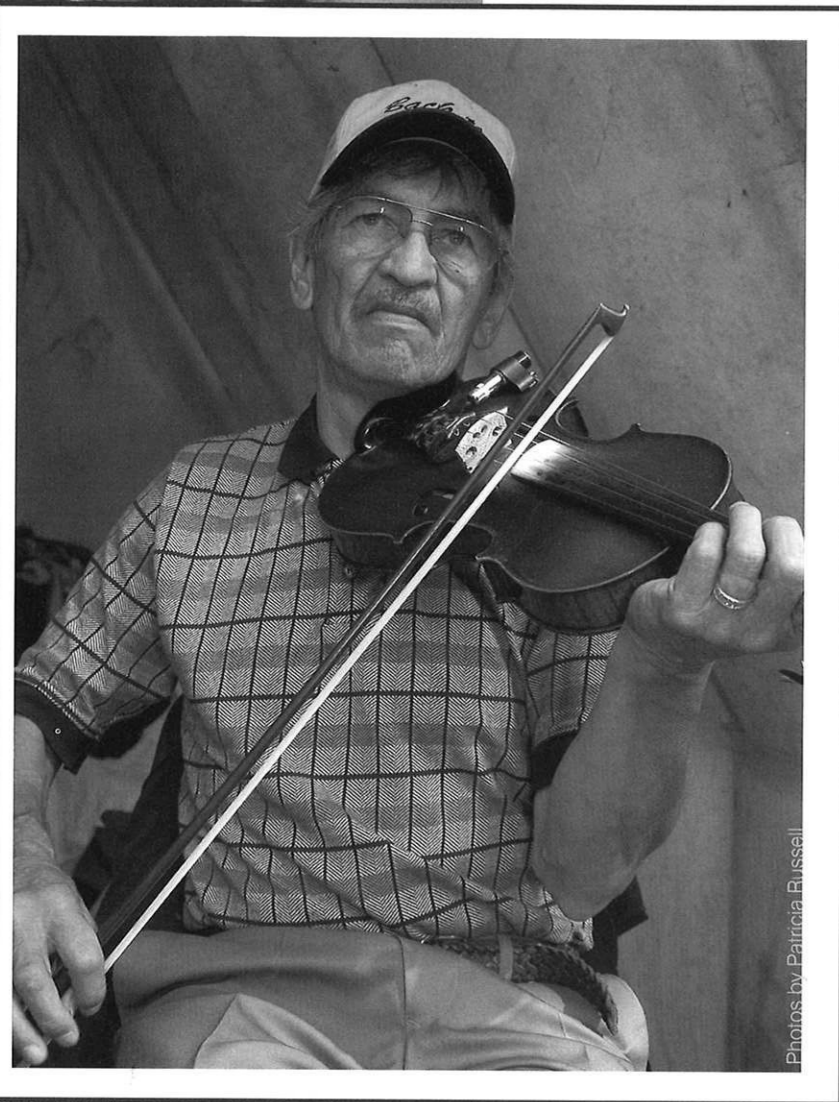


Otipemisiwak

VOICE OF THE MÉTIS NATION IN ALBERTA



MNA Draft Harvesting Policy



Photos by Patricia Russell

Otipemisiwak: oh-t-paym'-soo-wuk

Michif:
"their own boss,
the independent ones"

On Our Cover:

Sewing with coloured horsehair is a traditional art form of the Métis people, which was used prominently in the Grande Cache area in earlier times. Few Métis continue to practice the art form, pictured here on a pair of moccasins made by elder Rose Findlay, from Grande Cache. Cover photo by Rachel Hohn

Feature Photo (left):

Region 2 Vice President Homer Poitras playing his fiddle inside a trapper's tent set up as part of a very popular Metis Nation of Alberta display at the Alberta Legislature Grounds this past summer.

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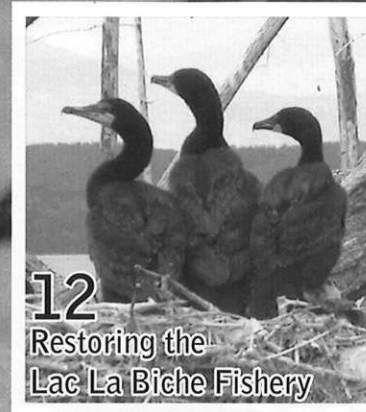
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Otipemisiwak

The Voice of the Métis Nation in Alberta

Otipemisiwak is the only Official Magazine of the Métis Nation of Alberta

Direct any correspondence or inquiries to:
Otipemisiwak
#100 Delia Gray Building
11738 Kingsway Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5G 0X5
Phone: (780) 455-2200 or
1 (800) 252-7553 (Alberta Only)
Fax: (780) 452-8946
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Assistant Editor: **Rachel Hohn**
Communications Officer, Photojournalist

Layout and Design: **Lori Nixon**
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Editorial Committee:
Audrey Poitras, President, MNA
Lorne Gladue, Director of LMD
Patricia Russell, Communications Manager
Kathy Hodgson-Smith, MNC Contact

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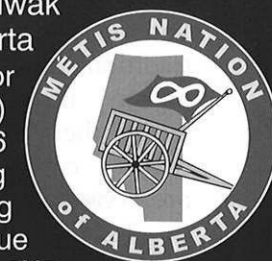
Otipemisiwak

The Voice of the Métis Nation in Alberta

We encourage Métis to make submissions to our Nation's official magazine in the form of photos and articles telling stories about the events and people in your community.

Deadline for submissions is May 12, 2006

Otipemisiwak
Métis Nation of Alberta
Phone: (780) 455-2200 or
1 (800) 252-7553 (Alberta Only)
Fax: (780) 452-8946
communications@metis.org
#100 Delia Gray Building
11738 Kingsway Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5G 0X5





President's Message

Métis hero's, role models, and winners are a prominent theme recurring in some of the stories featured in this edition of our official magazine, Otipemisiwak - Voice of the Métis Nation in Alberta.

Role models in the form of a young Métis father whose selfless effort to help other youth receives a national award of recognition and a successful Métis businessman who receives national recognition for his determination to improve the standard of living for Métis by providing safe, affordable housing.

We have included three stories about Métis heroes: a World War II Veteran, an advocate of Métis tradition, and a respected RCMP officer - three of our hero's who, during their lives and in their own ways, contributed to the preservation of the Métis Nation.

Like you, I believe it is important to celebrate their effort and successes, and to acknowledge

the legacies they leave behind for others to emulate or refer to as good examples of human behaviour.

But first of all, I'd like to acknowledge all our Métis people across the province who took an active role in the democratic process by voting in January's election. Métis participation was impressive. Our people took part in the election in record numbers as voters and as volunteers working the telephones and driving people to the polling stations. Your involvement in the democratic process is reflective of your concern for the future of the Métis Nation.

It is important for our Nation to continue pushing forward the Métis agenda with the new minority Conservative government. The positive relationship our Nation is developing with Canada and the forward momentum cannot be allowed to dissolve or dissipate due to a change in the government's leadership.



We made a great deal of progress under former Prime Minister Paul Martin's leadership with, among other successes, the signing of the Canada Métis Nation Framework Agreement recognizing the Métis Nation, an agreement with commitments to establish a negotiations process to address our

Aboriginal rights. The Kelowna Agreement is also very significant; 18-months of planning, negotiating, dedication and effort is behind that agreement, which has commitments for Métis-specific bursaries, childcare, a Métis Nation Housing Institute, and a Métis Centre of Excellence in Innovation and Education.

These agreements are signed with the Government of Canada and must be honoured regardless of the political stripe of the party in power. The Métis Nation leadership remains confident these commitments will be fulfilled and that our relationship with Canada will continue to develop in a way that's meaningful and respectful.

Indeed, this will be among the important issues discussed at the Métis National Council's Annual General Assembly, which is scheduled for April 1 and 2 in Winnipeg, MB.

President Clément Chartier's term is up this year and I want to personally acknowledge the tremendous amount of work he's done for the Métis Nation during his two-year term. President Chartier's dedication and commitment to the Nation is unwavering and for that I say, 'thank you'.

On a personal note, for the first time in all my years as your president, I put aside some time to go on a short vacation with my family. My grandchildren are getting older, soon they will be teenagers and young adults and, like every Kookum I want to have good memories with my children when they're still children. Gordon and I had a wonderful time in Disney World, seeing the children in Mickey Mouse hats and watching their favourite cartoon characters with awe. One of the best memories I will keep with me forever is when my 8 year-old grandson Cody turned to

me and said, "Gramma, these are the best ten days of my whole life!"

He has so many years ahead of him, as do all our children and young people. I believe that every one of us, as parents and grandparents, must do whatever it takes to be certain they have the very best life we can provide and the very best options we can provide for their futures. Take good care of your family and your little ones.

I offer my kindest regards to our Métis people who are shut-in due to illness or infirmity and my condolences to those families suffering the loss of a loved one.

Respectfully,

Audrey Poitras, President
Métis Nation of Alberta

A Message from the Johnston Family

We, Leo Johnston's parents, brother and sister say "thank you" to all of you who have been so supportive and comforting to us in so many ways.

Special thanks to the RCMP and to the entire law enforcement community nation-wide for having taken us in as a 'family'. We appreciate all of you so much and appreciate everything you have done and continue to do for us.

Leo was a normal (whatever your perception of normal is) kind of child. It was my son, our son, our brother who said, "I hope to do you justice, Mom."

He had good times, he laughed, he had bad times, sometimes he got angry, sometimes he cried, he played, worked, sometimes were lazy, had failures, had successes, were energetic,

always willing to learn and up to any challenge wanting a positive result. If not, then 'oh well, we'll do it different or try harder'. He was loyal and honest to the core. He was strong-willed, sensitive, thoughtful, considerate and most times helpful (if asked).

While Leo was growing up on the farm, and later when he grew older, whenever possible, Leo and his brother enjoyed taking overnight and weekend trips during the fall, winter, and spring to the trap line and going hunting. Not so much for the work that activity involved or the possible kill, but for the peace, quiet, and beauty of seeing the changing seasons and the freedom of being in the wilderness - mainly for the fun of it.

Leo also really liked living in the city, the hustle and bustle, the accessibility to almost everything, the movie theatres and the popcorn, and for the time spent with all of his friends playing badminton, motorcycle instruction and the riding days. But most of all, he always enjoyed being with his brother Lee, doing stuff with his brother, no matter where or when.

He also wanted to be a pilot and started taking lessons from a motorcycling friend.

Leo's will and determination were most evident in September, 1997 when he had a life-threatening motorcycling accident. With the

support of his extended family and many friends, he persevered with diligence no matter how painful or frustrating. He did what he was told and what he had to do to meet recovery challenges head-on.

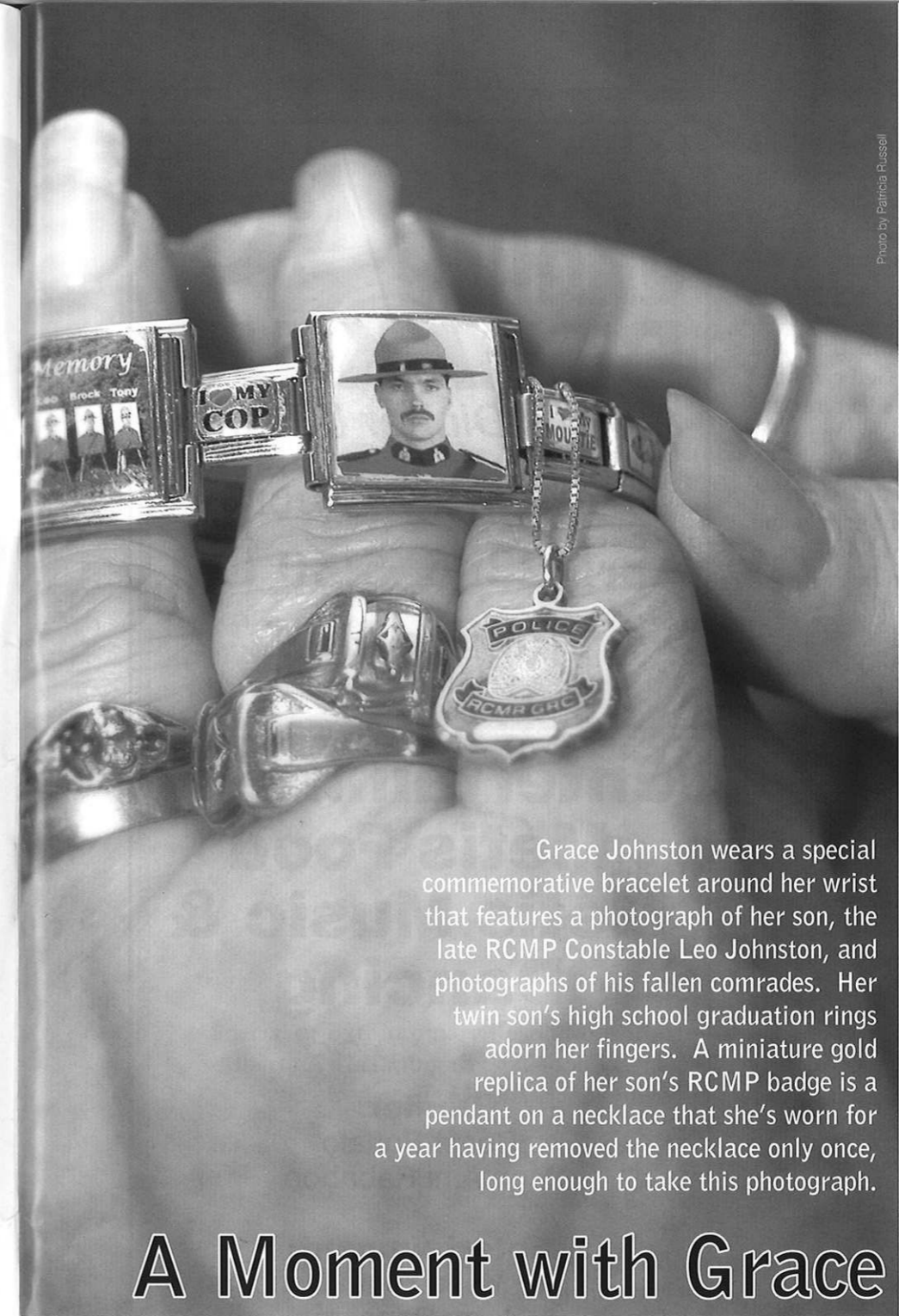
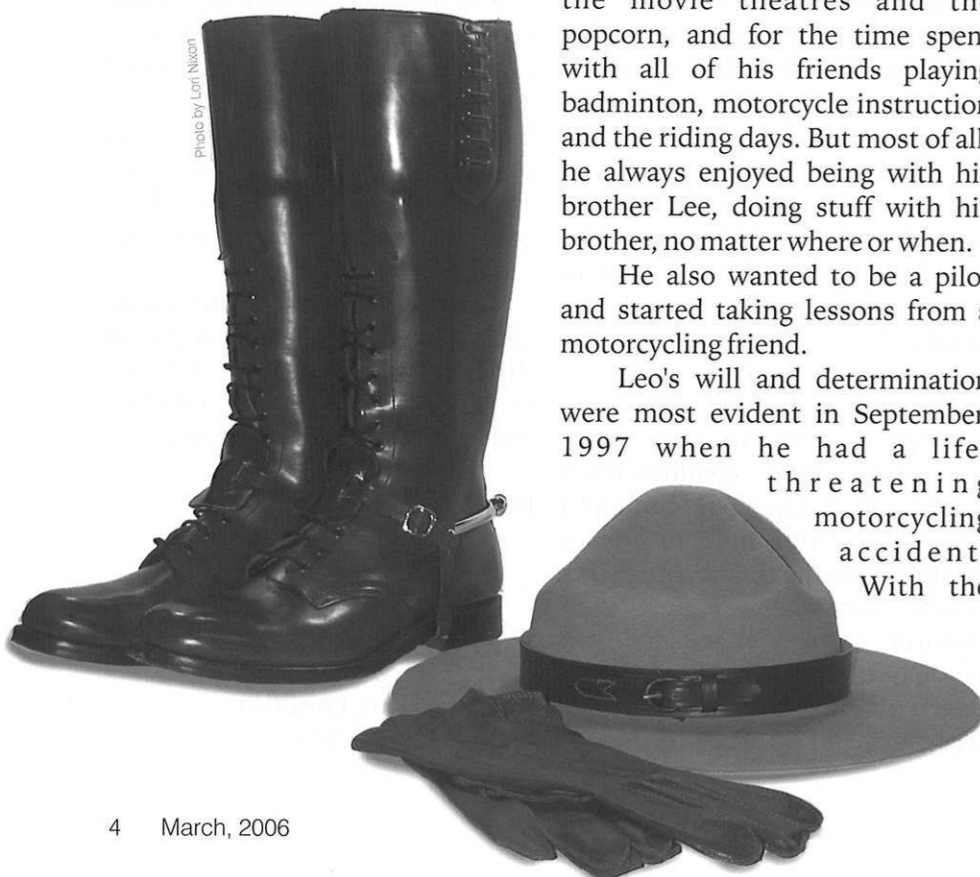
After that, more than ever, Leo was determined to become a "Mountie". With "sometimes unkind" yet supportive brotherly love and encouragement throughout the application process and Depot training process, on April 17, 2001 Leo took the oath "To Serve and Protect". Leo presented Leo with his badge and then became a proud constable in the RCMP.

At the end of his training during his exit interview, Leo was to have said, "I'm not trying to be smart: but Depot is easy, all you have to do is work hard."

Leo was one of our three children and as parents we did the very best we could with love and guidance, and always being there for him, for all of them. They were given opportunities and were encouraged to expand their horizons and make choices to grow into the adults they have become (and the adult Leo was).

The loss of Leo to our family, especially in a way that should never have happened, will forever be without measure. Our lives will never, ever be even close to what we could have imagined as we all grow older. The one consolation that we (I) hold onto daily that gives us (me) a small measure of peace is that Leo was doing the job he loved, fighting the good fight.

Grace Johnston



Grace Johnston wears a special commemorative bracelet around her wrist that features a photograph of her son, the late RCMP Constable Leo Johnston, and photographs of his fallen comrades. Her twin son's high school graduation rings adorn her fingers. A miniature gold replica of her son's RCMP badge is a pendant on a necklace that she's worn for a year having removed the necklace only once, long enough to take this photograph.

A Moment with Grace

by Patricia Russell

When God grants us trivial human beings the gift of children, He gives no indication as to the depth of love parents will feel for their offspring. No handbooks, no instructions have ever been written that adequately describe or quantify the degree of emotion a parent will feel for their

child. It just comes naturally. Perhaps that love can be measured as proportionate to the depth of grief experienced when a parent outlives the child. Like exclusive membership in a club that none of us want to join, only parents who experience that sadness and misery can possibly know.

And the depth of that grief is multiplied ten-fold, perhaps more, when a child is taken from a parent in a senseless, rage-filled act of murder.

This is only a glimpse of the kind of grief borne by Grace Johnston and shared equally, yet privately, by her husband, Ron. It is a throbbing ache that invades the lives of her remaining children.

Here sits a mother whose boy, Leo Johnston, a twin child, was murdered a year ago on March 3, 2005 in an incomprehensible act of murder committed by a man who had no inkling no idea or care for the pain his sick and selfish act would cause upon the family of the man he shot in the back. Here sits Grace Johnston.

They say the year following a loved one's death is the most difficult as it is filled with anniversaries and painful memories that usually start with, "A year ago at this time we were....", memories that end in a piece of Kleenex soaked with tears.

Grace can rattle off an anniversary for every week of the year. Fifty-two anniversaries tick from her manicured fingernails without hesitation. But she keeps the personal memories to herself, memories that span 32-years: a baby in the crib, going to school, a skinned knee, a lifetime of memories. Her eyes fill with tears recalling the last birthday and Mother's Day card she received from Leo.

Grace was planning to celebrate Easter with her son at the end of last March. But the train of life fell off its natural track the moment she recognised the RCMP support team walking up the sidewalk to the door of her house in Owl River bearing news of her son's murder.

And while Canadians attended memorial services and

millions more watched in unprecedented shock and awe, Grace held back a flood of tears. She held back her grief even as she stood at her son's graveside as, unknown to her, a Métis sash was carefully placed on his casket. She refrained until returning to the privacy of home on the north shore of Lac La Biche.

For the families of the four RCMP officers, theirs is a kind of grief that's frozen in time and ironically, only time and the grace of God can offer relief. And it comes slowly like a silent reward granted only after facing the pain, clenching your teeth and dealing with it one tear at a time.

When the reporters finally turned their cameras and attention elsewhere, Leo Johnston's family and the families of Brock Myrol, Anthony Gordon and Peter Schiemann struggled to come to terms with the magnitude of their loss.

Now, their grief is channelled into action advocating for change within Canada's justice system to prevent a similar horror from befalling other families. They've written letters, spoken in public and met with the leaders of Canada's major political parties and former justice ministers imploring each to do whatever it takes to strengthen the punishment for gun-related crimes. They promote the Referendum of Light asking Canadians to turn on their porch lights on the third evening of every month to draw attention to the deficiencies that allowed a depraved man to remain a free citizen, to terrorize a community, to arm himself, and then kill four RCMP officers.

In our country, the RCMP officers are heroes, larger than life, figures of authority. Unless we are the parent of an RCMP or other law enforcement officer, the rest of us Canadians cannot possibly relate to certain realities. We don't understand how brave the RCMP officers have to be to place themselves in situations where they don't know if they'll come out alive.

Inside the Red Serge is a son or a daughter whose parents worry every day for their child's safety, parents who sleep with one ear tuned, waiting for the telephone to ring or for a knock on the door from someone bearing the worst news possible. That's a reality unknown to the rest of us.

But what the rest of us can do is pray for Grace for her family, and for the families of the three RCMP officers, who died in the line of duty beside Leo Johnston. To their parents, each was a child whose life was cut short in a way the rest of us cannot comprehend, lest we be in their shoes.

SPRING

BREAK-UP

A Métis Dinner & Dance

Big Valley Alberta
April 22nd, 5:30 P.M.
Jubilee Hall

∞ ∞ ∞

Entertainment

Métis Food

Métis Music & Dancing

∞ ∞ ∞

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Roast Buffalo
Mon Ami Rababoo

Entertainment:
Calgary Métis Youth Dancers
Hoop Dancers
Scottish Piper

Music:
Gary Lee on fiddle,
and Ray St. Germaine on guitar


For More Information Please Contact
Richard Lucier-Larson
403-876-2945

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

Notice of Meeting

Métis Nation of Alberta Association Annual Meeting
August 19th & 20, 2006
Lac La Biche, Alberta

In accordance with the Bylaws of the Métis Nation of Alberta Association, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the 78th Annual Assembly of the Métis Nation of Alberta Association will be held on August 19 and 20, 2006 in Lac La Biche, Alberta.


Cecil Bellrose
Secretary
Métis Nation of Alberta

NOTICE TO MEMBERS


Deadline for Resolutions

Métis Nation of Alberta Association Annual Meeting
August 19th & 20, 2006
Lac La Biche, Alberta

Special or Extraordinary Resolutions for the 78th Annual Assembly of the Métis Nation of Alberta Association, to be held in Lac La Biche, Alberta, August 19 and 20, 2006 must be received at the MNAA Head Office no later than July 7, 2006 before 4:30 p.m.

Please send your resolution to:

Special / Extraordinary Resolutions
for the 78th Annual Assembly
Attention: Ron Harrison
Métis Nation of Alberta
100 Delia Gray Building
11738 Kingsway Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5G 0X5
Fax: (780) 452-8946


Cecil Bellrose
Secretary
Métis Nation of Alberta

Call the provincial office for more information 780 455 2200 or 1 800 252 7553

Strengthening Our Métis Rights

Draft Harvesting Policy

By Patricia Russell

A focus group of Métis hunters who have first-hand knowledge of the issues they are dealing with in their communities and in the field.

Technical personnel at the MNA have written a draft harvester's policy based upon information gathered from the focus group, the 18 community consultations held in 2005, and information from the former harvester's council - information that continues to be pertinent in the post-Powley environment.

With the right to harvest comes the responsibility of ensuring the practice is carried out in a manner that is safe and mindful of conservation issues. And since the right to harvest is a collective right exercised by individual members of the collective, it is the responsibility of the MNA to create a harvest management system.

No decisions were made over the weekend since the intention of the focus group was to generate discussion among active Métis

Métis hunters in the Medicine Hat area have mobilized themselves by establishing a Harvesters' Committee, which meets regularly to discuss and share information about common hunting and fishing concerns.

March 2006. The location of the community visits will be determined according to need and to suggestions made by the regional offices of the MNA.



Suggestions and concerns raised about the draft harvester's policy will be taken into consideration when technical personnel, under the minister's direction, write the consequent version of the draft policy, which will be brought before the Annual

General Assembly in August for acceptance by voting delegates.

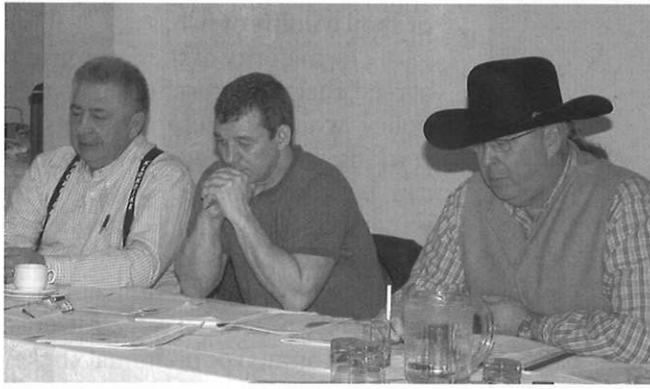
In preparation for community consultations, Métis harvesters are encouraged to consider the objectives of a harvester's policy, which are: conservation, safety, and management.

An effective policy will encourage our hunters, fishers, and trappers to abide by conservation practises that will ensure the species will continue to be available for future generations. For example, harvesters will make their best efforts to: not destroy or damage fish or wildlife habitat; not harvest vulnerable, threatened or endangered species; and not waste or spoil wildlife or fish.

The majority of the focus group agreed that a successful harvester's policy would require a means of tracking harvesting activity, which can be accomplished through the issuance of a small sticker applied to the back of the new MNA membership cards, similar to a sticker on a provincial vehicle license plate. An annual or bi-annual sticker would be available, at no cost, to all members of the MNA who choose to exercise their right to harvest.

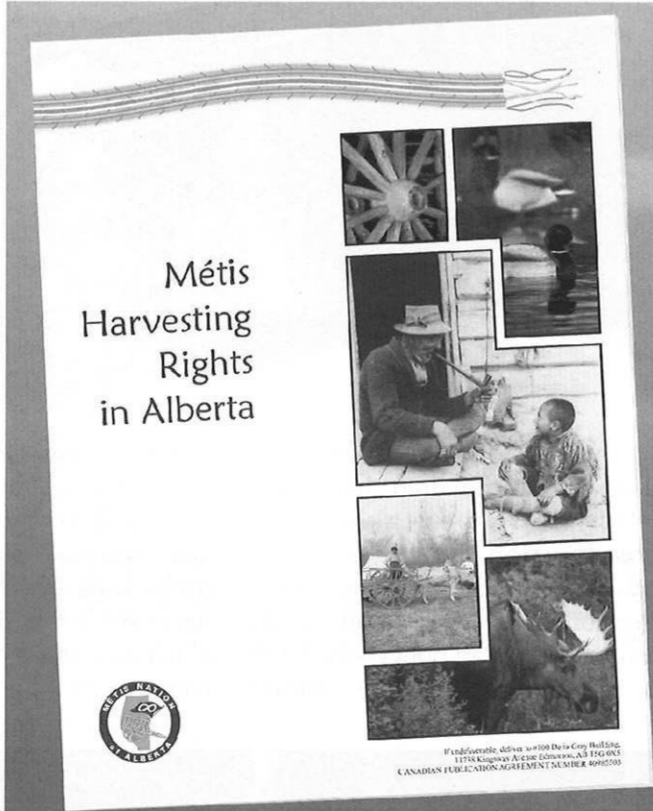
Replacement stickers would be issued after the annual harvest is reported to the MNA, information that would be used only for statistical and tracking purposes. Such information could include: species and location of the harvest; the amount taken; the age and health of the species, and other observations that may be relevant to the species being harvested and its habitat.

This is only one suggestion, other suggestions will be gathered from within the Métis community at large.



Top: Métis hunters Gordie Coutney and Richard McDonald
 Middle: R4 President Cecil Bellrose and MNA President Audrey Poitras
 Above: R6 Vice President Louis Bellrose, Métis hunters Albert Johnson and Bob Vandal

Another point of discussion within the focus group dealt with the question of which body within the MNA would be responsible for the management of harvesters. Perhaps a new harvesting body will be created, chaired by the Minister of Métis Rights with one regionally appointed experienced Métis harvester, to receive concerns arising from hunting activities. Another suggestion was to consider using the MNA's Judiciary Council as the body responsible. Again, these are only suggestions that came out of one discussion where no decisions were made. Additional suggestions are anticipated to come from the community consultations.



Request your free copy of
*Métis Harvesting Rights
 in Alberta*
 from the
Métis Nation of Alberta.

Phone: (780) 455-2200 or
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Important Notice to **Métis Hunters**

Know Where You're Hunting

Be absolutely certain that you have permission from the OWNER of the land you're hunting on. It is equally important to ensure that the land you're on belongs to the person from whom you have received permission.

Otherwise, enforcement officers may charge you with trespassing and hunting without a license.

It is the responsibility of each Métis hunter to know they are on Harvesting Lands, which are described in the Interim Metis Harvesting Agreement as:

- a) all unoccupied Crown lands in Alberta;
- b) provincial protected areas, and other occupied provincial Crown lands in Alberta that have a designation or area designated for hunting, trapping, or fishing (as the case may be);
- c) any privately owned lands in Alberta on which that Member has been given permission by the owner or occupant to hunt, trap, or fish (as the case may be).

In at least three instances, Métis hunters have been charged with trespassing and hunting without a license. In all three cases, the hunters received permission from the wrong person; the land actually belonged to the neighbour of the person they spoke to.

If You Are Charged

If you have been charged with a hunting related offence, after you identify yourself as Métis, the investigating officer must give you a Consent Form. This form addresses privacy laws and when filled out and sent to the MNA, allows our representatives and the provincial government to exchange information about your membership and your case.

Without your permission, the provincial government and the MNA cannot exchange ANY information about your membership in the MNA or your case.

If you believe your hunting activity falls within the IMHA, then mail or fax the consent form along with a copy of the charge ticket and appearance notice to the Métis Nation of Alberta's communications office in Edmonton as soon as possible. The contact information is on the form.

**Métis Hunters are
 Informed Hunters**



(780) 455-2200
 1(800) 252-7553
 (Alberta Only)
communications@metis.org

#100 Delia Gray Building
 11738 Kingsway Avenue
 Edmonton, AB T5G 0X5

albertamemis.com

Restoring the Lac La Biche Fishery The Métis Perspective

by Patricia Russell

Métis fishers from the Lac La Biche area met early in February with the regional leadership to outline their preferred approach to improving the lake's fishery and water quality. The meeting was a follow-up to an information presentation and consultation held with representatives of Alberta Sustainable Resource Development who advocate fishing limitations be put in place to allow the population and size of the top-level predator fish to recover, specifically walleye and Northern Pike, and to improve the population of Perch and Whitefish.

The Regional Head of Fisheries Management (NE Region) Paul MacMahon says a study conducted by ASRD, Lakeland County, and the

University of Alberta concludes the lake's ecosystem is in poor shape due to over-fishing and the explosion of the cormorant population.

Long time Métis fishers propose three steps be taken: first, start a vigorous cull of the cormorant population as soon as possible since the fish-eating birds take more than two million pounds of fish out of the lake every year and their excrement destroy the trees and diminish water quality.

Second, they propose all fish spawning areas be closed until at least the end of May.

And third, they propose a continued subsistence fishery for Whitefish for limited periods of time on certain parts of the lake where they know the fish stocks to be healthy.

Métis fisher Ernest Laboucane says ASRD did not ask

"It's the Cormorants (that are) taking a big bite out of the lake. And they're not supposed to be here; back in 1965 was the first time I saw a cormorant. We used to call them 'crow ducks'."
- Edgar Ladouceur

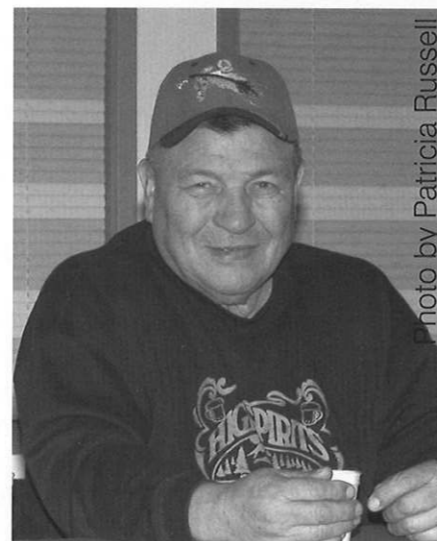
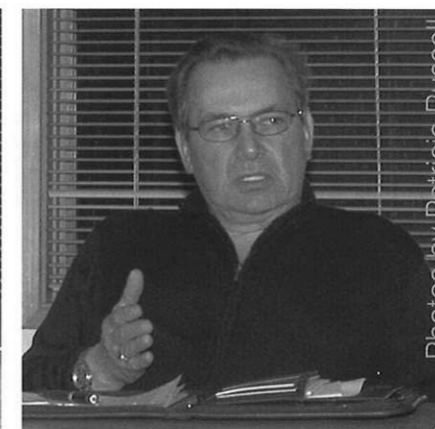
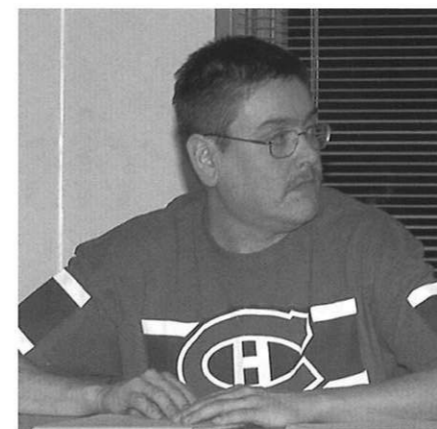


Photo by Patricia Russell



Photo by Patricia Russell

Edgar Ladouceur (top), and Ernest Laboucane (above), two Métis fishers who agree that the main threat to the Lac La Biche fishery is cormorants, not over-fishing.



MNA Region 1 President Ken Bourque, and Vice President Rick Boucher

Photos by Patricia Russell

experienced fishers for their input. He says the random tests were conducted in areas of the lake where Métis know the fish don't school. "I watched them from my place," says Laboucane, "I could see where they dropped their nets. I'd never fish in those places and I've been fishing on Lac La Biche all my life."

Another experienced Métis fisher, Edgar Ladouceur says the cormorants are not native to the area, "I fished the lake for more than 25 years as a commercial fisherman so I know, first hand, there's lot of fish in the lake. It's the cormorants (that are) taking a big bite out of the lake. And they're not supposed to be here; back in

1965 was the first time I saw a cormorant. We used to call them 'crow ducks'."

Government biologists agree. In a presentation made to Métis fishers in Lac La Biche in January, Paul MacMahon said, "80 to 90 percent of the fish consumption is attributed to cormorants."

Several weeks after the meeting in Lac La Biche, ASRD Minister David Coutts announced that based on input from extensive public consultations, his department 'will proceed with key actions to improve the Lac La Biche fishery.'

The key actions of the multi-year program include:

- Reducing the sport fishing

bag limit to one fish over 75 cm for Pike and three for Whitefish (all other sport fish limits remain unchanged);

- Closing the Owl River, other tributaries and the lake outlet to fishing
- Reducing commercial gill net fishing to one early summer fishery, with a quota of 30,000 kg for whitefish, and tolerance limits of 500 kg for Pike and 150 kg for walleye
- Continuing to reduce the cormorant population in the area
- Continuing to consult with Métis and First Nations about the subsistence fishery; and
- Re-activating the provincial walleye stocking program in spring 2006, including upgrading facilities at the Cold Lake Fish Hatchery. One of the first goals is to restore the walleye population on Lac La Biche. The actions taken by ASRD affect the commercial and sport fisheries on Lac La Biche and do not apply to the Metis subsistence fishery at this time.

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416-926-0775 fax: 416-926-7554 www.naaf.ca email: education@naaf.ca

New Membership Cards

by Patricia Russell

The Métis Nation of Alberta will begin issuing a new, updated version of its membership cards in mid-April 2006.

The red and white laminated cards will be replaced with a plastic card, similar in size and appearance to a driver's license, with additional security, and markings that cannot be duplicated or forged.

The current membership card will no longer be issued after April 2006. It will remain valid until 2007 giving members of the MNA adequate time to update their membership files. The transition to the new cards will last until April 2007, after which time the red and white membership card will no longer be valid.

New cards will be sent only to those members of the MNA who have made contact with the registry department to update and complete their membership files. Some of the necessary documentation has changed since the Supreme Court of

Canada ruled in Powley in 2003. The membership process now includes a declaration signed by members and applicants stating they are not on the Indian Affairs Registry.

Membership files must include a verified family tree. Métis Rights Minister Cecil Bellrose, who is also the MNA Executive Secretary responsible for the registry, says "A person's genealogy is the key to our membership process. Every one of our members must submit a family tree that lists ancestral birth dates and places to prove they are eligible for membership in the Métis Nation".

The MNA membership policy states:

"A Métis must provide historical proof of his or her status as Métis by providing evidence of an ancestor who received a land grant or scrip grant under the Manitoba Act or the Dominion Lands Act, or who was recognized as Métis in

other government, church, community, or other historical records. Historical proof must be in the form of a verified family tree detailing the genealogical ancestry of the person applying for Métis status. People applying for Métis status must provide proof of who their parents are by a long form birth certificate or a baptismal certificate or other acceptable records."

To receive a new card, except for new members, all other members of the MNA, regardless of how long they've had a card must contact the registry to ensure all the necessary paperwork proving eligibility is on file.

Métis Nation of Alberta president Audrey Poitras says, "We're not asking people to re-apply for membership; we're asking people to make contact with the registry agents at the provincial or regional offices to be certain that your files are complete. I have gone



1 866 886 3847 or
1 866 678 7888 or
1 800 252 7553

MNA registry staff across the province will begin issuing new membership cards in mid-April 2006. Standing (l-r): Marie Scarlett, Sarah Laboucane, Joan Soloway, Liz Shalapay, Alison Wanuch, Michelle McLauchlan, Brenda Amato, Colleen Tweedle, Lisa Vickland, Arlene Atkinson, Wendy Likness, Rhonda Franson, and Gaye Supernault

Front row (l-r): Citizenship Minister Cecil Bellrose, Director Irene Collins, MNA President Audrey Poitras, registry staff Sheena Phillips, Candice Paluck, Sharon L'Hirondelle

through the process of ensuring my file is up to date. Without making that effort, I would not get a new membership card."

MNA Director of the Membership and Identification Registry Irene Collins says, "The objectively verifiable central registry system that's used by the

MNA is among the most advanced, secure registry systems used by non-profit agencies across the Homeland.

The process we have in place guarantees that people who carry an MNA card are those who meet the nationally accepted definition of Métis and qualify as Métis rights-

holders under section 35 of the Constitution Act (1982)."

MNA registry staff can be contacted at the MNA provincial office in Edmonton and the regional offices in Lac La Biche, Bonnyville, Peace River, Slave Lake, and Calgary.

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11738 Kingsway Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5G 0X5

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS:
Wednesday, April 12, 2006

Genealogy workshops are 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM in the Provincial Office Building in Edmonton. Take the time to research your family tree! The workshops are free and our staff genealogist will be on hand to assist you in your search.

Historical documents and scrips can be made available to help you search the roots of your family tree.

Métis Land Claim in Manitoba Court

by Patricia Russell



April 3, 2006 will be an historic day for the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) and Métis across the Homeland. After 20 years of preparations and delays, a multimillion-dollar Métis land claim will finally be heard in a Manitoba courtroom.

MMF President David Chartrand says the case against the Governments of Canada and Manitoba is about land promises made to Métis people when 'we agreed to join Confederation',

promises that have never been fulfilled.

President Chartrand is confident the MMF legal team will prove the government's negligence and that it did not honour an agreement for a Métis land base along the Red River and Assiniboine River under the Manitoba Act of 1870.

"I have no doubt we'll win," says Chartrand in his keynote address to the delegates at the recent Crown-Métis Relations Symposium in Winnipeg, "When the trial begins in April, there will be weeks and months of evidence and arguments about the nature of those promises, the obligation that Canada had to our people, and the actions taken by both the federal and

provincial governments to frustrate the fulfilment of the land guarantees for which our people had taken the resistance and formed the Provisional Government."

When the MMF wins the case, the provincial and federal governments will be on the hook for billions of dollars.

The historic land claim is not about taking over Winnipeg. To the MMF and to Métis across the Homeland, the case is about achieving recognition and self-government. The honour of the Crown is at stake.

"The case is another way in which the Métis Nation is asserting itself. We are reminding all Canadians of our existence and our history, and it's a way to establish a

secure foundation of a modern relationship between our Nation and the governments of Canada and Manitoba," says Chartrand.

Métis Nation of Alberta President Audrey Poitras says, "It's disappointing and time consuming for our people to have to turn to the courts for a decision that amounts to a verification of historical facts. The Métis Nation existed long before Canada moved its borders west and when the Métis people agreed to create Manitoba - on land we occupied - the expectation was that the government would live up to its side of the bargain. But instead of the Crown honouring that agreement, we have to turn to the courts once more to get the government to fulfill its obligation."

The trial is expected to last three to six months in Winnipeg.

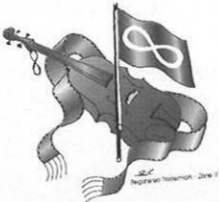
Coincidentally, the Métis National Council's Annual General

Assembly (AGA) is being held in Winnipeg on April 1 and 2. Métis attending the AGA are encouraged to bring their Infinity Flags and remain in the city for an extra day to witness the start of the trial.



Manitoba Métis Federation President David Chartrand

*Power of Youth
Wisdom of Elders*
2



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Thursday April, 27 - Sunday April 30, 2006

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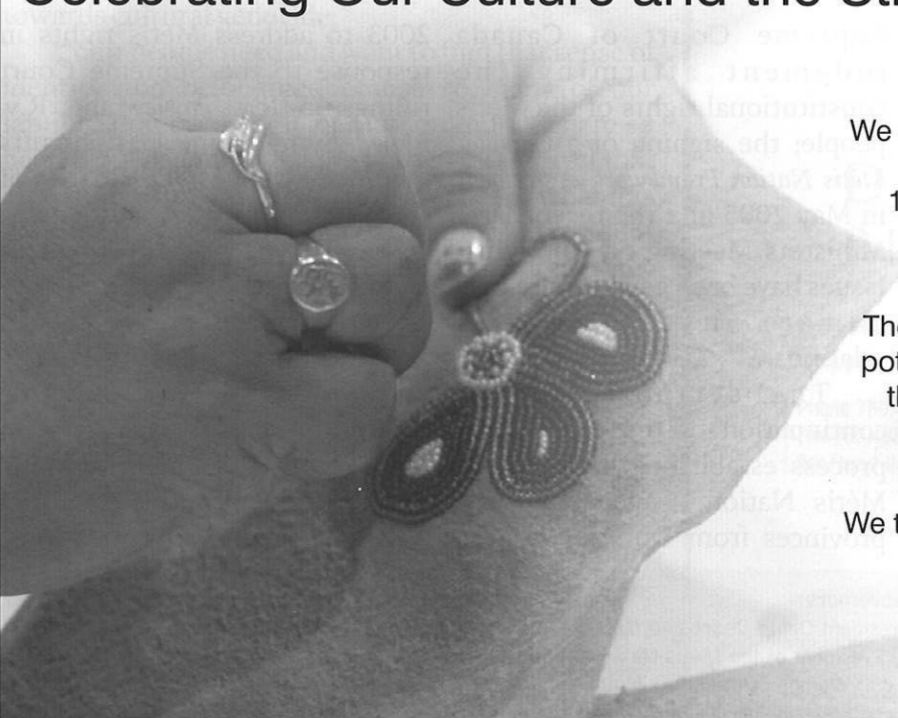
Youth and Elders come together to learn more about and to discuss:

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Registration, accommodation, and per diem will be provided for accepted registrants

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Métis National Council Building on Crown-Métis Relations

by Robert McDonald with files from Patricia Russell

Métis National Council and the Law Commission of Canada co-hosted a symposium focusing on Métis rights in Canada and how the new reality changes the relationship between the Crown and the Métis Nation. The three-day event was held in Winnipeg, MB, February 5 to 7, 2006.

Métis National Council President Clément Chartier, QC, says "Major changes are afoot with respect to the Métis Nation's reality in Canada. The unanimous

Supreme Court of Canada judgment affirming the constitutional rights of the Métis people; the signing of a *Canada-Métis Nation Framework Agreement* in May 2005 and the recent First Ministers Meeting on Aboriginal Issues have been generating a new climate in Crown-Métis relations."

The symposium is a continuation of the multilateral process established between the Métis Nation, Canada and the provinces from Ontario-west, in

2003 to address Métis rights in response to the Supreme Court rulings in *R.v. Powley* and *R.v. Blais*. Symposium participants included the MNC Board of Governors, lawyers, academics, government officials and technical staff.

Discussion focussed on jurisdictional questions, the implications of the Supreme Court of Canada's decisions on Métis rights, Métis identity, Métis self-government and the state of current Crown-Métis relations.

Top: The Métis National Council Board of Governors

(left to right) Manitoba Métis Federation President David Chartrand, Métis Nation - Saskatchewan President Dwayne Roth, Métis Nation of Alberta President Audrey Poitras, President of the Métis National Council Clément Chartier; Métis National Youth Advisory Council spokesperson Jennifer Brown, Women of the Métis Nation spokesperson Rosemarie McPherson, Métis Nation - British Columbia President Bruce Dumont, and Métis Nation of Ontario President Tony Belcourt.



Student at Law Kathy Hodgson-Smith and MNA Rights Minister Cecil Bellrose

Four specific ideas were tackled at the symposium:

1. Are the Métis people "Indians" within section 91 (24) of the *Constitution Act, 1867*?
2. The Doctrine of Inter-Jurisdictional Immunity and the Aboriginal Rights of the Métis;
3. Moving Forward on the Métis Self-Government Agenda; and
4. Métis Identification and Citizenship.

Manitoba Métis Federation President David Chartrand, in his keynote address, talked about the importance of protecting Métis identity and preventing it from being lost in waters muddied by the government's attempt to force Métis people into a "category of pan-aboriginal people - a step towards cultural genocide."

"Our people need and want to find that sense of identity and belonging because so many of our families and even some of our communities are so beaten down and struggling with daily survival that our children are losing the very essence of what it is to be Métis, to identify our culture." MMF President Chartrand added, "They are repeatedly told they belong in the 'aboriginal' category, but what is that? There is no 'aboriginal' culture to belong tothere are First Nations and Inuit and Métis cultures and identities."

Métis National Council Vice President Audrey Poitras agrees with the importance of protecting the Métis identity, "We must never become so complacent that we allow our culture and identity to be watered down by government doctrine. Ours is a distinct culture, Métis people are not Indians and we're not Inuit. We must use every opportunity to educate the Crown, government agents, and

Canadians at large of the Métis identity and our perspective on nationhood and self government"

Métis Nation of Alberta Rights Minister Cecil Bellrose described the symposium as a gathering of the best legal minds in the country. "It was good to hear positive discussion going on between the Métis Nation and representatives of the Crown. On the other hand, the sad reality is that our Métis rights are beginning to be recognized because the courts are directing governments to do so, it's not because of willingness on their part and that remains the reality."

As a result of the symposium, a book is being published that will include the papers presented by selected panellists and the discussions from the sessions. The book will be used as an information source describing the evolving relationship between the Métis and the Crown.

President of the Law Commission of Canada Yves Le Bouthillier says, "The Law Commission of Canada is pleased to partner with the Métis Nation on this important undertaking. We believe this symposium and the materials flowing from it will be useful and informative as governments and Métis move forward together."



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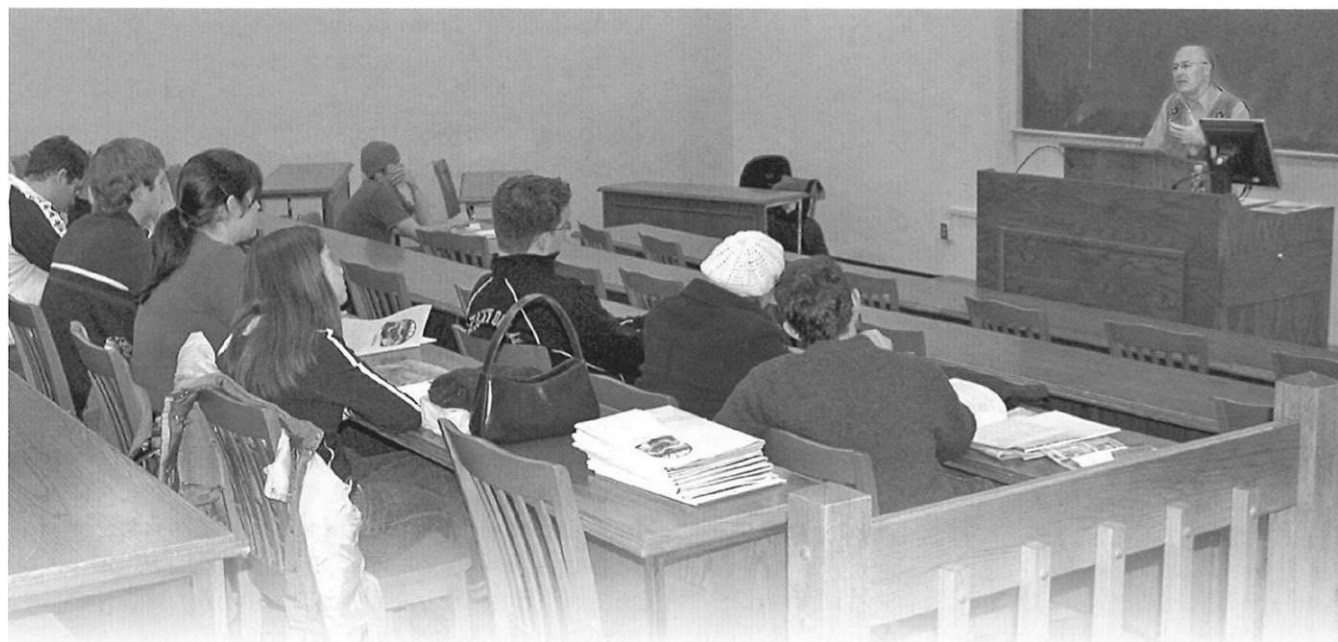
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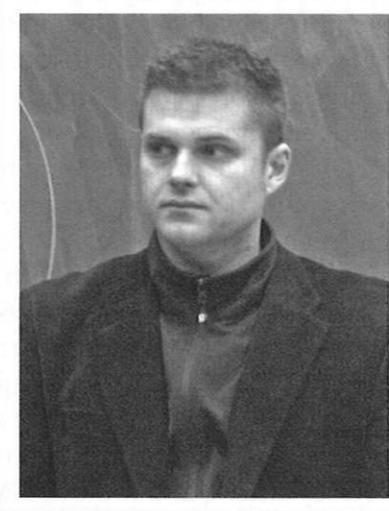


Powley Education for Law Students

by Robert McDonald

Métis National Council (MNC) President Clément Chartier, QC, Métis lawyer Jean Teillet, and MNC General Counsel Jason Madden finished a cross-Canada tour of law schools recently to engage and stimulate interest on Métis issues within university law classes. President Chartier's lectures include a visit to Dalhousie University in Halifax and the University of New Brunswick. Jason Madden addressed law students at the John White Society, Osgoode Hall at York University in Toronto, McGill

University in Montreal and the University of Alberta. Jean Teillet represented the MNC at the University of Victoria.



Top: MNC President Clément Chartier, QC lecturing law students about recent developments in Métis rights as a result of the SCC rulings in *R. v. Powley* and *R. v. Blais*.

Left: Law students at the University of Alberta hear a lecture on Métis rights from MNC General Counsel Jason Madden (above).



Photos by Robert McDonald

In September 2003, the Supreme Court of Canada handed down ruling on the constitutional rights of the Métis people in Canada (*R. v. Powley* and *R. v. Blais*). Both cases are important developments in Canada's evolving Aboriginal jurisprudence. In particular, in *R. v. Powley*, the Supreme Court affirmed Métis have existing Aboriginal rights protected by s. 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.

This new judicial reality has forced Canada and the provinces, from Ontario west, to begin the process of changing historic policies of denial concerning Métis rights. As a result, the Métis Nation has witnessed progress with some governments (e.g. Government of Alberta's Interim Métis

Harvesting Agreement with the Métis Nation of Alberta, the recently signed Canada-Métis Nation Framework Agreement, etc.) while others continue to act unilaterally or use the courts to avoid recognition and accommodation of Métis rights.

The Métis Nation believes it's extremely important to share these details with faculty and law students to outline the successes and challenges flowing from the release of the *Powley* case.

In addition, there have been several lower court judgments which applied the *Powley* test to answer questions of what is a "Métis community" and who can exercise a Métis community's right to harvest.

Additionally, litigation relating to Métis land and

jurisdictional issues continues to move forward. For example, the April 2006 trial of the *Manitoba Métis Federation v. Canada and Manitoba*, a case which seeks a declaration that various federal and provincial statutes and Orders-In-Council enacted during the 1870's and 1880's were unconstitutional because they had the effect of depriving the Métis of land to which they were entitled under the Manitoba Act, 1870.

The Métis National Council is using this educational opportunity to provide an update on ongoing Métis litigation as well as highlight emerging legal issues and trends with regard to Métis.

8th Annual Métis Entrepreneurial Leadership Awards

Please join us for a great evening of fun & Métis Entrepreneurial Leadership Awards

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Email: mlanz@metis.org

Reception: 5:30pm
Dinner: 6:30pm
Dinner Tickets: \$75.00 per person or \$550.00 for a table of 8
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Master of Ceremonies: Winston Wuttunee
Key Note Speaker: Hon. Clint Dunford,
Minister Economic Development
MLA Lethbridge - West
Singer: Dorothy Walker
Fiddler: Dean Malcolm
Gabriel Dumont: Bob Willis
Kookum' Visit
Calgary Métis Youth Dancers

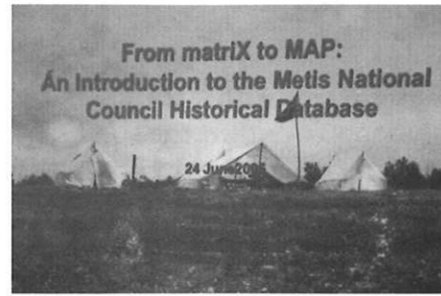
Mapping Our Homeland

by Véronique Boisvert

The Métis Archival Project (MAP), a research group based at the University of Alberta has been linking up with other like-minded groups, such as the University of Ottawa Voyageur Project and the St. Boniface Historical Society, through the historical database specialist group of the Métis National Council (MNC) National Research Initiative. Technical meetings in Ottawa in early January were held to enhance research relationships, share research experiences with data basing of archival records, and develop compatible database standards.

Since 1999, we have been conducting archival research on Métis scrip, Métis historical communities and traditional Métis economies. MAP specializes in the digitization of archival information, which allows for greater accessibility of archival sources. One of our objectives is to revive the typical Métis person of the past from the obscurity of official history. This involves locating and acquiring census schedules, scrip applications

and records of the fur trade companies.



Data-basing records is expensive; time and resources are required for acquiring copies of documents, designing data entry templates, verifying and correcting database records and developing legacy documentation for the project. However, if the databases are properly constructed, the information will be a lasting resource for communities. Moreover, databases can be designed to bring information together from different sources.

In the last few months, the Métis Archival Project facility has expanded to develop a Geographic Information System (GIS) and imagery lab. Erik Ellehoj, a GIS

expert joined the team to improve the in-house capacity for digitization of archival data towards the production of detailed maps. Additionally, Brad Bellamare, a Masters of Law student at the University of Saskatchewan, has joined the MAP group. MAP has also hired bilingual researchers enhancing the important French language capacity in the lab, a relevant skill for many of the documents.

MAP seeks to provide students and other employees with opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills. Much of the learning at the MAP lab involves "learning by doing." Recently, staff received intensive training in our database application program and in GIS.

MAP especially looks to recruit Métis students for its summer work internship program. For more information concerning job opportunities, please contact Katherin McArdle at kmcardle@ualberta.ca or 780 492-7217.



Camille Linknes, MAP team member; Dr. Nicole St-Onge, University of Ottawa; Erik Ellehoj, University of Alberta Geographic Information System specialist, and Dr. Frank Tough, U of A professor discussing the technicalities of the MAP project.

MNC Annual General Assembly

by Robert McDonald

The Métis National Council's 2006 General Assembly will be held in Winnipeg, Manitoba from April 1 to 3.


The theme of this year's assembly is "Métis Lands, Métis Rights." This theme captures the place in time the Métis Nation currently finds itself. Over the past few years, the Métis Nation has been making significant progress on its rights-based agenda. Some notable milestones include: the Supreme Court of Canada's landmark decision in the *Powley* case, which affirmed Métis have constitutionally protected Aboriginal rights, the signing of the *Canada-Métis Nation Framework Agreement* and the *Kelowna*

Accord which includes several Métis Nation specific commitments in the areas of housing, education, and relationships. The agenda for the General Assembly will include an update on the *Kelowna Accord*, a workshop on *Powley* implementation, a workshop on the National Definition and Acceptance Process and ministerial updates.

The General Assembly will also mark an important chapter in the Métis Nation's journey for justice in Canada. On April 3rd, after over 136 years of dispossession and denial, the Métis Nation will get its long-awaited day in court in *Manitoba Métis Federation v. Canada*. The case will deal with the unfulfilled treaty

promises made to the Métis people in the *Manitoba Act, 1870* in relation to a land base for Métis in what is now the province of Manitoba. The significance of this case will dramatically affect Crown-Métis relations for generations to come.

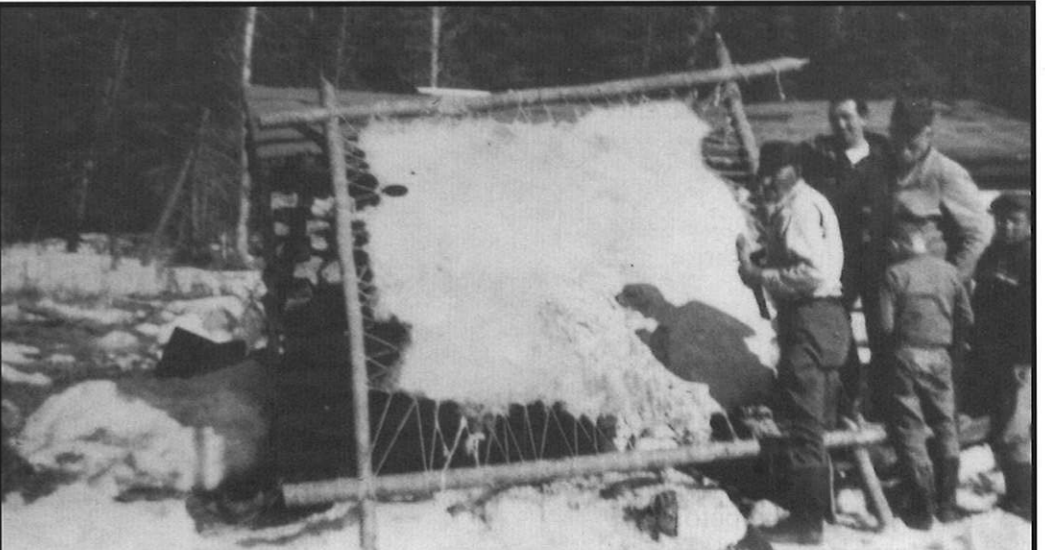
Over 75 elected Métis leaders from Ontario-west will be in attendance, along with representatives from the Women of the Métis Nation and the Métis National Youth Advisory Council. It is also expected that Métis citizens from throughout the Métis Nation Homeland will attend in order to witness the beginning of this historic land trial, *MMF v. Canada* on April 3rd.



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Métis Nation of Alberta (Draft) Harvesters Policy

The Minister of Métis Rights, Cecil Bellrose, is holding Community Consultations in Calgary and Bonnyville to discuss the draft Harvesters Policy.

BONNYVILLE

March 22, 2006 at 6:00 p.m.
location to be announced
Call the Region 1 office
for more information:
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CALGARY

March 23, 2006 at 6:00 p.m.
location to be announced
Call the Region 3 office
for more information:
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Parenting Knowledge



By Rachel Hohn

The kind there were a few hiccups in first the conference with volunteer speakers unexpectedly cancelling, however, King shrugs off the inconveniences and says he was excited still by the whole event. He says they are looking at continuing the conference in the next year.

Opening and welcoming remarks were made by Region 6 President Sylvia Johnson, Region 5 VP Peter Champion, and MNA Vice President Trevor Gladue.

To have a healthy home there must be an emphasis on eating right, exercising, and healthy behaviours, says Friday's

when a packed house of parents and social workers gathered to get informational tools to help their children through gang, drug, sex, racism, education and family related issues.

The seats in Edmonton's Westwood Inn were full from February 16 to 18 even with the conference using only word of mouth advertising. A waiting list filled up three weeks before the free conference occurred. Almost forty businesses and individuals supported the conference with their time, energy, and materials.

"We were able to get the right people to talk on these topics and provide quality information to the parents," organizer Greg King says. Being that it was the first event of its

key note speaker, Violet White, from Capital Health.

"As Métis people in general we need to look at the health of our children," White says. "More than half of our youth aren't active enough... We need to push our children to be a little more active."

Speaking from her own life's experience of raising children and grandchildren, White says Alberta's children need their

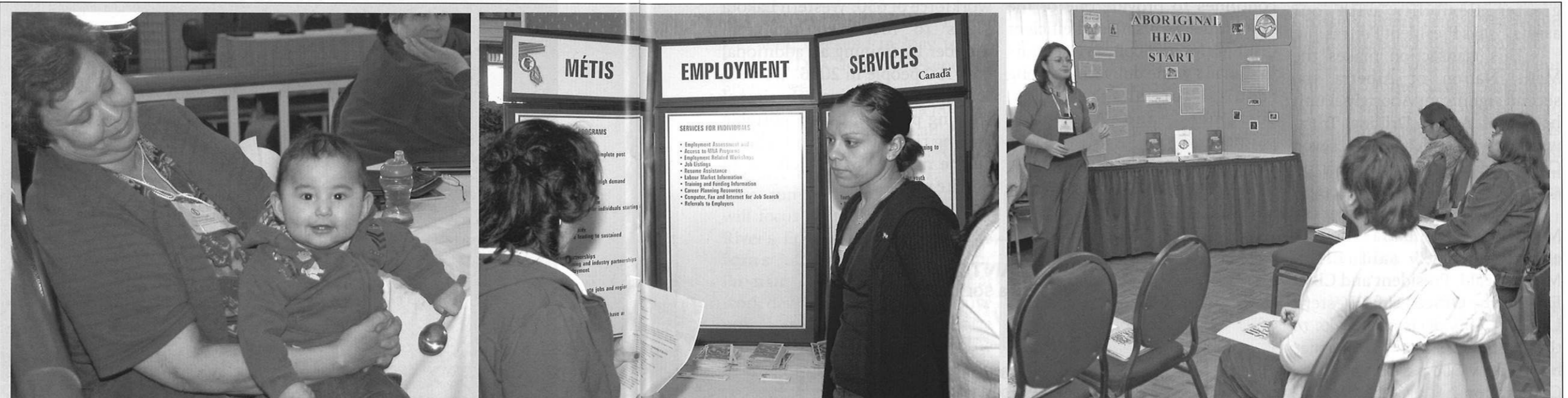
parents' strict guidance to succeed in life.

Foster Parent Sally English came to the event to learn how to better help her eight-year-old foster child. "I wanted to learn more about FASD and school problems," she says. "And I learned quite a bit."

Lorraine Poitras, a foster care worker, says she too enjoyed the information covered by the conference - especially the

information targeted to parents of FASD children or foster children. She is looking forward to bringing her foster parents with her to the next conference to help them grow healthy families and to promote awareness of aboriginal issues.

Over 130 people pre-registered and around 180 showed for the event including presenters, staff, and attendees.



Left: Arlene Fraser sits with her grandchild during the Healthy Families keynote address. Middle: Métis Employment Services Information Booth at the Parenting Conference. Right: Conference attendees listen to speaker T.J Skalski as she discusses the Aboriginal Head Start Program.

Photos by Rachel Hohn

MNA Drilling Rig Sold

by Patricia Russell

The Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) has sold its drilling rig in exchange for a hefty number of shares in one of Canada's fastest growing energy service providers, Western Lakota Energy (WLE) Inc. Western Lakota paid a net price of \$5.97 million for the rig and its assets by issuing 244,000 common shares in the company and transferring 568,000 units of Acuna Drilling Trust, a subsidiary of WLE to the Métis Nation of Alberta.

President Audrey Poitras says the transaction means that instead of owning just one rig, the MNA now owns shares in 36 rigs in a fleet that is projected to increase to 60 rigs by early 2007. "This kind of investment offers the Métis Nation of Alberta greater flexibility with our assets," says President Poitras.

This transaction makes the Métis Nation of Alberta the second significant Aboriginal unit holder of Acuna Drilling Trust, which owns and operates seven Coal Bed Methane (CBM)/oil sands coring/pre-set drilling rigs.

"We are very pleased that the Métis Nation of Alberta is now an equity owner," said Elson MacDougald, President and Chief Executive Officer of Western Lakota. "This decision speaks to the confidence that this partner has developed in our Corporation."

One of Canada's fastest growing energy services providers; Western Lakota is currently operating 36 drilling



Western Lakota CEO Elson MacDougald and MNA President Audrey Poitras (2005)

rigs, including seven CBM/oil sands coring/pre-set rigs. The company also operates three-coil service units with an additional five scheduled to be completed throughout 2006. Western Lakota continues to provide one of the newest fleets of safe and efficient drilling rigs and coil service units in Canada while delivering strong results for shareholders, customers, and Aboriginal partners.

Shares in WLE have almost tripled in value since they began trading publicly on the Toronto

Stock Exchange in May, 2005. The same year, Western Lakota doubled the size of its fleet by buying or building 19 rigs.

Aboriginal employees make up 20 per cent of the companies workforce of 650; Western Lakota plans to increase that total number by training an additional 100-150 people in 2006. Western Lakota's distinctive aboriginal training program uses a portable drilling rig platform that includes all the machinery and jobs of an on-site rig.

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Let's Meet at Métis Crossing



By Juanita Marois

It seems as though winter has just begun, but spring is quickly approaching and with spring we edge closer and closer to the season opening of Métis Crossing! Activity has certainly increased in the Métis Crossing offices this past month, and we have many things to do to prepare for May 2006!

Métis Crossing will open for seasonal operation on May 20, 2006! It will be a day that many people have worked towards for a number of years and many more have prayed will occur.

Our seasons for 2006, 2007 and 2008 will run from the Victoria Day long weekend in May to the Labour Day long weekend in September.

This opening means a number of changes - including all Métis Crossing offices will move out to our site beginning May 1, 2006. This summer, our programming will focus on the Historic Village, River's Edge nature trail, and the barn's interpretive centre. Our Program Coordinator is hard at work developing these interpretive programs. It never ceases to amaze me how much work goes into the development of each.

The base of research from which these programs are being developed draws from the many stories shared by our elders. We plan to have a living and growing inventory of stories so if you want to participate, please let us know and we will try to include you in phase II or III of our research.

Having the programs also means that we need interpreters. We plan to hire four to six people to share our culture at Métis Crossing. Interpreters can be young or old; you just need to be full of enthusiasm to share our Métis culture. We are planning a full training program to prepare you. The program will start in the beginning of May to be ready for a May 20 opening. Those interested, please call 1-800-252-7553 and ask to talk to Juanita.

The RV campground will also be open for business. We will operate on a "first come - first serve" basis except for special site rentals such as weddings and family reunions where reservations will be taken and yes, we already have a wedding planned to occur at the Crossing this summer!

The overwhelming community response to the Métis Crossing Centennial Voyage last year has ensured that we will build this event into an annual community tradition.

However, our event will

change this year. We are expanding our onsite celebration to two days - August 25 and 26, 2006. You can expect even more entertainment over the two days, a tradeshow, crafters, cultural activities in the Historic Village, more food vendors and even better parking! We are planning to have a canoe voyage and wagon trek again in 2008 to celebrate our Grand Opening.

We will again require lots of community involvement from entertainers, crafters, organizations, vendors, and volunteers. If you would like to participate, please call us soon to be included.

And to make all this work, our fund development continues to grow. Suncor Energy Foundation has recently committed \$300,000 to the development of our Métis Crossing Elders' centre. We would like to extend a huge "Thank you!" to Suncor and welcome you to our Threads of the Sash community. We still have a long way to go to reach full development at Métis Crossing, so all donations and referrals are appreciated. We are in the process of developing a community approach for donations, so that each of you can invest in this wonderful place as well.

We look forward to hearing from you! Meet you at the Crossing soon, my friend!

Métis Employment Services Contact Information



Seventeen Métis Employment Service Centres across the province offering a variety of services including:

- ◆ Pre-employment services
- ◆ Job referral
- ◆ Employment assessments
- ◆ The provision of labour market information
- ◆ Career counselling
- ◆ Job finders clubs

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Youth in the Labour Market

by Rachel Hohn



The Labour Market Development Units (LMDU) across the province are focused on educating Métis youth and the transition into the workforce. In Region 6, more than 80 per cent of the youth enrolled in the Manning Youth Employment Transition program completed the program in December of 2005. Nine of the twelve students completed the Youth Employment Strategy, a training and job placement program.

In Region 4, nine youth finished the Youth Employment Transitions program in Barrhead, six youth were recruited to Trades 2000, and five youth were recruited to Jasper Park Firesmart-Forestwise. The region continued full steam ahead as they joined with Oteenow to deliver Employment Training & Community Programs for Aboriginal Youth seminars at the annual Dreamcatcher Conference held at Edmonton's Grant MacEwan College.

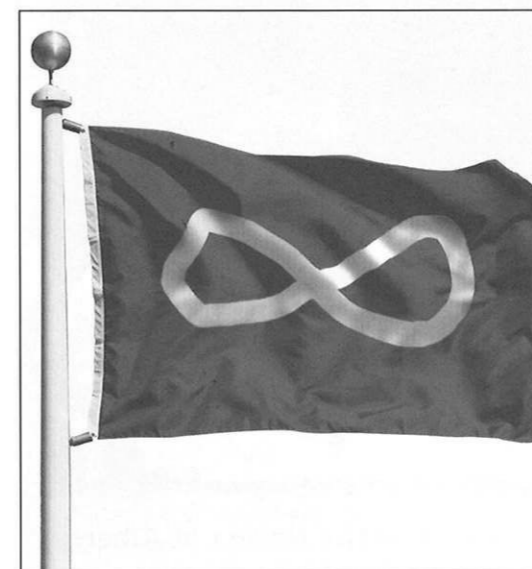
Another accomplishment for the LMD youth programs includes Region 3's involvement with the Annual Lethbridge Community College Career Fair. Southern Alberta students attended the fair and the MES Centre booth was kept busy talking and handing out MNA brochures describing schooling, employment, and career planning to the youth in attendance.

After all these successes, the other three regions are gearing up for their own youth initiatives. Region 2 is about to start *Renewal*, their 22-week Provincial Disability Project aimed at helping skill development and assessment of Métis people with disabilities aged 18-35. The program focuses on clients who have unresolved long-standing issues with various other agencies, like police, justice, children and social services. Life skills, action plans, computer skills, health and fitness subjects are covered in over 22 weeks of support.

Region 1 has two initiatives underway, one to get youth back into school or in job training and one to

identify the barriers facing youth in Fort McMurray. The first project is six weeks long and started on February 28 with a class of 10 students. They learn about occupational health and safety, drivers training, and are introduced to a number of trades including carpentry, plumbing, electrical ATV training, and drywall and painting. The second project will study both Métis and First Nations youth in the communities of Fort Chipewyan, Fort MacKay, Anzac, Janvier/Chard, and Conklin. The purpose of the study is to find gaps in services and identify the barriers youth are facing that prevent them from gaining education and employment in the oil-rich area.

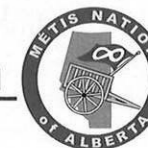
Three Youth Pre-employment Preparation programs are underway in Region 5 in Slave Lake, High Prairie, and Wabasca. Youth who are unclear about their future can find out more information on life skills, job readiness, career and educational goal setting, and more.



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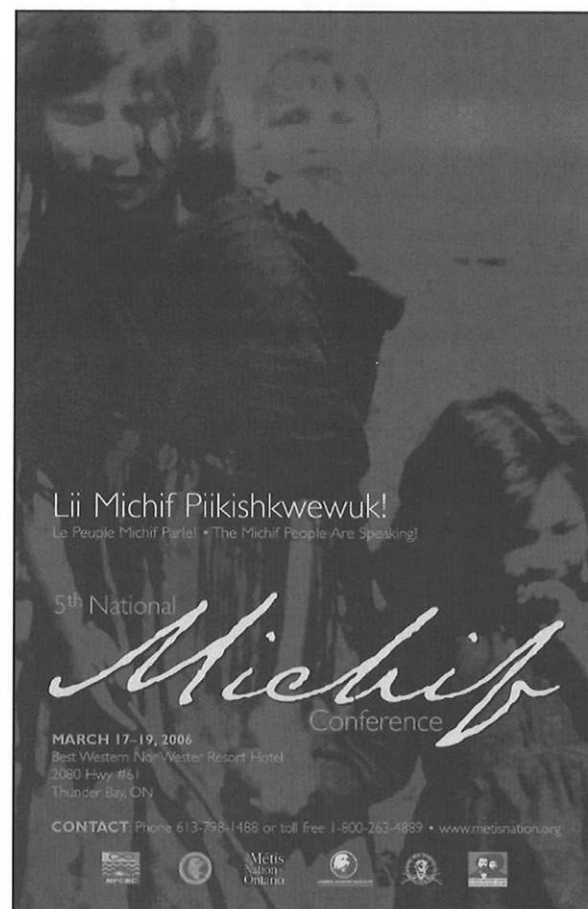


National Michif Conference

by Rachel Hohn


The fifth annual National Michif Conference runs from March 17 to 19 in Thunder Bay, Ontario. The conference will be dedicated to the Michif language and Metis culture. It is an opportunity to celebrate our linguistic distinctiveness and cultural strength.

Two Alberta Métis elders, Sam Dumais and Cecile Howse, will be in attendance and will be sharing the Michif language through activities and stories told in their traditional by gaining greater access to existing educational tools, resources, and community-based approaches. A series of presentations and workshops will be offered featuring some of the strong Michif speakers, elders, youth, leaders, and language specialists from across the Metis Homeland.



Farewell

Debbie Munroe finished her employment with the Métis Nation of Alberta's provincial office on January 6, 2006 to join the forces of Trade Winds to Success Aboriginal Pre-Trades Training, where she will become an executive assistant.



Debbie was a senior administrative officer with the MNA for three years, and she worked in finance for a year and a half prior to that. We wish her all the best in her new career.

From the Métis Nation of Alberta

MNA Judiciary Council



by Rachel Hohn

On December 17, 2005, six new members of the judiciary council were sworn into their positions at the Chateau Louis Hotel in Edmonton, Alberta. They were sworn in by Region 4 Elder Marge Friedel.

One council member from each region is appointed for a three-year term: Bertha Clark Jones, Region 1; Gabe Deschamps, Region 2; Toby Racette, Region 3; Dale Friedel, Region 4; Paul Sinclair, Region 5, and Bonnie Bell from Region 6.

The council was established in 1996 as an arms-length adjudicating body to deal with civil disputes such as membership issues, election disputes, conflicts of interest, and more.

Photo at top: New Judiciary Council members Dale Friedel (named chairperson), Toby Racette, Region 3 Vice President Joe Chodzicki, Paul Sinclair, and Gabe Deschamps (named co-chair) pose for a quick photo after their Signing In Ceremony on Dec. 17, 2005. Members Bertha Clark-Jones and Bonnie Bell, not shown, were unable to make that ceremony date.

Canada Revenue Agency Aboriginal Summer Student Work Opportunities

As part of an effort to maintain our Employment Equity objectives, we hire Aboriginal high school students to work within Canada Revenue Agency in a variety of Clerical positions throughout the summer months.

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You must be a returning student in the fall in grade 10, 11 or 12, and at least 15 years of age.

If you are interested in becoming part of our dynamic organization for the summer, please submit your resume, **including your date of birth and complete address**, along with a letter of reference from your teacher, principal, or guidance counsellor via email or fax to:

Canada Revenue Agency
Attention: Lucy Macedo
4th floor, Canada Place
9700 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton AB T5J 4C8
Email: lucy.macedo@ccra-adrc.gc.ca
Fax: (780) 495-3284

Résumés and
Reference letters
must be received no
later than
April 18, 2006

Scholarships and Bursaries



By Greg King
MNA Education
Manager

Perhaps the most common question I'm asked is, "Mr. King, how do I get money for my education?" While there are many avenues to explore, ultimately one of the paths I recommend is the scholarship and bursary road.

not for a lack of trying to give that money away. I can only guess that it is a combination of three factors:

- 1) **People are not aware of all the opportunities available to them**
- 2) **It can be challenging to create and complete an application**
- 3) **People disqualify themselves before trying**

Reason #3 creates reasons #1 and #2: people have the misconception that they aren't worthy of a scholarship or bursary. After all, if you aren't worthy, why bother doing a bunch of research and trying to figure out the application forms? To these

naysayers I say, "That's bunk!" You don't have to be a saint, or a genius (though some smarts does help). For Métis students, the pool of competing applicants is smaller, giving them a slight advantage over the general population.

I'd like to give an example from my own life. My second year of university approaching, I applied for every scholarship and bursary that I found out about. Out of the twenty or so applications sent out, I received two separate scholarships that totalled just enough to cover tuition and books.

One scholarship I almost did not apply for was for engineering - after all, I was studying physiology

and education. I figured I "should not" have applied for the scholarship since, technically, it was not what I was studying. I applied anyway. Call me rebellious - I think it runs in my Métis veins. In the application, I made a tenuous link between what I was studying and engineering in my application; but I'm pretty sure I got that scholarship because no one else applied. My point is that this happens more than we might think: not enough students apply for the scholarships.

Over my years at the university, I learned that it really didn't matter what the criteria was for an application - there was no harm in applying. I set up a "funding file" with a résumé, cover letter, budget, short/long term plans/goals, reference letters, transcripts, envelopes, and some stamps - I could apply for scholarships at a moment's notice. So, fifty cents to a dollar and ten minutes of my time occasionally paid out in thousands of dollars. The effort and the postage were small prices to pay to have my entire two degrees paid for by scholarships. While I know that not everyone will be so fortunate, it doesn't hurt to try.

To make the scholarship application process a little easier for our students, the Métis Nation of Alberta has compiled a list of scholarships and bursaries available at www.albertametis.com. I often refer people to the website as a place to start - not to finish. There are tons of websites and manuals out there with funding opportunities of all kinds for Métis students. Even if you come across one with dated material - chances are the opportunities listed are still available, just substitute 2006 wherever you see a past year indicated (and of course, follow up with a phone call to ensure that the opportunity is still available).

As well, don't forget to contact a Métis Employment Service Centre near you to find out about other funding options that may be available. Call 1-800-2552-7553 to find a Service Centre near you.

Wrapping up this article, I'd like to re-enforce one point: you are a worthwhile investment and it is worth the effort for you to get more information on scholarships and bursaries. There is no reason preventing you from applying to any and all scholarships and bursaries that you can.

As this application season approaches, I'd like to wish all Métis students looking for funding, "happy hunting."

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www.academyoflearning.ab.ca

The Scholarship and Bursary Handbook

for Métis Students

The "Scholarship and Bursary Handbook for Metis Students" is for information purposes in regards to accessing funding sources for employment training and continuing education.

- Tips for Accessing Financial Resources for Education and Training
- Awards for Aboriginal Students
- Public and Private Sector Awards
- Post-Secondary Institution Awards
- Delia Gray Memorial Scholarship
- Belcourt Brosseau Métis Awards
- Student Finance Information - Grants and Student Loans
- The Métis Nation of Alberta Labour Market Development Program Employment Assistance Service Centres

For more information, contact your Regional Office, Employment Service Centre or call:

(780) 455-2200 or
Toll free (Alberta only)
1 - (800) 252-7553

Download your copy from
www.albertametis.com/awards.aspx



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NAIT, in partnership with Alberta Economic Development, will be presenting a series of weekend Business Management workshops that address many of the difficulties Aboriginal Entrepreneurs face in today's competitive economy.

Each month now through March, 2006, one module will be presented addressing key areas of:

- Marketing
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- Human Resource Management
- Project Management

Customized with an Aboriginal focus, these workshops will provide you with credit towards a NAIT Business Management Certificate.

Fee: \$50 per person for each workshop, or all five workshops for \$150.

Note: These modules are exclusively available to Aboriginal people currently operating a business.

All workshops will be delivered once a month on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday in Edmonton, Calgary and Slave Lake.

For details and to register, please contact

Michelle Steinhauer
780. 471.8815 or
msteinha@nait.ca

No! to FASD

By Eileen Mustas

In a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) prevention promotion coordinated by the Métis Nation's Children's Services Sector and launched in Alberta's schools, students from Grades 6 to 12 were invited to design an FASD prevention advertisement on coasters. The four winning designs are being distributed to alcohol-serving establishments in a public awareness campaign.

FASD is an encompassing term describing many fetal alcohol disorders and the effects that occur from drinking alcohol during pregnancy. FASD affects 300,000

people in Canada - around one per cent of the population. Some of the side effects include physical, mental, behavioural, and learning disabilities. In some cases, the effects are life-long. This problem is completely preventable.

Some of the themes the students were asked to work with are: we care about our children; know the facts and know the risks; healthy babies - healthy children - healthy families; positive messages - hope and faith; steer friends in the right direction; don't judge - help and support healthy pregnancies; encourage community

responsibility; friends help friends; encourage healthy growth and learning; stand up for unborn children; and, let's all work together to stop FASD.

The Métis Nation of Alberta's (MNA) provincial FASD coordinator and the six regional coordinators selected the four winning entries. It was challenging to pick only four winners from the many wonderful submissions from students. Thank you to all the schools, youth organizations, and families for participating in the contest.

As active participants of the

national network of FASD prevention campaigns, the MNA project joins other service providers in engaging peer groups and the community to become involved, with positive, supportive and healthy messages to pregnant women. It is important to offer a supportive and caring approach and to communicate the message, "No alcohol is best!"

To foster greater understanding and to promote prevention of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, our FASD Project provides information sessions focused on better understanding the disorder by sharing current research and resources.

Our FASD presentations continue to improve and the success of the FASD workshops is made possible by the involvement of elders and other community members committed to sustainable healthy growth and the success of all children in the Métis communities. You can contact your Métis regional office to speak with an FASD Coordinator to organize a session in your area.



Congratulations to coaster design winners:

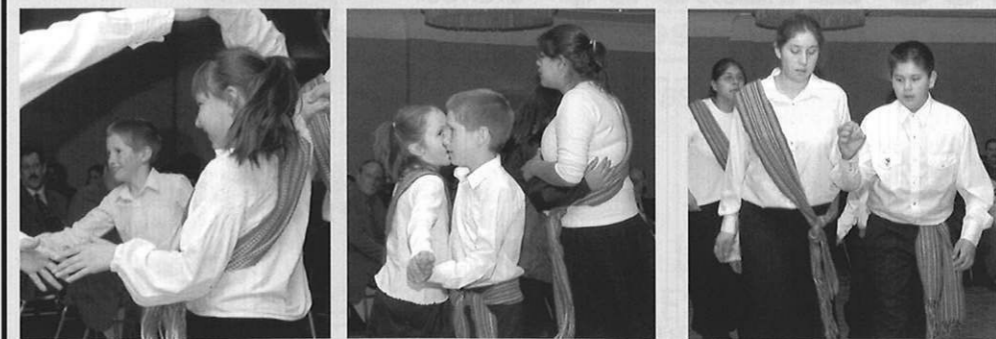
1. Thomas Grosset, Grande Prairie Composite High, Grande Prairie
2. Shannon Hinks, Harry Belfour School, Grande Prairie
3. Ivanna Okimaw, Prince Charles School, Edmonton
4. Charles Grosset, Harry Belfour School, Grande Prairie



Photo by Patricia Russell

MNA Region 3 FASD Coordinator Terra Wuttunee and Provincial Coordinator Eileen Mustas.

**Join the Region 3
Calgary Métis Youth Dancers and Fiddlers**



Dance classes are held every Monday from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm. For more information contact:
David Garson
(Dance Coordinator)
Métis Nation Region III
Phone: (403) 569-8800
Fax: (403) 569-8959
cmydancers@hotmail.com

The "Calgary Métis Youth Dancers and Fiddlers" acts as a support group for Aboriginal participants who may feel isolated and unable to fit in with mainstream youth in other aspects of their lives.



Otipemisiwak

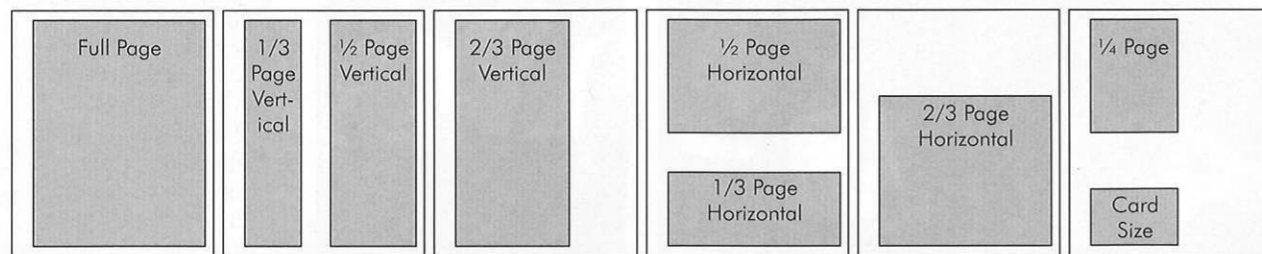
The Voice of the Métis Nation in Alberta

We encourage Métis to make submissions to our Nation's official magazine in the form of photos and articles telling stories about the events and people in your community.

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For more information on these rates, please contact *Otipemisiwak* at the Métis Nation of Alberta. Note that ads appearing on the back cover are in colour and are subject to a surcharge.

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2/3 Page Vertical	4½ inches	9½ inches	\$590
½ Page Horizontal	7 inches	4¾ inches	\$513
½ Page Vertical	3½ inches	9½ inches	\$513
1/3 Page Horizontal	7 inches	3 inches	\$395
1/3 Page Vertical	2¼ inches	9½ inches	\$395
¼ Page	3½ inches	4¾ inches	\$263
Card Size	3½ inches	2½ inches	\$133



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Tips for Business Owners

Courtesy The Business Link

If you operate your own small business, or if you're thinking about becoming your own boss, there's a wealth of information and services available to help you at *The Business Link*, Alberta's primary business service centre.

Through its specialized service area, the Alberta Aboriginal Business Service Network (Alberta ABSN), products and services have been developed to specifically help the Aboriginal person grow or establish a business in Alberta.

Speak one-on-one with

Alberta ABSN Coordinator Shannon Armitage or his colleagues about your business concerns. Use the books, directories, databases, and a number of Aboriginal-specific materials in *The Business Link* library for market research.

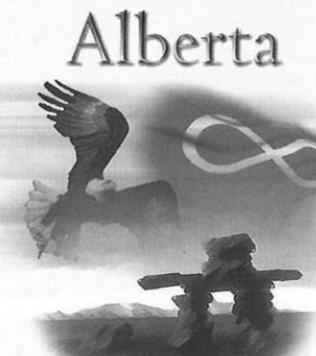
Plan to attend "quick-to-use, quick-to-learn" training sessions on a variety of business topics, as well as the annual Aboriginal entrepreneur conference.

Alberta ABSN resources are also available in many community-based centres serving clients throughout the province.

The Alberta ABSN website contains information guides, profiles of successful Aboriginal businesses, an online Aboriginal business directory, and other valuable resources.

As you start or expand your Alberta business, take advantage of the many free services available through *The Business Link's* Alberta ABSN. Call 1-800-272-9675, visit *The Business Link* in Edmonton at 10237 - 104 Street, or check out our website: www.cbsc.org/alberta/absn.

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We are your first stop for Aboriginal-specific business information and services in Alberta.

For Aboriginal business planning guides, online business tools, personal service and more, call or visit our website.

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The Alberta ABSN is a specialized service of The Business Link.





History in the Hills '06



By Amy Connochie

History in the Hills, a four-day cultural extravaganza, is an aboriginal event held annually in the Cypress Hills

Interprovincial Park next to the Elkwater Rodeo grounds. Planning is already underway for the June event which is sure to take visitors back in time, back to the western frontier in the Cypress Hills Country, through a traditional tepee village, interpretive stations, exhibits, fiddling, jigging, and a range of hands-on activities.

Cypress Hills was a traditional gathering spot for many aboriginal people including the Métis in the 1800's. The area is in Southeast Alberta, straddling the border with Saskatchewan and covering 20,250 hectares.

Métis people used the Cypress Hills a great deal during the 1800's as Hivernants, a French term that refers to an experienced fur trade employee able to winter in the wilderness. Our Métis ancestors, the buffalo hunters and fur traders, would follow the herd during the warm summer months and then spend the winters settled in camps all over the Cypress Hills, setting up villages with log cabins and churches that would be used year after year.

An important goal of *History in the Hills* is to preserve the cultural significance the area holds for aboriginal people and to bring awareness and attention to the community at large. Organizing partners of the annual event hope to do that by planning activities that will allow visitors to experience life as it was in the 1800's.

Important elements of the Métis culture that make ours distinct from other aboriginal cultures will be featured at the event. For example, a Métis traditional language speaker dressed in period costume will showcase the Michif language. Red River Cart builders will be on site to demonstrate for the younger generation how to construct such a cart. Métis fiddling and jigging will be heard, seen, and enjoyed throughout the week, and showcased by Métis musician Lawrence Houle along with the Medicine Hat Métis Jiggers. Visitors will also have a chance to sample bannock cooked over an open fire.

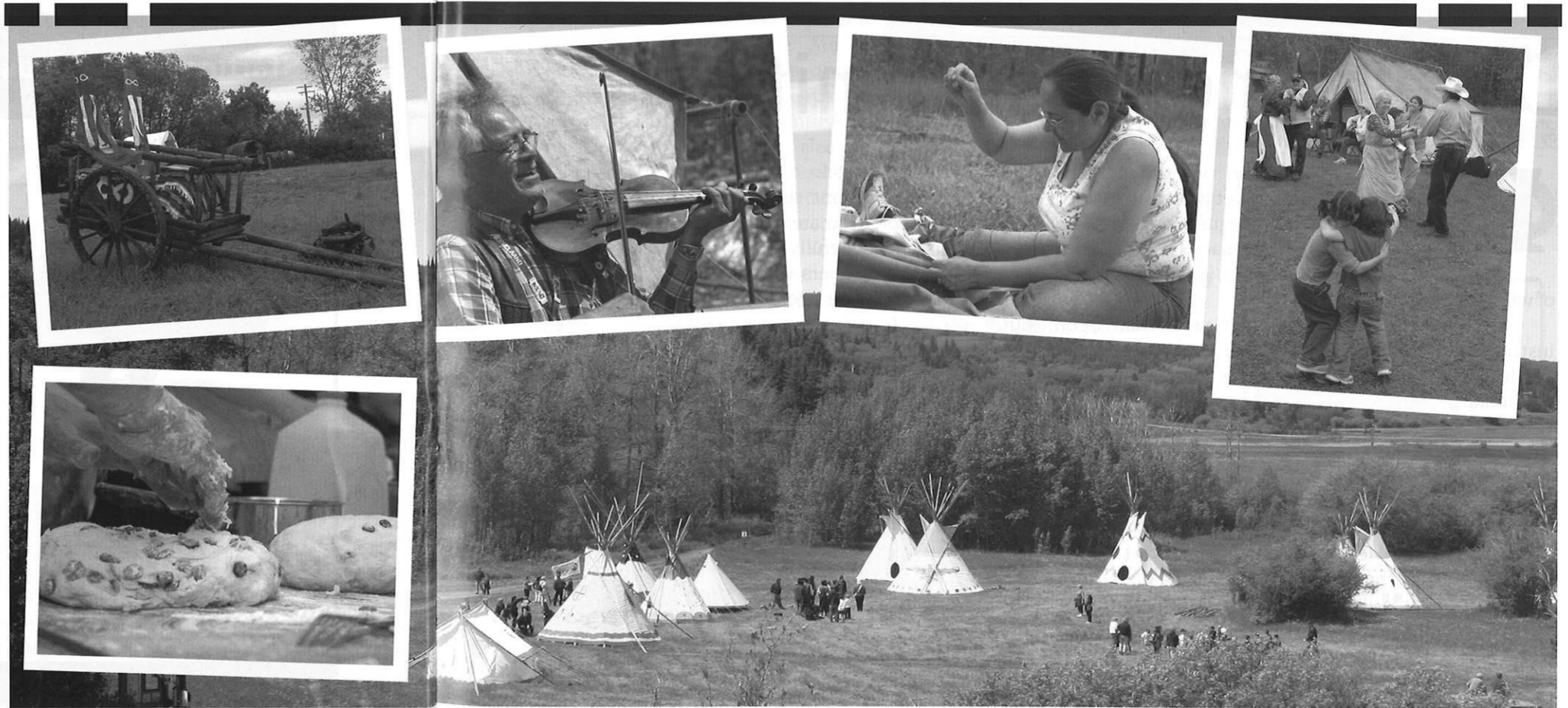
Staff from the Fort Walsh National Historic Site will set up a

patrol camp as part of a demonstration of their role back in the 1870's. Historical records show that in 1873, a bloody battle known as the Cypress Hills Massacre ensued when American wolf hunters, camped in the area, mistakenly believed their missing horses had been stolen by a group of Assiniboine camped nearby. In a drunken state, the wolf hunters decided to take revenge. The massacre of many Assiniboine and one non-Aboriginal man led to a parliamentary bill eventually being passed establishing the North West Mounted Police, the forerunner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

The archaeological dig site on the north slope of Cypress Hills

invites visitors to witness evidence of aboriginal history dating back 7,000 years. Using archaeology students from the University of Calgary, visitors and students hear and see a considerable amount of unearthed evidence, including stone and bone tool, butchered and charred bone scraps, showing how aboriginal people used the flora and fauna in the area to support their families.

History in the Hills is an excellent interactive learning experience for everyone to attend. Initiated four years ago, the event showcases the Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park, the Métis Nation of Alberta, the Miywasin Centre and other partner organizations and programs giving visitors a unique look into our history and an opportunity to experience our aboriginal culture.



Moving Forward

by Melanie Omeniho

ΦΩT The Métis Regional Council - Zone IV is moving forward with their 3-year strategic plan. On February 11 & 12, 2006 members of the Regional Council, community members, youth and elders came together to establish some general priorities and strategic plans for the next few years. More than 30 people attended from Region 4 communities of Grande Cache, Wetaskiwin, Drayton Valley, Gunn and Edmonton.

The workshop was to provide participants with an overview of the Region IV Business Plan activities to date, a Labour Market Development representative from the Métis Nation provided an overview of the programs available. Participants were asked to assist in identifying areas to suggest to the elected mandates, Cecil Bellrose, President and Tim Collins, Vice President - priorities in addressing the needs of Region IV. Elders and Youth attended the session to assist with the planning and to also explore ways of enhancing their involvement in the Regional Council process.

Participants were also asked to assist the Regional Council in determining the process / policy suggestions for committee appointments, governance portfolios, regional representation and structure, the benevolent fund and local initiatives fund.

The facilitator provided for an open and safe discussion environment where participants could ask questions or voice



More than 30 people attended the Region 4 planning workshop. top: Region 4 youth delegates Chelala Leonard and Cindy Johner bottom: Region 4 President Cecil Bellrose in discussion with the president of the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women Muriel Stanley-Venne and Apeetogosan General Manager George Vass

concerns regarding the Regional Councils services and direction. The Regional Council asked the elders to provide the opening and closing prayer and blessings. Participants chose the following priority items and broke into small discussion groups:

- Education
- Métis Rights
- Housing
- Métis Locals
- Economic Development
- Justice
- Finance
- Labour Market and Employment
- Community Development
- Urban Issues
- Health/Healing

Elders and youth worked together on determining some of the issues they face.

Region 4

Edmonton

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 Edmonton, AB T5G 1L9
 Phone: (780) 944-9288
 Fax: (780) 455-5546



Westaskiwin Métis Local Interim President Keith Grant with R4 President Cecil Bellrose, Dexter Knull (Westaskiwin) and R4 Vice President Tim Collins.

Developing Opportunities

by Rachel Hohn

ΦΩT More than two dozen Métis from Wetaskiwin attended the inaugural meeting of a new Local on February 16, 2006; each brought their hopes, ideas, and dreams of what they want the Local to be.

Interim President Keith Grant has been instrumental in pulling together the local and giving it the drive and push it needed to be less political and more relational.

"We want to do something different every time," Grant says. "We want to focus on the youth, the elders, and the culture." He says he's already started to gather information and planning sessions for awards, scholarships, business entrepreneurs, and loans for the youth in his local. He adds while the new local could be active politically he would rather focus on family-centered programs like genealogies, sash making, and financial courses.

The local will meet the third Thursday of every month, with the next meeting being March 16, 2006. For location and times contact Keith Grant at (780) 679-

0165 or (780) 387-1884.

As for now, Grant says he's excited to see the amount of people who are interested in the local. "I'm new at this and hopefully it works out," Grant says. "There are new members who have lots of good ideas. There are a lot of fine people who are willing to help out."

Laura McLaughlin

(780) 451-0465

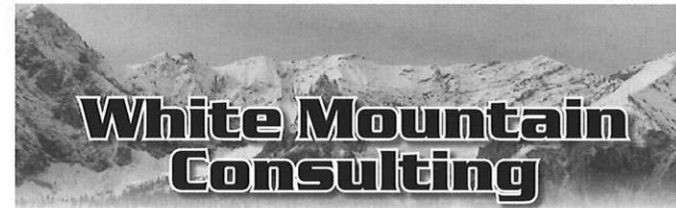
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An ad-hoc committee has been established to review the draft report and assist with the development of a business plan that will be ratified by the Métis Regional Council at their annual meeting this year.

Regional President Cecil Bellrose and Vice President Tim Collins say the weekend was beneficial and were happy to hear the input and discussions. They look forward to building on the work that has been completed and will assist in moving some of the identified priorities forward. They also welcome input and would be happy to disseminate the report from the workshop to the community when it is completed. They recognize that the strength of the Métis Nation is in the people they represent and in their involvement.

The Métis Regional Council - Zone IV would also like to take this time to welcome our two new Métis Locals - the first is Hinton Local 2005 and the newly developed Local in Battle River Wetaskiwin. If there are other communities that are considering starting a Métis Local they should contact the Regional Office and will be provided with support and assistance in getting up and running. We look forward to mobilizing our communities and supporting the capacity building of each of them.



Lloyd Gwin

Project Management and Staff Development

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Region 3 Annual General Meeting

by Patricia Russell



The leadership of Region 3 held their Annual General Meeting on January 28, 2006 in Calgary, AB.

Several dozen Metis attended the meeting from Calgary and surrounding communities such as Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, and Balzac to review the business and activities undertaken by the region and the Locals over the past year.

The day-long meeting included updates and presentations from

provincial and regional managers on relevant topics such as the activities underway and/or completed through the Labour Market Development Unit and Métis Employment Services, economic development, business development, health, children's services, education, youth programs and services for elders.

Region 3 President Marlene Lanz and Vice President Joe Chodzicki, along with their staff and volunteers, held a Twoonie Dinner/Dance and Auction for their guests later that evening.

Region 3
Calgary
Regional Office
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Calgary, AB T2A 6J4
Phone: (403) 569-8800
Fax: (403) 569-8959
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Across the top: 3 generations of volunteer cooks, Karla with daughter Faith Jones and mother Doreen Dumont-Bergum; David and Alice Bissonette; and MNA President Audrey Poitras and R3 President Marlene Lanz
Middle: Medicine Hat Local President Jeanette Hansen
Bottom: Sheila and Jack Bruce, Donna and Garland Bruce - all from Balzac, AB home of the famous groundhog "Balzac Billy" who predicted an early spring this year; and Richard Lucier-Larson and John Parkins

Region 5 Métis Celebration

Photos and Story submitted by Alicia Boisson, South Peace News, Slave Lake, AB

The 3rd annual Métis Celebration was a success in the eyes of its organizers and a good way for spectators to learn about the Métis culture.

The celebration, which was held in Grouard on Friday, Feb. 3, had a day of workshops and a night of jigging, Métis dancers and a talent competition.

According to Louise Myre of the Northern Lakes College Cultural Events Committee, 400 people showed up for the talent night, and about 350 people came and went from the feast.

Rick Neidig, Northern Lakes College president, agrees the celebration was a success and a good learning experience.

"The organizers did a great job," says Neidig. "We have some really dedicated staff that worked with the Métis Nation of Alberta Zone 5 Regional Council, and other sponsors to make the celebration turn out the way it did."

The highlight of the day, according to Neidig was the workshops that were held during the day.

"We try to promote the understanding of Aboriginal cultures," adds Neidig. "This is just another way for us to promote it."

Bev New, Métis Nation of Alberta Region 5 president, says



the partnership among the sponsors, themselves, and the Northern Lakes College is a benefit to the celebration and is helping to encourage support.

"People are starting to recognize that this is a positive event that will benefit not only the Métis but also the surrounding communities," says New. "We want to encourage people to come out and get involved."

New adds the success of the celebration is evident in

attendance and in the increase in prize money.

"We went from \$2,000 in cash prizes to \$3,500 for the talent competitors, which shows the support is getting better," says New. "It is becoming bigger, better and family orientated, which is the direction we have been heading all along."

Agreeing with Neidig, New says the afternoon workshops are the most important part of the celebration.

"It is important for us to share things like genealogy and jigging, this gives us a chance to share Métis culture," adds New. "Things like genealogy benefits everyone because it gives people a chance to learn about their family heritage and ancestry, this is for everyone interested."

Talent Show Winners

Junior Singing

- 1st - Kelsey Poitras
- 2nd - Natasha Cunningham
- 3rd - Zachary Auger

Youth Singing

- 1st - Neil Lamouche
- tie 2nd - Cory Poitras
- tie 2nd - Kristen McCarthy

Adult Singing (Female)

- 1st - Cindy Boucher
- 2nd - Crystal Cardinal
- 3rd - Joanne Auger

Adult Singing (Male)

- 1st - Curtis Papastesis
- 2nd - Nathan Cunningham
- 3rd - Patrick Callioux

Senior Singing

- 1st - Fred Belcourt
- 2nd - Marina New
- 3rd - Ed Poitras

Youth Jigging

- 1st - Cory Poitras
- 2nd - Shawna Lamouche
- 3rd - Emma New

Adult Jigging

- 1st - Russell Cardinal Jr.
- 2nd - Tammy Donald

Senior Jigging

- 1st - Yvonne Cardinal
- 2nd - Henry Russel Cardinal
- 3rd - Ed Poitras

Fiddling

- 1st - Cory Poitras
- 2nd - Ed Poitras
- 3rd - Kelsey Poitras



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Banana Bread

- 1 ¾ cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup Sugar Twin
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 4 tablespoons melted margarine
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 mashed bananas

Combine in a bowl: flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and Sugar Twin.

Beat eggs; add vanilla and melted margarine together. Mix well. Add dry ingredients. Mix until flour is moistened. Fold in mashed bananas. Put into a greased loaf pan.

Bake in 350-degree oven until done.

Region 5

Slave Lake

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 Slave Lake, AB T0G 2A0
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 Fax: (780) 849-2890
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St. Paul Winter Carnival

by Rachel Hohn

The St. Paul Winter Carnival kicked off its events with a fresh layer of snow covering the ground - something miraculous in the abnormally warm winter Alberta has been experiencing this year. St. Paul des Métis Local 1896 President Bob Nolin and VP Kevin Prather were instrumental in getting the event up and running in less than two months.

The concept came out of a "lot of sleepless nights," Nolin says with a laugh. He says he would wake up in the middle of the night with great ideas for the carnival. Nolin, his wife Jackie, and his son Skye all wore remnants of the ribbon that was cut to open the ceremony.

St. Paul Mayor John Trefanenko cut the ribbon to start the event on the Friday of the Family Day weekend. People poured past the ribbon site to enter the St. Paul Recreation Centre to get a good seat for the Mannawanis Native Friendship Centre Annual Talent Show featuring singing, jigging, and fiddling. Over two hundred people showed up to perform and watch the talented individuals compete.

Eddie Poitras, his 16-year-old son Cory, and 11-year-old daughter Kelsey were in competition with each other throughout the event. All three entered the competition to fiddle, sing and jig. Their mother Shelley laughs, describing it as "a big competition in the family to see who wins."

In addition to the jigging and fiddling competition there was a heavy Métis presence in the three-day carnival, with stew and bannock dinners, bannock on a stick, and an emphasis on



Photos by Rachel Hohn

traditional culture.

Métis Nation of Alberta President Audrey Poitras participated in the final day's grand entry at the Multicultural Monday Dance Showcase. There were dancers and singers from all races and cultures including Powwow, Ukrainian, Hoop, Silhouette, Highland, Square, Round, Les Blés d'Or, Phillipino, and Punjabi dancers.

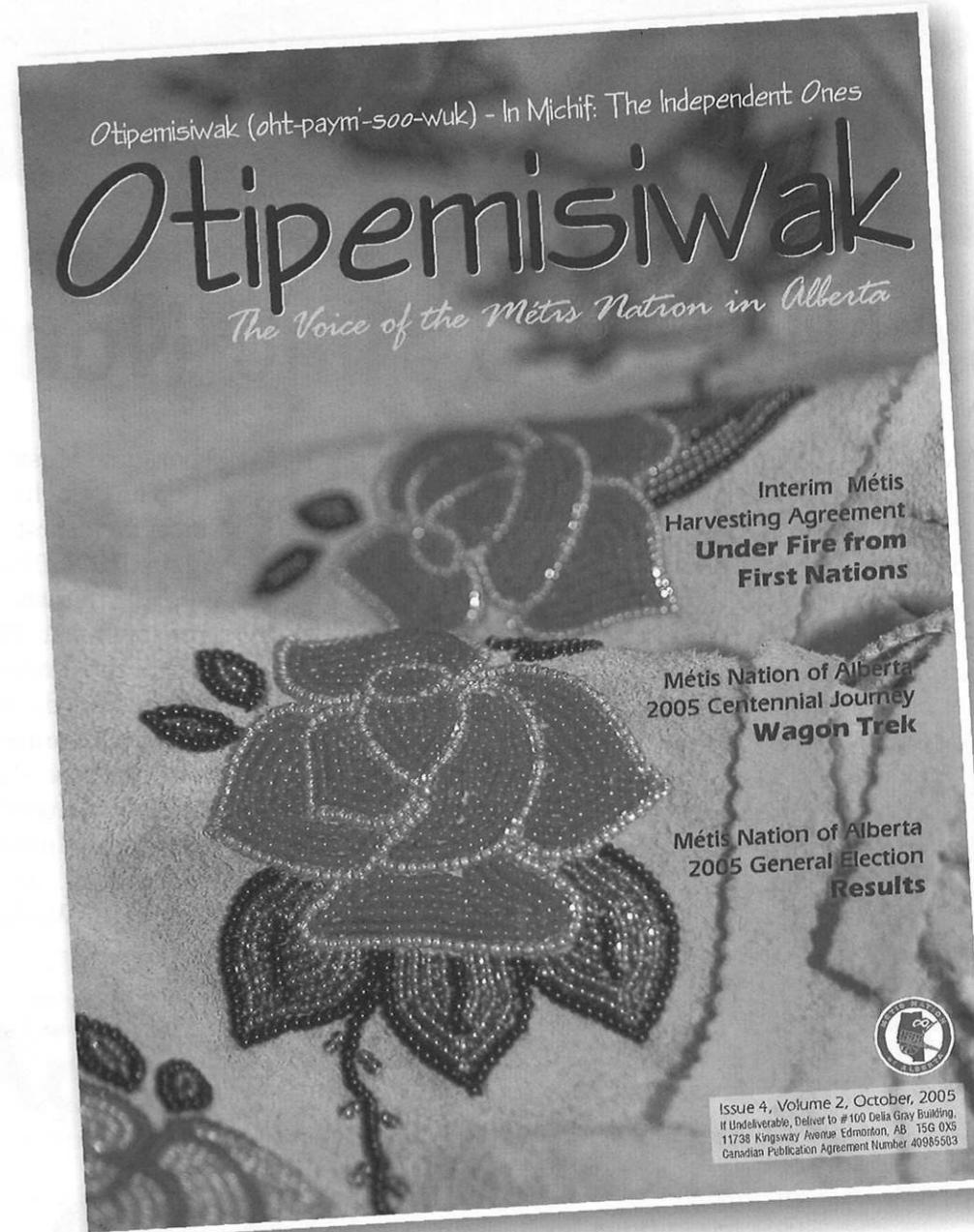
"What makes St. Paul unique is the multiculturalism," VP Kevin Prather says. He adds that they tried to focus on that multiculturalism to form the different events. There are over 15,000 people in the St. Paul county area, with two Métis settlements nearby.

"It is a very family-oriented event," Prather says. "We're all family here."

There were 17 different organizations involved in starting up the festival in addition to the Métis Local, including the Mannawanis Native Friendship Centre Society, the Town and County of St. Paul, the Trailblazers Snowmobile Club, Cat Country 1310 CHLW, the St. Paul Journal and more.

Nolin and Prather both say they hope next year the carnival will continue and grow. "It's going to get bigger," Nolin says with confidence as another wave of people swarm past him to watch the talent show. "Bigger and better."

Otipemisiwak - Nominated in 11 categories of the Western Magazine Awards



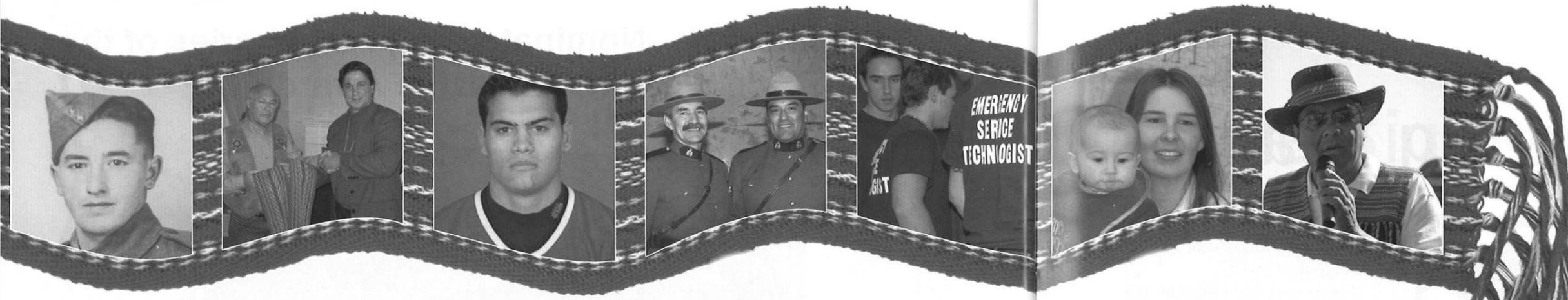
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Honouring Our Métis People



ASANI, 2006 Juno Nominee

by Rachel Hohn

The Métis Nation of Alberta congratulates ASANI on their 2006 Juno nomination for Aboriginal Recording of the Year. ASANI consists of three women, Sherryl Sewepagaham, Sara Pocklington, and the MNA's own Manager of Children's Services Debbie Houle.

"We're very excited, of course," Houle says. "I don't have the words to describe it...It's a whole different level of exposure and opportunity for us."

The group is up against some stiff competition according to Houle, who says it is an honour to be in competition with Aboriginal musicians such as Burnt Project 1, Eagle & Hawk, tagaq, and Billy Joe Green. "They're all really good," she says. "It's really hard because they've lumped all the different genres into one category." The groups range in musical focus from a capella, blues, rock 'n roll and jazz.

Arbor Records Limited nominated ASANI and after two nomination judgments, the women were alerted to their acceptance into the Junos. Houle laughs as she tells of knowing



Photo by Naomi Gordon

they were nominated but wishing and hoping their recording company nomination would turn into a Juno nomination.

"We were just waiting for the (Juno final nominations) website to come up," she says. "We kept hitting 'refresh', 'refresh' until the nominations popped up."

The women have won the Canadian Aboriginal Music Award for Best Female Traditional / Cultural Roots Album. They have also been nominated for an Indian Summer Music Award, two Western Canadian Music Awards, and three Canadian

Aboriginal Music Awards.

The trio has been together since their first performance in August 2001. Their debut album, *Rattle and Drum*, was released in January 2005. They opened and closed the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards with their song titled *Celebrate*, which they composed for the festival. They will begin touring after they record their next album in May, performing at the Kennedy Centre in Washington, DC, on



Above and Left: Rattle and Hum - the CD that earned ASANI a Juno nomination
Previous Page: Métis singer Debbie Houle, member of ASANI, singing at the Canada Day celebration in Edmonton, 2005.
Right: ASANI - Sherryl Sewepagaham, Debbie Houle, and Sara Pocklington

June 8, at the Smithsonian from June 29 to July 11, and in Cape Breton, NS in August.

The Juno Awards will air on CTV at 7pm (Atlantic time) on Sunday, April 2, 2006 live from Halifax, Nova Scotia.

"Not to be cliché, but we really are just honoured to even be nominated," Houle says. She adds that she can't wait to walk on the red carpet and hobnob with stars like Michael Bublé and Coldplay.



Photo courtesy ASANI

Aiming for the Big League

By Rachel Hohn



What do all the four hockey players on these pages have in common? They're all Metis and they're all from Lac La Biche, AB. Playing hockey is a family activity

Novice Rangers team. Makayla has two assists and is shooting for her first goal.

Eleven-year-old Jonathan has been lacing up his skates for two seasons, playing forward and in goal for Lac La Biche's PeeWee Rangers.

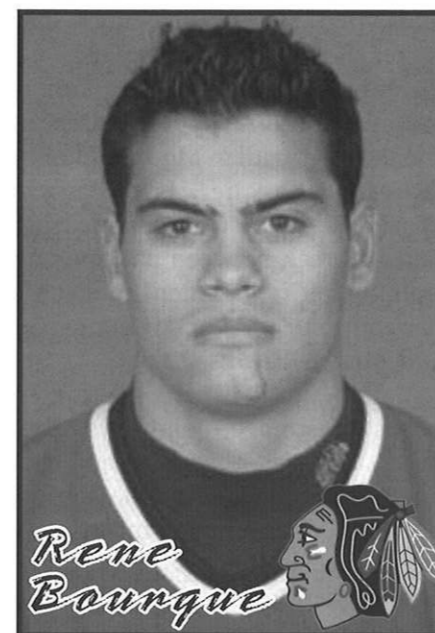
The youngest of the Koebel hockey players is 7-year-old Travis who's in the town's invitational league where he's learning the rules of the game and developing the skills to play hockey.

Proud parents are Debbie Koebel and Wilfred (Pappy) Boucher.

for the three Koebel siblings pictured here. This is the first year on the team for 9-year-old Makayla Koebel, nicknamed "Speedy", who plays the forward position for the

In the Big League

By Rachel Hohn



Rene Bourque, a Métis from Lac La Biche, AB, is a free agent playing left wing for the Chicago Blackhawks since July 29, 2004. According to the team website, over the 2005/06 season Bourque has scored 10 goals and

14 assists.

Playing against the Edmonton Oilers on November 19, 2004, Bourque scored 2 goals in the Blackhawks 4-3 win in a game that many of his friends and family travelled to Edmonton to watch.

Before 2004, Bourque spent four seasons playing college hockey for the University of Wisconsin and racked up 57 goals and 40 assists in 152 career games. He was signed by the Chicago Blackhawks and the American Hockey League (AHL).

Since then Bourque has appeared in 78 games for Norfolk - registering a team high and franchise record in making 33 goals and 27 assists.

Bourque scored his first professional goal, the game winner, in his professional debut at Hershey on October 16, 2004. He was named the Reebok AHL

Rookie of the Month for January 2005. With a shot measuring 99.8 miles/hour he won the CCM Vector Hardest Shot contest at the 2005 AHL All-Star Skills Competition. He was named to the Canadian Team All-Stars for the 2005 Dodge AHL All-Star Classic and he was named to the 2005 AHL All-Rookie Team. Bourque is also the winner of the Dudley "Red" Garrett Memorial Award as the AHL's Outstanding Rookie.

What else do these hockey players have in common?

Rene's dad and the Koebel siblings' dad were in the same recreational hockey league in Lac La Biche. In addition, Gary Bourque and Wilfred (Pappy) Boucher held the Metis Nation Region 1 leadership seats from 1996 to 1999 as president and vice president respectively.

Métis National Council 2006 General Assembly, April 1 - 3, Winnipeg Manitoba



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Louis Riel

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RCMP Dream Job

By Rachel Hohn



Métis youth Kim Mueller put a great deal of thought into her decision to leave the MNA and join the RCMP.

ends that made this office her second home for so many years.

The young energetic mom is leaving the MNA to start a career in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). On her last day as Provincial Youth Coordinator, Kim takes a break between packing and training her replacement to discuss her choice to end her current career and join the RCMP.

"All our lives are waiting in boxes in storage," she says. Kim kicks aside another box and sits down at her desk. "It is the hardest decision I've ever had to make in my life. I feel at home at work like family when I'm here."

She and her husband Shane Turvey applied for and were accepted into the RCMP after an aboriginal recruitment campaign kicked off in early 2005. Both dreamed of being in the RCMP, but well-paying, well-respected jobs and two children under the age of eight prevented them from giving the dream a second thought.

However, when opportunity

came knocking, the two answered the door. Kim didn't tell her parents or sisters of her choice until after she had been accepted. Her younger sisters, Holly and Jennifer are already members of the RCMP and Kim didn't know how they or her parents would react to the news of her joining. But her family astonished her when they all approved despite their surprise.

"I was shocked," laughs Marge Mueller, Kim's mother. "All my family are hard workers committed to a better way of life, and I'm really proud of them."

Kim and Shane sent their children, Taylor, 8, and James, 2, to live with Marge and her husband while the recruits complete their training at RCMP Depot in Regina. It was a hard transition, but Marge says they are adjusting well and counting down the days to the reunion for Easter celebrations.

Cathy Simmonds, a part-time interviewer for the RCMP, says



RCMP Constable Holly Mueller, Kim Mueller and her children James and Taylor.

Mueller was an ideal candidate for the force. Simmonds helped with the training of both Mueller's sisters during their time at Depot, so she felt a particular kinship to Kim during the application process.

"Her two sisters are amazing," Simmonds says. "Her whole family is amazing. It's quite a success story that three sisters, three Métis women, are all part of the RCMP."

Mueller's solid upbringing, her mature outlook, her upstanding lifestyle, and her preparation all indicated to Simmonds she was an ideal candidate. "I believe she'll be an asset," Simmonds says. "She serves the Métis Nation proudly. All the sisters do. They're all role models to the community."

After completing over a month in Depot, Mueller's family says she is still very excited to be in training. But first she had to make the decision to leave and change her whole life and that of her family so she could chase a childhood dream.

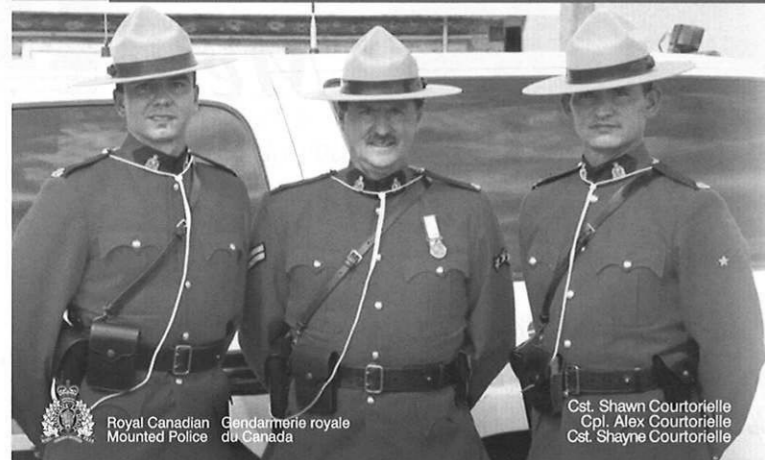
Back in her MNA office, as she takes another piece of memorabilia down from her office walls, she says with confidence, "This will be the most important job in my life."



Provincial Youth Coordinator Kim Mueller sighs and pauses to remember a moment captured in the photograph she just took off the wall in her office at the Métis Nation of Alberta's (MNA) provincial office building. Kim shakes off the memory in the photograph, smiles and continues to pack the odds and

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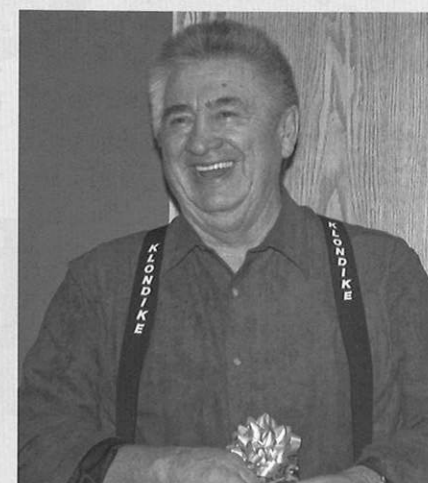
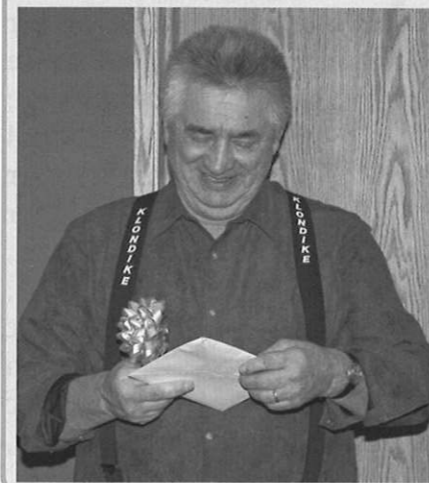


Happy Birthday to Region 6 Vice President Louis Bellrose!

Hard to believe Louis Bellrose has turned 70!

Upon receiving a surprise birthday cake from MNA President Audrey Poitras and the provincial office staff during a recent meeting of the MNA Provincial Council, Louis Bellrose cited advice from his father as the reason for his easy-going attitude.

"My father was a philosopher and I used to listen to what he had to say. He wasn't university educated or anything like that, but he was a philosopher. My father used to say to me, "Son, no matter what a person does to you, forgive them. If you don't forgive them, it will rot you from the inside. I think that's what helped to keep me young at heart."



Celebrating Métis Youth



by Rachel Hohn

The Métis Nation of Alberta, Oteenow Employment and Training Society, and the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) are hosting the Alberta Aboriginal Youth Achievers Conference (AAYAC) in Edmonton this year. Every year the AAYAC showcases the talent of Métis, First Nations, and Inuit youth aged 15 to 30. This year, the conference is being held at the NAIT campus in Edmonton, Alberta from March 24 to 26 and with a focus on Labour Market information including career speakers, workshops, and information booths.

The Alberta Aboriginal Youth Achievers Award (AAYAA) winners will be presented their awards on March 25, 2006. The awards are given to honour youth role models - youth who make a difference to their surroundings to better the lives of others.

Only 17 winners were

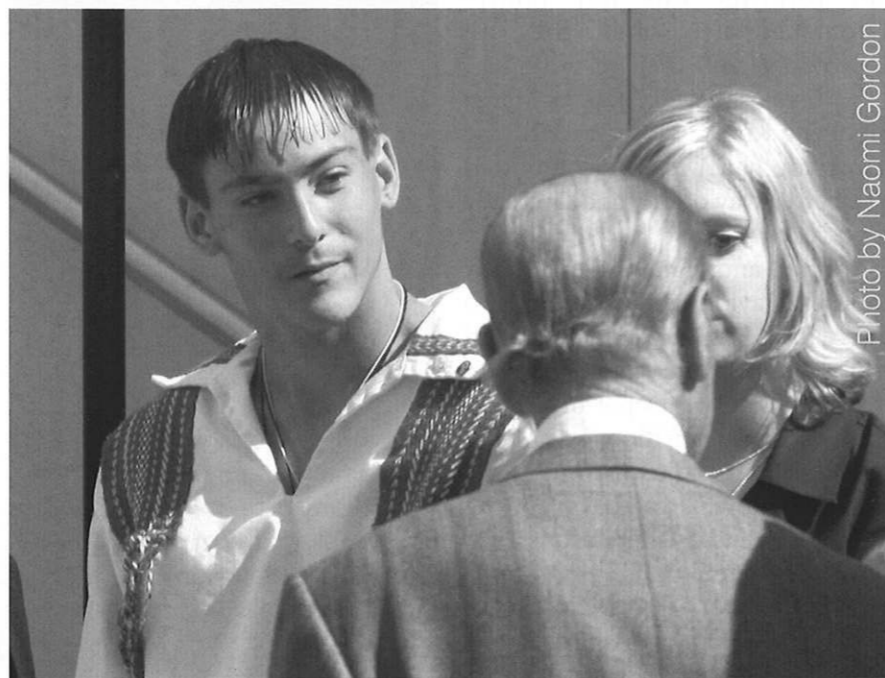


Photo by Naomi Gordon

Métis youth Shaun (Beazeley) Cummer about to receive the Duke of Edinburgh's Award from His Royal Highness Prince Phillip in May 2005.

chosen from the 30 nominations received. Each candidate was rated on five questions determining whether they had raised awareness, acted in leadership roles, received awards or recognition for their success and shown excellence.

"All the nominations we got were awesome," says Terra Haugen, new MNA Youth Coordinator and volunteer judge for the event. "A lot of them came really close."

The award-winners are: Jordan Cardinal, Culture & Heritage (First Nations); Kenny

Algona, Culture & Heritage (Inuit); Corbin Poitras, Culture & Heritage (Métis); Derek Huppie, for Academic Achievement (JR); Arrol Bernard, Athletic Achievement (JR); Charmaine Durocher, Career Advancement (JR); Stevie Snider, Community Leader (JR); Chantelle St. Martin, Personal Achievement (JR); Tyler Hallock, Volunteer Services (JR); Jennifer Skeard, Walking the Red Road (JR); Lindsay Lepine, Academic Achievement (SR); Justin White Cow, Athletic Achievement (SR); Kris Gladue,

Career Advancement (SR); Wayne Karakuntie, Community Leader (SR); Bridgitte Loonskin, Personal Achievement (SR); Shawn (Beazley) Cummer, Volunteer Services (SR) and Clinton Soto, Walking the Red Road (SR).

Some of the Métis winners were active in their communities while keeping a firm hold on their own personal lives. Kris Gladue is a manager of Region 4's Labour Market Development Unit, as well as being involved in the Métis National Youth Advisory Council and overseeing the Métis National Youth Initiative. In addition to being a young mom, Lindsay Lepine is an honour student in her first semester of Aboriginal Pre-technology with her sights set on completing the Medical Radiological Technology program at NAIT. And Shaun (Beazeley) Cummer won the Duke of Edinburgh's Award for his activities in volunteerism with several organizations and with a video called *Faith Like a Child, A grandparent's story about raising children with FASD*.

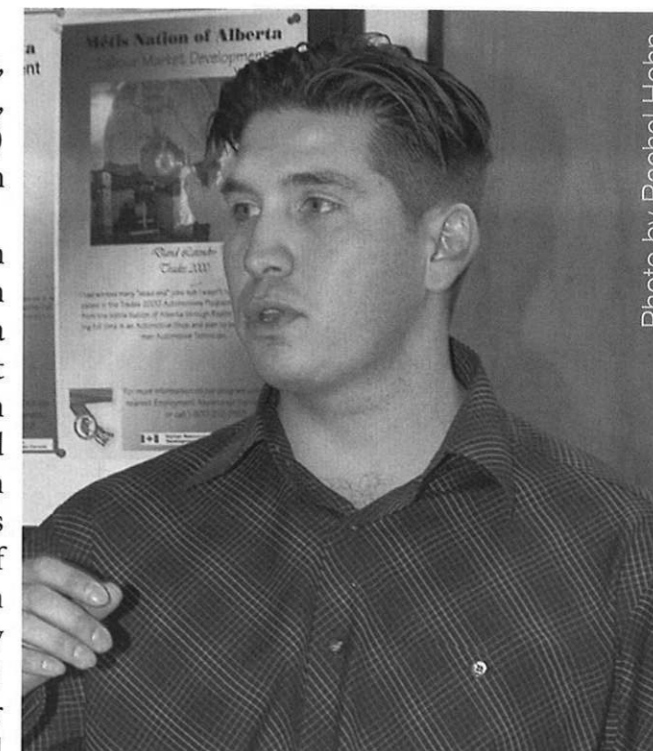


Photo by Rachel Hohn

LMD Manager Kris Gladue will receive the AAYA award for Career Advancement (Senior).

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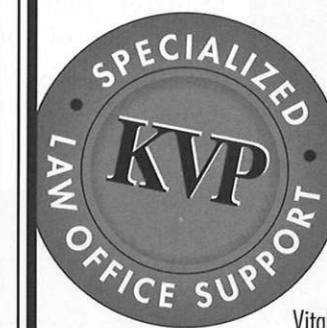
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2006 National Aboriginal Achievement Awards Celebrating Métis Winners

by Patricia Russell

Recipients gathered with friends, family, and well-wishers in Vancouver, BC on January 27, 2006 to accept their National Aboriginal Achievement Awards in a gala celebration honouring the accomplishments of aboriginal people in Canada.

Among the 14 winners are Métis recipients: Dr. Herb Belcourt, Métis Nation of Ontario president Tony Belcourt, and Jim Sinclair, aboriginal rights activist.

This year's lifetime achievement award was bestowed upon Jim Sinclair, a Métis from Saskatchewan, who has pursued the rights of aboriginal people for more than 40 years. Sinclair launched the first lawsuit against a sitting prime minister to get the Métis into the First Conference on Aboriginal Constitutional Affairs. "Then-prime minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau settled out of court and the two became close friends," reads Sinclair's biographical entry in the NAAA program.

"Leaders of other nations also took notice of his drive and determination. In 1990, he was invited by the prime minister of Australia to speak on indigenous rights, has appeared twice before the European parliament, and held a private audience with Pope John Paul II on four occasions to discuss aboriginal issues," reads the program. Sinclair is the former president of the Association of Métis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan.

Dr. Herb Belcourt, a Métis from Alberta, was recognized for his commitment to building homes and helping to improve the living conditions for Métis families in Edmonton and Calgary. Dr. Belcourt started a housing project in 1970, which led to the incorporation of the Canative Housing Corporation aimed at creating decent and affordable housing for Métis families. The housing program included skills training programs for tenants to learn parenting,

homemaking, health, and budgeting skills, and included a daycare.

"In 2002, through Canative Housing, Herb and his colleagues established the Belcourt Brosseau Métis Awards, donating \$13 million for further education for Métis people (the interest used for bursaries and scholarships) and also donated a residents' house for Métis postgraduate students at the University of Alberta", reads the NAAA program.

Herb received the 1977 Queen's Silver Medal for Community Service, the 1996 Alberta Aboriginal Role Model Award, the 2003 Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal and the 2005 Alberta Centennial Award. Additionally, Norquest College in Edmonton renamed its auditorium in his honour in November, 2005.

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) President Tony Belcourt received the National Aboriginal Achievement Award for public service for his work in raising awareness of Métis rights and for promoting and preserving the history and culture of Métis in Canada. Belcourt was instrumental in establishing the Métis Nation of



Ontario in 1993 and was elected as president of the organisation four times consecutively. During that time, the MNO was instrumental in the landmark Supreme Court of Canada ruling in *R.v.Powley* that recognizes and affirms the existence of Métis rights in the Constitution Act (1982).

Métis National Council President Clement Chartier congratulated the recipients in the NAAA program by writing "The MNC is amazed by the nominees and award recipients. Each of you instils enormous pride in the aboriginal community. On behalf of

the Métis Nation, thank you for your leadership and being role models at this crucial time in our history!"

Métis National Council Vice President Audrey Poitras was on hand to present an achievement award to MNO president Tony Belcourt. In letters sent to the Métis recipients, Poitras congratulates the winners for 'the numerous achievements you have reached in the interest of the bettering of Aboriginal people across the Homeland, achievements made possible because of your unwavering determination toward the realization of Aboriginal rights.'



Top: MNO President Tony Belcourt, Dr. Herb Belcourt and granddaughter, Amethyst Belcourt and MNC Vice President Audrey Poitras

Left: Dr. Herb Belcourt receives his National Aboriginal Achievement Award for housing.

Right: Jim Sinclair (left) received the Lifetime Achievement Award and George Tuccaro (right) received the NAA award for Media and Communications.



Above: Recipients of the 2005 National Aboriginal Achievement Awards.

Kelvin Desjarlais, Role Model

By Jennifer Brown



For six years running, the National Métis Youth Advisory Council (MNYAC) has selected a group of Métis youth from across the Homeland to be honoured by their peers as winners of the National Métis Youth Role Model Awards. This year's recipients gathered in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan for the awards ceremony held on March 11, 2006.

The MNYAC is delighted to announce Kelvin Desjarlais from Bonnyville, Alberta as the recipient of the 2006 award in the Personal Achievement category.

Kelvin's personal story has many chapters, but it is his triumph over life's challenges that make him an outstanding young man. Kelvin was raised in foster care from 2 years of age until 16. His premature birth left him with under-developed lungs, a medical condition he still deals with various forms from chronic asthma, to bronchitis, and acute emphysema. It was after his lungs collapsed as an infant that he was placed in a non-aboriginal foster home where Kelvin says he was exposed to extreme racism, stereotypes and discrimination from the people whose care he was placed into. But the negative home environment could not dampen his spirit or prevent him from becoming an excellent young man. After leaving foster care, Kelvin returned to his roots and began building a relationship



National Métis Youth Role Model Award recipient Kelvin Desjarlais playing with his son, Harley.

with his biological family.

Kelvin's experience in foster care guided his decision to offer mentorship to youth in situations similar to what he grew up in. His tremendous volunteer contribution to the aboriginal community has kept him involved in youth camps, social events, Christmas parties, helping youth with their literacy and homework skills. Never letting his lung condition get the best of him, Kelvin continues to work hard to support youth sports by coaching youth volleyball and soccer.

Kelvin is passionate about helping to improve the lives of aboriginal people. He has been working with the Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society in Edmonton since 2004 and has already moved upward by three positions since he started as a group home worker. Since then, he has been a facilitator for *Wind Dancers Pre-Employment Program* for aboriginal youth, and has recently become a student liaison worker with *Rights of Passage School*.

Through his experience as a father to a young son named Harley, Kelvin's understanding of friends, family, and community has deepened. Friend and colleague, Ann Nipshank says Kelvin "encourages and promotes aboriginal cultural identity. He wants youth to understand where they come from and to learn about their culture and heritage and to be proud to be aboriginal. In turn, the youth will feel the sense of belonging and pride to be an Aboriginal person."

Kelvin Desjarlais is seen as a Métis youth role model by our people, as a father, friend and member of the Métis community.

National Métis Youth Role Model Award Recipients

Métis Culture and Heritage:

Ginny Gonneau – Napean, Ontario

Career Advancement:

Danielle Levesque – Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Academic Achievement:

Angela Beam – Brandon, Manitoba

Volunteer Service:

Dylan Gaudry – St. Laurent, Manitoba

Athletic Achievement:

Dallas Fiddler-Boyer – Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Gabriel Dumont Award for Valour:

Marc Telosky – Campbell River, British Columbia

Group Achievement:

Métis Youth Expedition II - Ontario

Mamakwasesuk:

Chelsea Lavallée – St. Ambroise, Manitoba

Dalton David Mathias – Casselman, Ontario

Elijah's Legacy

By Rachel Hohn

Three years ago, Kevin Prather and his wife, Claudine Cardinal, a Métis family from St. Paul, gave birth to a boy-girl pair of twins - Elijah and Emily. Sixteen months later, after sickness and operations, little Elijah passed away due to kidney and liver failure at the Stollery Children's Hospital in Edmonton.

The grieving parents often drew upon their son's example for the inspiration to continue to hope, to work, and to live.

"He smiled everyday despite his on-going pain," Kevin says. Elijah continued to smile through his short life and help his family smile in the difficult times. "He was as much a teacher to us as we were to him," Kevin says.

They took their four daughters, Terryn, Niyanah, Gwen, and Emily to see their brother as often as possible. "As a family we tried to keep our kids involved in Elijah's life," Kevin says.

But there were many times when Kevin and Claudine would have to leave the girls at home with family in Buffalo Lake to be able to travel to Elijah's bedside in Edmonton - sometimes spending up to 10 days near the hospital. "We practically lived there for the last three months," Claudine says. "That was hard. We missed the kids, and they missed us."

After her only son passed away, Claudine continued to raise her four other children and work,

and she found a way to finish her Bachelor of Education degree through the University of Alberta. She credits her success to her son's inspiring life, and the help of her friends and family.

"What we went through with our son was very hard," Claudine says. "I just kept thinking 'I've got to finish this for him. I've got to finish this for my kids.'"

Claudine says she received a lot of aid from her instructors at the university to help her graduate. "They took me by the hand, and told me what to do," she says with a laugh. "I tried not to get overwhelmed...and, before I knew it, I was done."

Kevin says he also received help from many people in the community, at work, and in his family.

"Claudine has kept me grounded," Kevin says. "We juggled home, school, and other kids...and somehow she found a way to finish her degree in education. I think of it now and it's mind-boggling. I would've just quit."

Together now for 14 years, the couple turns to each other, and to their love for their departed son and to their

faith in God to keep them dreaming of one day having another son.

"I've come to understand that God made a plan for all of us," Claudine says. "I was heartbroken, but I'm not God, He has His own plan."

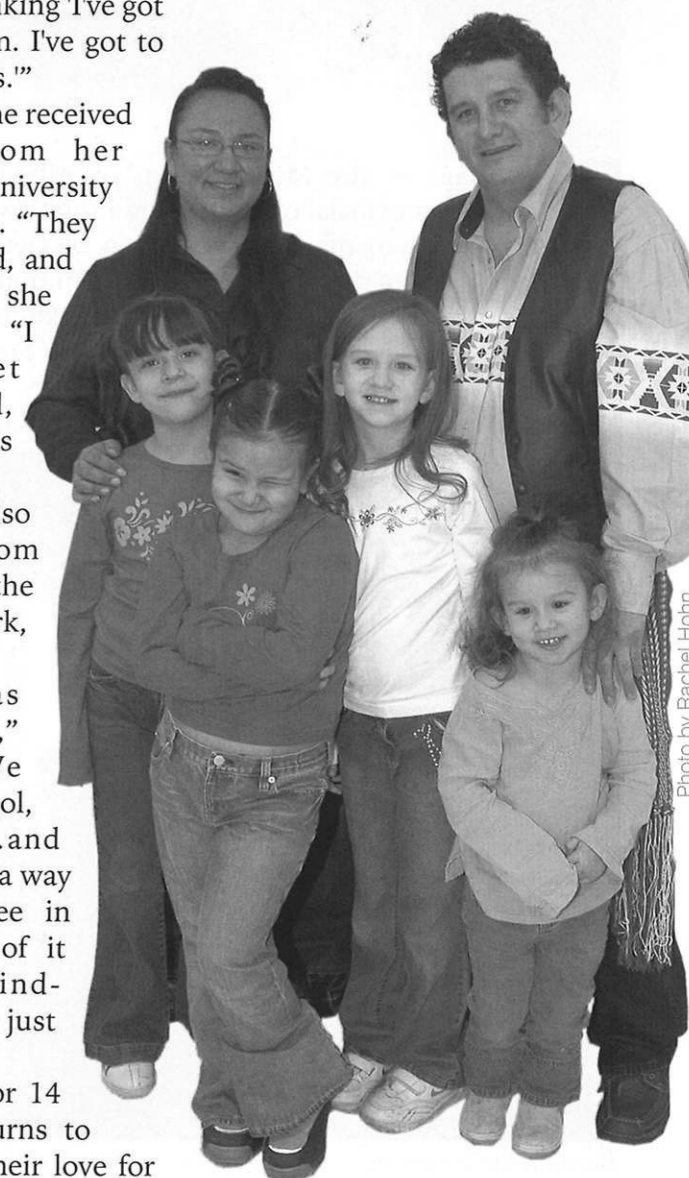
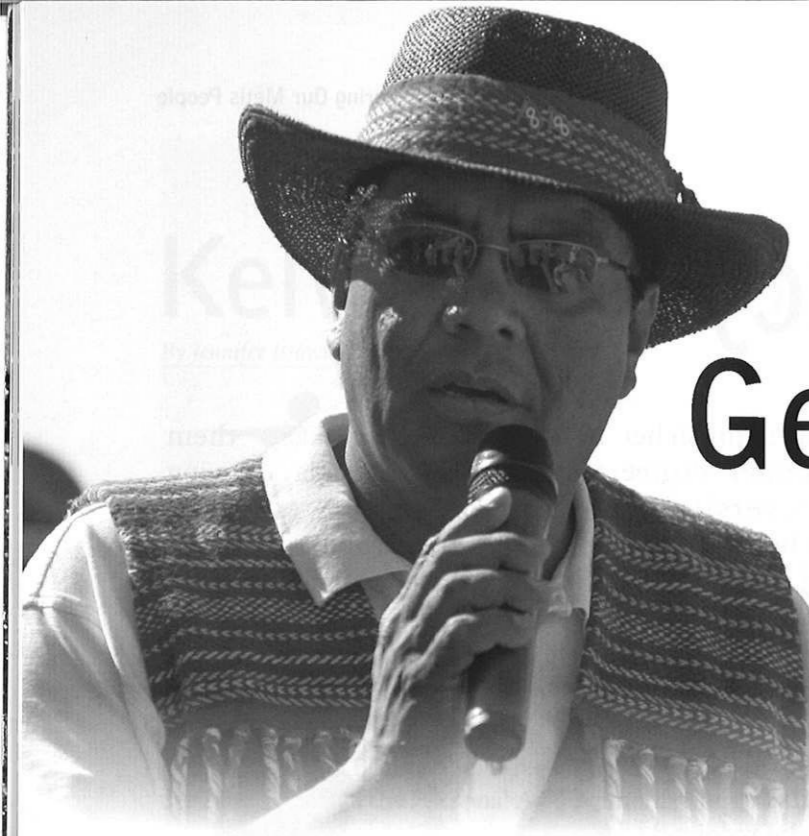


Photo by Rachel Hohn



Remembering Gerald White

by Rachel Hohn

The flags at the Métis Nation of Alberta's (MNA) provincial office in Edmonton flew at half mast to mourn the passing of Gerald White, a prominent member of the Métis community who passed away suddenly on Wednesday, January 18, 2006. His funeral was held at the Kikino Métis Settlement where he had lived most of his life. The Kikino Community School was filled with over 2,000

people celebrating the life of their friend and family member. A rear door of the school was opened so people standing outside the building could hear the service conducted inside the gymnasium.

Gerald was a strong member of the Métis Nation of Alberta who enjoyed performing traditional jigs at many events. A prominent member and manager of the Kikino Northern Lites Dancers, Gerald was often seen playing guitar and jigging alongside the youth in his troupe. The Kikino dancers have performed for many Métis across the Homeland at events such as annual assemblies, Métis Week festivities, and last summer's Canada Day Celebrations on Parliament Hill in Ottawa.

"Gerald just had so much heart," MNA President Audrey Poitras says, "He promoted Metis



Gerald White brought the Kikino Northern Lites Dancers to many provincial and national audiences, where he laughed and joked with the dancers. "Show your style", an encouraging phrase Gerald used to prompt his energetic dancers during performances such as this one at the MNC Annual General Assembly in Calgary, 2005.

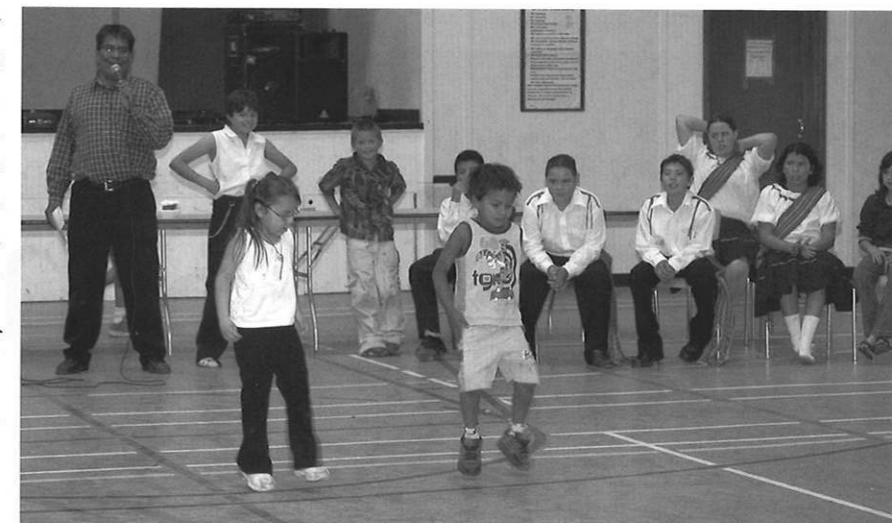
culture for most of his life by teaching the importance of Metis dance and tradition to all children. Gerald was one of the original Kikino Northern Lites Dancers and so many years later, he was still with the dancers; he was a source of inspiration for all of us and we just loved him for that."

"The sudden passing of Gerald White is truly a great loss to the Métis Nation in general and to the Métis community in Alberta," says Métis National Council President Clément Chartier. "Gerald was truly a great individual and leader in the Métis cultural world. He was both a great inspiration to the young people involved with his dancing group as well as an outstanding role model. Gerald will be missed by all the people he touched, entertained and influenced."

Originally from Kikino Métis Settlement, he spent a lot of time teaching and jigging in the Buffalo Lake area. He taught jigging programs at the Caslan School in Buffalo Lake. And, he was instrumental in starting the Buffalo Lake dancers. Margaret Daniels of the Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement says he was always active helping the community. "He's going to be sadly missed," she says. "Whoever he touched, he made a big impact."

He is survived by his mother, Doris White, his wife Denise, and his two sons Trevor and Travis. Gerald was reared by his Kookum, his Aunt Marcella and her husband Floyd Thompson.

"I raised Gerald from when he was six years old," Thompson says. "It was an instant family of six, and I was only 18 years old. It was quite an experience - I raised him like a son. His aunt, my wife, was like a special mom to him. Our



Top: Many, many Métis children and youth received Gerald's instruction and guidance in traditional Métis dancing such as these students performing in the community complex at the Buffalo Lake Metis Settlement, 2005.

Above: The Kikino Northern Lites Dancers with fiddler Cory Poitras and Gerald White after their performance at the MNC Annual General Assembly in Calgary, 2005.

kids were like brothers and sisters."

Thompson says that most people know Gerald for his entertaining, but there was another side to him that showed his recent passion.

"We knew Gerald more as a religious person," Thompson says. "He led prayer, attended services, and performed at wakes." He loved Gospel music, Thompson says, and he had quit performing

concerts to focus on creating an inter-denominational gospel CD from surrounding community singers. "He wanted the proceeds of the CDs to go back to the churches the singers were from," Thompson adds.

Since Gerald was unable to complete his dream, Thompson has decided to continue creating the Gospel CD in his absence. He says it is a fitting way to continue Gerald's legacy.

Photos by Patricia Russell

Métis Veteran Clifford Smith (1921-2006)

By Naomi Gordon

The ringing of church bells sounded across the still winter fields around Fort Vermilion as family and friends gathered at St. Henri's Roman Catholic Church to celebrate the life and mourn the passing of Clifford Clarence Smith. On January 21, 2006, Clifford Smith passed away at the age of 84, leaving a legacy of honour and inspiration to all in his life.

He was born October 24, 1921 to John and Madeline Smith in Fort Vermilion, Alberta. As a young boy, his parents instilled in him a strong work ethic and system of values. A system based



upon being Métis, a pride that he carried passionately throughout his life.

Like many young men of his generation, Clifford understood the hardships of the time and contributed what he could to the family through hunting and trapping. After leaving school, he followed in his father's footsteps and those of the men in the community, by working as a thrasher during harvesting season.

As war broke out in 1939, boys from across the region began enlisting in the forces. In 1942, Clifford left Peace Country and headed south to Edmonton, enlisting with the 49th Edmonton Regiment (later renamed the Loyal Edmonton Regiment). He would see battle in the Second World War, during the invasion of Sicily and Italy in the summer of 1943, fighting under the colours of the West Nova Scotia Regiment. After spending months on the front lines, Clifford was wounded in the battle of Ortona. He returned to Canada in the summer of 1944, after spending five months in hospital overseas.

Clifford returned to the familiar landscapes and communities of Peace Country, settling in Fort Vermilion. On January 7, 1948, Clifford married

his late wife Florence, and raised nine children on their homestead. He supported the family by traditional means, hunting and trapping, and by working various jobs such as road construction and driving a school bus. He would see the family grow to 19 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren.

Clifford's passion was in his land and his livestock. He held his traditions and values close, taking pride in his work and infecting those around him with the same dedication and appreciation for land and culture. He always ensured that respect governed his relations and interactions with people, unconditionally giving a hand to those in need.

In a telephone interview, MNA Region 6 President Sylvia Johnson says, "It is very sad for us, to have lost one of our World War II Veterans, one of the last World War II Veterans, but we are happy though to have been able to honour him at the General Assembly." She further commented that he was involved in the community and will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

The service for Clifford Smith was held on January 25, 2006 at St. Henri's Roman Catholic Church,

officiated by Father Sergio Leonardo. In his homily, Father Leonardo told of Clifford's commitment to the church and community. "This role of the bell ringer was something that he diligently fulfilled up to the last months of his life. He came here not only during funerals but every Sunday to ring the bell." He also spoke of Clifford's untiring dedication to maintaining the cemetery, "No matter how difficult it was for him to walk because of his knee, he would struggle to ride his mower and cut the grass or sent someone to do it. To me that was a strong indication of how much he remembered and valued those who have gone before him."

Métis Nation of Alberta, President Audrey Poitras said, "It is with great sorrow that we say good bye to one of our honoured World War II Veterans. Clifford's courage abroad and at home will always be remembered as will his dedication to his family and community."

His last journey over the gentle hills of Fort Vermilion was by a horse drawn sleigh delivering him to his final resting place. A peaceful goodbye to a man who has shown courage in the face of war and who led a life based on honesty, integrity, and compassion. His memory will never be forgotten.



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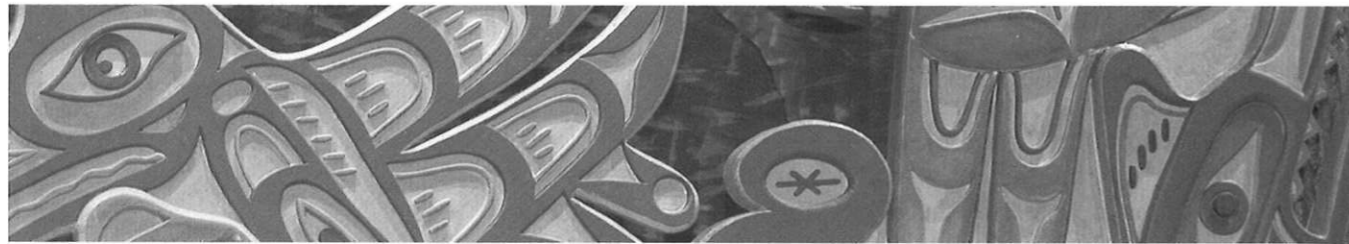
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Founded by aboriginal conductor, John Kim Bell, the awards were established 13 years ago to build pride within the aboriginal community and to provide role models for Aboriginal youth to aspire to. People of Métis, Inuit and First Nations ancestry who have attained a significant level of achievement in the arts, politics, education, social activism, science,

communications, and additional categories are eligible for the awards.

The complete list of winners for 2006 is: Jim Sinclair, lifetime achievement; Andrea Dykstra, for youth; Dr. Herb Belcourt, housing; Tony Belcourt, public service; Bernd Christmas, business and commerce; Gladys Taylor Cook, heritage and spirituality; Billy Day, environment;

James (Sakej) Youngblood Henderson, law and justice; Shirley Firth Larson, sports; Jane Ash Poitras, arts and culture; George Tuccaro, media and communications; Taiaiake (Gerald) Alfred, education; Wendy Grant-John, community development; and Myra Cree (posthumously awarded) for media and communications.



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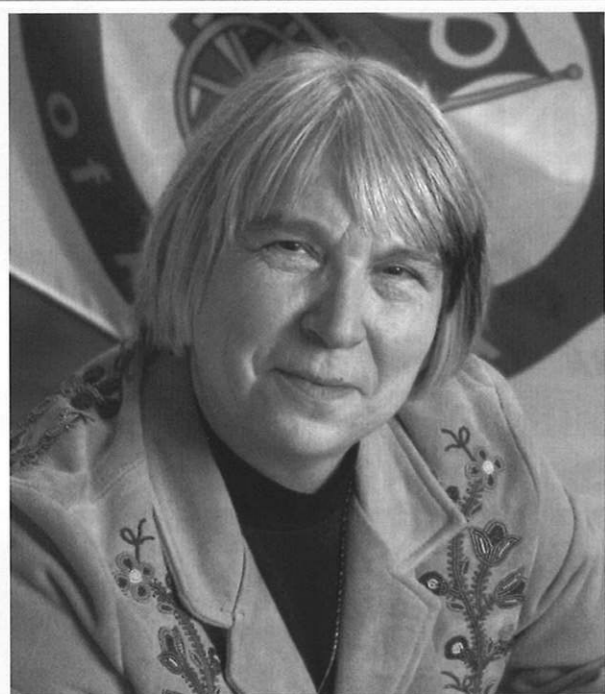
* First Nations Idol 2005 winner Taz Johnson-McGillis *

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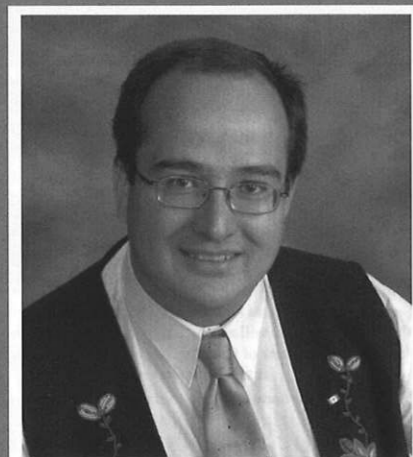
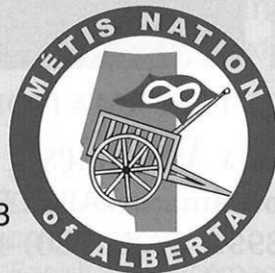
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Editor's Insight

Patricia Russell

When it comes to heroes and role models, too often our children receive the wrong impression - a commercial impression - confusing the difference between them. Thanks to the culture of popular media, heroes are mistaken for rap musicians, baggy pants and all, or the victor who wins a title for besting strength, wit, and physical ability or for winning a popularity contest. These are over-represented themes our children see on television, in movies, print media, and on the Internet.

Let's face it - it sells clothes and music generating a popular fad so someone, somewhere can earn a buck off our desire to emulate scripted behaviour. I fell for it too as a teenager, wearing the "Flashdance" outfits of the '80's, the slouching, fake leather 'Peter Pan getaway boots', ripped oversized t-shirts, leg warmers and curly-permed hair pulled back with side combs. It was a fad that came into vogue for a while but didn't last.

While there's nothing wrong with having a hero, it's important for our children to know the difference between a hero and role model.

A role model is a beast of a completely different colour. They're the people who don't get a designer clothing line named after them even though their actions, social contributions, and behaviour can be more heroic and longer lasting. They're the people for whom our attention and praise is more deserved than someone like a rap star whose lyrics promote violence, disrespect, and anarchy.

A positive role model is one who practises tolerance and believes it is not necessary to blow out the other person's light in order for his own to shine brighter. Role models illustrate exemplary behaviour, ideals that others strive to adopt in every day life; they consider the needs of other people and help them to achieve their goals through selfless action. Role models do things that the rest of us silently vow to do as well; we want to be like them.

Kelvin Desjarlais is a good example. He's the recipient of a Métis Youth Role Model Award. Here's a young fellow who gives of himself by sharing his experience with other people his age, hoping they'll make different and better choices than they're currently making. And for what? It's probably a matter of principle and moral value that keeps him going. Kelvin is an example of a Métis youth who acts in the interest of the greater good.

Role models set behavioural standard for the rest of us to aspire to.

My earliest impression of a role model is that of a Catholic Nun, Sister Anna Bisson, of the Grey Nuns Order. She lived in the convent down the street from where I grew up and taught catechism at St. Paul's Elementary School in Hay River, NT. Certainly, her instruction of Catholicism left an impression but it was her behaviour outside of the classroom and outside of the church that had the greatest impact, so much so that I seriously considered becoming a Catholic Nun myself.

Her acts of kindness to me and to my brothers and sisters were exemplary and always made without judgement. Many times, Sister Bisson brought me and my siblings into the convent 'as her guests' to feed us at lunchtime. She offered this kindness with welcoming grace and I aspired to be just like her. She was my role model and the very best example of how to treat other people with kindness and consideration. She taught me how to hope for a better future and encouraged me to turn that hope into reality.

Appreciation for selfless action is immeasurable; it starts with emulation; when we whisper to ourselves, "I want to be like that person."

National Definition of Métis

*As Adopted at the MNC's 18th AGA in Edmonton, AB
September 27th - 28th, 2002*

1.1 "Métis" means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, is of Historic Métis Nation ancestry, and is accepted by the Métis Nation.

Defined Terms in National Definition of Métis

1.2 "Historic Métis Nation" means the Aboriginal people then known as Métis or Half-breeds who resided in the Historic Métis Nation Homeland.

1.3 "Historic Métis Nation Homeland" means the area of land in west central North America used and occupied as the traditional territory of the Métis or Half-breeds as they were then known.

1.4 "Métis Nation" means the Aboriginal people descended from the Historic Métis Nation which is now comprised of all Métis Nation citizens and is one of the "aboriginal peoples of Canada" within the meaning of s.35 of the Constitution Act 1982.

1.5 "Distinct from other Aboriginal peoples" means distinct for cultural and nationhood purposes.



Métis Nation of Alberta

Our Vision

A strong Métis Nation embracing Métis rights

Our Mission

To pursue the advancement of the socio-economic and cultural well being of the Métis people of Alberta

Our Guiding Principles

- We believe in the National definition of Métis
- We believe in continuing to build our foundation for future generations
- We believe in fairness and respect for all people
- We believe in the need to work in unity and harmony
- We believe in Métis participation in building our nation
- We believe in encouraging and assisting Métis people to achieve their goals
- We believe in honesty, integrity, and professionalism
- We believe we will achieve self-government, and
- We believe in our Métis rights as recognized and affirmed in Section 35 of the *Constitution Act (1982)*



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Métis Nation of Alberta
#100 Delia Gray Building
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