

# OTIPEMISIWAK



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I would like to open this winter edition of Otipemisiwak by wishing everyone a happy 2016. There have been many exciting initiatives over the past few months including the launch of our new website, a registry drive initiative, the publication of a Métis health report and the development of a Provincial Métis Consultation Policy!

In the next few months, we look forward to engaging with the Government of Alberta (GoA) to address Métis Rights. On Monday, February 1st, The MNA submitted a proposal to the GoA titled *Directives for the Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. We are optimistic that the GoA will follow through on their commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and will engage the MNA in a government to government relationship in 2016.

Sincerely,

Audrey Poitras  
President, Métis Nation of Alberta

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## PRESIDENT POITRAS MEETS WITH MINISTERIAL SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE

*Edmonton, AB – Wednesday, January 13, 2016*

Métis Nation of Alberta President Audrey Poitras met with Ministerial Special Representative Tom Issac today. Mr. Issac was appointed by the Honourable Bernard Valcourt, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, to commence a federal consultation process with Métis communities across Canada in June of 2015. MNA President Audrey Poitras stated that "the MNA is very happy to have this opportunity to represent Métis Albertans at the Federal level. We are committed to regular and ongoing consultation with the new Liberal Government to ensure the needs of Métis Albertans are addressed."





# MNA HEALTH REPORT SHOWS MÉTIS MEN EXHIBIT HIGH RATES OF LUNG CANCER

Edmonton, AB - Monday, February 01, 2016

A recently published health study titled *Cancer incidence and mortality among the Métis population of Alberta, Canada* conducted by the MNA and University of Alberta has revealed that Métis men have higher rates of lung cancer compared to the general population.

MNA Minister of Health, Children and Youth; Diane Scoville, hopes that the report will provide a catalyst for action toward improving health outcomes for Métis people. Diane Scoville remarked that "the empirical evidence is indisputable. In light of these findings, we hope to see more done by our governments to improve health outcomes for the Métis community." MNA Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, Sara Parker, seconded Scoville's statement by commenting "this data confirms the lingering health disparity that exists between Métis and non-Aboriginal communities. We hope to use this information to provide health services for our Métis people."



View the full report online:  
Int J Circumpolar Health 2016, 75: 30059 -  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.3402/ijch.v75.30059>

# MNA SETS SIGHTS ON PROVINCIAL CONSULTATION POLICY

Edmonton, AB - Monday, February 29, 2016

The development of a Métis Consultation Policy framework with the Government of Alberta is underway with consultation meetings taking place across the province.

So far, consultation meetings with MNA Regional and Local Presidents have been carried out. These meetings will help build momentum toward the development of a Métis Consultation policy framework that works for the MNA in its entirety at the Provincial, Regional and Local levels.

Further engagements are being planned with Metis communities and individuals that will add to the feedback already received from the initial round of engagement. In addition, staff are planning for web based capabilities for on-line submissions and feedback. This should be available on the MNA website in the near future. We are only in the early stages of development on the Metis consultation framework.

A Technical Working Group (TWG) comprised of regional technical experts has been established. The TWG will assist the MNA Provincial Office in carrying out its functions to develop a framework that guides MNA and GoA dialogue/negotiation to develop a "made in Alberta" Métis consultation policy. The TWG is optimistic that a report will be filed at the 2016 AGM. An overview of "what we heard" to date was presented by MNA Director of Sustainable Development and Industry Relations, Bruce Gladue, at the MNA Provincial Business mixer on March 31, 2016.



Bruce Gladue, MNA Director of Sustainable Development & Industry Relations, provides an overview of the various stages in the Oil and Gas lifecycle process.



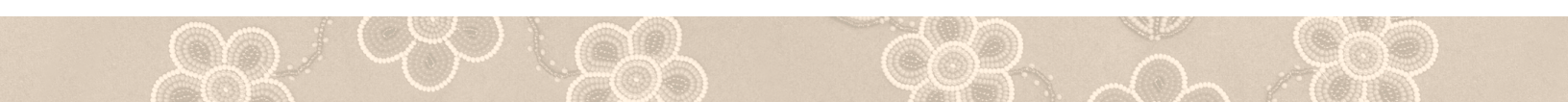
Top-Left: Aboriginal Rights Lawyer, Jason Madden, gives a comprehensive presentation on the history of Métis rights and discusses the consultation policies of the MMF and MNO.

Bottom-Left: MNA President, Audrey Poitras and MNA Region 3 President, Marlene Lanz.



Right: Region 3 Local Presidents including Jeannette Hansen, Raye St. Denys, Gail McLenaghan, Marcien Leblanc, Doreen Williams and Dewayne Lavallie.

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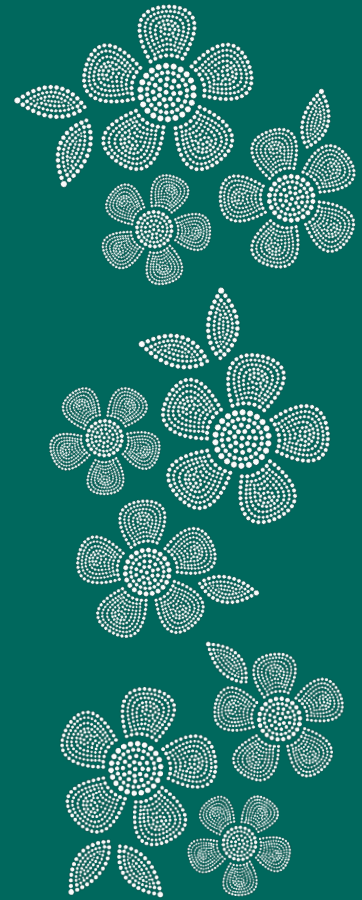
MNA President, Audrey Poitras, remarked that “recent shifts in the political landscape have resulted in renewed government interest in working with the Métis Nation. I am confident that the Government of Alberta will heed the recommendations set out in these consultation meetings and work with us to develop a consultation policy that works for Métis Albertans.”

# MNA TO RAMP UP MEMBERSHIP DRIVE EFFORT IN 2016

Edmonton, AB – March 23, 2016

The MNA Registry department hosted a series of membership drives this March. The membership drives took place in rural communities across the province with the intent of assisting prospective members to complete their applications. The MNA intends to plan future outreach opportunities in 2016 as part of our commitment to community engagement. Please check the MNA website at [www.albertametis.com](http://www.albertametis.com) for future outreach opportunities!

For more information about MNA membership drives, please contact us at 1-866-678-7888 or [registry@metis.org](mailto:registry@metis.org).



Top-Left: Laura Horne and Joanne Tolmie assist an applicant at the Rocky Mountain House Membership Drive.

Top-Right: A large turn out for the Rocky Mountain House Membership Drive and Annual General Assembly!

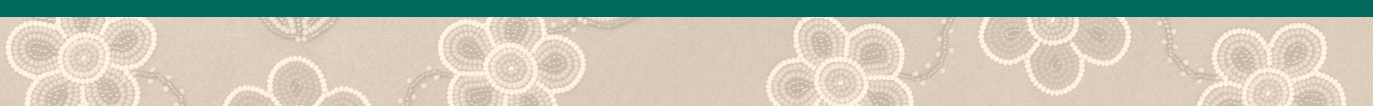


Bottom: The MNA Registry Team looks forward to meeting you this year!

Top Row, Left to Right: Roxanne Sousa, Susie Sousa, Laura Horne, Grace Hardy, Terry Boucher.

Bottom Row, Left to Right: Dawn Darrington, Beatrice Demetrius, and Joanne Tolmie.

Missing: Carrie Aldridge and Tracee McFeeters, Director of Registry.







# MÉTIS ARTIST TAKES CENTRE STAGE

*Edmonton, AB – Wednesday, February 17, 2016*

Theresa Poirier, also known by her stage alias "Muskeg Mama", is no stranger to the limelight. The talented Métis artist took to the stage during the MNA Métis Week Box Social in November and recently performed a one hour set at MacEwan University on February 4.

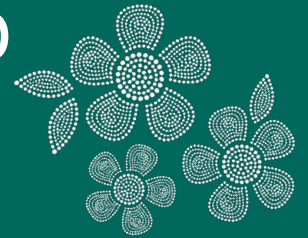
Theresa discovered music as her life's passion 3 years ago after she picked up a guitar for the first time ever. Theresa's music has a distinct folk aesthetic - many of her songs connect with people, places and the natural environment and a number of her works are related to Métis culture.

As an avid learner, Theresa is currently pursuing an arts degree in sociology and political sciences at MacEwan University. Theresa discovered the therapeutic aspect of the arts since surviving both cancer, Graves disease and testifying for the Truth and Reconciliation report - she finds music and the arts profoundly important for the physical and spiritual healing process.

Theresa is an artisan in every sense of the word and her accomplishments are myriad. She is always on the lookout for new projects and has penned 100 songs in 100 weeks and written 20 stories in one school semester! Theresa is an author and recently had one of her works published in *40 Below Volume 2: Alberta's Winter Anthology*. In addition to her literary skills, Theresa demonstrates an aptitude for the visual arts and has painted a number of watercolour compositions in the minimalist, abstract and aboriginal genres.



# MNA REGIONS 3 AND 4 HOST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS



*Edmonton, AB - Sunday, January 31, 2016*

MNA Regions 3 and 4 hosted Annual General Meetings this January. The Region 3 AGM took place at Calgary's Coast Plaza Hotel and Conference Centre on Saturday, January 16, 2016 while the Region 4 AGM happened at Edmonton's Royal Executive Inn on Saturday, January 30.



Photos from the Region 4 AGM:

Top-Left: MNA Region 4 President, Cecil Bellrose, addresses the room.

Bottom-Left: Bob Phillips, President of the Aboriginal Veterans Society, John McDonald and Ken Powlyna.

Bottom-Right: Herb Belcourt