

# OTIPEMISIWAK

Issue 3 2017

## **Celebrating Métis Week**

November 13 – 18, 2017.

Commemorating the outstanding contributions of Métis people to Canada.

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## **Métis Consultation Policy**

A closer look at the current Consultation Policy conversation.

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Carvel Electric, Out of the Blue Mobile Boutique, and Gwin Communications.

Read about these entrepreneurs journey to success.

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**The Official Voice of the Métis Nation of Alberta**

# Presidential Message



I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of our readers and take this time to thank all who attended the 89th Annual General Assembly in Peace River, AB. It was a successful weekend with a strong attendance for both the Youth and Rights conferences. During the Business Meeting, constructive conversations were had around Special and Ordinary Resolutions and many new ideas were brought forward.

As we leave behind the summer months and head into a busy fall we look forward to celebrating Métis Week during November. Métis people played a leading role in the development of the City of Edmonton as fur traders, voyageurs, merchants, and craftsmen, while continually shaping the cultural landscape of this great city today.

Events will be held November 13th to 18th, and I encourage everyone to join in the celebrations of recognizing the outstanding contributions of Métis people and our rich Métis culture.

Highlighted in this issue of the Otipemisiwak are Métis business owners. The talent and motivation of these entrepreneurs, is a testament to the limitless potential of Métis ingenuity in Alberta's economic landscape and within our community.

With the year coming to a close, I look forward to seeing everyone at our Special Meeting and Community Christmas Party, December 16, 2017.

2017 has been a ground-breaking year for the Métis Nation of Alberta and I am optimistic 2018 has much more in store.

*Audrey*

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# Developing a Métis Consultation Policy

## Key highlights from meeting with Métis Nation of Alberta and Minister of Indigenous Relations



Métis Nation of Alberta representatives meeting with the Government of Alberta to discuss an Alberta Métis Consultation Policy

On October 6, 2017, leaders from the Government of Alberta and the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) met to begin discussions for an Alberta Métis Consultation Policy. “The meeting is a significant milestone forging a strengthened Nation to Nation relationship” stated the President of the Métis Nation of Alberta, Audrey Poitras.

She continued, “It has been a long time coming. We are excited to get the discussions officially started and begin developing a consultation policy for the Métis Nation and the Province. Crown consultation is about respecting and protecting rights and for far too long the Métis in Alberta have not been consulted. Jointly developing this policy will mark a new era of Crown-Métis relations in the province.”

The MNA has advocated for policy requiring consultation with Métis people for decades. The development of this policy was identified in the Métis Nation of Alberta - Government of Alberta Framework Agreement signed on February 1, 2017. The Framework Agreement outlines how the MNA and Government of Alberta will work together to facilitate the recognition

and respect of Métis rights in Alberta, uphold the honour of the Crown, and advance reconciliation.

In his presentation, the Minister of Indigenous Relations, Honourable Richard Feehan, focused on Alberta’s priority initiatives related to Métis consultation. Specifically, launching a dialogue on potential legislation on Indigenous Consultation and a policy on Métis Harvesting. The Minister further outlined his intent to conduct consultation, understand barriers experienced by Métis citizens, and understand Métis peoples’ connection to the land and their role protecting it. Minister Feehan also highlighted the importance of creating a mechanism to provide legislative feedback.

A Métis consultation policy that works for both the Government of Alberta and the Métis Nation of Alberta is crucial for the province’s future. The policy will allow Alberta’s lands and resources to be developed ensuring the Métis Nation, as a distinct Indigenous people, can flourish creating prosperity for the Métis Nation and all Albertans for generations to come.

# INAC Announcement

## INAC is dismantled and two new departments are introduced

On Monday, August 28, 2017, Prime Minister Trudeau announced the dissolution of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) with the creation of two new departments; the Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, and the Department of Indigenous Services.

Carolyn Bennett will now serve as the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs and former Health Minister Jane Philpott will become Minister of Indigenous Services.

A statement on Prime Minister Trudeau's website details the ministerial changes:

"The new Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs will guide the Government's forward-looking and transformative work to create a new relationship with Indigenous Peoples...The Minister will also be tasked with better whole-of-government coordination on our nation-to-nation,

Inuit-Crown, and government-to-government relationships. The new Minister of Indigenous Services will continue the important work of improving the quality of services delivered to First Nations, Inuit and Métis people."

In a personal message to INAC employees, Trudeau explains that, "We need to shed the administrative structures and legislation that were conceived in another time for a different kind of relationship."

The Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) is optimistic about the changes as they are modelled on recommendations from the 1996 Royal Commission on Indigenous Peoples, which included a chapter on the Métis. It is also important to note, although this recent announcement is a positive start, much more work is still needed to build a successful nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationship between the Métis and the Canadian Government.



Carolyn Bennett, Jane Philpott, Kent Hehr, Carla Qualtrough, Ginette Petitpas Taylor, and Seamus O'Regan  
Image taken from website of Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada

# Honouring the Garneau Tree

## Hundreds of community members gather to farewell an important mark of Métis heritage

On Friday, September 15, 2017 community members and descendants of the Garneau family assembled at the University of Alberta to celebrate and honour the legacy left behind by Laurent Garneau and his wife Eleanor; the historic Garneau Tree.

With hundreds of people gathering around the historic Manitoba Maple, the intimate ceremony touched not only on the prominent impact Laurent and Eleanor Garneau had on the Métis community, but also included personal memories and stories shared by family descendants.

Speakers of the ceremony included President of the MNA, Audrey Poitras, MNA Minister of Culture, Duane Zaraska, artist and professor, David Garneau, Annette Rondeau, Métis Elder, John McDonlad, Métis Veteran, community members, and University of Alberta representatives.

Brianna Lizotte fiddled throughout the ceremony bringing life to this historic celebration in Métis history.

Although, as of September 17, 2017 the Garneau Tree no longer stands on the University of Alberta grounds, the Garneau family and community members will continue to remember the legacy left by Laurent and Eleanor Garneau. Pieces of the Manitoba Maple have been saved by the Garneau family and community members and plans are underway so that they may be used to carry on the memory and history of the Garneau Tree.



The Garneau Tree



President Audrey Poitras & Brianna Lizotte



David Garneau & President Audrey Poitras

# Deb Fiddler

## Métis armwrestling champion

Deb knew she was hooked on armwrestling after winning her first official tournament during her high school years. She competed against four girls and beat them all. When looking back at old photos, she can't help but laugh, "[I didn't] even have the right stance or anything."

In preparation for qualifying and attending multiple World Championships, Fiddler uses her expertise as a Canada Post worker to build her immense grip strength. To open the airmail and lock bags, there is a strong twist tie that can only be removed with pliers. The constant motion of squeezing pliers is what gives Deb the strength and power to go up to the tables and crush the competition, as well as her opponent's hand.



2017 Armwrestling Championship Gold & Silver medals

Armwrestling gives Deb the camaraderie, confidence, and discipline she wants to share with the Métis community.

While filming for Arm Nation, a docu-series coming next year to APTN, Fiddler says she feels "proud that we're finally being recognized as people in the community and it shows that anybody can [armwrestle]."

"They have the Mi'kmaw games in Nova Scotia for aboriginals to do these armwrestling tournaments, and I thought hey, why can't I have that here. I'm thinking that way I can get more involved in the community."

In her most recent tournament at Nationals in Halifax, with around 395 competitors, Fiddler placed 2nd with her right arm in the Master class (40 yrs and older). During the same competition, she also placed 1st in the Grand Masters (50 yrs and older) with her left arm.

Fiddler says armwrestling is always a "nerve racking and fun" experience, which she continues to pursue both as a competitor and as a Level 1 Referee.



Deb winning against USA in 1998 World Championships

The largest armwrestling hubs in Alberta can be found in Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, and Grand Prairie; all ages and abilities are welcome.

**For more information or to get involved visit:**

**[www.edmontonsport.com/organizations/alberta\\_armwrestling\\_association](http://www.edmontonsport.com/organizations/alberta_armwrestling_association)**

# Louis Riel

## History of a Hero

Every year during Métis Week, we join on two notable occasions to honour the legacy left by our leader, Louis Riel.

The week of celebrations opens with the Louis Riel Commemorative Walk. For this event, community gathers to walk 6.6 kilometers in honour of Riel's family and friends who carried his casket 6 miles in the harsh Manitoba winter to St. Boniface to lay him to rest.

A New York Times article published December 14, 1885 describes the procession:

"To show the great esteem in which the deceased rebel was held, his people bore his remains upon their shoulders all the way from St. Vital, almost 6 miles. The names of the pall bearers were: Benjamin Nault, Chas Nault, Elie Nault, Posper Nault, Pére Harrison,

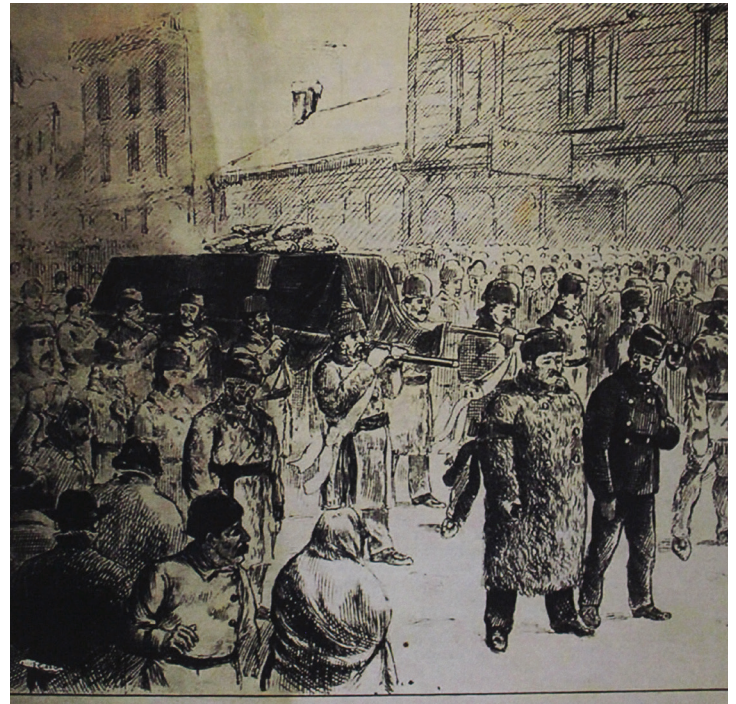
W.R. Lagimodiere, Louis Blondeau, Romain Lagimondiere, Norbert Landry, Roman Nault, Alfred Nault, Martin Nault, André Nault, Louison Desrivieres, Francis Poitras, Joseph Lagimodiere, St. Pierre Parisien, Francois Marion. Red colored sashes encircled their waists. They wore a white sash each across their shoulders and breast."

Riel was hanged in Regina and as per his dying request, his body was returned to St. Boniface to be buried next to his father.

On November 16th, we gather at the Alberta Legislature at 11am. On this date, at this time in 1885, Louis Riel was executed. His trial began on July 20th and lasted a total of four days. While he was in prison awaiting trial, Riel penned a letter to his friend, Doctor Romuald Fiset, which indicates his optimism:



Trial of Louis Riel, 1885



Louis Riel's funeral in Saint-Boniface, Manitoba





Louis Riel's Council 1870

"My quick surrender has contributed, I think, to a greater hope for the Metis to have peace, and has done them good, I presume... I humbly ask not to be treated as a murderer and not to be ironed before the jury have pronounced. And I am confident they will find me not guilty."

The jury determined Riel to be guilty of treason. However, they requested mercy from the judge. No such mercy was granted and Riel was sentenced to death on August 3, 1885.

It is these historical events, and all Louis Riel's heroic actions, we keep present in our minds when celebrating Métis Week. On the page 11, you will find an extensive schedule so you and your family may join us in the celebrations and honour this rich Métis history while looking optimistically to our future.

# Riel's Composition

Recently, the Métis Nation of Alberta came into possession of a long un-translated and un-published poem penned by Louis Riel. Writer, historian, artist, and translator, Michael Barnholden of Roberts Creek, British Columbia, translated the eight-verse poem and it was published this summer by The Capilano Review.

## Composition de Riel

1

Il faut rendre célèbre  
Ce triste champs des morts,  
Salut place funèbre  
Où j'aperçois trois corps.  
Ces disponibles mortelles  
Feraient verser des pleurs  
L'amentons-nous pour elles  
Dans leur derniers malheurs.

2

En les voyant – j'éprouve  
Une sentiment d'effroi  
Un corps humain se trouve  
Toujours le corps d'un roi  
L'homme est roi par son âme  
Et ses idées d'honneurs  
Nous savons que la femme  
Est reine par son coeur

3

Victimes de la guerre  
Je vous plains je vous vois  
C'est moi qui les enterre  
Au bout de trois longs mois  
Vous appelez la rage  
La grande faim des loups  
Assez longtemps l'orage  
S'est abbatu sur vous.

4

Mille a su vous surprendre  
Mais vous en retraitant  
Vous avez bien su rendre  
Le souffle en vous battant.  
Vous avez vu la poudre  
Eclater avec bruit  
Et comme un coup de foudre  
Se plonger dans la nuit.

5

Le bronze de batailles  
A déjà fuit hélas  
Pour vous des funeraillles  
Il a donné vos glas  
Vous avez eu la gloire  
De mourir en guerriers  
Le jardin de l'histoire  
A pour vous des lauriers

6

Oh! que ma main est fière  
D'inhumir des héros  
Quand l'air frais la poussière  
Vient carreser leurs os  
Tu me prête ta bêche  
Jérôme pour ouvrir  
La terre dure et sèche  
don't il faut les couvrir.

## La 7ieme marque

Nous sommes trois personnes  
Pour en enterrer trois  
Nos sympathies sont bonnes  
Et louables je crois  
Daniel Dumas, tu creuse  
Leurs fausses avec moi  
Mes pensées généreuses  
Doivent parler de toi.

8

Puisque ta femme Elise  
Vient t'aider jusqu'ici  
Il convient que je dise  
Un mot pour elle aussi  
Que la Bon Dieu vous fasse  
Ainsi qu'à moi Riel  
D'heureux jours et la grace  
De parvenir au ciel

## Riel's Composition

1

We must celebrate  
These sad fields of death  
Salute this funereal plot  
Where I see three bodies  
Those deathly remains  
Make our tears flow  
We cry for them  
In their final agony

2

Seeing them I am stricken  
With feelings of horror  
The human body is  
Always the body of a king  
Man is king because of his soul  
And his ideas of honour  
We know that woman  
Is queen because of her heart

3

Victims of the war  
I see you and I pity you  
It is I who bury them  
For three long months  
You survived their rage  
The great hunger of wolves  
Since the fury of the storm  
Came down upon you

4

You were surprised by thousands  
But you are in retreat  
You have done very well  
You are still breathing  
You have seen the gun powder  
Explode like thunder  
And like a cannon shot  
You plunge into the night

5

Those with battle medals  
Have already fled alas  
For you there are funerals  
Your death bell rings  
You have the glory  
Of the death of a warrior  
In the garden of history  
Your laurels await

6

Oh let my hand be strong  
When I bury our heroes  
While the air cools  
Before their bones are dust  
Lend me your shovel  
Jerome to open  
The hard dry earth  
A final cover for them

## The 7th part

We are three  
To bury three  
Our thoughts are good  
And honourable I believe  
Daniel Dumas you dig  
Their graves with me  
My thoughts are generous  
When I speak of you

8

Since your wife Elise  
Came to help you here  
It is right that I should say  
A word for her as well  
May the good lord give you  
As well as me Riel  
Happy days and grace  
When we reach heaven



Louis Riel

# Celebrating Métis Week

# 2017 EVENTS

# CALENDAR

## November 13 – 18, 2017

The Métis Nation of Alberta celebrates Métis Week to commemorate the outstanding contributions of Métis people to Canada. November 13th and 16th are especially significant as we honour Louis Riel and his fight for Métis rights.

Please visit our website [www.albertametis.com](http://www.albertametis.com) or call 780-455-2200 for more information.

## Provincial Head Office: Edmonton

MONDAY

13  
NOV

### Louis Riel Commemorative Walk & Reception

Join us as we walk 6.6 kilometers in honour of Riel's family and friends. They carried his casket 6 miles in the harsh Manitoba winter to St. Boniface to lay him to rest.

Following the walk, mass with Archbishop Richard Smith, Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton, will be held at St. Margaret's Church, followed by a light lunch at Deville North Cooking Lake Hall.

**Location:** St. Margaret's Church, 51442 Range Rd 203, Sherwood Park, AB (starting point for the walk)  
Deville North Cooking Lake Hall, 21033 Wye Rd, Sherwood Park, AB

**Time:** 10:00am – 1:00pm

TUESDAY

14  
NOV

### Métis Urban Housing Corporation (MUHC) Open House

Come to the MUHC Open House to learn about the programs and services they provide the community.

**Location:** 11923 121A Street, Edmonton, AB

**Time:** 11:00am – 1:00pm

### Métis Veterans' & Seniors' Tea

All Métis Veterans and Seniors are welcomed to enjoy an afternoon of tea, coffee, and light snacks.

**Location:** Métis Nation of Alberta Provincial Office, #100 11738 Kingsway NW, Edmonton, AB

**Time:** 1:00pm – 3:00pm

### Rupertsland Institute Métis Student Mixer

**Location:** SAIT Campus, Chinook Lodge (NN108), Senator Burns Building, Calgary, AB

**Time:** 4:00pm – 6:00pm

**City Hall Proclamation**

The MNA and the City of Edmonton are co-hosting a proclamation in commemoration of Métis Week. Light lunch and entertainment provided following the ceremony.

**Location:** Edmonton City Hall, 1 Sir Winston Churchill Square, Edmonton, AB

**Time:** 11:00am – 1:00pm

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**Hiding in Plain Sight: Discovering the Métis Nation**

Join us for the launch of Library and Archives Canada's exhibition exploring Métis culture and history including a Métis 101 presentation by MNA's Marilyn Lizee. Reception and light snacks to follow.

**Location:** University of Alberta Enterprise Square, 10230 Jasper Ave, Edmonton, AB

**Time:** 6:30pm – 9:00pm

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**Rupertsland Institute Métis Student Mixer**

**Location:** Mount Royal University, Calgary, AB

**Time:** 4:00pm – 6:00pm

**Louis Riel Commemorative Ceremony**

Pay tribute to Louis Riel, by joining a commemorative ceremony on the exact date and time of his execution; November 16<sup>th</sup> at 11:00am.

**Location:** Alberta Legislature Building, 10800 97 Ave NW, Edmonton, AB

**Time:** 11:00am – 12:00pm

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**Métis Nation of Alberta Open House**

Following the Louis Riel Commemorative Ceremony, gather with the community for lunch.

**Location:** Métis Nation of Alberta Provincial Office, #100 11738 Kingsway NW, Edmonton, AB

**Time:** 1:00pm – 4:00pm

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**Free Health Services for Métis Citizens**

A range of free, non-insured and culturally appropriate health services for Métis Citizens.

**Location:** Métis Nation of Alberta Provincial Office, #100 11738 Kingsway NW, Edmonton, AB

**Time:** 1:00pm – 6:00pm

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**Youth Art Contest Voting**

Voting for the art contest will occur during the Open House.

**Location:** Métis Nation of Alberta Provincial Office, #100 11738 Kingsway NW, Edmonton, AB

**Time:** 1:00pm – 6:00pm

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**Rupertsland Institute Métis Training to Employment Open House**

**Location:** 12308 111 Ave, Edmonton, AB

**Time:** 2:00pm – 4:00pm

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**Lighting of the High Level Bridge**

Edmonton's High Level Bridge lights will be white and blue to represent Métis colours in celebration of Métis Week.

FRIDAY

17  
NOV

### Free Health Services for Métis Citizens

A range of free, non-insured and culturally appropriate health services for Métis Citizens.

**Location:** Métis Nation of Alberta Provincial Office, #100 11738 Kingsway NW, Edmonton, AB

**Time:** 9:00am – 12:00pm

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### Youth Art Contest Voting

Voting for the art contest will continue.

**Location:** Métis Nation of Alberta Provincial Office, #100 11738 Kingsway NW, Edmonton, AB

**Time:** 9:00am – 12:00pm

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### 2017 Métis Week Gala: Celebrating our Rich, Vibrant Culture in Canada

Join MUHC and the MNA for an evening of entertainment, dinner, and celebrating our Métis community.

For ticketing information, please contact Lisa at 780-452-6440 or Margaret at 780-455-2200 Ext. 382.

**Location:** ENOCH Grand Ballroom, River Cree Casino & Resort, 300 East Lapotac Blvd, ENOCH, AB

**Time:** 5:30pm doors open for cocktails

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### Unveiling of the Rupertsland Reading Room Plaque

**Location:** MacEwan University, Kihêw Waciston Centre, 7-131, 10700 104 Ave, Edmonton, AB

**Time:** 1:00pm – 3:00pm

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SATURDAY

18  
NOV

### Family Day

Join the MNA for lessons in jigging and fiddling. All ages welcome.

**Location:** Edmonton Inn, 11834 Kingsway Ave, Edmonton, AB

**Time:** 1:00pm – 5:00pm



Louis Riel Commemorative Walk 2016

## Region 2: Bonnyville

780-826-7483

FRIDAY

17  
NOV

### Region 2 Open House

Join us for stew and bannock, while enjoying old time Métis music played by a fiddler and guitarist. The unveiling of the Elders and Members Wall will follow.

**Location:** Region 2 Office, 5102 51 St, Bonnyville, AB

**Time:** 12:00pm

## Region 3: Calgary

403-569-8800

MONDAY

13  
NOV

### Flag Raising Ceremony – Calgary Police Services

**Location:** Calgary Police Service, 5111 47 St NE, Calgary, AB

**Time:** 9:00am

### Flag Raising Ceremony – Calgary City Hall

The City of Calgary will be hosting a gathering at the Region 3 Office immediately after the flag raising ceremony. Lunch will be served.

**Location:** **Calgary City Hall**, 800 Macleod Trail SE, Calgary, AB (flag raising Location)  
Region 3 Office, 1415 28 St NE, Calgary, AB (lunch location)

**Time:** 12:00pm

TUESDAY

14  
NOV

### Métis Calgary Family Services Open House

**Location:** Native Network, 19 Erinwoods Dr. SE, Calgary, AB

**Time:** 12:00pm – 3:00pm

**Phone:** 403-273-6032

### Rupertsland Institute Métis Student Mixer

**Location:** SAIT Campus, Chinook Lodge (NN108), Senator Burns Building, Calgary, AB

**Time:** 4:00pm – 6:00pm

WEDNESDAY

15  
NOV

### Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary Open House

**Location:** 101-427 51 Ave SE, Calgary, AB

**Time:** 11:00am – 3:00pm

**Phone:** 403-270-7379



Métis Week 2016 Youth Art Contest Winners (Berg Felsing, Clarity Kruk, Giorgianna Leddy)

THURSDAY  
**16**  
NOV

**Business Mixer**

Sponsored by Apeetogosan Métis Development Corp.  
Please RSVP by calling Métis Nation Region 3 at 403-569-8800.

**Location:** Coast Plaza Hotel, 1316 33 St NE, Calgary, AB

**Time:** 6:00pm

FRIDAY  
**17**  
NOV

**Fruit & Bannock Sale**

Métis Calgary Family Services (National Child Day), Kemama Nnanik, Medicine Wheel Early Learning Centre, funds will go to Children’s Christmas Party. \$6.00 per lunch.

To order a bagged lunch, phone 403-240-4642 Ext. 0, or email order at mail@mcfs.ca

**Delivered between 11:00am and 1:00pm**

**Senior’s Supper**

Attendance must be confirmed by calling Region 3 at 403-569-8800. Free to seniors over 55.

**Location:** Coast Plaza Hotel, 1316 33 St NE, Calgary, AB

**Time:** 5:30pm

SATURDAY  
**18**  
NOV

**Fun Day**

Prizes, face painting, and cultural activities for the whole family. Free lunch will be provided.

**Location:** Albert Park Community Hall 1310 28 St SE, Calgary, AB

**Time:** 11:00am

**Traditional Métis Supper & Dance**

Music by Dean Malcolm & Friends. Admission \$12.00.

**Location:** Albert Park Community Hall 1310 28 St SE, Calgary, AB

**Time:** 6:00pm



## Region 5: Slave Lake

780-849-4654

FRIDAY  
17  
NOV

### Stew & Bannock

**Location:** Region 5 Office, 353 Main Street North, Slave Lake, AB

**Time:** 12:00pm – 1:30pm

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### Crib Tournament

**Location:** Region 5 Office, 353 Main Street North, Slave Lake, AB

**Time:** 1:30pm – 4:00pm

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### Evening Dance

Entertainment by Nathan Cunningham

**Location:** Faust Métis Centre (previously Northern Lakes College, Faust Campus)

**Time:** 9:00pm – 2:00am

## Region 6: Peace River

780-624-4219

MONDAY  
13  
NOV

### Métis Flag Flying During Métis Week

Our Métis flag will be flying from November 13<sup>th</sup> – November 20<sup>th</sup> to celebrate Métis Week.

**Location:** Peace River, AB

TUESDAY  
14  
NOV

### Beyond Sashes & Fiddles

Please join us for the grand opening of Beyond Sashes & Fiddles exhibit. The exhibit will remain until May 9, 2018.

**Location:** Peace River Museum Archive & Mackenzie Centre, 10302 99 St, Peace River, AB

**Time:** 6:00pm – 8:30pm

WEDNESDAY  
15  
NOV

### Métis Artist Showcase

Join us at the Library for a Métis Artist Showcase. Bannock and soup will be provided.

**Location:** Peace River Library, 9807 97 Ave, Peace River, AB

**Time:** 6:00pm – 8:00pm

SUNDAY  
20  
NOV

### Region 6 Open House

Learn about Métis awareness, our membership, and enjoy traditional Métis food.

**Location:** Region 6 Office, 9621-90 Ave, Peace River, AB

**Time:** 6:00pm – 8:00pm

# Carvel Electric

## Q&A with Métis brothers Joel and Jordan Jolicoeur

Carvel Electric has been a Métis family owned and run business since 1997. We spoke to brothers Joel and Jordan Jolicoeur (Vice President and Acting CEO, respectively) to find out more about Carvel Electric, their Métis culture, and any words of advice for those wanting to be successful entrepreneurs.

### How is it running a family business?

**Jordan:** Me and Joel have really great dualities on how we approach business and it's been a really good relationship.

**Joel:** Our family has a pretty great dynamic and we all get along. Why would you not want to do business with your family, they're your family and if it benefits them, it benefits you.

### How has being Métis impacted your business?

**Jordan:** What we are trying to do is build a team of Métis or Indigenous electricians. I think the advantage of creating that culture of an Indigenous work force is that everybody wants to be apart of growing something, or growing a company that is a strong

Indigenous business, and it's really good for creating moral and team building.

**Joel:** It shapes where we are going and where we come from. When we started, we thought we just wanted to wire houses and then we realized that there was the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB [www.ccab.com](http://www.ccab.com)) to get involved with. They create a platform for businesses to get together and figure out ways to promote Aboriginal businesses within Non Aboriginal businesses.

### What challenges have you faced in taking on this role of business owners?

**Jordan:** I think the challenge, just because of the economy in the last few years, has really been just trying to acquire new clients in a really tough climate and we've had to get really creative and we've had to become very good business men and bring lots of value to a client that they maybe weren't seeing before. We had to structure our business to be very aggressive and find value for our clients.



Joel, Jordan & Sylvio (Father of Joel & Jordan) at the Carvel Electric office in Stony Plain

## Where do you see Carvel Electric in five years?

**Joel:** I think we'll be one of the employers hiring the highest number of Métis and First Nation people. Seeing our company hire as many Métis and First Nation people as possible provides a place where people can come to work and not be worried about their surroundings and being judged because I know that's an issue for people when they go to work. If we could eliminate that kind of atmosphere and create our own, I think that's where I see our company going.

## What advice do you have for those wanting to be successful entrepreneurs?

**Jordan:** For me, I would say why do you want to be an entrepreneur and what do you want to achieve in your life? Find out what your direction in life is and then say, is being an entrepreneur going to help me achieve that goal?

You have to have a goal at the end of it and if it's just to own a business for the sake of owning a business, then I'd say maybe reflect on that. Understand where you're trying to head in life first.

**Joel:** Similar to what Jordan was saying, you need to figure out your priorities and the life you want to live. You have to enjoy what you're doing.



Carvel Electric, as a nominee last year for the Eagle Feather Award, part of the Alberta Business Awards of Distinction ([www.abbusinessawards.com](http://www.abbusinessawards.com))

## Has the Métis culture always been a part of your life growing up?

**Jordan:** Oh absolutely. Our dad at any time, if you could let him speak Michif or explain his family tree or talk about his upbringing, he always tried to make sure the Métis culture was in our family. As I get older I start to respect our culture more and more so I can thank our father for that and instilling those values and wanting to carry on our Métis heritage.

**Joel:** The Métis people are proud of their culture; especially the younger generation. They want to be apart of something.



Jared Blais, R.A.P student from Stony Plain Memorial Composite High School

## We heard you had an office bowling team called the Expendabowls?

**Joel & Jordan:** We are the defending champions of 2016-17 and have been doing this for four years. We play Wednesday nights in a mixed league with four players.

Our strategy is to throw the ball and knock down as many pins as possible and looking really good while doing it because we have sweet jerseys. It adds intimidation factor, which all adds to the strategy. It's funny because we actually take bowling very seriously.

**For more information about Carvel Electric visit:**  
[www.carvelectric.com](http://www.carvelectric.com)

# Lost and Found

## Nicole Prokopiuk's journey to self-discovery and entrepreneurship

As a child, Nicole Prokopiuk was always curious about her Métis heritage but grew up divided from it.

"There was so much shame around it growing up in my family, there was a lot of negative around being Indigenous," Nicole recalls.

Unfamiliar with her culture, Nicole never really felt at home. Originally from Winnipeg, she spent many years moving around Canada and living overseas, but never settled down.

That is, until she had the chance to connect with her heritage. Nicole met and spent time with two women who she credits with changing her life. One from the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres and the other from North East Métis Association, these Elders introduced Nicole to the part of herself she had yearned for.

**"It has helped me feel a sense of understanding who I am."**

"One of the biggest things for me in life in terms of my own healing and growth was learning about [my] heritage. I never really was whole. I was all over the place, I was moving around and so not grounded in life. It has helped me feel a sense of understanding who I am," mentions Nicole.

Feeling more grounded, Nicole found her home and her passion here in Alberta. She spent many years working with at-risk-youth before taking a leave of absence earlier this year to start her own business.

With training in beading and other traditional crafts, Nicole had plans for a studio that not only sold her hand-made goods, but educated and engaged at-risk youth in aspects of Indigenous culture. However, Edmonton commercial rent was far beyond her budget so she had to think outside the box. From this road block, [Out of the Blue Mobile Boutique](#) was born; a fashion truck traveling to markets and events selling hand-made jewelry, accessories, and homewares.

"It solves a lot of business issues in terms of location and other factors and after initial startup, your ongoing costs are so small in comparison to running a retail space," she says.

Nicole initially set out with a two-year plan: set up the truck, operate it for a year at markets and events, then, in 2018, open a studio and store front as a base for teaching crafts and employing Indigenous youth. But, features on CBC Radio and the St. Albert Gazette helped spread the word about her unique store and to Nicole's surprise, she was fully booked all summer, quickly selling all of her inventory.

**"My goal is ultimately to train and employ as many Indigenous youths as I can. I really believe in the power of opportunity."**

Now plans for the store front have moved up to this fall and she is currently looking for a space in St. Albert. While she has plans to sell goods in the store, her main priority is working with at-risk Indigenous youth.

"My goal is ultimately to train and employ as many Indigenous youths as I can. I really believe in the power of opportunity." Additionally, Nicole also hopes to facilitate a community service program so that youth can serve part of their sentence learning traditional crafts.

Since its inception, the truck has run in to its fair share of road blocks, but Nicole remains focused on her passions and goals stating, "I'm doing what I'm doing because I have to. It's what I dream about, think about, it's something I need to do... for anybody that has the passion or desire, just do it. [T]here's so many struggles and so many things that make me want to pack it in or quit but it's fighting through that and reaching out and connecting, it's asking for help when you need it."



Nicole Prokopiuk, owner of Out of the Blue Mobile Boutique



Out of the Blue Mobile Boutique



Out of the Blue Mobile Boutique

For more information about **Out of the Blue Mobile Boutique** visit:  
[www.facebook.com/outofthebluemobile/](http://www.facebook.com/outofthebluemobile/)

# Gwin Communications

## Elevating Indigenous voices

After almost a decade of work for the City of Edmonton, Shani Gwin decided to go it alone. She started [Gwin Communications](#) in 2016 and specializes in creating communications strategies for Indigenous communities and organizations. Gwin credits her Métis heritage with her professional success. "It's a part of me that I've really felt connected with, I've always been raised knowing who I am," she explains.

Indeed the Gwin family is deeply involved in Indigenous efforts; her father Lloyd Gwin works with the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) affiliate, Rupertsland Institute and her mother is the CEO of Niginan Housing Ventures. Even though she was raised with this strong identity, Gwin still encountered challenges. "I didn't grow up in a [Métis] community, a lot of the time people were like 'you're aboriginal, so where are you from?' 'I'm from here,'" she recalls, laughing.



Shani Gwin, owner of [Gwin Communications](#)

Since those days, Gwin has created ties with a range of Indigenous communities and given her extensive experience working for the City of Edmonton in Indigenous Relations, she is highly sought after.

In just a year [Gwin Communications](#) has worked with a range of Indigenous organizations such as, the Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, the First Nations Health Consortium, and the Aboriginal Professional Association of Canada.

With her studies starting out in teaching, this line of work wasn't always in Shani's future, although she always knew she wanted to make a difference. Scholarships and study grants provided by the MNA and affiliates helped Gwin through her post-secondary education. She was the recipient of the Belcourt Brosseau Métis Award and participated in the Metis Employment Centre's Labour Market Program, now offered by Ruperstland Institute. "I wouldn't be where I am if it weren't for a lot of the opportunities that were provided to me in school. That made things a lot easier," she explains.

Fast forward almost a decade and Gwin has built a successful career doing work that gives her a sense of purpose. As a mother, Gwin understands the importance of changing the conversation around Indigenous narratives in the media for future generations. "Those are all really important issues to me I still want to work on them and still want to be able to help as many people as possible," she says.

For others looking to pave their own professional path, Gwin stresses the importance of utilizing available services. She implores others to "Really take advantage of... all these learning opportunities. There are so many free ones for Indigenous groups. Take full advantage. Attend them and learn what you can, ask a lot of questions."

As Gwin's entrepreneurial journey continues, her gaze remains fixed in her two biggest priorities; helping Indigenous communities tell their stories and raising her daughter. "Before she gets old, I want to be at home more... Before she's 16 and doesn't want to hang out with me," she laughs.

**For more information about [Gwin Communications](#)  
visit: [www.gwincommunications.com](http://www.gwincommunications.com)**

# Supporting Métis Citizens

## Programs and services available to Métis citizens wanting to become successful entrepreneurs

### Apeetogosan & Pinnacle Business Services

Apeetogosan & Pinnacle Business Services provide profitable and sustainable financial services and support to clients interested in becoming economically self-sufficient. Apeetogosan & Pinnacle Business Services also provides business advisory assistance to the Alberta Aboriginal business community.

#### Services Provided:

- Small business loans
- Access to small business grants
- Support service programs
- Business advisory services
- Business plans
- Marketing plans
- Accounting set-up
- Bookkeeping services
- Management support services
- Business workshops/seminars

#### Contact Information:

780-452-7951

info@apeetogosan.ab.ca

www.apeetogosan.com

### Métis Nation of Alberta Scholarships

Each year, Métis Nation of Alberta provides scholarships to reward outstanding academic achievement. Scholarships are open to Métis students pursuing post-secondary education.

- Art L'Hirondelle
- Delia Gray
- Pearl Calahasen
- Gary Pruden

#### Contact Information:

780-455-2200

www.albertametis.com

mna@metis.org

### Rupertsland Institute

Since 2010, Rupertsland Institute-Métis Centre of Excellence (RLI) has focused on research, education, and training for Métis students.

#### Education:

RLI offers financial support to Métis students through a variety of awards, scholarships, and bursaries.

Through the Métis Education Foundation, Métis Scholar Awards are awarded to students at a number of post-secondary institutions across Alberta. These institutions include: MacEwan University, University of Alberta, Portage College, Mount Royal University, Lethbridge College, Athabasca University, Norquest College, NAIT, Grande Prairie Regional College, University of Lethbridge and University of Calgary.

For a list of awards, scholarships and bursaries available through RLI, call 1-855-616-9977.

#### Research and Professional Development:

In partnership with the University of Alberta, RLI conducts labour market research and other professional studies to help build service delivery capacity. This research also supports relevant studies leading to a better understanding of Métis culture and identity. The goal is enriching the individual and collective well-being of Métis people in Canada.

#### Training and Employment:

The objective is to identify and promote actions improving education, skills levels and employment opportunities for Métis people. It also aims to deliver programs enabling Métis people to pursue education, enhance their skills, and find productive and well-paying careers and employment.

#### Contact Information:

1-855-616-9977

www.rupertsland.org

# In Memoriam

## Remembering Gail Johner



Gail Johner with her family

With great sorrow, the Métis Nation of Alberta bids farewell to Gail Johner.

On September 17, 2017 we lost a family member. For 21 years Gail Johner worked at the MNA's Region 4 office alongside President Cecil Bellrose. In fact, the two started on the same day. Cecil describes Gail as the "backbone" of operations in this region adding, "she was the best thing to happen to the Region 4 office."

Throughout her battle with cancer, Gail continued her work ensuring everything at the office ran smoothly. Cecil recalls with a laugh, "she wouldn't go on short term leave because she didn't want someone new to come and mess everything up."

Those that knew Gail describe her as a hardworking, shy woman who was kind to everyone.

**"Nobody ever said a bad word about her. She's really going to be missed," adds Cecil.**

Gail leaves behind her three children, Robert, David, and Cindy, two grandchildren, Cali and Jackson, and three siblings, Kathy, Joanne, Brenda. Her brother Ronnie passed away in 2008.

Gail's daughter Cindy is also a valued member of the MNA Region 4 office.



## Remembering Thelma Chalifoux

The Métis Nation of Alberta was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Thelma Chalifoux. Thelma was a champion for Métis rights and a valued member of the Métis community.

She was the first Métis woman to be appointed to the Senate of Canada and served for seven years. Following her retirement, she founded the Michif Cultural and Research Institute (now Cultural Connections) in St. Albert, which works to protect and promote Métis culture in Alberta. In addition to these amazing achievements, Thelma was a recipient of a National Aboriginal Achievement Award and was very

active within the Métis Nation of Alberta. She also sat on the MNA's Elders Senate and was an elected Zone 4 official. She leaves behind a legacy of activism and culture but also a better world, say her loved ones. Her obituary reads, "she uplifted spirits - changed hearts and minds for the better and left this world a far better place than when she found it."

In a fitting celebration of Thelma's life, more than 100 people gathered at a traditional Métis wake in St. Albert on September 27th.

The MNA would like to extend our deepest condolences to Thelma's family and friends.

## Remembering Oscar Lacombe

On August 1, 2017, we lost an admirable member of our community. Oscar John Joseph Lacombe was a proud Métis veteran who served in the Korean War as well as tours with NATO and United Nations Peacekeeping.

Born April 29, 1929, Oscar Lacombe was raised on a farm, seven miles from St. Paul, Alberta. As a child, family friend James Brady helped foster a strong sense of Métis pride and identity for Oscar. This pride would prove useful in the face of discrimination, which began in his early school days. Oscar recalls "Just about every day I would get into a fight. At that time, it wasn't very popular to be a half-breed. But I was very proud that I was and I was ready to fight to protect . . . myself and my kid brother. I got pretty good at [fighting] because it was called survival."

Oscar's aspirations for travel and affinity for the less predictable lead him to enlist in the Canadian Armed Forces in 1949. One year later, Oscar was deployed to Korea with the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps in logistics, primarily transporting ammunition and supplies to infantry units. Oscar returned safely from Korea and continued serving with NATO and the United Nations Peacekeeping completing missions in numerous countries, such as Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Congo, and Cyprus. During his military career, Oscar rose through the ranks, eventually attaining Regimental Sergeant Major. Oscar's army uniform was donated to Métis Crossing and can be viewed there in the Veteran Museum.

Reflecting on his time with the army, he says, "It molded me into a person who respects his country, who serves his country, and a person who is proud to be a Canadian."

Oscar is a true embodiment of Métis pride and hard work. He will be greatly missed.



Oscar Lacombe, Métis Veteran

# Home, Heart, Herb...

A poem written by Andre Morriseau in memory of Herb Belcourt

The world is earth molded into futures where one day dust will fly again  
With memories of those who aspired to build  
With kindness and handshakes, smiles and determination  
They build the nation  
That the future holds in place  
For tomorrow's yet come  
Thy Kingdom Come

Men of ages of memories told  
Strong with fresh ideas, we all grow old  
What is left, what still shines  
The legacy that binds  
Minds together, growing prosperity for their children's children  
Celebrating culture and tradition  
A man on a mission

We celebrate a life's work of a beloved man  
Family, friends, business and community  
From books to civics and that helping hand  
His memory like the wind sweeps the land  
That he so loved, that he so shared  
His deepest thoughts are with us now  
As new tomorrow's dawn over a special park

A place of peace, joy and calm  
This great man is never gone  
Just resting, smiling on the world he touched  
Much thanks, but not good bye  
We celebrate with wonder this man in the sky  
We wonder why, but we know  
Forward in the shadow of strength we all follow.



Herb Belcourt at the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) 2017

# Mark Your Calendars

## Notice of Special Meeting

Notice is hereby provided of a Special Meeting of the Members of the Métis Nation of Alberta to review and vote on a Special Resolution to amend the Bylaws of the Métis Nation of Alberta Association with respect to the Métis Judiciary Council.



Date: Saturday, December 16, 2017  
Time: 10:00 am  
Place: Courtyard Edmonton West  
10011 184th Street NW  
Edmonton, AB, T5S 0C7

Copies of the full Special Resolution can be found at [www.albertametis.com](http://www.albertametis.com) or by visiting any of the six Regional Offices or the Provincial Head Office.

If you would like a hard copy mailed to you, please phone Maggie Hawrysh at **(780) 455-2200 Ext. 382** or email [mna@metis.org](mailto:mna@metis.org).

## Community Christmas Party

Join the Métis Nation of Alberta, after the Special Meeting, for a Community Christmas Party with dinner and entertainment.

Date: Saturday, December 16, 2017  
Time: 5:30pm Doors Open.  
Ticket Price: \$10 - Proceeds will be going to Nihgi Métis Seniors Lodge  
All funds raised will be matched by the MNA  
Location: Courtyard Edmonton West  
10011 184th Street NW,  
Edmonton, AB, T5S 0C7

Please contact your Regional Office to reserve tickets. Tickets are limited.

**Region 1: 780-623-3039**    **Region 2: 780-826-7483**    **Region 3: 403-569-8800**  
**Region 4: 780-944-9288**    **Region 5: 780-849-4654**    **Region 6: 780-624-4219**



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