and responsibilities that go along with these sacred gifts. After the shakers were made we taught the children the brave heart song. What an honour it was to see the children each take a lead and proudly sing and shake their new shakers.

There are many cherished stories I could share but that would take pages and pages. In conclusion, I want to say "thank you" to the MNO, and those who organised and worked so hard to make the AGA a success, as well as those who participated. A special thanks to Senator Reta Gordon and Senator Lois McCallum. They really went out of their way to make so many people feel welcomed and loved and they truly touched my heart. I am honoured to have met them.

Arlene Lehto is the Diabetes Prevention Co-ordinator in Thunder Bay.



SENATORS' FORUM - THUNDER BAY, JULY 7-8, 2007



Many Miles

Largest ever group of Métis Nation of Ontario Senators meet in Thunder Bay to laugh, cry and talk the business of the Nation

Another wonderful Annual General Assembly (AGA) has come and gone. I always find the AGA a wonderful time when Senators, MNO staff, families and citizens from every region share not only the business of the meetings but also laughter and togetherness.

Preceding the AGA for the second year, a Senators' Forum took place (July 7th and 8th). In attendance were Council Senators, four PCMNO Senators and three Honourary Senators. This was the largest group of Senators that has ever gathered together.

A beautiful memorial service was held to honour the memory of the late Senator Marion Larkman, the Matriarch of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

I began the service by reading a prayer submitted by Senator André Bosse. Following the prayer, a special musical tribute was presented by Senator Elmer Ross; he played a touching rendition of "Amazing Grace" on the harmonica. Senator Ruth Wagner-Millington played a moving rendition of "Ave Maria" on the violin.

We then took turns sharing some of our most memorable stories of Senator Larkman. Some stories brought tears to our eyes, but some remembrances filled the room with laughter. The guests of honour were Senator Marion's long time devoted partner Paul Elcombe and her cherished grandson Jason Defosse.

The remainder of the day, we discussed the following recommendations:

1) For future meetings, it is recommended that Senators' spouses be provided with name tags as well, in recognition of their ongoing support.



SENATORS SPOTLIGHT

BY **RETA GORDON**
PCMNO SENATOR

- 2) It is recommended that Senators (especially women and irrespective of whether they or their husbands, fathers, or brothers were veterans) become active in the Royal Canadian Auxiliary because legions across the country are in need of help and assistance to provide services to their members.
- 3) More healing circles and sweat lodges are recommended.
- 4) It is important to write your stories about veterans or those unrecorded stories are at risk of being lost.
- 5) There should be a compilation of stories and artefacts of our Métis veterans. These items should become part of a Métis veterans' museum.
- 6) We should access and share the list of names of all Métis who fought in the Battle of Batoche. (Senator Elmer Ross has an A-Z list of names.)
- 7) In order to help others identify family backgrounds and lineages, it is recommended that participants identify their Métis family names on name tags at meetings.
- 8) Protocols for the fire keeper at *the Assembly* should be developed and available to provide guidance on roles and responsibilities (similar to the protocols developed for Senators).
- 9) Improve lines of communications among Community Councils, Regional Councilors, and PCMNO on programs

and other MNO business.

- 10) Priorities for the MNO housing program to include: support for the working poor; apartments for seniors; initiatives that are inclusive of new home owners; initiatives that support energy efficiency, and programs designed to help cover the costs of utilities. Housing needs should be based on levels of income and issues of mobility and portability should be considered. It may be possible for some land to be donated in-kind by Métis citizens and to partner with other Aboriginal organisations for the purpose of housing developments.
- 11) For future surveys and consultations, often it is difficult to contact those that are most in need. It is important to come into the communities for improved communications and consultations.

The following day, we had some wonderful presentations from President, Tony Belcourt; Chair, Gary Lipinski; Registrar, Karole Dumont-Beckett; Director of Housing, Jean McIsaac Wiitala; Director of Health, Doug Wilson; Mental Health Services, Jo MacQuarrie; and Health Care Manager, Bobbie Burns. Each speaker gave the Senators updates on their departments and on the programs or services their staff provides in our communities.

I would like to say a special

thank you to PCMNO Councillor, Pauline Saulnier, for all the time she spent taking minutes at the *Forum*; to WSMNO Representative, Lynn Pantuso, for registering the Senators and for all of her help throughout the *Forum*. Meegwech to the facilitator, Wenda Wattayne. I could not have accomplished all the work that went into making this year's *Forum* a success without the help of Laurie Fonjong, who met with me many evenings and weekends to put the Senators' Forum in place. Thank you, Laurie.

This 14th Annual General Assembly was one of the best AGA's held.

On Wednesday the inaugural *Suzanne Rochon-Burnett Volunteer of the Year Award* was given and I am very thankful to say that I was the recipient of this prestigious award. To PCMNO Senator Gerry Bedford and to PCMNO Councillor Cam Burgess, who nominated me, to the Senators, citizens and many councils who sent in letters of support for my nomination, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I was given the letters that you all submitted and I am eternally grateful and touched by your kind words.

“

WITHOUT VOLUNTEERS THE MNO WOULD NEVER HAVE COME THESE MANY MILES.”

As I said in my acceptance remarks, "I share this award with each and every one of you who has ever sat on a council, participated in any MNO activity, those of you who go in to offer services in your local council offices. People such as Richard Sarrazin, to name one, who volunteers countless hours in his Métis community, worked 16 hour days to set up the tent, stage etc. for this AGA."

Without volunteers the MNO would never have come these many miles.

To all, Ekoshi Maaka, (this is Until We Meet Again), c'est tous a la prochaine, Marsay Kinas Koumitin, thank you very much, Merci Boucoup. ∞

SENATORS' FORUM 2007

The true Soul of our Nation

BY PAULINE SAULNIER

Let me begin by saying how wonderful that this year's Forum opens up with a special tribute to a wise Senator who in her own way managed to touch each and everyone of us. During this time, all the Senators had the opportunity to voice their own personal comments about the



Grandmother of the MNO and a true veteran at heart. It made me take note that even in death, Senator Marion Larkman still manages to bring Métis citizens together and still emphasises the importance of sharing the knowledge and the wisdom that all Senators hold.

Telling about themselves in their autobiographies, allowed all Senators to share their unique lives. Each dealt with a lot of hardship, but managed to survive and become stronger as a result of their experiences and survival strategies. I also heard and witnessed first hand the personal strengths of 31 Senators as they shared their stories. This was truly an eye opening moment for me. I got to record the strength and the true soul of our nation. I realised that Métis Senators are a tremendous source of knowledge and wisdom. It is vital that opportunities for more of these gatherings and this type of sharing be created

MORE ON PAGE 23

MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO YOUTH COUNCIL: PROGRESS FOR MÉTIS YOUTH COUNCIL

BY ALISON CROFT

During the last six months the MNOYC has held two successful meetings with the nine representatives from across the regions in Ontario. These meetings were designed to set out objectives and priorities for the council.

At our initial meeting in Ottawa, the agenda was set-up to create an open session where presenters introduced topics such as the Urban Multi-cultural Aboriginal Youth Centre Initiative (UMAYC) and gave important information regarding how the MNOYC is involved in making decisions. Governance was also introduced to ensure that all members were aware of the Métis Nation of Ontario structure and how the MNOYC fits into the tiered system. These topics gave way to an open discussion regarding MNOYC prior-

MNOYC Contacts

REGION 1 - Amber Griffiths

Women, environment, Michif
amberg@metisnation.org

REGION 2 - Sean Barrie

seanb@metisnation.org

REGION 3 - Scott Russell

Michif, environment, harvesting rights
scottrussell@metisnation.org

REGION 4 - Joni Labbe

Family and Youth Services
joni@metisnation.org

REGION 6 - Benny Michaud

Culture, environment
bennym@metisnation.org

REGION 7 - Ashley Saulnier

Radio, women, health
ashelys@metisnation.org

REGION 9 - Matt Rochon

Health, harvesting rights, michif
mattr@metisnation.org

ities to establish goals and trajectories of the youth council.

The MNOYC had collectively agreed to talk about the MNOYC priorities. Through an open discussion regarding obstacles and difficulties about engaging and attracting youth to the MNOYC, we decided on two priorities:

1. Finding youth and developing the visibility of the MNOYC
2. Empowering youth through identity and pride and spirituality in Métis culture.

This discussion led to describing our personal journeys and experiences. We talked about what it feels like to be Métis, how we connect to nature and how we can empower youth to pass on knowledge and understanding of our values through our personal journeys. We described how we could find and create

opportunities through youth bridging the gap and describing incentives and possibilities for youth.

To ensure that we are targeting the needs of youth, the MNOYC members decided to write down their own specific interests, which were then organised into a portfolio system so that representatives could be involved in activities that they find interesting.

During the 14th Annual General Assembly (AGA) MNOYC meeting, members of the council were asked to elect members into internal governance positions. The selected members now hold the following positions: Alison Croft, Chair; Benny Michaud, Vice Chair; Amber Griffiths, Treasurer and Joni Labbe, Secretary.

This political exercise developed into a discussion regarding these specific roles and their importance inside the MNOYC

structure, and naturally evolved into external governance of the MNOYC and the PCMNO and their respective roles in the MNO.

The MNOYC gave the floor to Joni Labbe, who spoke about her documentary project, "Métis Youth as Leaders". She talked about the steps she is taking to complete this project and how the supportive community of Sault Ste. Marie has come together to help Joni and her selected participants carry out this project.

If you or someone you know is interested in the Youth Council or becoming a part of the MNOYC and would like more information regarding activities or events that are happening please email your local representative.

Alison Croft is the Youth Representative on the PCMNO. She can be reached via email at alisonc@metisnation.org.

This story appeared in The Huntsville Forester on August 22nd, 2007, and is reprinted with their kind permission

Introducing Verna

BY PAULA BOON, Aug 22, 2007

The chair of the Moon River Metis Nation is proud of her heritage. She makes bannock, hunts, fishes and flies the blue Metis flag beneath the red maple leaf at her home.

But Verna Porter didn't know the truth about her family history until she was 35.

"My father held a respectable job and kept quiet about it," says the Huntsville woman. "Back then, if people found out you had Indian blood, you could lose your job."

Porter grew up in a small, isolated community called Gogama between Timmins and Sudbury. She and her siblings heard rumours that their grandmother was native, but their questions were discouraged.

Married in 1970, Porter and her husband Doug lived in Gogama, Hearst and Timmins before retiring to the old homestead on the canal between Fairy and Pen lakes where Doug was raised.

At age 35, Porter decided she was going to find out about her heritage once and for all. The lawyer for whom she was working helped her to fill out forms

requesting government records.

She learned that her Scottish great-grandfather, an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company, had held the top post at Fort Mattagami, now known as the Mattagami Reserve. This meant he was "the law, doctor, judge, and probably father confessor to the Ojibway and others," Porter says.

He married a native woman and they had 11 children, one of whom was Porter's grandmother.

When she went looking for more personal information and anecdotes, Porter wished she had been able to talk to her grandmother, who was 91 at the time, about these things when she was younger.

"You feel a bit of a loss," she said. "I regret not finding out more about my family history."

Porter did manage to glean some information from two uncles, a taped interview with a great-aunt, and a family history written by several cousins. Her father still wasn't talking.

Since retiring to Huntsville in 1995, Porter has been active in embracing her heritage.

Verna Porter



She was one of the original members of the Moon River Metis Council, which hosts two general meetings annually and has organized the National Aboriginal Day celebrations at Muskoka Heritage Place for the past two years.

The group also holds an event each September called the Rendezvous, where members hunt for and package meat for Metis who can no longer get out to hunt themselves.

Porter has always fished, but she only started hunting after learning she was Metis.

"My husband is a hunter, so our interests blend well," she says.

"I never thought it would be so peaceful, sitting there waiting," she adds. "And it makes you think back to when they had these huge families and had to come home with meat."

Porter is frustrated that Metis people are still fighting for their hunting and fishing rights. The Metis are listed alongside the First Nations and Inuit in the Constitution, she says, but nonetheless her people have had to appear before the Ontario Supreme Court as recently as

last spring over hunting and fishing disputes.

"We don't hunt for the kill, but for the meat," she says. "We put tobacco where moose or other animal dropped to thank the Creator, and we do all our own skinning, butchering, wrapping and freezing."

Porter is a firm believer that you have to know where you come from to know where you're going. She says she wants to educate her children and granddaughter to be proud of their heritage.

"I hope my granddaughter and other young Metis will be free to fish, to hunt, to harvest, and be recognized."

"My granddaughter Victoria loves it when I make bannock," she says. The little girl also knows how to do the jig and wears a traditional ribbon dress while doing so.

Looking toward the future, Porter says, "I hope my granddaughter and other young Metis will be free to fish, to hunt, to harvest, and be recognized."

Porter envisions a time when Metis people, wearing their distinctive sashes, are included in cultural festivals alongside Ukrainians and Scots.

"That would be great," she says.

SOUL OF OUR NATION

FROM PAGE 22

and nurtured. Maybe we would be able to capture these life lessons on video or in recordings. To lose such irreplaceable treasures would surely be a great tragedy for our Métis people and for our Métis Nation of Ontario.

If I had to title it, the first day of the Senators' Forum would be called, "A day of Capacity Building and Knowledge sharing".

On the second day, updates from both President Tony Bel-

court and PCMNO Chair Gary Lipinski informed the Senators of some of the issues and some of the advances that the Métis Nation of Ontario leaders and staff had been undertaking. I thought the discussion and question period after each presentation was especially important. It allowed the Senators to bring up some of their personal issues and express their views.

The report from Registry on all the progress in that department was well presented by Karole Dumont-Beckett (Registrar). Jean MacIsaac-Wiitala (Director of Housing) emphasized the importance of receiving comments and input from the Senators as a guideline to the

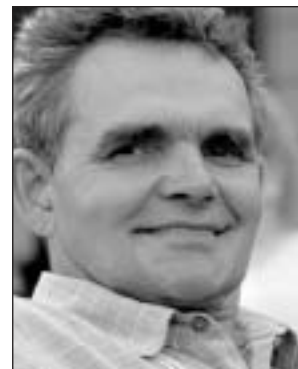
accommodation needs of the MNO. Doug Wilson (Director of Health Services) amazed the Senators with all the services available, some the result of partnering with other agencies and departments, such as MNO Registry, and the Victorian Order of Nurses. How fortunate the Métis Nation of Ontario is to have so many staff willing to wear multiple hats and dedicated to achieving great success for our nation.

Bobbie Burn's (Primary Health Care Manager) self-care presentation reminded the Senators that even though they all do so much volunteering, taking care of themselves is vital. To be more productive and more active you must take care of yourself.

So the title for the second day would be "Take care of yourself, the Métis Nation of Ontario is depending on strong healthy Senators!"

All in all the entire Senators' Forum was a great success. I especially enjoyed the nice dinner and seeing the Senators dancing and talking at the Friday evening get-together and at dinner on Sunday.

Unfortunately, due to the weather, the Fireside Youth and Senators Story Sharing did not materialise. However, the story-



telling between the Youth and the Senators was done inside and it was a great success for all who attended.

In conclusion, I want to congratulate Senator Reta Gordon for organising the biggest gathering of Senators

and for all the wonderful work that she and all the Senators did. Face to face meetings and establishing good friendships and great networks within the nation are things that cannot be measured but will certainly be beneficial to all for years to come.

Meeting the needs of Metis learners,
bridging the gap to Ontario's labour force

Voyages

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) has been actively engaged in the delivery of employment and training programs and services since 1996, with the introduction of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada's Regional Bilateral Agreement.

For more than ten years, a service network that spans the province with dedicated and committed front line staff has made every effort to serve the employment, education and training needs of Métis people. While program limitations and funding restrictions have created challenges, these programs and services have assisted thousands of Métis clients and in turn improved the standard of living of Métis families and communities throughout Ontario. This is a testament not only to the strength and vigilance of the staff but to the efforts of Métis people pursuing new opportunities and labour market success.

The successes achieved have been substantial and lessons learned extremely valuable. The MNO continues to employ a community-based review structure of Regional Approvals Committees and Métis Awards Committees that is unparalleled in other service delivery networks. These community volunteers play a pivotal role in the review of requests and offer an additional level of program accountability.

The true strength of these labour market programs has been their ability to design and deliver programs and services in direct response to the needs of clients and communities. Programs have been modified and enhanced in an effort to address emerging priorities including apprenticeship, mobility and self employment and to adequately address the unique cultural needs of Métis people. Over the years, support has been provided for a number of innovative projects including two canoe expeditions, an indigenous exchange to Ecuador, two important community research publications, self employment grants, the Community Sports Initiative, the Conflict Resolution Program, and many more. Individual client success has been immeasurable and every effort is made to highlight these achievements through a publication titled "Voyages" and within the branch annual report (documents are available on the MNO web site).

The following is a brief snapshot of 2006/07 labour market activity:

Métis Client Interventions

- Funded 572 clients 2006/2007
- 205 found employment, 261 returned to school

- Approximately 38% were male and 62% were female
- 68% were under the age of 30

Summer Student Program

A total of 96 students were employed through the Métis Summer Career Placement Program, 50 Secondary and 46 post-secondary students

Métis Bursary Program

In 1998 the MNO established the Métis Bursary Program and 32 Colleges and Universities. This unprecedented financial assistance program for Métis students provides awards to more than 100 students each school year with an overall investment of more than \$100,000. This past school year 140 students were awarded bursaries for a total of \$137,552.

School Board Outreach

A number of meetings have been held with local school boards across the Province including Lakehead District School Board, Rainy River District School Board, and Toronto District School Board. Métis representatives are involved on these local boards and have been engaged in the Aboriginal student identification policy.

Ministry of Education

The MNO participates on the Minister's Education Partnership Table to ensure a strong voice for Métis people is reflected in policy and program development. MNO ... also represented on various other ministry working tables on education including: Conflict Resolution, Learning to 18, and Special Education Committee.

Ministry of Training Colleges & Universities Committees

The MNO is represented on the Advisory Committee on Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education as well as other sub-committees including Centre of Excellence review committee, and Aboriginal Education & Training Strategy Review.

Chair of Métis Studies

The establishment of a Chair of Métis Studies at an Ontario university has been a priority for a number of years. The MNO did receive a commitment to establish a Chair of Métis Studies from Premier McGuinty and Chris Bentley, MTCU Minister. Since these commitments have been

made, the MNO has held many meetings with interested universities to determine their priorities and potential contribution to move this important initiative forward, and MTCU has formally set aside an endowment of \$2 million for the position.

Métis Family Literacy

Metis Families Learning Together-Literacy Program – The MNO was successful in obtaining funding from the Trillium Foundation to develop a Métis-specific literacy program in partnership with Frontier College. Two Literacy Co-ordinators have been hired and are now in place in Toronto and Sudbury. A first phase of training has been provided and resources are being developed.

In an effort to effectively manage the development and implementation of these new priorities and programs the Education and Training Branch has undergone a reorganisation and staff expansion. The following is a snapshot of these important changes and the branch structure overall.

There are 18 staff members located in communities across the province with various education and training responsibilities of a regional or provincial focus.

This network of skilled and experienced professionals is truly the foundation for program success and growth. These positions include a Provincial Education Initiatives Co-ordinator, Provincial Apprenticeship and Employer Developer as well as Provincial Youth Co-ordinator. Further, the Provincial Contracts Administrator has been revamped to a Provincial Projects Officer position that assumes additional financial and project management responsibilities to enhance program accountability and allow for a greater segregation of duties.

The Community Development Officer (CDO) and CDO Assistant positions have been revised and renamed to more accurately reflect day to day responsibilities and job duties. These positions now titled "Regional Employment and Training Co-ordinator" and "Regional Employment Officer" serve to support the varied labour market and learning needs of clients and communities throughout their regions. In addition, there are two new Literacy Co-ordinator positions in Toronto and Sudbury that have been



MELISSA BUTTON
ABORIGINAL YOUTH ADVISOR, HAMILTON

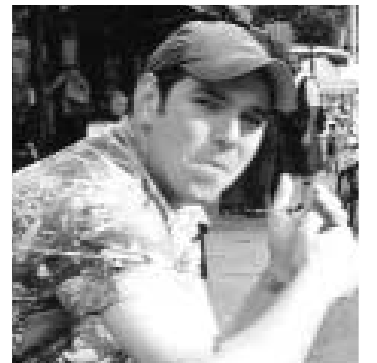
"I was living on my own trying to support my baby and myself and I didn't know what I was going to do, and then came along the MNO. They were very supportive, understanding and compassionate people. This encouraged me to work harder and be a better person."



TIFFANY MILLER
DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR,
CANADIAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION
THUNDER BAY

"The Métis Nation of Ontario played a pivotal role in helping me find the career of my dreams. I cannot even begin to express how grateful I am for your generosity and assistance." – Tiffany

Knowing that the job market in Thunder Bay was tough, Tiffany Miller looked to the Métis Nation for help. She was able to obtain paid employment as a volunteer coordinator at a local charity with the help of a *Métis Wage Subsidy*. The experience she gained there lead her to her current position with the Canadian Diabetes Association.



BRAD KURTENBACH
ICE CREAM ENTREPRENEUR
TORONTO

"The program helped short term with preparing a business plan and with short term financing; cash is god in small business and that was very helpful. [The funding] let me take the next step with my business, which was to secure financing and get financial distribution. [It was a great help to] survival in my third year." – Brad

Brad Kurtenbach approached MNO's Region 8 office and was able to access the *Métis Self-Employment* program for support for his small business Kensington Market Organic Ice Cream.

tasked with the implementation and development of the MNO's Métis Family Literacy Program.

A detailed list of program information and staff contact information is available on the MNO's web site.

While the branch continues to focus on providing quality, accessible and accountable services and support to Métis people, over the coming months, a number of priority areas will be addressed. Efforts are already underway to develop new policies for the Literacy Program; to implement community-based

programs; to strengthen the existing review, assessment and monitoring policies and procedures; to expand upon partnerships that will create education and employment opportunities, and to establish a comprehensive branch strategic plan to guide our efforts as we move forward.

The MNO Education and Training Branch is always interested in hearing from members of the community and welcomes your feedback. At anytime feel free to contact one of the regional offices or email jennifers@metisnation.org or call 1-800-263-4889.

Soldier back with family after Afghanistan tour

Sudbury-based Métis Military Police Officer attached to the Royal Canadian Airforce

BY PAM TREMBLAY

Jamie Tremblay of Métis ancestry, son of Denis Tremblay of the Sudbury Métis Council, and Donna Tremblay, successfully came home after his six month tour in Afghanistan. While Jamie was overseas, he was based in south-east Asia at a location he cannot disclose for security reasons. Jamie is 28 and a military police officer with the Canadian Armed Forces.

He has stood by caskets of fallen comrades and has transported some of the dead and injured soldiers from the aircraft that he lived out of for six months. Seeing caskets with Canadian flags can be a mental drain because Jamie knows they are his brethren going home.

After the recent deaths of Canadian soldiers he doesn't believe that troops should pull out but that the international community is in there trying to help; Canada is part of that community. Jamie doubts the conflict will be resolved any time real soon, and has no idea how it could end quickly.

Soldiers are encouraged to get counselling to debrief during and after their tours in the war-battered nations. He worked with a unit attached to the International Security Assistance Force and when on the ground



Jamie Tremblay

he protected the aircraft's contents and military officials.

He may be called to another tour in Afghanistan as he is willing to cover for soldiers when they take their needed breaks.

Jamie Tremblay spent five years as a military police officer based out of Cold Lake, Alberta. He is a graduate of St. Charles College and of the Police Foundations Program.

At his recent homecoming, which happened to fall on Canada Day, Jamie got engaged to his high school sweetheart. Welcome home Jamie; we are proud of you.

The Voyageur and the Métis Nation of Ontario are pleased to honour our Métis heroes. If you have a story to share please send it to llord@kingston.net.



Shaun Redmond at Louis Riel Day ceremonies in Toronto November 16th, 2004.

Métis veteran honoured for lifetime of service

BY SENATOR RETA GORDON

Recently, Métis citizen and veteran, Shaun Redmond, became only the second area person to receive a commendation from the Canadian Ministry of Veterans Affairs.

The Cornwall resident comes from a long line of military men, so it's not surprising he found himself joining the Canadian Forces in 1973. Redmond's father served in the Canadian Air Force and his uncle died in the Second World War. He has been active with the Canadian cadet movement and the Royal Canadian Legion and is an Officer of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem and a Golden Jubilee Medal recipient. It's a tradition he's not only passed on to his own children, but one that served to inform what would become one of his passions--veterans' issues. Shaun has worked with the

National Aboriginal Veterans' Association and the Métis Nation of Ontario Veterans' Council. He was also a driving force behind an Aboriginal Spiritual Journey in 2005, which took more than 200 Métis to Europe. The trip was organised as part of the effort to repatriate the spirits of Métis soldiers who died overseas.

"It is a belief among the Aboriginal people that when a warrior dies outside his territory, his spirit must be returned to his land," said Redmond. "We went there to bring their spirits back; to help them cross over."

The group used a miniature birch bark canoe to carry the spirits from Europe back to the Métis territory in this region of Ontario where many Métis settled years ago.

"It offers closure to the families of those who died over there," said Redmond. "At the same time, it helps educate peo-

ple about the contributions made by the Métis in times of war."

Commendations have been issued by the ministry each year since 2002 and are given to individuals who have performed commendable service within the veteran community and serve as role models for their fellow veterans.

"I am proud to honour these distinguished individuals, all of whom have contributed so selflessly to keeping alive the sacred memory of Canada's veterans," said Greg Thompson, Minister of Veterans Affairs. "Through their generosity, devotion and dedication, they have made an outstanding contribution to improving the lives of our veterans and their families."

"I'm sure there are many more people who've done a lot more than I have," said Redmond, "but I'm honoured to have received this."

MÉTIS VETERANS ISSUES:

Voices of Métis veterans heard at forum

In June, 2007, veterans from across Canada were invited to take part in a Métis veterans information forum. The veterans discussed how a better quality of life might be achieved for veterans and their families, and how the contributions of Métis veterans to their country, to the Métis Nation and to their respective communities could be adequately recognised.

The veterans expressed a profound concern that neither the contributions of veterans nor their needs are adequately recognised. Such recognition, they maintain, should acknowledge not only the broadly understood sacrifices of all Canadian veterans, but also the additional challenges faced in the transition from the Métis cultural environment to that of military service; challenges that they willingly met. In short, Métis veterans seek

to be recognised for their loyalty to both their country and to the Métis Nation.

There were a number of concerns and ideas discussed and possible solutions advanced. It was suggested that veterans could help to educate in our schools and assist the Métis Nation locally and nationally by attending events and becoming more visible.

The Métis Veterans of Canada voiced the following concerns:

- Initiatives should be taken to democratically elect, an organised body, from each province throughout Canada as a prerequisite to applying for funding;
- Provincial presidents should then sit on a national board, which in turn would appoint or elect one of its members to



sit as the only recognised spokesperson representing Métis Veterans' concerns and issues under the direction of the body of provincial presidents. (Such an arrangement would ideally have the co-operation of the provincial Métis federations and the Métis National Council for assistance with administrative resources. Métis National Council and provincial Métis federations would be invited to elect or appoint a Veterans Affairs Minister.)

- Membership should include:
 - a) Veterans, who are honourably discharged, and can prove Métis status, or

veterans who are willing to apply for Métis citizenship, or

- b) Veterans who are deceased, in which case, the surviving spouse or estate may register for possible denied benefits. (NB Because of veteran status, we also seek to be fast-tracked for Métis citizenship cards).

- Veterans should work with Veterans Affairs Canada and participate in the many programs available.

- The past accomplishments of Métis veterans should be promoted and memorialised by the dedication of monuments

or cairns, etc., laying of wreaths, and by battlefield revisits. There should also be more extensive and organised work with local military museums and education for younger people to preserve our history, so that others may learn of our combined efforts to preserve freedom for Canadians.

Both the Métis Veterans Association and the provincial and national Métis federations should set in place clear protocols by which they can work compatibly with others and help promote peace and goodwill and in so doing, assist our nation in the enhancement of our national heritage.

MÉTIS-BIZ



Technology key to growth for Aboriginal-owned small businesses

70% anticipate expanding either locally or nationally within five years

Canada's Aboriginal business community is thriving, according to a national survey of Aboriginal-owned small- and medium-sized businesses (SMBs). The Xerox Canada / Leger Marketing poll attributes much of this potential growth to new technology solutions that make it easier for smaller businesses to compete in the Canadian marketplace.

The survey revealed that 72% of Aboriginal business owners plan to expand over the next five years, with more than half (51%) planning to grow locally, and another fifth (21%) expecting to expand nationally. Three-quarters (77%) of the businesses surveyed said that scalable technology solutions, including colour printing and document management capabilities, are critical to business growth.

Most Aboriginal-owned businesses adopted colour around 2000, a year ahead of non-Aboriginal-owned SMBs, according to the same survey.

"Since our inception we have worked hard to promote Aboriginal business in Canada, and it's encouraging to see this important demographic come into its own in such a short period of time," says Chief Clarence Louie, Chairman, National Aboriginal Economic Development Board. "A strong Aboriginal business community ultimately means a strong Canada, and the support of companies like Xerox has enabled us to prosper in ways that would have been impossible as little as 10 years ago."

When asked about the greatest challenge facing Aboriginal businesses today 25% said that finding quality staff was one of their greatest barriers to success.

ABOUT THE SURVEY:

The national survey was conducted for Xerox Canada Ltd. by Leger Marketing between July 19 and August 2, 2006 with a representative sample of 331 small and medium-sized business owners or managers. The survey is considered accurate within +/- 5.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Métis serving in the Canadian Forces:

Métis seaman receives Military Merit honour

BY MICHAEL MCWHINNIE

On Thursday, May 31st, 2007, Tyrone H.W. Pile, Rear-Admiral in the Canadian Forces and citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario was presented the insignia of Commander of Military Merit, signifying his membership to the Order of Military Merit. Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General and Commander in Chief of the Canadian Forces presided over the Investiture Ceremony, which took place at Rideau Hall in Ottawa.

This prestigious honour is conferred upon only a few select flag and general officers in recognition of outstanding meritorious service and demonstrated leadership while fulfilling duties of great responsibility.

Rear-Admiral Pile is from Geraldton, Ontario and enrolled in the Canadian Forces in 1975 after graduating from Geraldton Composite High School. He is a graduate of Royal Military College Kingston and conducted post-graduate studies at the University of Victoria. Rear-Admiral Pile is the brother of Mr. Tim Pile who is currently serving as the Secretary-Treasurer of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

Over the course of his career, Rear-Admiral Pile has served at sea onboard ships in positions of increasing responsibility, culminating with his appointment as Commanding Officer of HMCS REGINA, a Canadian Patrol Frigate based in Esquimalt, BC.

Rear-Admiral Pile currently serves as Chief of Military Personnel and Commander of Military Personnel Command at National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa. This summer, he will assume command of both Maritime Forces Pacific and the recently formed Joint Task Force Pacific. Rear-Admiral Pile will be responsible for naval operations in the Pacific while overseeing the conduct of all CF domestic contingency operations in British Columbia.

Rear-Admiral Pile has been a strong advocate of ensuring that the many opportunities offered by the Canadian Forces are actively discussed with and advertised to Aboriginal Canadians. As part of his recent Canadian Forces Diversity Outreach Initiative, Rear-Admiral Pile and his team met with Métis, Inuit and First Nations leaders to generate interest among young Aboriginal men and women and to develop stronger ties with their respective communities across Canada.

Historically, Métis, Inuit and First Nations peoples have played important roles in the Canadian Forces. Their proud, selfless and long-standing military contributions continue to be recognised and valued. The Canadian Forces offers a fair and equitable opportunity for a full and rewarding career and is committed to



PHOTO: Sgt. Eric Jolin, Rideau Hall

Rear-Admiral Tyrone H.W. Pile with the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General and Commander in Chief of the Canadian Armed Forces at Rideau Hall.

recruit, develop and retain Métis, Inuit and First Nations personnel in a manner that is respectful of their cultures.

All Canadian citizens can apply to enrol directly through a Canadian Forces Recruiting Centre without going through special programs. However, the Canadian Forces has also developed additional programs specifically for Métis, Inuit and First Nations candidates.

The Canadian Forces Aboriginal Entry Program provides an opportunity to explore the Canadian Forces and experience Basic Training prior to deciding to

Rear-Admiral Pile has been a strong advocate of ensuring that the many opportunities offered by the Canadian Forces are actively discussed with and advertised to Aboriginal Canadians.

enrol. The three-week course incorporates information on CF Aboriginal history, military occupation career counselling and a pre-recruit training course comprising military and physical fitness training conducted in garrison and in the field. This program affords candidates the opportunity to explore all aspects of a transition to full-time military life before making an informed decision about joining.

Raven was developed by the Navy and is a seven-week program held at Canadian Forces Base Esquimalt. Its aim is to provide participants with an insight of life in the Canadian Forces while offering the option, without obligation, to pursue a career in the Reserve Force, Regular Force, or work in a civilian occu-

pation with the National Defence upon completion. Raven comprises a military recruit-training phase and a culture camp administered by Aboriginal advisors.

Bold Eagle is an Army program conducted every summer at Canadian Forces Base Wainwright, Alberta. Designed in collaboration with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and other Aboriginal youth organisations in western Canada, Bold Eagle combines military training and Aboriginal cultural awareness and seeks to foster the development of self-confidence, self-discipline, teamwork and physical

fitness. Bold Eagle allows candidates to experience and evaluate a military career environment without committing beyond the program itself.

Canadian Forces Aboriginal Entry Program candidates receive a monetary bonus for completing the course. Raven and Bold Eagle candidates are paid at the usual rate for Primary Reservists.

Métis, Inuit and First Nations Canadians interested in these programs may visit any Canadian Forces Recruiting Centre, go to www.recruiting.forces.gc.ca or phone 1-800-856-8488.

More about Raven and Bold Eagle can be found at: www.army.gc.ca/boldeagle/contents.htm

OKI CHI TAW: Métis developing indigenous martial arts system

BY GEORGE LEPINE

Since 1997, Native Canadian Centre of Toronto Martial Arts has been providing instruction in the martial arts in the Toronto area.

Oki Chi Taw focuses on specific Plains-Cree Aboriginal weaponry techniques and their respective movements. Indigenous weaponry such as the tomahawk, lance, gunstock, war club and knife are applied throughout the system. Hand to hand techniques are utilised, but the adoption of impact weapons is always present. Oki Chi Taw employs a variety of hand techniques although most are a derivative of weapon applications. The hand positions and movements are very similar, if not identical to that of students holding their weapons (tomahawk, etc.) in both hands. Find out more online at: www.blackbelts.ca/ncctma

George J. Lépine is the Chief Instructor of OKI CHI TAW at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto (16 Spadina Road, Toronto, ON) he can be reached at 416-964-9087.

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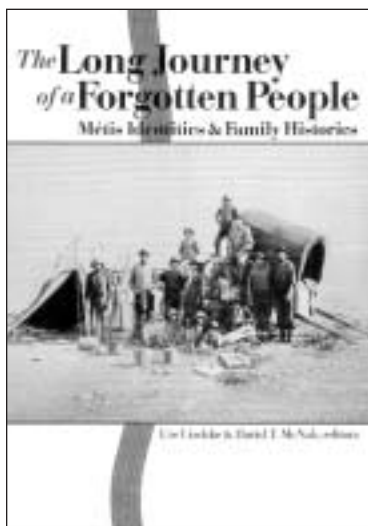
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Métis identity & experience explored

Known as “Canada’s forgotten people,” the Métis have long been here, but until 1982 they lacked the legal status of Native people. At that point, however, the Métis were recognised in the constitution as one of Canada’s Aboriginal peoples.

A significant addition to Métis historiography, *The Long Journey of a Forgotten People*, includes Métis voices and personal narratives that address the thorny and complicated issue of Métis identity from historical and contemporary perspectives. Topics include: eastern Canadian Métis communities; British military personnel and their mixed-blood descendants; life as a Métis woman; and the ongoing struggle for recognition of their rights, including discussion of recent Supreme Court rulings.

Ute Lischke, an associate pro-

BOOK REVIEW by Virginia Barter

The Long Journey of a Forgotten People
edited by Ute Lischke
& David T. McNab
Wilfrid Laurier University Press

fessor at Wilfrid Laurier University, teaches English, film studies, and German cultural studies. She is the co-editor with David T. McNab of *Walking a Tightrope: Aboriginal Peoples and Their Representations* (WLU, 2005). McNab is a Métis historian who

has worked for more than 25 years on Aboriginal land and treaty rights’ issues in Canada. He is also an associate professor of Native studies at York University.

You will recognise many of the contributing authors to this book as Métis Nation of Ontario citizens. It is refreshing to see a history book with so much emphasis on the Métis experience in Ontario. It makes an important addition to any library.

The Long Journey of a Forgotten People is available in bookstores and online at Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Historians George and Terry Goulet’s newest tome recounts little known characters and events of Métis history like...



If you’ve been looking for a good general book on Métis history, this is one you should consider. This new book by Métis authors George and Terry Goulet is one of the best comprehensive overviews available on Métis history. It’s an excellent reference on all things Métis—easy to read and very well organised. The colourful style of the writers makes it enjoyable for anyone to read.

BOOK REVIEW by Virginia Barter

The Métis – Memorable Events and Memorable Personalities
by George & Terry Goulet
published by Fabjob
Calgary 2006

What I really like about this book is its layout. The first section gives a general overview of Métis history and culture and discusses some of the contemporary issues and arguments of Métis identity. The authors’ use of point form and numbering of facts makes it very easy to quickly find the information you want. In the section on “Métis Symbols and their Origins” for instance, there are subsections for: flags, sashes, Red River carts, birch bark canoe, York Boat, Michif language, etc.

The book has a good index and bibliography, as well as a very useful chronology of Métis events from 1670 to 2005. The authors have even included a list of various Métis organisations in Canada. I especially like how the authors have put a separate reference list at the end of each chapter or in some cases even sub-chapters to specifically provide the reader with further sources of research material on the particular subject. In addition each section or topic will often have key points summarised or listed

in point form.

The section “B” of the book deals with memorable key events in Métis history; again each event is dedicated to its own chapter making for easy reference. Each event is pivotal to the evolution of the Métis identity beginning with the early history and continuing right up to the present: The Battle of Seven Oaks; Events after the Battle of Seven Oaks; The Buffalo Hunt; Red River Expedition to the Oregon Country; Free Trade and the Sayer Trial; Battle of Grand Coteau; The Red River Resistance; The Métis Dispersion; The North West Uprising; Constitutional and Government recognition; Supreme Court of Canada decision.

The third section of the book features “Memorable Personalities” such as: Cuthbert Grant, Premier Métis Leader; Pierre Falcon, Bard of the Métis; James Sinclair, Activist and Adventurer; Louis Riel, A Métis Icon; Elzear Goulet, Métis Martyr; Pierre Delorme, Politician and Métis Rights Advocate; Gabriel Dumont, Buffalo Hunter and Mil-

itary Strategist; Thelma Chalfoux, Social Activist and Métis Matriarch; Harry Daniels, Métis Crusader; Tantoo Cardinal, Métis Actor Extraordinaire.

Undoubtedly, there are many more personalities and events that could be included in the book, so perhaps the authors will consider doing a second version someday. Admittedly, they do comment in the book that the memorable events are specific to western Canada—a shortcoming from an Ontario perspective. However, in their criticisms of Métis definitions and political boundaries, they give significant acknowledgement to issues of Métis identity in eastern Canada.

The authors are seasoned researchers who have collaborated on many other books, particularly on Métis history. George Goulet is the best-selling author of *The Trial of Louis Riel, Justice and Mercy Denied*; his wife Terry was the chief researcher.

Battle of Grand Coteau

One of the events that George

and Terry Goulet discuss in their book, is the Battle of Grand Coteau. This is, perhaps, one of the least known Métis historical events, yet one of profound significance in forming the identity of the western Métis as a unique and unified people. The Goulets give especially intriguing details of the famous battle between over 2,000 Sioux warriors and a small group of 67 Métis hunters in the summer of 1851. The Métis won against incredible odds and thereafter were respected by the Sioux as their equals on the plains. Among them was 13 year old Gabriel Dumont who would later become the most famous of Métis military strategists.

The battle occurred in July, 1851, in an area called the Grand Coteau in present day North Dakota. The word “coteau” is derived from the French language and describes elevated land such as a butte, a plateau, or a divide between two valleys. The Grand Coteau is just that, a vast elevation extending over many kilometres, the eastern edge of which is a long escarpment marking the beginning of the second steppe of the North American plains. This was in an area claimed by both the Sioux and the Métis as traditional buffalo hunting territory. Consequently, there was always danger of warring attacks from the Sioux. This was no light matter. As George and Terry Goulet quote from HBC fur trader Alexander Ross, “The Sioux are a bold and numerous race, whose very name has been

the terror of every nation...War is their profession; horses, guns, and hunting their delight.”

The Métis hunting parties were huge, often involving thousands of people—men, women and children. It was their custom to travel in close proximity to each other for protection in case of attack from the Sioux. On this occasion there were three main groups from the Red River area—one from St. Boniface, one from Pembina and another from White Horse Plains. The first two bands (St. Boniface and Pembina) consisted of 1,300 people, 315 of whom were hunters. There were over 1,000 Red River carts as well as horses, oxen and dogs. These two parties headed west from Pembina to join up with the White Horse Group—a group consisting of just 67 hunters and their families. Initially all parties hunted together, but for some reason the small White Horse group split off on their own around the end of June. On July 12th, they arrived at the eastern ridge of the Grand Coteau. It was here the trouble began.

Prelude to the battle

•••

“Five Métis scouts discovered that there was a huge encampment of Sioux numbering 2,000 to 2,500 not far from their own camp on the Grand Coteau. They immediately alerted their group and throwing caution to the

MÉTIS HEALTH:

NEW DIGS FOR DRYDEN

Council, MNO Health, Education and Training programs settle into new home -- ready to serve Métis community

BY AVERY HARGREAVES

The Northwest Métis Nation of Ontario has now moved into its new facilities located at 34B King Street in Dryden, Ontario.

Local Community Council President, Alvina Cimon, says: "Now that we have moved into the new facility we are looking forward to having old and new friends and contacts to come in and visit our office and learn more about the local council and program services." She is pleased with the recent expansion program of the Northwest Métis Nation of Ontario and is proud to be a part of such a progressive community council.

Long Term Care Program Co-ordinator, Don McDonald, says, "The new facilities have given a new energy to the local program as the Health Branch Services office anticipates continuing to care for those benefiting from the present program and increasing its future role in the community." He also stated that the agency is prepared to implement the new on-site Telehealth Services for those who will benefit from this remarkable program.

The Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program Co-ordinator, Carol Hanslip, anticipates improved services for those benefiting from this key program. Further she explains: "The new location is wheelchair accessible which will accommodate all clientele. Our new facility has enhanced

“

NOW THAT WE HAVE MOVED INTO THE NEW FACILITY WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO HAVING OLD AND NEW FRIENDS COME IN AND VISIT OUR OFFICE.”

visibility and awareness in the community. The Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program is part of a province-wide network of prevention and early intervention services for families. Our mandate is to assist families in need in order to ensure that babies and children

develop in a healthy manner." She predicts a definite improvement in services within the coming year.

New to the local office's programs and services is the Community Action Program for Children (CAPC). Program Coordinator, Lee-Anne Moore, excitedly states that: "The purpose of this outstanding program is to invest in the well-being of children. Its focus is on the health and development of children ages 0-6 years and providing support and information to parents for healthy approaches to child care and development."

She further foresees the early success of the local program because of the custom facilities in the Northwest Métis Nation of Ontario, Dryden office.

Key to the services available through the Northwest Métis Nation of Ontario Training Initiatives (MNOTI). The MNOTI programs provide employment services and support to the Métis people of Ontario through an assessment and approvals process. Dana O'Donnell, the Regional Employment and Training Coordinator works in the Region One (1) area which

includes Fort Frances, Dryden, Kenora, Sioux Lookout and surrounding areas (read Dana's report on page 6.). The MNOTI programs are geared toward finding and keeping work or increasing career skills. A number of programs have been introduced which offer financial support and opportunity to Métis individuals. The focus of each program is employment and employability through wage subsidies, training purchases, skills development and special projects.

Anyone interested in obtaining information or volunteering with the local programs is encouraged to contact:

Aboriginal Healthy Babies, Healthy Children
PH: 807-223-4540

CAPC
PH: 807-223-5280

Long Term Care
PH: 807-223-4535

Training Initiatives
PH: 1-888-793-3334 Ext. 22

Local council office
PH: 807-223-8082

NORTHWEST MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO COUNCIL:

Alvina's Update

BY ALVINA CIMON

I hope everybody had a good summer. As usual, I greatly enjoyed the AGA.

The Grand Opening of our new and bigger office was held on September 13th. We have moved to make room for the Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) which is up and running under the direction of coordinator, Leanne Moore.

Welcome aboard to our new LTC Coordinator, Don McDonald.

Our **3rd Annual Harvest Feast** will be held on October 27th. Join us for fun and music at the Moose Hall. Call the number below for tickets.

On **Remembrance Day**, November 11th, one of our veterans will be placing a wreath on the epitaph.

Louis Riel Day, November 16th will feature the raising of our flag, followed by an open house at the office.

Alvina Cimon, *President*
Northwest Métis Nation of Ontario
34B King St., Dryden, ON
PH: 807-223-8082
nwmewtis@drytel.net

NORTHERN ONTARIO MEDICAL SCHOOL NEWS:

Métis Med student on new path at age 50

BY RICK GARRICK

Penny Forth is excited about her new career path in medicine.

"I have two diplomas, a university degree, and now I'm in med school," says the 50-year-old Métis woman from Sudbury, who began her first year at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine on August 27th along with 55 other first-year medical students.

"I feel so humbled that the school and the community have taken a chance on me at my age. I won't let them down."

Forth has followed a long path to her current goal, a path that began with the births of son Michael at age 15 and daughter Nickie at 19; academic upgrading and an attempt at college in her early 20's; a wide variety of jobs, including store detective; a bout of acute anxiety; a move across the country from B.C. to Sudbury in 1986; three years of study at Cambrian College, where she met her husband; the birth of son Christopher; 18 months of study at the Canadian College of Massage and Hydrotherapy, and the development of her own massage therapy business in Sudbury.

Towards the end of her 18 months of study in massage therapy, Forth remembers coming to the realisation that her true path was through medical school.

"I knew exactly what I was supposed to be," she says. "I'm supposed to be a medical doctor."

But she'd just spent 18 months away from home, so she told her husband that she would wait five years before continuing her studies. Three years later she woke up one morning with the realisation that she couldn't wait any longer; she needed to start working towards her goal right away.



Penny Forth, Northern Ontario School of Medicine student.

"So off I went," she says. "I started my four-year science degree at Laurentian University in Sudbury. It's been about 10 years since I realised where I needed to go."

Forth knew that NOSM was the school for her from the start, with its focus on the north's diversity of cultures, differing health issues, wide range of health service delivery models, and personal and professional challenges, rewards and satisfactions.

"What they are saying is right for what I feel about being a doctor," Forth says. "I feel there was never a better fit for me."

Now that Forth is in medical school, she is aiming to be a family practitioner, which means at least six years of

study, four years at NOSM and at least two years of residency, before she earns her license to practice family medicine.

Since she began her studies at Laurentian, Forth has come to realise that she has always been a care giver throughout her life. "In my background, it seems to me that I always needed to be looking after someone, either my siblings or my grandmother," Forth says. "I was the one who went to look after her. I have always been in the role as the helper."

Forth is looking forward to her studies at NOSM, where the students work in small groups throughout the year. "It's amazing what you can learn working in a group," Forth says, noting that she and the other medical students worked together in groups on a desert scenario during the school's orientation session in late August. "We all knew a little about living in a desert, that we were able to bring to the table."

As for her long term goals, Forth already has three plans: she wants to work with Aboriginal people in northern Ontario; she wants to work with children

at an orphanage in Malawi, in south central Africa; and she wants to work with children to encourage them to lead healthy, active lifestyles.

"I feel very strongly about the young being fit," Forth says. "I want to have more of a role in children's health care. I also feel it's a responsibility of mine that I serve remote areas, both here in northern Ontario and in Africa."

Forth realises that her plans will require plenty of work, but she feels that she is up to the challenge. "I'm going to be a busy girl," she says. "I will find a way to make it work."

DIABETES PREVENTION IN THUNDER BAY:

Blueberries & wild rice

After starting my position in December, I spent the first five months attending meetings and building linkages and partnerships with other agencies and organisations. Sharing circles, ceremonies and workshops took place at various locations in the city. Sports Leader, Ashley Moreau, and I were fortunate to make a great partnership with the Balsam Street School. Through them we offered an after school program twice per week. The focus of course was on diabetes prevention, nutrition, and active living.

Near the end of May, we held a 5 km Healthy Lifestyles walk with the junior kindergarten through to grade three classes. The Canadian Diabetes Association and the Heart and Stroke Foundation came to show their support. It was one of those really hot and muggy days and this would prove to be a challenge as most everyone believed we wouldn't be able to pull it off. We were prepared with sun screen, hats and water. The children took turns carrying banners and posters they had made. We were very proud and honoured to be part of this successful group. The children had a hard time but they persevered and were great role models for the community. At the end of the walk the children feasted on healthy foods and they were all rewarded with some active living give-aways.

In June, we participated in the Children's Festival. Again, Ashley and I set up an activity table for this three day event. We made our booth enticing to the children with fiddle music, jigging and spooning contests. The festival days were hot and many of the children only brought a limited supply of drinks and snacks for the day so the juices and fruit we gave out were very appreciated.

Our highlight was watching the grade three class debut their play, *The Day the Animals Learned About Diabetes*. This play was originally created by Eileen Malcolm, a previous Diabetes Prevention Worker funded through the Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative. The children worked hard to make the puppets and they even added signs that said: "Diabetes is a Disease"; "The pancreas produces insulin"; "Healthy eating and physical activity prevent diabetes." At the end of the play the children asked their audience questions like: "What is diabetes?" "What does the pancreas do?" "How do you prevent it?" I was amazed at how much the audience learned and how well the parents and children could answer their questions. This was a proud moment for sure. There is no doubt we reached our goal, knowing these



BY ARLENE LEHTO

children really did learn about diabetes and shared their knowledge with peers, parents and the community.

The MNO hosted Aboriginal Day festivities during the Health Fair and celebrations at Balsam Street School. Again, the grade three class took time to learn some songs and sang them with us during the opening ceremony. Amazingly, we had enough strawberries to pass out to the approximately 1000 people who were in attendance. At this time we gave out certificates to all the youth who participated in the 5 km walk, puppet show and the after school program. Special recognition was given to Mr. Cunningham, the principal, and Mr. McChristie, the grade three teacher. Without them our after school program would not have been. They welcomed us with open arms. They have shown us enormous support, encouragement and assistance in making our program a success. They both received a certificate and a Métis sash. Sadly, with the end of the school year the after school program was coming to an end. Balsam Street School was also



IT IS HARVESTING TIME NOW SO THERE ARE A LOT OF WHOLESOME FOODS WE WILL PICK AND PREPARE FOR THE WINTER, OUR COMMUNITY KITCHENS AND GATHERINGS."

slated to close down indefinitely.

I have also been making a greater effort to develop effective partnerships "in-house". My time downstairs in the Housing area allowed me to build effective communications and team building practices with the Housing staff. Since my move upstairs with the Health Branch I found we were truly becoming a team and on our way to true success for the Métis Nation here in Thunder Bay and more important, for the people we service.

Many great programs and events were made possible through the combined efforts of each health team member. One of the highlights was our very successful blueberry harvest. We had a full bus load of citizens (42 people) and everyone was happy with what they received in the end. We made the picking fun, as we realised berry picking is work and the people picking were giving up half of their berries to our health team. We started by shar-

ing some teachings of the blueberry. A prayer was said to give thanks for what we picked and all participants were asked to not pick the first seven bushes they found. This ensures there are enough berries left for the bears and for next year. For each large cup they picked they received a ticket to win incentives. Everyone left happy and the "house" picked up eight extra large freezer bags of blueberries.

At different picking sessions we managed to get raspberries and strawberries, so we made four different types of jam including a mixed berry. Each participant received one jar of each and the remaining jars were stored for our community events, feasts, ceremonies and give-aways.

Other joint programming sessions included community picnics, a walking group, diabetes prevention workshops, empowerment circles, active living sessions, community Christmas party, fundraising and an emotional wellness series which focusses on healthy living and positive thinking.

In the fall the health team will be harvesting wild rice and will host another community event to hull, package and share the teachings. It is harvesting time now so there are a lot of wholesome foods we will pick and prepare for the winter, our community kitchens and gatherings.

Each Wednesday we will be having "community kitchen" which ties into the "Give and Receive Program". Participants will learn how to cook, preserve, and make low cost meals. The Give and Receive Program is similar to a food bank but there are enough food banks in Thunder Bay. So, instead of a food bank we will empower our families and citizens to give back instead of taking. The program will be open to our Métis citizens and offered once per month provided they either participate in programming, volunteer in some capacity or make a trade.

The healthy foods provided will be largely from our harvesting and community kitchen as well as from donations and a limited amount from our budgets. Instead of splitting all the food up with the participants at the community kitchen we will make additional healthy meals we can freeze and package.

So as you can tell, things in Thunder Bay are very busy and exciting. Soon I will be travelling in the surrounding communities offering Diabetes Prevention Workshops that promote active living, nutrition, emotional wellness and community action. If anyone is interested in a workshop or forming a partnership or linkage please contact me at 807-624-5023.

Arlene Lehto is the MNO's Diabetes Prevention Co-ordinator in Thunder Bay.

WALKING WITH DIABETES

Self-professed couch potato turns gym bunny and loves it

BY BARB KELLY

My name is Barb Kelly and I'm 62 years old. I was born heavy and remained that way all my life. I loved food; it tasted great, never disappointed me and comforted me through good and bad times.

I was the picture posted in the dictionary next to "couch potato". Exercise? Who had the time or energy after a full day's work?

Eventually retirement arrived and I joined the YM/YWCA. I absolutely loved anything to do with the pool. My son commented that he never thought his mom would turn into a "gym bunny". Although I attended faithfully and did an hour of laps and another hour of water exercises, I still remained hefty. I was toned but you could still see me coming from a long way off.

After five years I had a disagreement with the Y and handed in my membership. I knew I had to do something in order not to gain even more weight and to keep my glucose levels under control.

I had started a diet approximately six weeks prior and had lost a bit of weight but it was

very slow going.

I decided I'd start walking and save myself \$36 at the same time. I noticed a difference within a week. I've now been walking for seven weeks. The results of two blood tests are below.

My doctor is very pleased and encourages me to continue walking. I've also been monitoring daily counts on a pedometer my sister Reta Gordon had received from Shelley Gonneville who is Coordinator of the MNO Diabetes Program.

To date I've lost 33 lbs. and I know that I will be successful in losing another 33lbs. As a sexagenarian I'm finally uncovering the "skinny" me.

Every morning I watch the sun rise, enjoy bird calls, rabbits scurrying and even encountered a skunk—I quickly conceded his possession of that particular side of the road.

The most satisfying experience occurred when a guy put his head out of his van and whistled. I actually turned around to see who was behind me and to my shock I was all alone. Now remember, I'm 62 and hadn't heard a whistle directed toward me in over 40 years. What a morale booster!

Surprisingly, I've found a form of exercise that is enjoyable, inexpensive, healthy and effective. The only disadvantage to all the miles I've been racking up is that no air line recognises them as 'air miles'.

Happy trails to y'all.

BARB'S BLOOD TESTS

| | MAY 31/07 | JULY 19/07 |
|------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Cholesterol | 5.88 | 4.48 |
| Triglycerides | 1.61 | 1.54 |
| HDL cholesterol | 0.94 | 1.7 |
| LDL cholesterol | 4.2 | 2.7 |
| TC/HDL-C ratio | 6.3 | 4.2 |
| Haemoglobin A/C | 0.082 | 0.066 |

Health Branch deploying to Métis communities

BY DOUG WILSON

It is my pleasure to announce that circumstances now permit the Health Branch to finally start implementing a strategy originally announced at the Sault Ste Marie AGA in 2006.

That strategy was to move as many of our managers and supervisors as possible, out of Head Office in Ottawa and into the communities where they would be closer to their staff and the input of the Métis citizens we serve.

At the time of that announcement we had indicated that we would not force anybody to move but that we would make the desired transition through a combination of normal attrition and opportunity.

Fortunately, that first opportunity has finally arrived and effective September 1, 2007,



AHWS Manager

Monique Raymond

our AHWS Manager, Monique Raymond, has relocated to the site office in Timmins. As circumstances would have it, it is extremely beneficial that one of our managers is the first to make this change as it will permit us to fine tune the new system before any other moves occur. The Timmins Council and their President, Natalie Durocher, deserve a huge round of applause for going above and beyond in accommodating this initiative.

Doug Wilson
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Goulets' new tome recounts little known characters and events of Métis history

FROM PAGE 27

winds, they approached the Sioux, presumably to parley. The scouts were taken hostage, but two of them were able to escape and fled on their speedy steeds back to their Métis camp.

"When they reached the safety of their camp, they found that hasty preparations were being made under the Chief of the Hunt, Jean Baptiste Falcon (son of Métis minstrel Pierre Falcon). Under his leadership, they were taking measures to defend themselves against the attack that they knew was imminent.

"The Red River carts had been formed into a circle, axle to axle, and slightly angled up from the ground. The shafts were pointed outwards like spears. Poles were shoved through the wheels of all the carts to ensure their immobility and to make penetration by the enemy formidably difficult.

"Pemmican and other supplies were placed between the carts to fill the gaps and fortify the hastily assembled bulwark. Rifle pits were dug by the men in front of the carts to provide the hunters with protection while sniping at their attackers. Meanwhile, trenches were dug under the carts by the women and children to provide them with shelter, and the livestock were placed inside the circle. The Métis had literally 'circled the wagons'.

"A number of Sioux approached the Métis barricade stating that they would release the remaining three prisoners the following day, and indicated they would like to receive something in return, presumably a peace offering. The Métis did not believe them. Métis riflemen

would not allow a subsequent Sioux delegation to come near the bulwark. The Métis were determined to conceal from the Sioux the military preparations they had made in their makeshift fort.

"That night (in which an eclipse of the moon occurred) an attempt was made by the Métis to furtively dispatch scouts to the St. Boniface and Pembina hunting parties to ask them to urgently come to their assistance. These scouts were seen, but sometime later two other Métis were able to elude the Sioux and make it to the other brigades." [But would their help come in time?]

The First Day

"The next day, July 13th while Father Louis Lafleche (the priest from White Horse Plain who was accompanying them) was administering the sacraments, the Métis scouts warned that a multitude of Sioux warriors was rapidly approaching. Thirty armed Métis huntsmen rode out to meet the lead band of oncoming Sioux, offering them gifts and asking them to turn back. The Sioux refused and, as they continued to approach, the Métis scouts raced back into their camp, corralled their horses, and jumped into their rifle pits.

"The remaining three Métis captives of the Sioux made a break for freedom. Two were successful; the third Jean Baptiste Malaterre, who was riding a slower horse, was unable to make it to safety. His dismembered body was later found with three bullet holes and 67 arrows in it.

"The Indians, painted and decked out for war, did not charge the Métis fortification en masse. Undoubtedly this would have seen the Métis ramparts breached. Instead the Sioux used hit and run tactics, firing off bullets and launching countless arrows at their low-lying, well-protected opponents. This method of attack, which they repeated after an initial fallback, was a failure. In the meantime the Métis sharpshooters picked off a number of Sioux while the Métis women and older children continually reloaded the rifles.

"During the attacks by the Sioux, Father Lafleche urged on the Métis. He went among the carts with a crucifix raised in his hand, energising the Métis hunters and soothing the children. His bravery played a part in discouraging the Sioux. His staunch spirit (together with the eclipse of the moon the night before and a sudden thunderstorm that day) made the Sioux believe that the Métis were supported by a Manitou, a supernatural being.

"Among the 77 riflemen, which now included the

Dudley George's spirit continues to inspire

Ipperwash tragedy spawns fund to provide educational opportunities for Aboriginal youth

In June, the Elementary Teachers of Toronto (ETT) issued a press release in support of the Ipperwash Report. "Teachers in Toronto are extremely pleased with the report of the Ipperwash Inquiry," says Martin Long, President of the Elementary Teachers of Toronto. "It stands as a landmark not only for Aboriginal rights in Ontario and across Canada, but also as a significant contribution to justice for all Canadians."

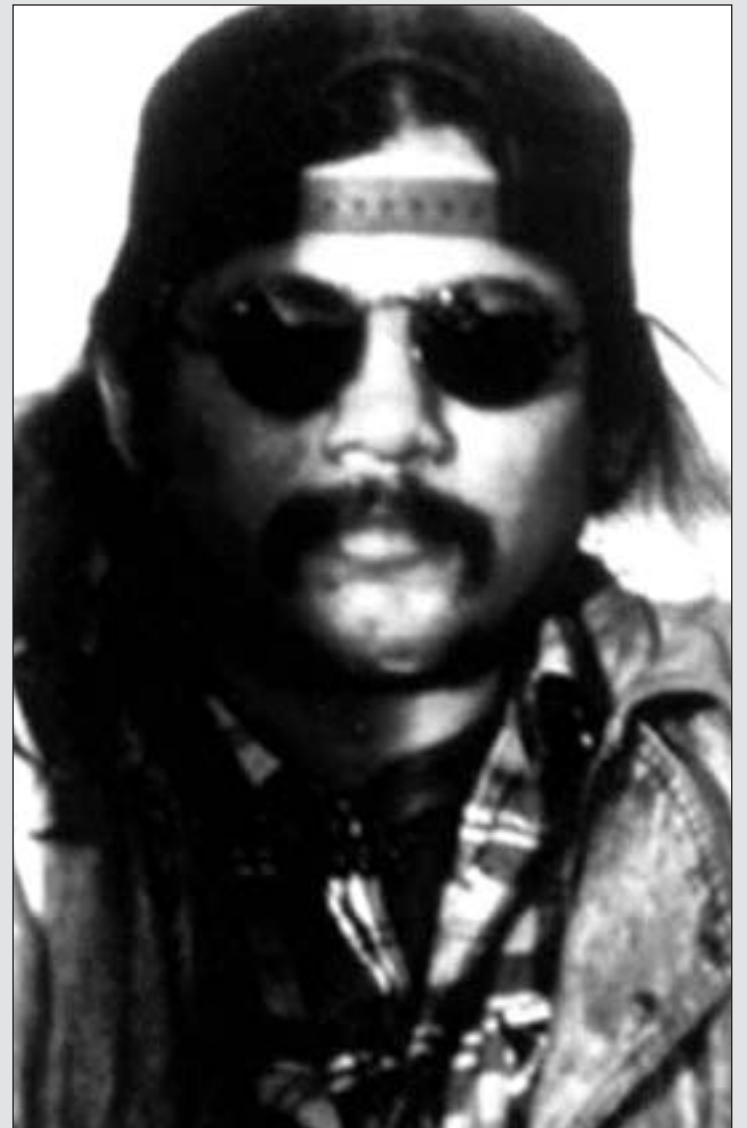
The ETT represents over 11,000 teachers in the Toronto District School Board.

The union has long supported the George family's search for answers to the shooting death of Dudley George by an OPP officer at Ipperwash Provincial Park in 1995.

"When you realise that Dudley was the only native killed in Canada in a land claim during the 20th century, huge questions arise, especially considering the fact that all the natives occupying the park were unarmed," adds Long.

Sam George led the family's call for a public inquiry. The provincial government stubbornly refused to open an inquiry even after the trial of OPP officer Kenneth Deane found him guilty of the shooting and raised questions about the actions of the police and government. In frustration, Sam launched a potentially costly private lawsuit against the OPP, the government and the Premier, Mike Harris.

ETT responded to the family's need for financial help. In 2001 it held a standing-room-only fundraising concert at Con-



vocation Hall to support the Ipperwash Legal Fund. The following year, supporters filled Massey Hall to hear musical greats like Buffy St. Marie and Molly Johnson and to raise more money in support of the lawsuit.

Commenting on these events Sam George noted: "The teachers came along at a very difficult time for us. The concerts raised much-needed funds for our legal action. More than that, they really raised up our spirits at the same time."

With the election of the Liberal Government in 2003 and the out-of-court settlement of the George family's lawsuit, the remaining funds raised by ETT were transferred to the Dudley George Memorial Education Fund, whose mandate was to further educational opportunities for Aboriginal youth.

The fund has supported projects from Ipperwash to Toronto

to Trout Lake in northern Ontario. The Ipperwash program, designed to help ease the transition into high school for Aboriginal youth, has been adopted by communities as far away as New Zealand.

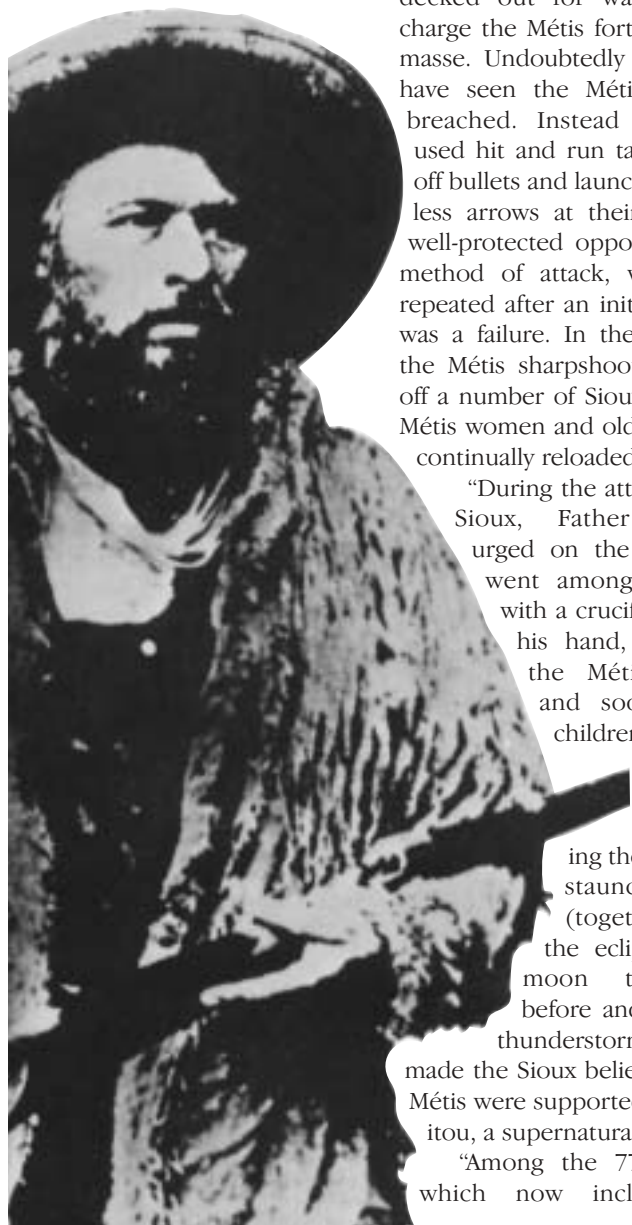
"The fund is doing the kind of work that would have made Dudley smile," says Sam George. Long adds, "We hope Dudley's name and spirit will continue to inspire young people from all backgrounds for a long time to come."

Dudley George Memorial Education Fund

Dennis Fox, *Chair*
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Elementary Teachers of Toronto

Martin Long, *President*
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teenage boys, was not only the senior Isadore Dumont but also his two sons 17 year-old Isadore and 13 year-old Gabriel. Young Gabriel was destined to become the great military leader of the Métis during the North-west Uprising of 1885 over 40 years later. Many of the lessons he learned at the Battle of the Grand Coteau, particularly the effectiveness of the rifle pits, he later used during that uprising.

"The Sioux onslaught on the first day of the battle continued for six hours until a heavy downpour, coupled with their losses, caused them to withdraw. However, they continued to whoop and shout all night long, indicating that they were not yet done

with the Métis."

The Second Day

"Before sun-up the next morning (July 14th) and the return of the Sioux, the Métis decided to make a run for safety to the other Métis parties some 25 or 30 miles away. Sentries were dispatched to watch for the approach of the native warriors, while Red River carts were hastily readied, after which they quickly departed.

"However, it was not long into their flight before their sentinels warned them that the Sioux were in hot pursuit. The same procedure of circling the wagons, as they had used the day before, was quickly implemented by the

Métis.

"The Sioux charged, again using their hit and run technique. This method of attack was of no value against the fortified barrier of the Métis and their rifle power. The Métis marksmen were deadly accurate with their rifles, and continued to gun down their opponents while suffering no casualties themselves, except for some livestock.

"After five hours of attack on this second day, the Sioux had sustained enough carnage. In a gesture of peace, a chief approached and conceded victory to the Métis.

"The Sioux retreated just as another torrential downpour

MORE PAGE 31

RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING AWARENESS:

OUT of LUCK

Are you feeling lucky? Maybe not after you hear some facts on gambling and the odds

BY GLEN LIPINSKI

"Local Métis Strikes It Rich!"

The headline above, although fictitious, is one that we are all quickly attracted to with long-ing interest, curiosity and excitement. We want to know: How did they get rich? What did they win? Can I get some too? If that person did it, I should be able to do it too, right? Well, maybe--with some "luck".

The word "luck", what is it? What does it do and how does it work its magic?

Good luck; bad luck; best of luck; wish me luck; feeling lucky; getting lucky; all of these phrases share a similar message. The mere word is cause for excitement and a promise of good things to come. Why are we so fascinated with the word "luck"? Let's have a look at "luck".

The dictionary defines "luck" as "a force that seems to operate for good or ill in a person's life, as in shaping circumstances, events, opportunities etc., good fortune, advantage or success considered as the result of chance."

What makes you lucky or how do you get luck on your side? You could carry a lucky rabbit's foot, a lucky stone, a special amulet, lucky oils, a lucky coin, etc. Are any of these things going to aid us in our quest for luck? Maybe, possibly, some people swear by it, others are not so sure. Here are some interesting points worthy of consideration on the subject of luck.

Probability and odds say that aids such as a rabbit's foot and lucky coins will not improve your chances of becoming "lucky" (and then ultimately rich) while playing games of chance because of your supposed new found "good luck".

A significant number of Aboriginal people play games of chance or gamble, hoping that "luck" will make them rich. In

you are one of those people who are at risk or are one of those people who will have problems with gambling.

Approximately 6% of people who gamble are at risk of becoming a problem gambler. Most of us can relax and continue to enjoy moderate, recreational gambling within limits.

However, this does not mean that we should all relax to the point that we ignore responsible gambling, or turn our heads and say "gambling has nothing to do with me" and please, don't think that "problem gamblers" only go to casinos!

There is a general lack of interest, along with the classic "it can't happen to me" idea, or "it's not my problem", that is causing major concern with issues over problem gambling among Aboriginal people today. Remember that "problem gambling" can lead to additional health problems including, emotional, physical, mental and social difficulties.

Health care workers across the province and indeed across the country and the world are becoming more and more concerned with the exploding issues surrounding gambling. Responsible gambling practices are needed now more than ever due to the following:

- Greatly increased access to games of chance (slots and table games) at casinos
- Creation of huge mega-Bingo halls
- Easy access to internet and television gambling
- Increased ease of access to large amounts of available credit (cash).
- Large advertising budgets designed to make "striking it rich" look very easy and very attractive for the ordinary, every day person
- Availability of lottery tickets, pull tabs and on-line gaming to children and youth

We want to draw your attention to and make you more aware of this evolving and escalating



fact, recent studies from five Aboriginal communities in Ontario indicate that between 48% and 93% of respondents say that they gamble in some form. Between 43% and 69% of Aboriginal women in the surveyed communities are gamblers, between 32% and 57% of Aboriginal men in the surveyed communities are gamblers.

Gambling is defined as "any gaming behaviour involving risk and considered reward where money or valuables may be won or lost".

“...DON'T THINK THAT 'PROBLEM GAMBLERS' ONLY GO TO CASINOS!"

In a recent Aboriginal gambling study of Aboriginal communities in Ontario, bingo, instant win tickets, lottery tickets and slot machines were indicated as the gambling activities that were most prevalent among Aboriginal people in Ontario.

Gambling has been a part of all of our lives for a long time. It is estimated that 63% of people gamble in some form, 6% of them will become what is considered "at risk" and have the potential of becoming problem gamblers.

"Problem gambling" is defined as "any type of gambling that compromises, disrupts, or damages personal, family or work pursuits".

You are probably wondering if

THE SIOUX & MÉTIS WARS

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erupted. Almost immediately after, a large group of Métis hunters from the Red River and Pembina parties belatedly galloped on to the scene. It was decided not to pursue and seek revenge from the unsuccessful native adversaries, but to carry on with the buffalo hunt."

Aftermath

•••
"The exact number of Sioux casualties is not known, but has been estimated at 80 killed and numerous wounded, and the loss of dozens of their horses. They had

been emphatically repulsed. This battle forever ended warfare between the Sioux and the Métis. This triumph made the Métis the undisputed lords of these plains and of the buffalo herds in this [area] and the nearby Turtle Mountains.

"Astonishingly, the Métis did not lose one man, woman or child during the lengthy onslaughts. However, several were wounded and a number of their horses and oxen were killed and the unfortunate Malaterre had been killed by the Sioux before the battle started.

"The Métis who fought for

their lives at the historic Battle of the Grand Coteau, figuratively wore badges of honour and courage. Their valiant actions in this dramatic conflict were an accomplishment par excellence and vividly exemplified the fighting spirit of this unique people."

As you can see from the excerpt above, the authors combine good narrative writing with historic detail. As an introduction to Métis history, or for those intent on finding out more about the origins of our people, this book is recommended. ∞

problem. Only through knowledge and understanding of the issues that surround gambling can you make correct and informed choices to the very best of your abilities and in turn promote wellness for yourself, your families and your communities.

Throughout the coming months I will be offering you (in an easy to understand and factual format) the latest and most up-to-date information to guide you to increased health and wellness in your lives through the promotion of responsible gambling practices.

Please remember that "gam-

bling" and more important "responsible gambling" is everybody's concern and only by working together can we increase that awareness all across the Métis Homeland.

The next time you are feeling "lucky" and want to exercise your gambling right, consider the facts and gamble responsibly and safely.

Glen Lipinski

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MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO HEALTH CAREERS SUPPORT PROGRAM

Do you want to be a health professional? Have you wanted to go back to school but not had the opportunity? Are you currently pursuing a health career and having difficulty making ends meet? If so, the Métis Nation of Ontario may be able to help you through a new funding program designed to assist Métis students from Ontario.

TRAINING & SUPPORT: This program assists and encourages Métis students to gain the necessary prerequisites to position themselves for ongoing education ultimately leading to a career in health.

SCHOLARSHIPS & BURSARIES: This program helps Métis students who have demonstrated need for assistance to complete their program of study.

CONTINUING EDUCATION: The Continuing Education award helps Métis health professionals who provide services to Métis people in Ontario to enhance their education.



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Ottawa, ON K1N 9G4
Ph: 613-798-1488
or 1-800-263-4889 (toll free)
www.metisnation.org

Santé Canada Health Canada

Funding made available through the Métis Health Human Resources Initiative, a four year national program funded by Health Canada.



MÉTIS CANOE EXPEDITION 3

SEEKING YOUNG ADVENTURERS

The Métis Nation of Ontario is looking for interested Métis individuals to participate in the Third Métis Canoe Expedition. This theme of this adventure is "Learning Through Discovery" and will take place between May and August, 2008. Two weeks of training will be arranged, but applicants are encouraged to be in good physical condition.

In 2003 the Metis Canoe Expedition a youth project sponsored by the Métis Nation of Ontario in partnership with Fort William Historical Park, retraced the 2,000+ kms historical canoe route used by the Voyageurs 200 years ago. A crew of 10 Métis youth along with an experienced expedition

leader paddled a 26-foot replica birch bark canoe following the Ottawa and Nipissing Rivers to Lake Huron and Lake Superior from Lachine, Quebec to Old Fort William in Thunder Bay.

In 2005 the "Second Métis Canoe Expedition" continued on deep into the Northwest from Thunder Bay, Ontario to Batoche, Saskatchewan, a journey of nearly 2,300 kms.

Applicants must submit the following: A current resume; Three (3) references; Registration Form; Métis verification form; Medical form and an essay (max 500 words) describing why you want to be a

part of this project and why you should be selected for the expedition. All these documents are available on the Métis Nation of Ontario website (www.metisnation.org) or by contacting the number below.

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the Métis
Nation of
Ontario

Métis man hoped to thank Métis Nation of Ontario health worker

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

He was a champion snowmobile racer and a well-known mechanic. He worked hard making maple syrup and founding his own firewood and logging business. He found great pleasure and relaxation with hunting, fishing, dog training and family outings. Donald will always be thought of as a family man. His devotion to his family and friends was and always will be carried in the hearts of those he loved.

At the time of his death, Mr. Hass was composing a letter of thanks to the Windsor Essex Métis Council. His family has requested that the letter be shared.

My name is Donald Hass. I live in French River, Ontario, where I have lived most of my life. This is an area that is located just north of Parry Sound. I was born in a hospital in Toronto, Ontario in 1945. When I was a little boy my parents bought some river front property and built a tourist camp. I worked for my parents at this camp where I met the love of my

life Marie Lacasse. I married Marie in 1968 and we both moved into a home at the camp. During this time we continued to work at the camp and I began my own wholesale bait business. I would drive all over selling minnows and worms to camps and businesses. In 1980 we bought a piece of property on the river and build our home where we are still living. At this time I began my own cut and split firewood business. I spent the bulk of my time after 1980 working in the bush and built my business up from a firewood business with only one truck, to my own logging business with a cherry picker, two skidders, and a staff that ranged from 2 to 10 men. Over the next 14 years I built my business into a stable and prospering enterprise.

In the fall of 1994 I suffered from a silent heart attack. At this point my doctor told me I would no longer be able to work. Due to doctor's orders I was forced to retire due to medical reasons. Because of my medical history I lost both my A and B licenses.

Over the next several years I argued and fought with the government who refused to grant me a disability pension. To help make ends meet we were forced to sell off many of our belongings one piece at a time as well as use up all the money which we had been saving up for our retirement. After nine long years the govern-

ment finally granted me a disability pension. By this time the equipment and the savings were gone and I was now diabetic. With the pension in place we were able to survive for the next few years without problems.

In 2001 my doctor changed my life again. This time I was told that because of the health problems I have had since the heart attack that my kidneys were failing and that it was only a matter of time until I would have to go for dialysis. A year and a half later the inevitable happened. I began dialysis in the summer of 2003. I had been on dialysis from that point until March of 2006 when I received a phone call telling me that they had found a kidney match and that I would have to leave my home and go down to London where the transplant would take place. My wife and I were flown down to London from the Sudbury airport. We were told that we would have to spend at least four weeks down there after the surgery was over to make sure that everything was working and to settle all the medical questions and issues that might arise. I spent four days in the ICU after my transplant. Once stable and in recovery, my wife tried to find a place where we would stay once I came out of the hospital.

My wife contacted many different agencies to see how much

help they would be able to give her. The one agency for which we are both extremely grateful is the Métis office of Windsor. When my wife called them to explain our situation a wonderful woman by the name of Patricia Messenger drove all the way from Windsor to London to help. She drove my wife around the city showing her different apartments and hotels. She was able to show my wife short cuts and show her where different places could be located. Not only this but she was extremely pleasant and was able

in which we stayed has placed another strain on our finances. We stayed in this apartment for the month of April. I have only been back home since the end of April and I may now have to go back down to London due to complications in my transplant.

I have now had the new kidney for almost two months. I am feeling much better and I am glad that I no longer have to go and spend four days a week for five hours a time stuck to a dialysis machine.

.....

This is as far as Donald got in composing his letter. The family wishes to add:

Over the next 12 months Donald would see the inside of the London Hospital, as well as the Sudbury Hospital several times due to infections and complications with the new kidney--always leaving him with less and less strength to fight. He had a few periods where he believed he would get better and be able to enjoy life again, but it was not to be. On May 23rd, 2007 he lost the battle.

We would like to thank everyone for all that was done to help Donald through the difficult years of illness and although the transplant did not do what we were wishing for, it did give us an extra 14 months to enjoy Donald's love.

“THE ONE AGENCY FOR WHICH WE ARE BOTH EXTREMELY GRATEFUL IS THE MÉTIS OFFICE OF WINDSOR.”

to provide companionship and friendship to my wife who had been stressed out ever since I went in for surgery. Patricia vowed to help us in any way that she could.

I spent a week in the hospital and we were able to eventually find a place to stay. The apartment