

OTIPEMISIWAK

August 2017

Express

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



It is my honour to welcome you to Métis Nation of Alberta. Our strength comes from our community which is why we strive to keep our members informed about news, events, and opportunities. As a member, you can stay connected by browsing our website, visiting our Facebook page, Twitter page, and Instagram page, or opting in to receive email newsletters by emailing commteam@metis.org. Our quarterly magazine, Otipemisiwak, is available on our website and in print. Print copies of the publication can be picked up at our provincial head office in Edmonton as well as at our regional offices located in Lac La Biche, Bonnyville, Calgary, Edmonton, Slave Lake, and Peace River.

Kind Regards,

Audrey Poitras
President, Métis Nation of Alberta

NEWS

Métis Harvesting Rights

The MNA-Alberta Framework Agreement, which was signed in February 2017, included Alberta's commitment to facilitate "the recognition and respect of Métis rights in Alberta that upholds the honour of the Crown and advances reconciliation." We have been working hard with Alberta to implement this agreement. With respect to Métis harvesting, the agreement committed Alberta to:

"Pursue collaborative discussions with the Ministry of Environment and Parks with respect to Métis harvesting rights;"

The MNA has never agreed with or supported the Alberta unilaterally imposed Métis Harvesting policy. This policy was put into place in 2007 after our Interim Métis Harvesting Agreement was discontinued. Because of our consistent and collective efforts, Alberta has now agreed to begin formal discussions with the MNA on reviewing and updating this policy.



In the next few weeks, we hope to finalize mutually agreeable terms of reference to guide our efforts.

Then the hard work will begin—at the negotiations table with Alberta. At the same time, we will be engaging in province-wide consultations in the Fall of 2017 to inform our positions at the table and to receive input from our members on the issues that concern them. The MNA is cautiously optimistic that real progress can be made on this file, so our Métis harvesters can exercise their constitutionally-protected rights without fear of harassment or prosecution.





IN CASE YOU MISSED IT... 89th Annual General Assembly

This August the Métis Nation of Alberta gathered in Peace River for the 89th AGA, hosted by Region 6. The weekend began with a Youth Conference which aimed to connect youth with career and education resources. Attendees enjoyed informative presentations from community leaders, industry representatives, and education providers. The Métis Rights Conference was another highlight which discussed and celebrated the recent agreements and ongoing discussions with the Provincial and Federal governments.

A BBQ in Riverfront Park was a wonderful close to a productive and fun first day.

The Business Meeting commenced on Saturday morning with constructive conversations about the Special and Ordinary Resolutions. Saturday evening ended with an entertaining banquet including live music, jigging, fiddling, and dancing.

For a recap of Special Resolutions and a more in-depth look at what happens during an AGA, please visit our website.

SEPTEMBER EVENTS Community Health Nights: Healthy Pregnancy

Tuesday, September 26th
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

MNA Provincial Head Office
#100-11738 Kingsway NW
Edmonton, AB

Métis Nation of Alberta will be hosting their third Community Health Night on September 26, 2017. The Gianna Centre with Catholic Social Services will be providing a presentation on Healthy Pregnancy. Topics will include; nutrition, mindfulness, exercise, and birth planning. To reserve a spot contact Christine by Tuesday, September 19, 2017 at cdyck@metis.org, or 780-455-2200 ext. 249.

Garneau Tree

Friday, September 15th
University of Alberta

An important mark of Métis heritage in Edmonton, a 140-year-old Manitoba Maple, has sadly reached the end of its life cycle. On the grounds of the University of Alberta stands this historic tree; planted by prominent Métis figure Laurent Garneau and his wife Eleanor, shortly after their move to Edmonton in 1874.

The MNA, in collaboration with the University of Alberta, Garneau descendants, and community members are planning Commemorative Events to celebrate Laurent Garneau's legacy and the history of the neighbourhood named in his honour.

A ceremony is to be held at the site of the Garneau Tree on September 15th, 2017. The event will include opening and closing prayers by Métis elders, fiddling, and speeches from MNA President Audrey Poitras, Garneau descendants Duane Zaraska (MNA Region 2 Vice President) and David Garneau, and a community member.

A kitchen Party, hosted by David Garneau will follow at the Main Gym in Van Vliet Centre (behind the Butterdome).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Métis Week: 7th Annual Louis Riel Commemorative Walk

Sunday, November 12th
10:00 am - 1:00pm

St. Margaret's Church: North Shore, Hastings Lake, Deville
AB 51442 Rge Rd 203 Strathcona County

Each November, Métis Nation of Alberta celebrates Métis Week to commemorate the outstanding contributions of Métis people to Canada.

In honour of Louis Riel, the 6.6 km commemorative walk with horse and wagon rides to St. Margaret's Church signifies the procession made by Riel's family and community to his funeral.