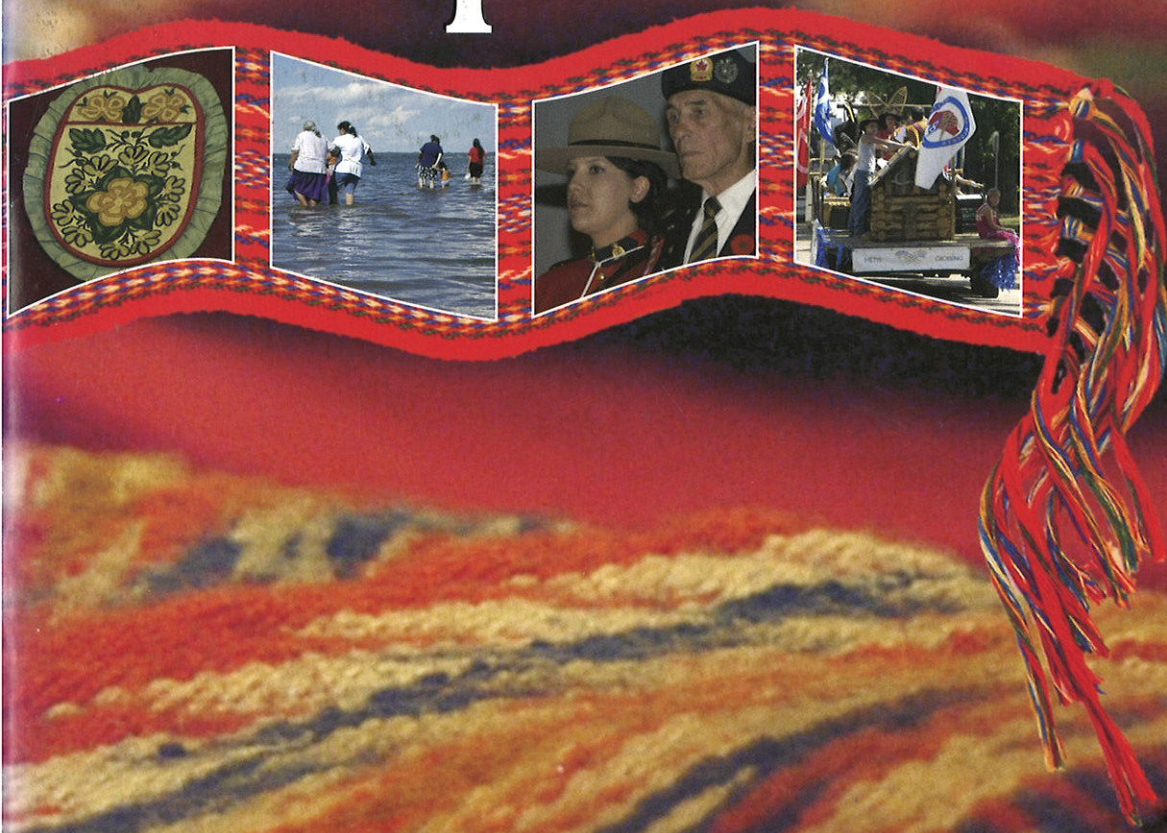


# Otipemisiwak

VOICE OF THE MÉTIS NATION IN ALBERTA



## Royal Alberta Museum Brings Home Métis Treasures

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

Michif:  
"their own boss,  
the independent ones"

**Feature Photo (left):**

Maurice Flood, a proud Métis from the Wetaskiwin area, smiles for the camera the morning of the Capital Ex parade. Flood not only provided his truck and trailer for the MNA's use during the parade, but he also helped build the small wood cabin that was a centerpiece for the float. Photo by Monique Devlin

**On Our Cover:**

This sash was part of the collection of Métis and First Nations artefacts bought by the Royal Alberta Museum this summer. Read more about it on page 32. Photo by Monique Devlin

# 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:  
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Edmonton, AB T5G 0X5  
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## in this issue

2 *President's Message*

### Strengthening Our Métis Rights

- 4 *No Change to Interim Métis Harvesting Agreement*
- 9 *Harvesting Agreement Update*
- 11 *Medal to Celebrate Métis Veterans*

### Building the Métis Nation of Alberta

- 12 *MNA 78th Annual Assembly*
- 15 *Genealogy and Lands Resource Centre*
- 17 *Calgary Thoroughfare Named Métis Trail*
- 18 *Mexico to Follow Alberta JFR Model*
- 20 *Provincial Council's New Strategic Planning Process*
- 25 *Métis Employment Services Hit the Road*

### Celebrating Métis Culture

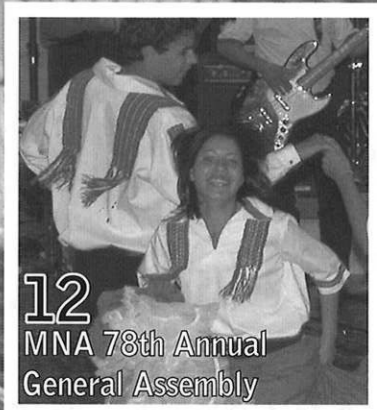
- 26 *Lac Ste. Anne Pilgrimage Faces Uncertain Times*
- 30 *Healing Our Spirit Worldwide*
- 32 *Royal Alberta Museum Brings Home Métis Treasures*
- 35 *Health in the Hills*
- 37 *Hivernant Rendezvous*

### Honouring Our Métis People

- 40 *Labour Market and Development Success Stories*
- 45 *Sash to Appear in National US Museum*
- 46 *A Trip to Heinsburg*
- 49 *NCSA Honours MNA Council Member*



9  
Harvesting Agreement  
Update



12  
MNA 78th Annual  
General Assembly



32  
RAM Brings Home  
Métis Treasures

# 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 November 8th, 2006**

Otipemisiwak  
Métis Nation of Alberta  
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1(800) 252-7553 (Alberta Only)  
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# President's Message

Welcome to the fall edition of Otipemisiwak, the official magazine of the Métis Nation of Alberta. I trust that you have all enjoyed another beautiful Alberta summer, and I hope you had a chance to visit with family and friends before school resumed in the fall. I would like to thank the youth who participated in our various programs over the summer; it is always wonderful to see the strength and character of our next generation develop as they expand their minds beyond the walls of the classroom.

Also, a big thank you to all of the delegates and their families who joined us for the Annual General Assembly this August in Lac La Biche. While the Assembly is an integral part of our political process and ensures that every member of the Nation has the opportunity to have his or her voice heard, there is more to it than speeches and resolutions. Often, it is a place where old friends reunite, new ideas and plans are developed and we have a chance to celebrate our unique culture together. It is important to not underestimate this part of the assembly because it is the celebration of our culture and relationships with each other, more than anything else, which unites us as a people and keeps our

Nation strong. It is with a mixture of joy and sadness that I announce the departure of our Communications Director and Otipemisiwak Editor, Patricia Russell. While I am happy that she has moved closer to her family in North West Territories by taking a job with the Government there, her presence here will be greatly missed. In the two and a half years she worked with the MNA she became an integral part of our operation through her work on the Interim Harvesting Agreement, on the creation of this magazine and the MNA Communications Department. I would like to take this opportunity to wish Patricia all the best in her new endeavours.

This year will be an exciting one for Métis harvesters. While they are out hunting for food for their families this winter, we will be negotiating the final agreement with the Provincial Government to protect this right. We have already had some preliminary meetings with the provincially appointed negotiator and I am confident that we will reconcile the issues that have arisen from the implementation of the Interim Agreement. I invite you to read Jason Madden's update on the Harvesting Agreement further on in the magazine



Photo by Monique Devlin

to better understand the steps we are taking to protect our right to harvest for food.

On the national front, there is still quite a bit of uncertainty about our relationship with the new federal government and their intentions regarding the Métis Nation agenda. We remain hopeful that the honour of the

such a positive relationship between the province and the MNA itself. I have had the opportunity to work with Premier Klein many times over the years, and always appreciate his forthright manner and genuine concern about the development of the MNA.

It is important that his successor be just as concerned, and be willing to continue working closely with us. On that note, I would like to encourage each and every one of you to become involved in the election process. Read about the different candidates and their platforms. Do they have a stance on Métis rights, and if not, why not? Attend community meetings and find out what you can do to help ensure that the next Premier is one who respects our people and our Nation. If you are a member of the Alberta Progressive Conservative Association (the party will remain in power until the next provincial elections, regardless of who is leading it) I encourage you to go out and participate in the vote for the new leader, and if not, consider becoming a member yourself. This election is of huge importance to the MNA and it is up to us to make sure that the next Premier is one who respects our rights and our Nation.

crowns will be upheld, and that the agreements reached in the Kelowna Accord will be fulfilled.

Closer to home, Premier Ralph Klein has officially announced his resignation from provincial politics. I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for every thing he has done for our province and for the development of

strengthening yourselves, you are strengthening the Nation and I thank you for that.

Also in fall, one of our biggest celebrations takes place Métis week, from November 12-18. Check with your Regional Offices to see what events are in store. At the Head Office, we have many exciting events planned, including the grand opening of our Genealogy and Lands Resource Centre and the Delia Gray Gala held on Riel Day, November 16. Métis week is a time to celebrate, and also to remember the struggles that our Nation has gone through. As we celebrate Louis Riel's birthday, it is important to take pause and think about how far we have come as a people and a community.

I would like to offer my deepest condolences to the family of Rene Boucher who passed away this September. As the Region 1 representative on the Elder's Council, Rene was a proud member of the MNA who touched a countless number of lives. He will be missed by family and friends alike. I would also like to extend those condolences to all families who have suffered the loss of a family member.

Respectfully,

*Audrey Poitras*  
Audrey Poitras, President  
Métis Nation of Alberta

## Strengthening Our Métis Rights

# No Change to Interim Métis Harvesting Agreement

Following the release of the MLA Committee report on the Interim Métis Harvesting Agreement (IMHA), the Alberta Minister of Justice, Ron Stevens, on behalf of the Alberta Government, confirmed at a press conference that the IMHA will remain in place until a new agreement is negotiated and signed.

As Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) members are aware, the IMHA was signed in order to accommodate Métis food harvesting in Alberta and has been in place for over two fall harvesting seasons. In order to build on the positive relationship the MNA has with the province since the release of the *Powley* decision, the MNA is currently in negotiations with the province on a new agreement to replace the IMHA.

However, like all new relationships, there have been a few bumps in the road over the last two years. One of the most apparent is the differing points of views on how Métis can fish for food.

"To date, Alberta has taken a rather narrow view and has decided that the only way Métis can fish for

food is with a domestic fishing net." Cecil Bellrose, MNA Minister for Rights and Citizenship said. "We don't believe that is consistent with what the courts have said about Métis harvesting rights. Moreover, because more often than not more fish are taken by net fishing than by fishing with a rod and reel, the province's position is difficult to understand from a conservation or practical point of view."

The difference of opinion arises from Alberta Government taking

the position that fishing with a rod and reel is considered "sport fishing" and therefore is not covered by the IMHA. The MNA believes that our members have the right to fish for food and the wording of the IMHA accommodates all types of Métis food fishing, as long as it respects the safety and conservation standards set out in the IMHA. The MNA does not believe that arbitrary "sportfishing" regulations can limit the Métis right to fish for food or the commitments with the IMHA.



Métis believe that when we take from the land, we give something back in return; the most crucial return is in demonstrating, through our hunting practices, respect for the conservation of the animals, birds, and fish. Often when fishing with a net, more food is collected than needed. Fishing with a rod and reel can better control the amount of fish taken for food purposes.

As stated above, the MNA is currently in negotiations with the

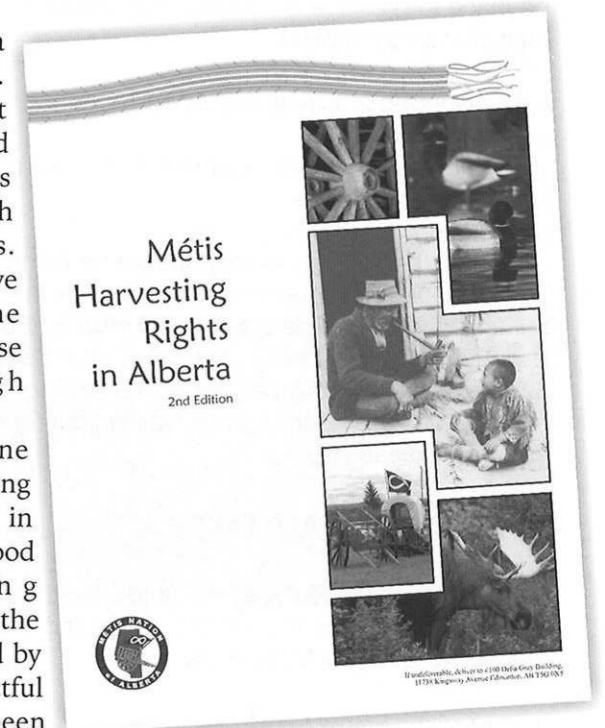
Alberta Government for a new harvesting agreement. The MNA is optimistic that the fishing with a rod and reel issues as well as others can be resolved through constructive discussions. MNA members will receive regular updates on the progress being made in these negotiations through Otipemisiwak.

"We have now gone through two fall harvesting seasons with the IMHA in place and with Métis food harvesting being accommodated throughout the province. I am encouraged by the positive and a respectful relationship we have been building with the Alberta Government on Métis harvesting issues. While we continue to have some challenges, I believe we are on the right track and look forward to another successful and safe fall harvesting season," concluded President Poitras.

Refer to the following two pages for additional information. These contain frequently asked

Métis Harvesting Rights in Alberta 2nd Edition, published by the Métis Nation of Alberta

questions about the Interim Harvesters Agreement, reprinted from the second addition of the Interim Harvesters Agreement Manual.



## Interim Métis Harvesting Agreement Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. WHAT DOES THE INTERIM MÉTIS HARVESTING AGREEMENT MEAN?

The agreement means members of the Métis Nation of Alberta, or people who are eligible to be members, can hunt, fish, and trap year round for subsistence purposes without having to buy a license.

### 2. WHAT LIMITATIONS APPLY TO MY RIGHT TO HARVEST?

The right to harvest can be limited for three reasons: conservation, safety, and health. Alberta Métis harvesters, along with non-Aboriginal harvesters, must comply with valid conservation based closures or restrictions that may be place to preserve a species. The conservation-based restrictions may apply to:

1. A species of animal, fish or bird
2. A period of time
3. Within a Wildlife Management Unit or area of land
4. Or a body of water

Métis harvesters are responsible for being aware of conservation-based restrictions that may be in place prior to hunting. Call the nearest regional office of Sustainable Resource Development or the toll-free information line: 1-877-944-0313. Traditional Métis harvesting practises dictate that Métis refrain from harvesting during spawning and calving seasons.

### 3. HOW MUCH CAN I TAKE?

Métis are encouraged to abide by the traditional harvesting practises that dictate harvesting the amount required to feed your Métis family.

### 4. CAN I SHARE MY HARVEST?

The harvesting agreement includes occasional sharing between members of the Métis Nation of Alberta.

### 6. DOES THE HARVESTING AGREEMENT APPLY TO FISHING?

There remains an unresolved fishing-related issue between the MNA and Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (ASRD). Some ASRD officers have been charging Métis subsistence fishers with 'fishing without

authorization' when using a rod and reel. It is the MNA's position that subsistence fishing using a rod and reel is covered by the agreement. Moreover, the MNA asserts the way Métis fish for food can not be limited by arbitrary regulations. The MNA has requested that this issue be addressed through the IMHA's dispute resolution process and hopes a table with Alberta will be established soon to resolve the issue. The MNA will continue to provide Alberta Métis with updates on the issue, however, until it is resolved members should be aware that they may be charged. Métis who fish for food using a net are required to get a Domestic Fishing Permit, at no cost, from Sustainable Resource Development (SRD). The permit will indicate the size of gill net to be used and the body of water the net will be placed in. Lakes closed to fishing for conservation-based reasons are closed to all fishers, including Métis. Similarly, a species of fish that's closed to fishers for conservation-based reasons is also closed to Métis. Since this agreement is for subsistence purposes only, Métis who are fishing commercially or for sport must the appropriate licenses and abide by the regulations for sport or commercial fishing.

### 7. CAN MÉTIS HUNT MIGRATORY BIRDS SUCH AS DUCKS AND GEESE?

Yes. The existing federal Aboriginal harvesting policy allows Aboriginal people, including Métis, to harvest migratory birds for subsistence purposes without a permit, outside of government prescribed hunting seasons.

### 8. AM I REQUIRED TO REGISTER MY GUNS?

You are required to register your firearms pursuant to federal law.

### 10. DOES THE AGREEMENT APPLY TO COMMERCIAL HUNTING?

The harvesting agreement has no commercial application whatsoever nor does it apply to sport or trophy hunting.

### 11. WHAT ABOUT CONSERVATION AND SAFETY?

It must also be remembered that no rights are absolute and limits can be placed on the Métis right to hunt when safety and conservation issues arise. If there is a

legitimate concern about the survival of the animal, and all harvesting of that animal has been denied in a specific area, a limitation may be justifiably imposed on Métis harvesting.

### 12. WHAT SHOULD I DO IF A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER APPROACHES ME?

Be calm, polite, and courteous throughout the encounter. Being confrontational will not be helpful. Be certain to identify yourself as a member of the Métis Nation of Alberta and state that you are exercising your Métis right to harvest for food. This is very important. If you do not identify as Métis than a different law and/or regulations may be applied to your harvesting activities. Show your Métis Nation of Alberta membership card to the enforcement officer.

1. Make it known to the enforcement officer that you are a Métis subsistence harvester.

2. If the officer asks you questions like 'what do you know about Métis rights or the Powley case?' or 'what Métis community are you from and when was it formed?', you do not need to answer. In fact, you should be aware that additional information you provide at that time might be used against you at a later date. All you have to say is that you are exercising a Métis right to hunt for food and provide your identification.
3. Ask for the enforcement officer's name and identification number and write it down. Also, if you can, make notes on anything that was said during the interaction.
4. Report any seizures, investigations, or charges to the Métis Nation of Alberta immediately.
5. If you are being charged with a harvesting-related offence, the enforcement officer will issue you with a form titled, "Important

Message to Métis Harvesters". Fill out and sign the form, include a photocopy of the charge ticket, and fax or mail it to the attention of the Communications Office at the Métis Nation of Alberta in Edmonton.

### 13. WHAT ELSE SHOULD I BEAR IN MIND?

1. Individual Métis harvesters are responsible for knowing and following safety laws and conservation standards.
2. Be absolutely certain you are on harvesting lands.
3. Follow the traditional harvest laws.
4. Seek hunting advice from experienced Elders.
5. Be absolutely certain you have permission to be on the land where you are harvesting. Otherwise, you may be charged with trespassing and hunting without a license.

## MNA HARVESTERS LEGAL DEFENCE FUND



### Send your donation to:

**MNA Harvesters Legal Defence Fund  
c/o MNA Communications  
11738 Kingsway  
Edmonton, AB T5G 0X5**

The Métis Nation of Alberta needs your help! Métis harvesters are being forced into Alberta's courts to defend their constitutional right to harvest for food. The MNA Harvesters Legal Defence Fund has been established in order to help offset the costs associated with this defence.

# 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:

- all unoccupied Crown lands in Alberta;
- 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);
- 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.



(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

# Métis Hunters are *Informed Hunters*

# Harvesting Agreement Update



by Jason Madden

**W**ith the fall harvest season just around the corner, the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) continues to defend the Interim Métis Harvesting Agreement (IMHA) and the Métis right to harvest for food.

In May 2006, the MNA Provincial Council passed a unanimous motion agreeing

to defend MNA harvesters who were charged by Alberta as long as those harvesters were MNA members, were harvesting within the terms of the IMHA and were respecting Métis traditional values of conservation and safety. Following that

important decision, I was retained by the MNA and since that time I have been working with the MNA to defend charges, as they arise, across the province.

Currently, we have six known harvesting charges that we are dealing with. *It should be noted that there may very well be more charges out there, however, the onus is on charged Métis harvesters to come forward, contact the MNA and fill out the necessary consent form so information can be legally obtained and shared.* Of the six charges we currently know of, five of them are charges for fishing for food with a rod and reel. As most of you may be aware, Alberta continues to take the position that Métis can fish for food with a net, but are not able to fish for food with a rod and reel because that is deemed by the government to be 'sportfishing'. Without question, the MNA does not accept that position and the MNA is of the position that the IMHA covers Métis fishing for food with a rod and a reel. Moreover, we believe the law of this land, as it related to Aboriginal rights, does not support Alberta's position. Simply put, the proper characterization of the Métis right is – the right to hunt and fish for food. Alberta cannot conveniently use a term (i.e. "sportfishing") in order to justify charging Aboriginal peoples who fish for food.

The MNA remains optimistic that this contentious issue can be resolved through the soon to be engaged

MNA-Alberta negotiations on a Final Métis Harvesting Agreement. If not, it is likely that this issue will have to be litigated in order to obtain clarity. It is interesting to note that First Nations in the province are also challenging Alberta's "sportfishing" regulations and two Indian fishing cases are set to be heard by the Alberta Court of Appeal in the near future. We will definitely be paying close attention to what the Court of Appeal has to say about this issue in the Indian context.

In early November, the MNA is also currently set to be before the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench in Edmonton for the appeal in the Kipp Kelley case. Jean Teillet and I are acting as legal counsel for Mr. Kelley. This appeal will be important to all Alberta Métis because the IMHA is at issue. At trial, Judge Norheim found that the IMHA did not provide Mr. Kelley a legal

Alberta cannot conveniently use a term (i.e. "sportfishing") in order to justify charging Aboriginal peoples who fish for food.

defence, even though he found that Mr. Kelley is Métis and was trapping within the terms of the IMHA. We will be arguing that the IMHA, as an interim accommodation agreement entered into

between the MNA and Alberta, does provide a legal defence for eligible Métis harvesters. Further, we will be arguing that the honour of the Crown is at stake in ensuring Alberta fulfills the terms and promise of the IMHA to Métis harvesters. As we get closer to the appeal hearing date, additional information will be provided.

With respect to the other cases that we are moving forward on, research is currently being undertaken. Dr. Frank Tough of the University of Alberta is working on some elements of this research. Gwen Jones (one of the experts in the Powley case) has also been retained to prepare a report on Alberta Métis. As well, Irene Collins and Beatrice Demetrius from the MNA's Métis Identification and Registry Unit have been very helpful in compiling the genealogical information we need for these cases.

In all, a lot is happening on the litigation front. However, we are hopeful that the renewed MNA-Alberta negotiations will be able to resolve many of these issues so more time and effort can be focussed on enhancing the relationship between the MNA and Alberta, instead of dealing with issues through the courts.

Mr. Brian Rogers, Q.C., a lawyer from Calgary, has recently been appointed Alberta's lead negotiator. I am honoured to have been appointed the MNA's negotiator and look forward to working with President Poitras, Minister Cecil Bellrose, Jean Teillet and the MNA in attempting to arrive at a Final Métis Harvesting Agreement. Mr. Rogers and I anticipate that our first formal negotiations meeting will be held in early September and our negotiations team will continue to report back to and seek direction from the MNA's leadership and members on the Final Agreement.

Alberta's willingness to work with the Métis should be commended and emulated across the Métis Nation Homeland.

In closing, I would like to add that although there are areas of contention and frustration between the MNA and Alberta on Métis rights issues, there is, at the very least, a respectful relationship that is admirable and can be built upon. Through the work I have done, across the Métis Nation Homeland, since the release of the *Powley* decision, I have been utterly disappointed by the lack of progress and honour shown by provincial governments on Métis rights.

In Manitoba, there are now over 25 harvesting charges and there are no formal negotiations between the province and the Manitoba Métis Federation. In Saskatchewan, even after our 2005 victory in *R. v. Lavolette*, that province continues to harass Métis harvesters. In Ontario, the government has broken the agreement it entered into with the Métis Nation of Ontario. In British Columbia, the government does not even acknowledge there are any rights-bearing Métis communities.

With that said, I believe Alberta's willingness to work with the Métis should be commended and emulated across the Métis Nation Homeland. I believe much of Alberta's willingness to work with the MNA flows from its credibility, the strength of its leadership and the integrity of the MNA's Registry. While we will always stand up for our rights, I believe the situation in this province has been and continues to be a shining example of what can be accomplished when the Crown actually works with the Métis Nation.

Métis Harvesting Rights in Alberta

If applicable, write to #100 Delia Gray Building  
11738 Kingsway Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5G 0X5  
CANADIAN PUBLICATION AGREEMENT NUMBER 9991501

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



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



# Medal to Celebrate Métis Veterans

By Monique Devlin

The Métis National Council (MNC) is creating a veterans' medal that will be given to all Métis veterans.

While it is still in the planning stages, David Chartrand, Manitoba Métis Federation President and Minister in charge of Veterans Affairs for the MNC, is excited about its release.

"The mistreatment of our veterans when they returned home from war through the very denial of their existence is something that still plagues us today," he said. "This medal will serve as a sort of a foundation of its own record, and will help carry the legacy on."

While thousands of Métis veterans fought in the Korean and the two World Wars, most were denied the services provided to other war veterans by the Canadian

government upon their return home. In recent times, First Nations and the Merchant Marines have received compensation from the Canadian government to atone for their mistreatment after the wars. Many Métis veterans are still fighting for this kind of recognition.

Robert McDonald, who is

helping design the medals, says that they will be similar in size to other medals but will be distinctly Métis.

"I think it is something that is somewhat overdue," McDonald said. "We want to do something, anything we can to recognize the fact that our veterans are very special to the Métis Nation."



MNC is designing a medal to celebrate all Métis veterans.

## Update your Membership Files

What is needed for a file to be considered up to date?

- Historical proof of Métis status (this can be in the form of a land scrip or grant, or some other government, church, community or historical record recognizing an ancestor as Métis)
- A completed family tree of your Métis ancestors to the mid-1800s
- A long form birth certificate OR a baptismal certificate and a wallet sized birth certificate
- One (1) piece of photo identification for the purpose of swearing a statutory declaration
- A digital photo—this photo can be taken at any Regional Office or in the Edmonton Central office

Please contact your Regional Office or any of the following toll-free number to confirm the status of your membership file.

1-866-88METIS (1-866-886-3847)  
1-866-678-7888  
1-800-252-7553

#100 Delia Gray Building - 11738 Kingsway Avenue - Edmonton, AB T5G 0X5  
www.albertametis.com



# Building the Métis Nation of Alberta

## MNA 78th Annual Assembly

By Monique Devlin

Good weather, good food, and good debate characterized this year's Annual Assembly in Lac La Biche. Hundreds of Métis delegates were welcomed to the picturesque central Alberta town that had decorated its main street with Métis flags for the assembly, which ran from August 17th to 20th.

The Assembly began with a golf tournament hosted by Region one followed by a fish fry at McCarther Place, overlooking Lac La Biche Lake. After dinner, participants were invited to stay and enjoy a rousing game of Métis trivia—Jeopardy style, courtesy of Jori Hunter and Greg King.

Delegates were invited to register on Friday the 18th, and had the chance to either check out the tradeshow and craft fair or to make some traditional Aboriginal arts and crafts. The genealogy workshop gathered quite a crowd as people explored their family trees.

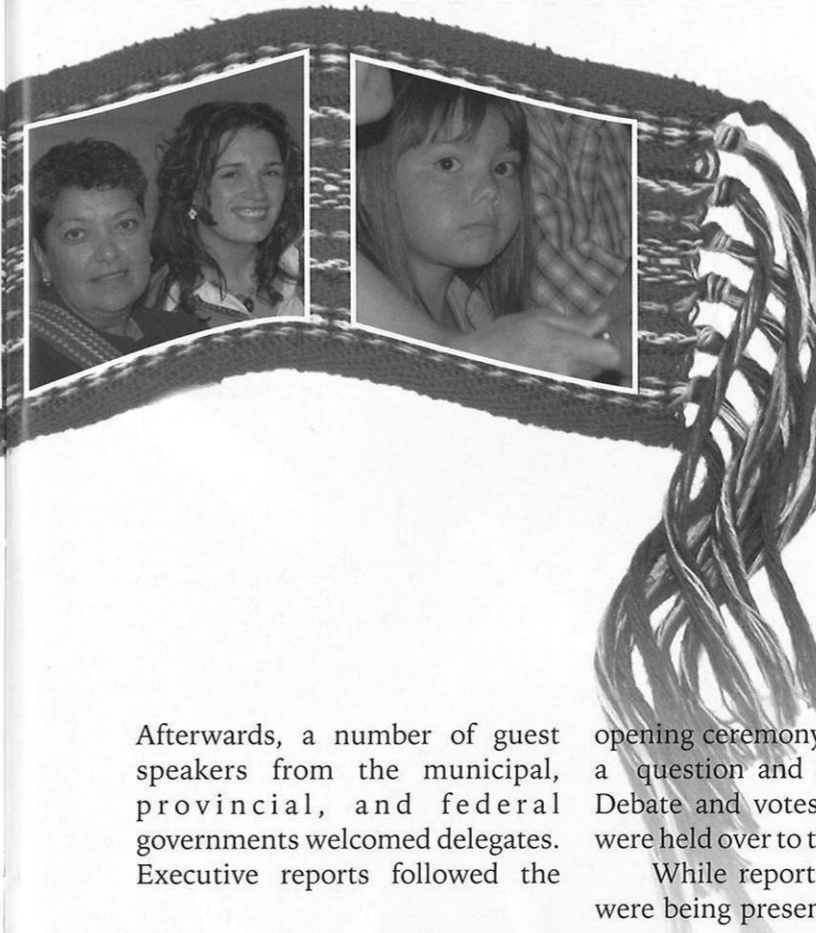
After the presentation of the ministerial and affiliate reports, Region one put on a talent show that stretched on into the late hours of the night. There was

fiddling, jigging and singing. Johnny Cash covers seemed to be a favourite as a packed auditorium cheered on both young and old entertainers.

The official opening ceremonies took place the Saturday morning with a multimedia presentation celebrating our people and accomplishments.



Inset above: The entertainment on Saturday night consisted of a live band and dancing.



Afterwards, a number of guest speakers from the municipal, provincial, and federal governments welcomed delegates. Executive reports followed the

opening ceremony, complete with a question and answer session. Debate and votes on resolutions were held over to the next day.

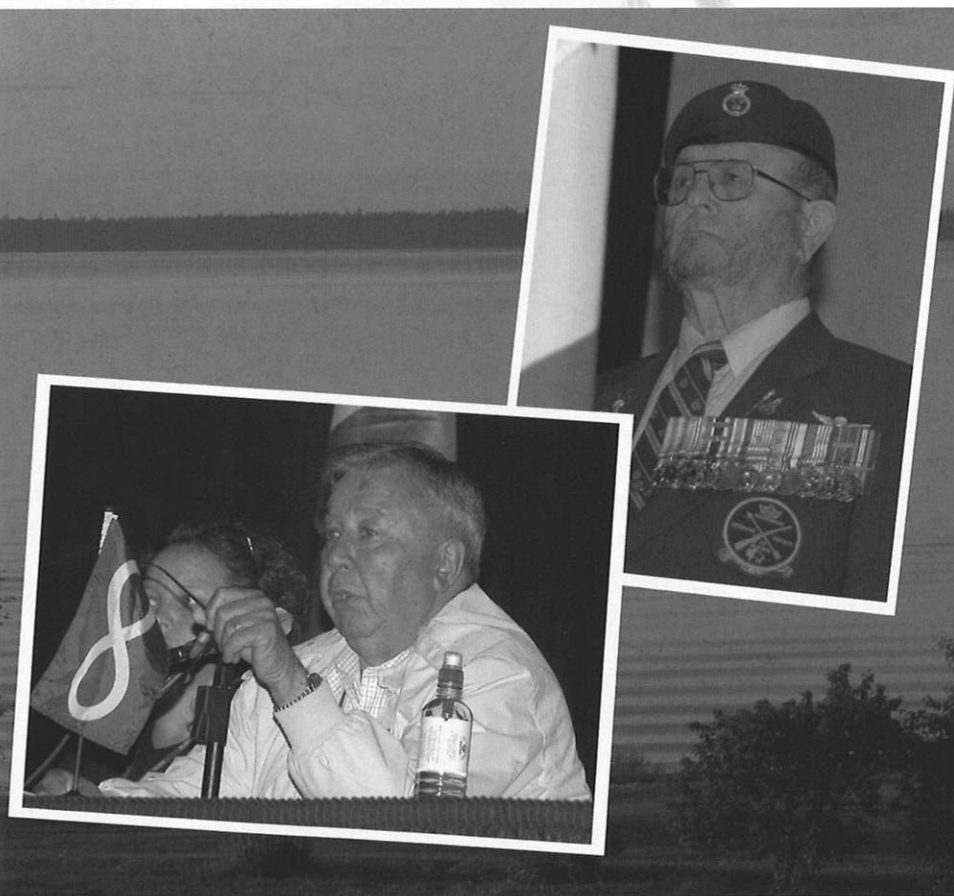
While reports and questions were being presented in the main

auditorium, discussions just as lively were taking place across the hall in the Elders' lounge. There, Elders were invited to sit, share tea and bannock, and discuss the day's events. Conversations switched fluidly from English to Michif as stories, jokes, and opinions about the proceedings across the hall were discussed.

Saturday night was a time for celebration with a feast, special presentations, and a live band. The dinner consisted of the usual barbeque fare of steak, corn on the cob, baked potatoes, and salads, with an unusual twist—the steaks were fried fondue-style, using a pitchfork!

After some energetic jigging by the Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement Dancers and the Kikano Northern Light Dancers, the highlight of the evening was a touching presentation held in remembrance of Gerald White, who passed away earlier this year. After the presentation, the band played into the wee hours of the night as both young and old took to the dance floor.

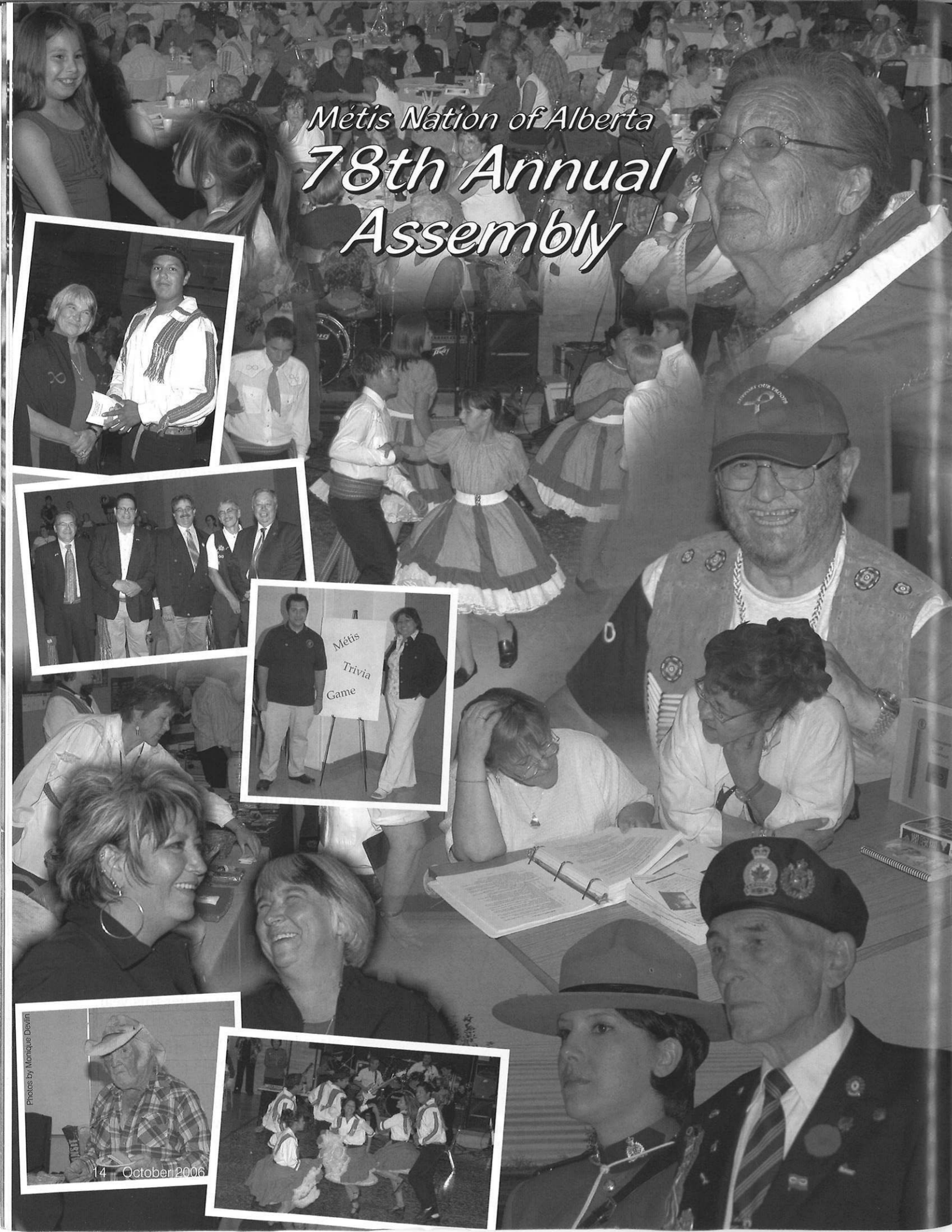
Next year's assembly will take place in Region two. We'll see you there!



Inset above: Cecil Bellrose, MNA minister of rights and citizenship, discusses the inroads made in his portfolio this year. Inset top: Oscar Lacombe stands at attention during the opening ceremonies.



# Métis Nation of Alberta 78th Annual Assembly



## Genealogy and Lands Resource Centre

By Sonja McGee and Beatrice Demetrius

The Métis Nation of Alberta Genealogy and Lands Research Department is pleased to announce the opening of the new Genealogy and Lands Resource Centre.

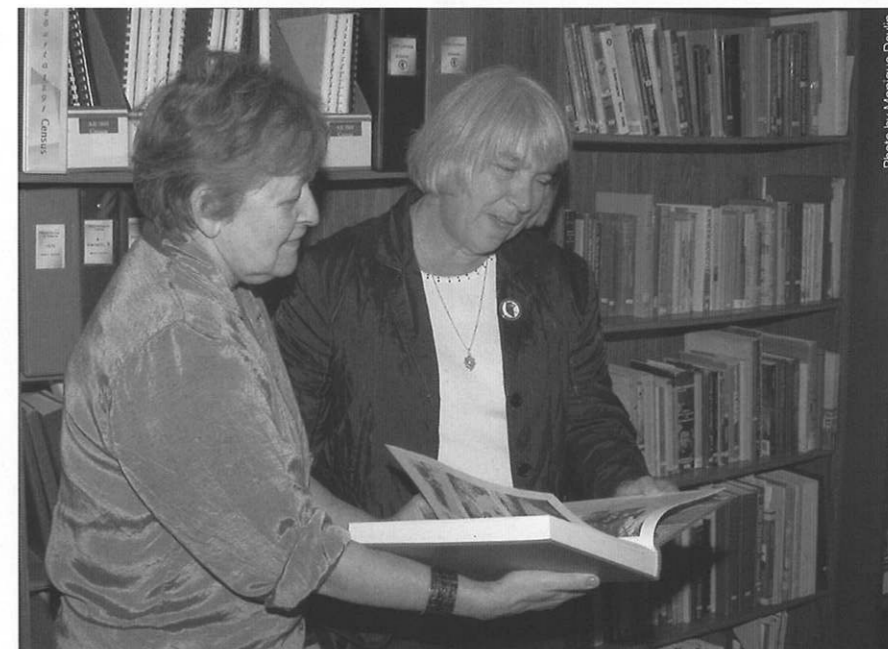
Opening September 1<sup>st</sup> 2006, this newly created space will help Métis people research, identify and broaden their knowledge of their Métis family ancestry.

Working steadily to index, organize and categorize materials, Genealogy and Lands Manager Beatrice Demetrius and her assistant, Sonja McGee have been putting together the final touches on the centre over the last couple months.

"I am highly anticipating the convenience of the Resource Center," Demetrius said. "Instead of waiting for a monthly workshop to access the resources of the Métis Nation of Alberta, people will be able to access not only the resources, but the help of the Genealogy and Lands Researchers. We are confident that our materials and expertise will facilitate the membership of many Métis people seeking the background of their ancestry."

Valuable records and archives incorporating over two decades of work, materials and resources have been added to the Resource Centre with the goal of continually increasing the variety of information and resources within.

The Resource Centre combines the work of highly prestigious



Beatrice Demetrius (left) shows MNA President Audrey Poitras some of the materials available in the newly opened Genealogy and Lands Resource Centre.

genealogists and historians, complete family lineages, community and resource books and archival data from provincial and federal databases.

Along with paper copies of provincial Oblate records, a computer will provide online access to important and helpful archival websites.

"We are very excited to be able to provide a working and interactive space for people to come and research their family ancestry," says Sonja McGee. "It will be a place where Beatrice and I will be able to help and direct people who are seeking the clues to the puzzles of family histories."

President Audrey Poitras and

Cecil Bellrose, Minister of Citizenship and Métis Rights, are committed to the Métis Identification and Registry process within the Métis Nation of Alberta.

"Our Mission is to provide an efficient Métis application process to meet the needs of individuals and families of Métis ancestry. This new endeavour is another example on how we continuously seek to fulfil our mission" said Irene Collins, director/registrar of the Métis Identification and Registry Unit.

The Centre is open Monday through Friday 9am to 4pm (closed for lunch between 12pm and 1pm). The official grand opening will be held during Métis week.

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## Calgary Thoroughfare <sup>Twice</sup> Named Métis Trail

By Monique Devlin

What goes into a name? Well, for Calgary residents, the naming of a major roadway "Métis Trail" stirred up quite a controversy.

On June 19, Calgary City Council agreed to name a high-traffic roadway (much of which is still being built north of McKnight Blvd.) Métis Trail. The next day, the same council voted to reconsider the decision because of complaints put forward by concerned community members.

A letter from Greg Steiner, the president of the Saddle Ridge Community Centre, dated May 26th, questions the name due to lack of community consultation (letters were sent out April 26th announcing the proposed name). He then proceeds to question the use of a "native nation, tribe or individual" to name a roadway that does not connect different corners of the city, and the fact that there are many other city trails without "native" names. The letter also goes on at length about the lack of perceived history the Métis have to the area.

"The name Métis has no relevance to this area of the city, as there is no historical evidence that the Métis ever set foot in the area of Saddleridge," Steiner states in his letter.

Almost immediately, there was a backlash to the council flip-flop. Columns appeared in both city newspapers slamming the revised decision and letters to the editor and editorial cartoons sprung up defending the Métis and their history in the city.

Frank Tough, Professor of Native Studies at the University of Alberta and the principle investigator for the Métis archival project, says that Métis would have hunted buffalo in the area and that there were at least four scrip commission visits to the Calgary area between 1885 and 1901.

"Calgary was probably about the sixth or seventh largest concentration [of Métis people], outside of Red River" Tough said when asked about Métis relevance to the Calgary area.

When city council voted again on July 17th, it was decided—the name Métis Trail is here to stay. The unanimous vote included that of the alderman representing the objecting neighbourhoods, Helen Larocque.

"It's not that I was against the name at all... I just wanted the community to have some input and they've had that opportunity," the Calgary Sun quoted Larocque as saying the day before the decision.

Unfortunately, that was not the end of the issue. The day after the decision was reaffirmed, a Treaty 7

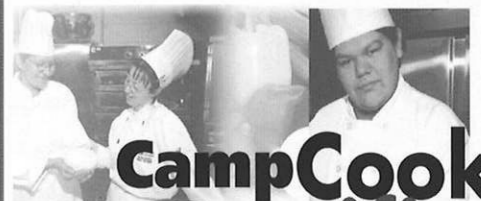
Chiefs' press release slammed it. The release questioned again the history of Métis people in the area, and noted "Mayor Dave Bronconnier should have consulted with the Treaty 7 Chiefs and elders before the naming of this trail."

Aside from another flurry of letters and columns, not much was made of this new development, and the official naming will go ahead as planned. Marlene Lanz, president of the MNA Region three based out of Calgary, could not be happier.

"I think it is wonderful," Lanz said. "Everybody in Calgary can be proud when they are riding along Métis Trail. It is a major interchange road."

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# Mexico to Follow Alberta's JFR Model

By Monique Devlin

A representative from the Jalisco state of Mexico spent the summer working with the Alberta Junior Forest Rangers (JFR) with the hopes of setting up a similar program in her home state when she returns.

Alma Madrigal coordinates volunteer programs and is in charge of environmental education in the Volcán Nevado de Colima National

Park located in the Mexican states of Colima and Jalisco. The state of Jalisco is a sister state to Alberta, and our Department of Sustainable Resources has been working with the state to help bring some of our forest preservation tactics to Mexico.

"I think the Junior Forest ranger program is great," Madrigal said. "In Mexico we don't have any

programs like this; it gives a lot of opportunity to the teenagers to know more about the forest and to gain more skills."

Madrigal spent most of the summer with different JFR camps learning about the different aspects of the program, and she was especially impressed with the idea of the Aboriginal JFR program.

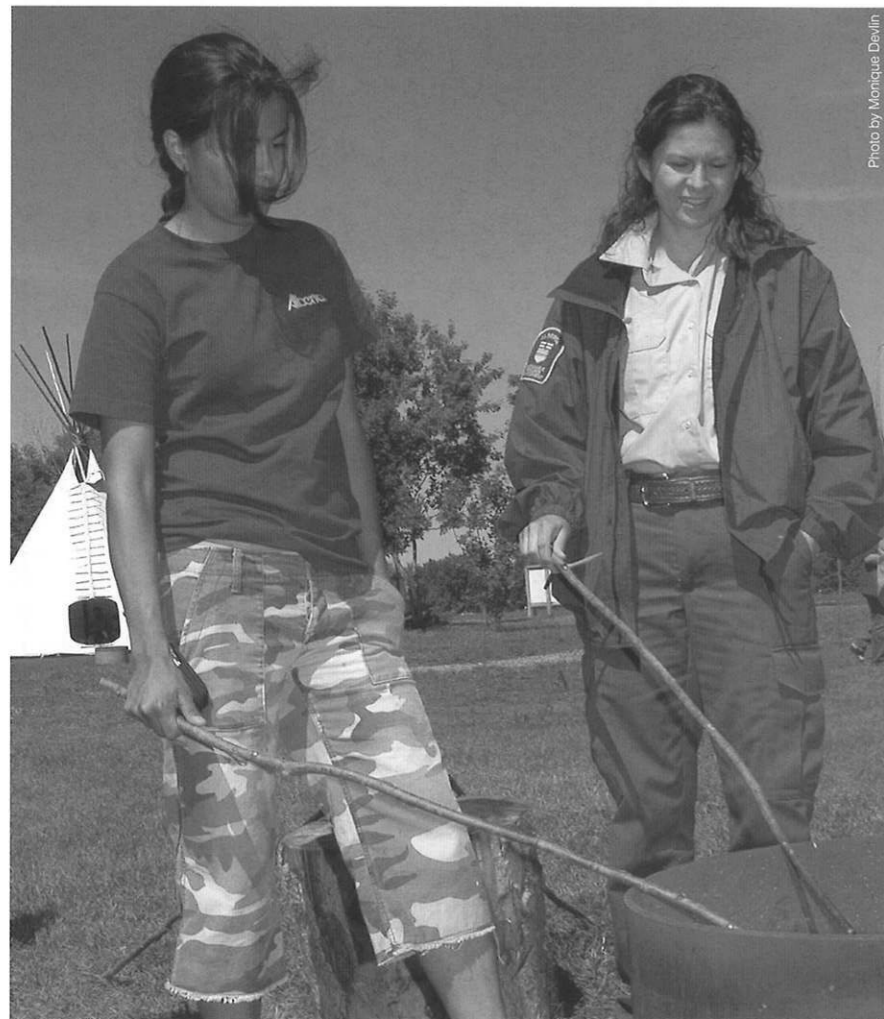
"We can implement both programs in Mexico she said, "It would be great, and it would be the first program of its kind in Mexico."

According to Madrigal, most Mexican youth are limited in their job opportunities and a program like the JFR will go a long way in opening up new possibilities and will help foster a respect and understanding for the environment.

JFR and Aboriginal JFR are seven-week summer work programs for youth aged 16 to 18 that allow them to earn while they learn about forestry in Alberta.

"They are exposed to different opportunities," James Atkinson, the Provincial Program Coordinator said. "We try to organize a wide variety of workshops for them and to the best of our abilities we will get environmental professionals to deliver those components."

Participants spend 70 per cent of their time working and the remaining 30 per cent learning and can earn credits for Career and Technologies Studies, a high school program that helps students develop skills and explore career opportunities.



Alma Madrigal (right) cooks bannock over an open fire at Métis Crossing with Junior Forest Ranger participant, Chantal Quintal.

Photo by Monique Devlin

While the JFR program is in its 41<sup>st</sup> year, the Aboriginal portion is relatively new and has just wrapped up its fourth year. In the original program, participants live in a camp setting, while the Aboriginal JFR is community based—participants are hosted by a First Nations or Métis community for their seven-week term, and have the opportunity to attend a cultural camp, learn more about traditional hunting and gathering practices, and learn about the important role of Elders in the community.

Interacting with some Elders was one of the highlights to Madrigal's trip.

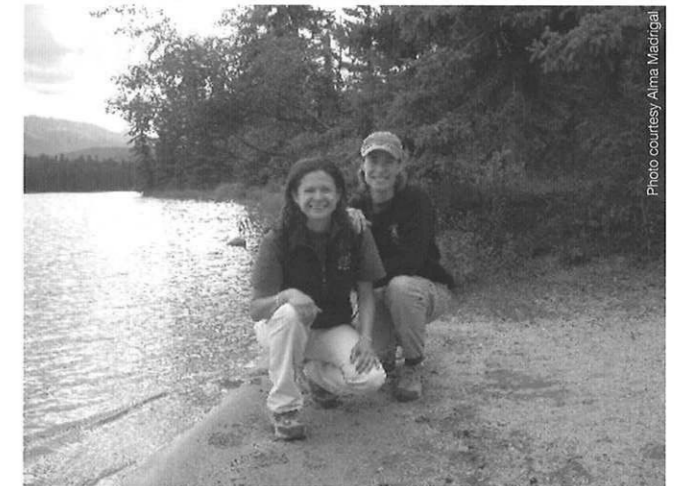
"You can see that Elders know how to respect the environment and natural resources," she said. "So it is so good to be around them."

On one of her last days in the field, Madrigal had the chance to participate in a pipe ceremony.

"I always read about the pipe ceremony—about going and being inside of a teepee—and now that I have experienced it, it wasn't only an experience, it was a gift to me."

Although she is not yet sure about the funding, Madrigal will begin planning the new program when she returns home.

"We have to adapt the program to our own problems in Mexico," she said. "So I am thinking in the



Alma Madrigal (left) poses with JFR coordinator Gail Greenwood.

Photo courtesy Alma Madrigal

beginning we can implement the program at the national park, and maybe have one or two crews, and then from there we can see if the program will be nice for Mexico."

If the Mexican version of the JFR program proves successful, Madrigal hopes to eventually run an exchange program between Canadian and Mexican participants, something the JFR participants she has talked to are already excited about.

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# Provincial Council's New Strategic Planning Process Sets Direction for MNA

By Lorne Gladue

## Background

In October, 1999, the MNA Provincial Council conducted a strategic planning session at Nakota Lodge near Calgary to establish a formal process from which to conduct MNA business. This planning process led to a document called "Blueprint to Métis Governance." The Blueprint to Métis Governance contained three essential goals and objectives that served as umbrella policy for MNA operations since 1999 and as reference point for Provincial Council in conducting its affairs and annual reporting to the Annual General Assembly.

In December, 2002, the Provincial Council revisited the Blueprint to Métis Governance document for the purpose of taking stock on accomplishments and opportunity for further refinement. Although much work had been completed, it was also determined that much work remained unfinished under the Blueprint document, and that the established goals and objectives were still relevant to the aspirations of the newly elected Provincial Council; so it was decided that the Provincial Council would continue its good work under the original goals of the 1999 Blueprint document.

## NEW Strategic Planning Process Gets Underway in November 2005

In November, 2005, the Provincial Council reviewed its goals and objectives under the Blueprint document once again. This time, significant changes were made to the vision statement of the MNA, the guiding principles of Provincial Council, and five new

goals were introduced that included the call for a formal planning process for the Métis Nation of Alberta. The Provincial Council then directed its senior staff to move ahead with the Strategic Planning Process which is now underway. This Provincial Council decision ignites the beginning of a new era for the Métis Nation, as the Strategic Planning Process will alter the way MNA conducts its business and daily operations by April 1<sup>st</sup> next fiscal year.

As part of the Strategic Planning Process, the MNA Provincial Council introduced its plans to the Alberta Government under a separate negotiation process - the renewal of the Alberta-MNA Framework Agreement. The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development immediately recognized the importance of a Strategic Planning Process for the MNA and supported Provincial Council's effort by funding the Strategic Planning Process and directing her officials to participate in the MNA Steering Committee that oversees the project. As well, through the Tripartite process, the MNA introduced the Strategic Planning Process to the Government of Canada, and through the Office of the Federal Interlocutor (OFI), Canada now contributes to the cost of the project as well (albeit to a lesser extent than the Alberta Government).

The Strategic Planning process encompasses the entire organization - from the political arm to MNA administration; from Provincial Council to Regional Councils; from Provincial Head Office to Regional Offices; from elected mandates to MNA Ministries.

organizations to diversify revenue sources for MNA, and to provide long-term economic benefits for the Métis people of Alberta.

## New Goals and Strategic Priorities of the Provincial Council

### 1. Effective and Accountable Governance

To establish a MNA governance system that is democratic, open, transparent and accountable to meet the needs and aspirations of Métis people of Alberta.

### 2. Positive and Productive Relationships

To establish relationships with all other orders of government on a "government-to-government" basis, with devolution of funding and other resources, as appropriate, under each federal, provincial and municipal government department to support Métis self-governance.

### 3. Establish Economic Partnerships

To establish effective, long-term partnerships with the private/business sector and non-governmental

### 4. Support Advancement of Métis People

To maintain, preserve, protect and promote the Métis culture, language and heritage in Alberta and to achieve a quality of life for Métis people equivalent to other Albertans.

### 5. Create Legislative Policy

To establish comprehensive self-governance for Métis people of Alberta under MNA government and to continue working within Métis National Council for the betterment of Métis people.

## Objectives of the Strategic Planning Process

Over the years, the MNA has established fourteen ministries that were responsible for achieving the goals and objectives of the Blueprint to Métis Governance. Consequently, under the new Strategic Planning Process, the work of these Ministries will be highlighted once again and they will clearly be tied to the established goals of the Métis Nation.

Presently the MNA Ministries are:

1. National and Intergovernmental Affairs
2. Metis Rights and Citizenship
3. Labour Market Development
4. Education
5. Economic Development
6. Environment
7. Women and Youth
8. Justice and Culture
9. Housing
10. Renewable Resources and Energy
11. Métis Land Issues
12. Agriculture
13. Family Wellness and Finance
14. Veterans and Seniors

While each ministry will develop specific goals and plans under the Strategic Planning Process, it will be reflective of the goals and objectives established by the Provincial Council for the MNA. For example, the Ministry of Labour Market Development (LMD), which has engaged in strategic planning processes since 2004, already has a business plan that is developed and closely linked to MNA strategic goals and objectives. The LMD strategic planning process with its clearly articulated goals, strategies and measures, roles and responsibilities, opportunities and challenges has assisted the Ministry to remain focused and has enhanced MNA capacity to achieve excellent outcomes for Metis people in relation to employment. As such, the LMD business plan with its comprehensive details on all aspects of the Ministry's strategic direction has helped create the keen interest of other MNA Ministries to engage in similar strategic planning processes.

Therefore, the MNA Provincial Council made the decision to extend the strategic planning process to the entire organization, and in this process engage regional councils, with the firm belief that strategic planning tied to the MNA's goals and objectives across the organization can only enhance its organizational capacity to better serve the Metis people of Alberta.

## Vision Statement

The MNA and its fourteen ministries and six regional councils will have a standardized strategic planning process with clearly identified goals, strategies and measures that clearly link and contribute to the achievement of the goals and objectives established by the Provincial Council in November 2005. This will establish a consistent and coherent business environment at the MNA, and will assist with the development of greater inter-ministerial and inter-

regional knowledge and cooperation. Staff members who are responsible for the services provided by each ministry will have a better understanding of the contextual and historical development of current situations and will be able to select services that best meet the needs of Metis people. Staff will also be able to carry out program evaluations based on both hard and soft data and ultimately, accountability will be enhanced.

## Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the strategic planning process are to clearly articulate requirements that will allow staff at the provincial, regional and ministerial level to:

- Develop annual plans that are linked to and promote the achievement of the goals and objectives established by the Provincial Council.

- Work toward the creation of a more cohesive and integrated organization.
- Increase the capacity of each MNA Ministry and concomitantly increase the capacity of the MNA to engage in actions that better serve the Métis people of Alberta.

## Expected Results

- The Strategic planning carried out by the MNA as an organization will be more cohesive and coherent.
- The Provincial Council will have a coordinated, integrated and strategic approach to carrying out political direction.
- Each ministry of the MNA will have information on which to develop individual plans that are

- integrated where appropriate, with other ministry plans.
- Regional Councils will be able to identify and promote planning with clear links to the MNA Strategic plan.
- All members of the MNA will have easy access to information on the activities of each ministry of their organization.

## Preferred Approach

The MNA Provincial Council wished to develop a strategic planning process for the entire organization by working with the ministries and staff of the MNA and to create a strategic planning process that is understood, accepted and supported by all. The underlying weaknesses of the past planning processes lied in the diffusion of work-plan practices and MNA processes that were not strategically linked or integrated to create a concerted approach to conducting MNA business.

The Provincial Council therefore recommended an approach that began with the appointment of project management to oversee the development of the overall Strategic Planning Process. Project management has

now been outsourced to Western Management Consultants who have appointed two individuals to work closely with the senior management of the MNA and Alberta Aboriginal Affairs to establish a Steering Committee and to a) develop Terms of Reference along with Strategic Plan Outlines and Timetables; b) schedule a series of workshops to involve the various stakeholders and to identify and reach consensus on the critical elements of the strategic planning process; and c) create the necessary formats for the recording of the information from the plans developed as part of the strategic planning process, and develop and field test software systems to support the process.

## Expected Benefits

Overall, the Provincial Council's Strategic Planning Process will offer the following benefits to the MNA as well as Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development of the Alberta Government and the various government ministries at the provincial and federal levels:

- Increased consistency and coordination in planning and action by the MNA.
- More effective and timely use of human and fiscal resources through the sharing of information across the MNA.
- More effective working relationships with ministries at the provincial and federal level

through the timely use of information to guide decision-making.

- Increased capacity of the MNA to influence policy direction at the provincial and federal levels to ensure a strong Métis Nation embracing Métis rights in Alberta by the provision of information generated from both hard and soft data.
- Enhanced accountability through increased transparency of goals, strategies and measures developed by each Ministry of the MNA.
- Strengthened governance capacity to support policy development.

## Performance and Progress Measures

Once the project is completed the MNA expects to have achieved the following outcomes:

- There will be a standardized approach to the Strategic planning process across the MNA.
- The strategic planning process will be used by each of the 14 ministries of the MNA and will be linked to the goals and objectives identified by the Provincial Council resulting in the creation of an integrated, cohesive and out-come focused Strategic organization.

- The six Regional Councils will engage in a strategic planning approach linked to the goals and objectives of the Provincial Council.
- The MNA will have increased capacity to influence policy direction at the provincial and federal levels based on information generated from reliable data.
- The MNA will have enhanced governance capacity to support policy arenas and decision-making processes.

## Challenges

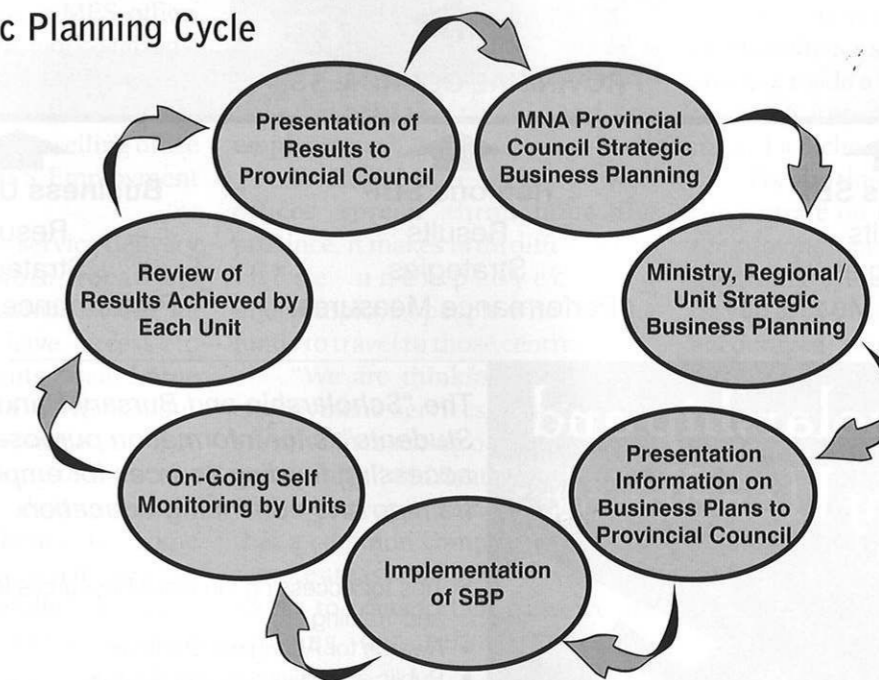
This project challenges the MNA to rethink its approach to achieving its vision, goals and objectives. The Organization has begun to engage itself in a more structured and strategic approach to planning as demonstrated by the Ministry of Labour Market Development. However, elected members and staff in the various regions and ministries have been very comfortable with their own way of doing business. Thus, it will be very important to work closely with the Regions to accept the value of adopting a standardized strategic planning process and of sharing information across regions and MNA Ministries. To help assure understanding, acceptance and support, the MNA will involve representatives of each region and each ministry in the planning and analysis phases of the project. The regional input will be identified and taken into account and

incorporated into the plan. The project leaders will work in collaborative fashion. In addition, some changes may need to be imposed when cooperation cannot be achieved in other ways. The Project Manager and the Steering Committee will take responsibility for identifying these issues and recommending needed action.

As this is a substantial shift in the operational climate of the organization, the Provincial Council proposes the following initial implementation of the Strategic Planning Process: 1) that the process be reviewed annually to make refinements; and 2) that the MNA identify the support that is necessary to ensure long term success with the process.

The tables below provide a better illustration of the work that will be carried out:

## MNA Strategic Planning Cycle



### Critical Path for Strategic Planning Process with the MNA Provincial Council



### Critical Path for Strategic Planning Process with the MNA Ministries



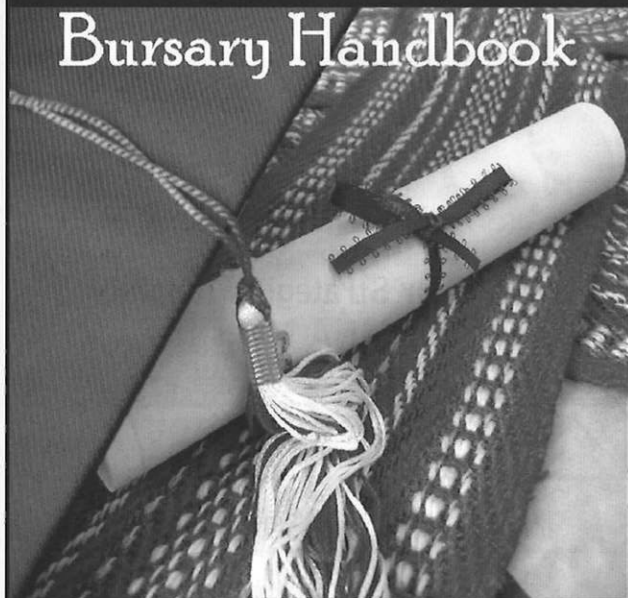
## Critical Path for Strategic Planning Process with the MNA Regions and Strategic Units



## Process Map for MNA Strategic Business Planning



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## Métis Employment Services Hit the Road

By Monique Devlin

Having problems contacting or can't seem to make it to the nearest Métis Employment Services (MES) office? No worries, one may soon be coming to you!

A 36 foot wheel chair accessible Winnebago has been custom designed to replicate a MES office, complete with client work-stations, computers, wireless internet access, a display of labour market information, and a counselling office complete with a MES Employment Counsellor.

"It extends our service delivery network to remote locations throughout the province where we typically do not have access to certain types of clients," said Lorne Gladue, Director of MNA Labour Market and Development. "For example, we are trying to draw out and encourage the discouraged or more reclusive clients to come forward and examine what MES has for them and hopefully take some action towards training and



interventions that lead to employment."

While there are already 16 MES offices spread throughout the province, it makes little difference to those unemployed and underemployed people who lack the funds to travel to those centres.

"We are thinking that mobile employment services can be really effective in reaching out to our client community," said Ryan Nouta, driver of the *Coureur de Bois*. "I have heard that a common complaint from the remote areas is that they do not have access to transportation, so we are bringing our services to their

community."

While Nouta is unsure how long it will take the unit to travel the entire province, he says that for the immediate future, the unit will tour mostly north of highway 16 until a new schedule is clearly established for the unit. Mobile MES has already travelled to several communities including Fort McKay, and has made a guest appearance at the MNA Annual General Assembly in Lac La Biche.

For the time being, the unit will concentrate on the northern half of the province, but communities with upcoming events that are likely to have a Métis presence are encouraged contact a MES centre near them to possibly have the mobile centre attend.

There are already plans to have it in Region two from September 27<sup>th</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup>, in Red Deer from October 17 to the 19<sup>th</sup> and in Edmonton for Métis Week from November 13<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup>.



Dubbed the *Coureur de Bois* (runner of the woods), the new Métis Employment Services mobile unit will help bring employment information to those otherwise unable to travel to an MES centre.

# Celebrating Métis Culture



## Lac Ste. Anne Pilgrimage Faces Uncertain Times

By Monique Devlin

People have been coming to the healing waters of Lac Ste. Anne long before there was a Mission, and Louise Breland, a member of the Lac Ste. Anne Pilgrimage Board, believes they will continue to come, even if the Mission is no longer there.

"The Pilgrimage itself will survive—it is about the people, the people coming here. It isn't about what we do or don't do," Breland said. "They will do it without bathrooms, they will do it with the building falling down over their heads—as long as there is water in the lake."

As unfathomable as it may seem to those who have been going on the Pilgrimage for as long as they can remember, there is a real risk that things will not be able to continue in their present form. Changes will have to be made.

Aboriginal people from across the prairies have regarded Lac Ste. Anne as a meeting place with high spiritual significance for centuries. In 1844 it became the first permanent Catholic Mission west of Winnipeg, and after almost closing its doors in 1887, Father Lestanc, an Oblate Missionary and the Missions Pastor at the time, built a shrine to Ste. Anne. In 1889 the first pilgrimage was held, attracting several hundred pilgrims. Now, anywhere from 30,000 to 40,000 people gather on the shores of Lac Ste. Anne every July to celebrate their spirituality and to wash themselves in the lake's healing waters.

People come from all across the prairies. Most drive, but there are still some who, for spiritual or personal reasons, choose to walk or bike to the site. Once there, everyone camps at no cost.

The problem with the current system is that in 1996 the Oblates Missionaries gave up control of the pilgrimage to the Lac Ste. Anne

Pilgrimage Committee, which was set up specifically to handle the responsibilities associated with the event. Due in part to a huge decline in the number of Oblate Missionaries world-wide and to partially repair some of the damage caused by Residential schools run by the Oblates, the Mission and shrine was given back to the community, along with a lump

sum of money to carry it through the transition.

"The Oblates were good enough, they left us with a decent sum of money that would last us for about five years," Breland said. "We are getting very close to the end of that money because costs change."

Changing costs range from the increase in the cost of labour (the Shrine needs a new roof that may cost up to \$50,000) to the costs of port-a-potties rentals and sewage disposal, and although donations help defer the

costs, there are not nearly enough to make the event sustainable.

"It is wonderful, we generate a \$186,000 over the five days," she said. "The tough part is that we are spending \$205,000."

This deficit is forcing the Pilgrimage community to look to new ways to generate funds.

"One of the challenges is that we have to somehow manage the tension between the day-to-day or year-to-year survival and the long range," Breland said. "A lot of people talked about setting up sort of a small conference centre here. And there is another conversation about turning where people currently are camped into an actual campground and making it available year-round."

"When I used to come here with my mom, growing up, we just came. And that is what a lot of people still do, they just come and [expect that] everything will be done—like how much could it cost for me to use a couple of sheets of toilet paper? But when you multiply it by 40,000, 10,000 or whatever the numbers happen to be, it becomes a much bigger enterprise."

And it is the cost of toilet paper and the waste associated with it that may be the ultimate downfall for the event. The old toilets onsite need upgrading, and the cost of port-a-potties rise and fall in relation to demand. This year's Pilgrimage coincided with three other local Edmonton events: the Capital EX, the Edmonton Indy, and the Taste of Edmonton. All of which needed port-a-potties to operate.

## Administrator Defends Pilgrimage Against Claims It Polluted Lake

Shortly after the pilgrims went home in late July, beaches in the area of Alberta Beach (near where the Pilgrimage took place) were closed to swimmers due to high levels of bacterial growth in the lake.

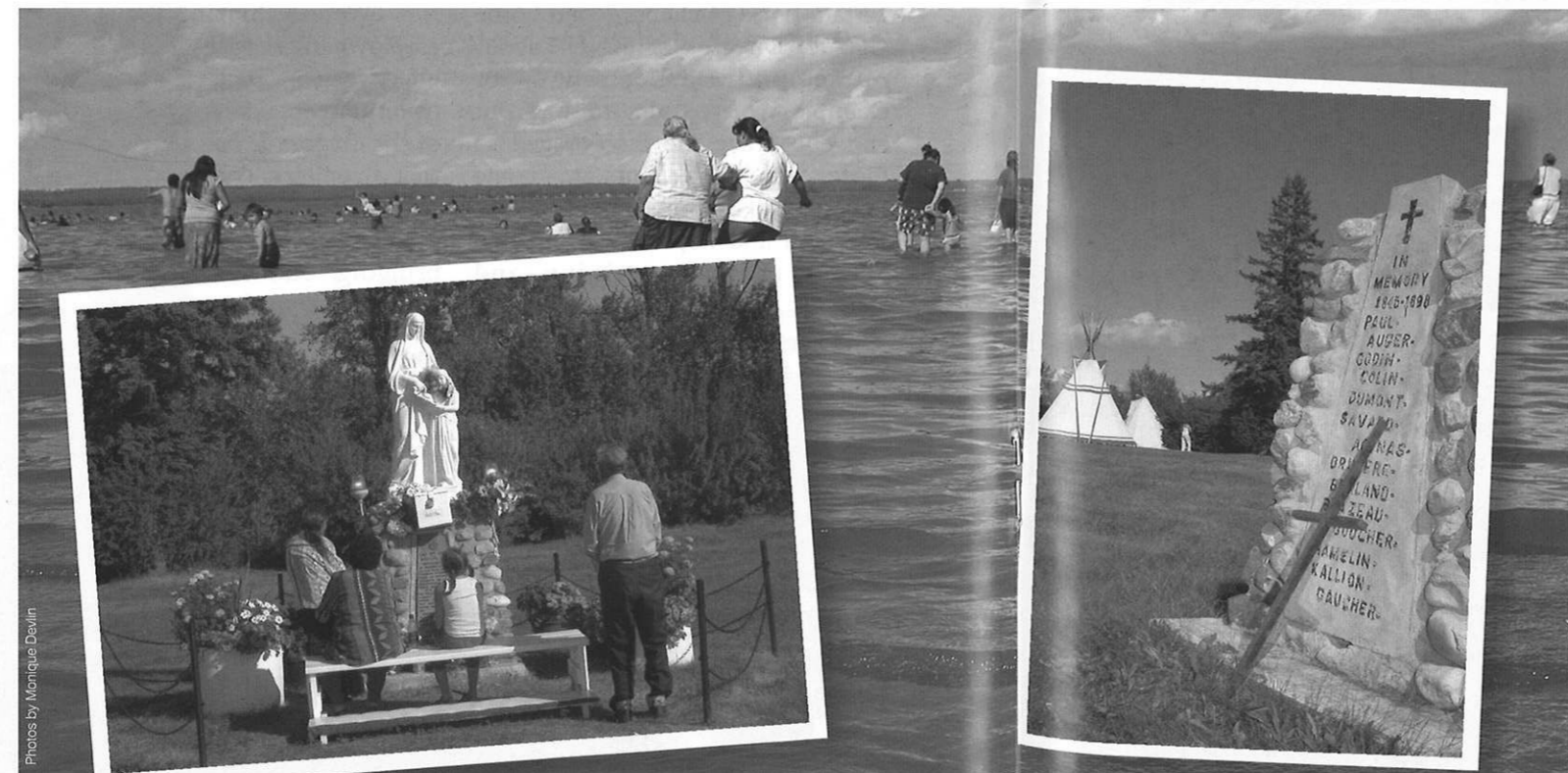
At least one Alberta Beach resident spoke to the press about the connection between the bacteria in the lake and the spiritual gathering, but scientists have refused to make the same connection.

Rod Lorenz, the pilgrimage administrator, has difficulty understanding the rationale behind blaming the bacterial growth on the spiritual gathering as it takes more than a week to cause that kind of damage.

"With a lake, you have a large body of water. If you are going to pollute that, you can't do it in a day. If you even tried to do it in a week, you wouldn't be able to do it," Lorenz said. "There is a build-up period for this—sort of an incubation period for bacteria—so if it happened concurrent to the pilgrimage, it started a long time before."

Lorenz suggests that it is more likely lower water levels and higher water temperatures are to blame for the growth, which could have been triggered by a number of things including geese or cattle feces.

The lake was reopened for swimming in late August.



Above: Pilgrims wade into the healing waters of Lac Ste. Anne  
 Left Inset: The Shrine of Ste. Anne  
 Right Inset: A cairn marks location of an old grave site located on the pilgrimage grounds.

# The Other Side of the Creek

By Monique Devlin

This was my first trip to the Pilgrimage, and not being raised Catholic, I was not sure what to expect. I was looking forward to a holy experience but was cautioned by more than one voice that there were two sides to the Pilgrimage, that which is holy, and that which is decidedly not so.

On my way out to Lac Ste. Anne, I got lost (those that know me know that this is not an uncommon occurrence). So lost in fact that by the time I realised I had missed my turn, I was already halfway around the other side of the lake. After pulling out my trusty map, I realised that instead of backtracking, it would be much quicker to continue driving the back roads to my destination. Because of this little detour, I missed the entire "mall" side of the pilgrimage, and walked into the official Pilgrimage sight with only a vague idea of what lay on the other side of the creek.

What I experienced there was wonderful. I saw people revelling in their spirituality, rekindling old friendships, and renewing their relationship with Christ.

For the life of me, I could not imagine what could possibly be bad about this experience. It was after talking to Louise Breland, and reading a letter she wrote to the Lac Ste. Anne Pilgrimage newsletter, that I realised there really was a whole other side to the Pilgrimage.

Catering to the 30,000 plus pilgrims was a veritable flea market set up just on the other side of the creek. Feeling incredibly guilty, on my way home I snuck off to this other side to see what was going on.

I could not believe my eyes. On the official side, there is a hamburger stand and an official souvenir shop, but nowhere else to spend money. On the other side, well, that is all there is—places to buy, buy, buy, and spend, spend, spend. If I wanted to, I could get pierced, tattooed, play pool, and even buy a car. Every third stall seemed to be selling mink blankets, many stalls had what looked like garage sale leftovers, and there were all kinds of sexy t-shirts for sale. While walking into the market I followed one group of young people whose conversation centred on beer, rye and a fistfight. The conversation made prolific use of the f-word as a noun, verb, and adjective—often in the same sentence.

With such a large gathering, it

is not surprising that a venue of this kind exists. What is surprising, is its stark contrast to the goings-on only a few yards away. The saddest thing was that while the official Pilgrimage is crying for money, the "mall" is under no obligation to contribute, as it is on private land. However, even if the vendors did choose to contribute funds, it is not sure that the Lac Ste. Anne Pilgrimage Society would be able to accept, given the questionable source of some of the revenue.

On the flip side, while I did have a hot dog on the official site, I could not help myself when I came across a vendor selling ripe, juicy BC cherries. I officially spent four times the amount of money there than I spent on the official side.

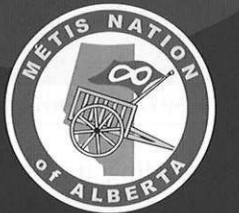
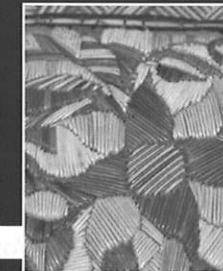
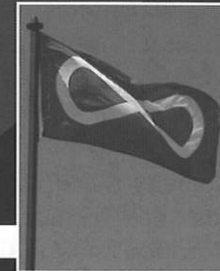
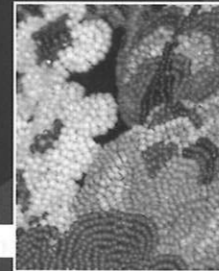


Across the creek from the Pilgrimage site, vendors sell everything from blankets to body piercing in an area dubbed "the mall".

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*Healing Our Spirit Worldwide (HOSW) was a concept envisioned by Dr. Maggie Hodgson in the 1980s. Today, it has grown into an international forum that focuses on various cultural, spiritual, health and governance issues relating to Indigenous people's struggles with substance abuse. Previous gatherings have been held in Edmonton, Alberta (1992); Sydney, Australia (1994); Rotorua, Aotearoa (New Zealand) (1998); and Albuquerque, New Mexico (2002). The fifth gathering saw the conference return to its roots in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada on August 6<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>, 2006. The HOSW conference is proof that Indigenous Peoples everywhere possess the resiliency, courage, tenacity and will to overcome the barriers to achieve self-determination in health and in healing.*

## Healing Our Spirit Worldwide



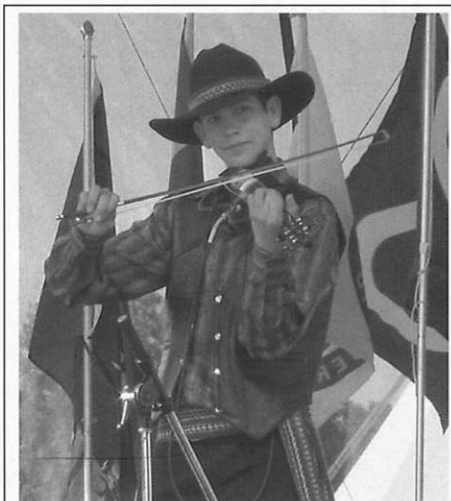
by Dawn Darrington

I had never heard of the Healing our Spirit Worldwide conference, until earlier this year when I was given the opportunity to volunteer for the August event. Up until the weeks leading to the grand opening, I was still unsure of the details

regarding its history and scope. I truly did not know what to expect.

I was taken aback by the sheer number of registered participants in attendance (I'm told up to five thousand people were expected). The concept of having this many people gathered in one location, at one time, coming together to share their stories and learn from one another, was almost beyond comprehension. At any given

moment there was a workshop in progress (some examples include: Moving Beyond the Impacts of Historical Trauma, Cultural Oppression & Colonialism; Institutional Abuse and Intergenerational Impacts; Indigenous Programs for Effective Prevention & Treatment of Diabetes; and Health, Homelessness and Poverty in Indigenous Populations; Residential Schools; among dozens of others)



Cory Poitras had everybody dancing when he played the fiddle during the opening ceremonies.

My role was to host the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) display booth inside the International Market Fair and sell various Cree Production merchandise to any interested participants strolling by. Although our dedicated team—Deborah St. Savard, Kathy Karakonti, Susan Giles and myself—managed to sell an extensive amount of Métis items, the most valued experience that I took away was the experience of interacting with people from various countries and backgrounds.

Take the Aussies [Australians]



(left to right) Deborah St. Savard, Jori Hunter, Dawn Darrington and Kathy Karakonti represented the MNA at the Healing our Spirit Worldwide conference.

from down-under—because they had spent all their funds on plane tickets, they weren't able to register for their own booth. Instead, they walked around relying on the bartering system. As the conference celebrated the spirit of sharing, we bartered goods. The most prized gift I received was when one young Aussie opened a boxed of various jewelled pendants from her country, and told me to pick one I liked; I chose a green gemstone. When I later had the chance to explore the trade shows myself, I saw the exact same gemstone on display from another country, as part of a set priced in the hundreds of dollars.

In exchange for a couple of MNA ball caps and other merchandise, we received t-shirts, caps and a history lesson regarding the Nunukwarrin Yunti Link-Up Program. This was an organization established by the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission to provide family tracing and reunion services to members of the Stolen Generations. Assistance is also provided to people who have been adopted, fostered or raised in institutions. The program is not funded to provide genealogy assistance or to locate missing persons. Since proclamation in 1836, the Australian governments have introduced a range of laws to address 'issues' regarding Aboriginal people. The laws resulted in the removal of hundreds of Aboriginal

children from their families, traumatizing many generations. Its effects are still impacting on the community today.

Some of the stories I heard from different cultures exemplified our differences and similarities. I remember my conversation with a young lady from one of the visiting countries. I had given a very condensed history lesson of the Métis, when she exclaimed "Oh, so did your government separate your people like they did to ours? Our government divided us (Aboriginals) into our different skin colours, light skinned versus dark skinned etc., then lined us up and

proceeded to shoot."

I also remember the New Zealanders and their stories of how the 'White Man' traded them tobacco for their land, and how currently one out of every two Maori People (estimated pop. 200,000) is addicted to tobacco. I had the opportunity to watch the Maori dancers, Te Karito Kura Wananga, who, through their performance, described the history of tobacco on their culture. The dance troupe was a family consisting of two Maori parents, Lloyd and Hinga Whui and two of their eight children—their son Hohaia and daughter Takukoha. The family have been performing for the last decade, traveling the New Zealand countryside to inform today's youth on the health risks associated with smoking.

All of this and more provided me with an experience that was rich in culture, stories of humanity, stories that proved how two people from opposites sides of the planet could have more in common than either of them could possibly know. The next HOSW Conference is set for 2010 in Hawaii, and I just might be there.



The International Indigenous Council for Healing Our Spirit Worldwide spoke during the opening ceremonies. (from left to right) Allen Benson from Alberta, Dave Baldrige from the U.S.A., Chief Austin Bear from Saskatchewan, Rod Jeffries from Ontario, Barry Bublitz from New Zealand, Maggie Hodgson from Alberta and Mike Gooda from New Zealand.



## Royal Alberta Museum Brings Home *Métis Treasures*

By Monique Devlin

It has been nearly 150 years, but a large collection of Métis, Blackfoot, Cree, Iroquois, and Nakoda artifacts that have been sitting in a Scottish castle are now back on Alberta soil.

The Royal Alberta Museum (RAM) secured a majority of the Southesk collection through a New York auction house in early May. James Carnegie, the Ninth Earl of Southesk gathered the collection during his travels through the Canadian prairies in 1859-60. It is considered one of the most well-documented and extensive collections of Aboriginal items from the northern plains region in that time period.

The Earl kept a journal of his trip documenting where and how he obtained many of the items, which allowed the museum to trace some of them back to the original crafts people. He commissioned some of the pieces on the first leg of his journey, and as he made his way back home, he was able to retrieve his "souvenirs."

"I guess that is what makes this so fantastic—he was here strictly for fun," Ruth McConnell, the assistant curator of the ethnology department at the museum said while discussing the collection. "He was here for no other reason than his own pleasure, so he wrote pretty freely and unbiased about what he saw."

The Earl was most likely the first European tourist to visit Alberta and the Rocky Mountains, as he wasn't there as a missionary, trader or explorer; instead he came to help recover his spirits after his wife passed away.

He travelled with an entourage of cooks, servants, guides and bearers, carrying comforts such as the complete works of William Shakespeare and a rubber bathtub. Like most modern day tourists, he took in the sites and brought home gifts for his children.

Many of these souvenirs, such as the octopus bags, were displayed in the castle. Others were hidden away in a dark trunk (probably a good thing, as they were protected from the sun's damaging rays).

While the collection's existence was common knowledge, it was a complete shock to the staff at the RAM when it was announced it would go up for sale.

"The curator of ethnology before Susan Berry, had visited the old Earl (the present Earl's grandfather) and asked him if he would consider donating to our museum, but he said it was part of the family history and it will



always stay with the castle," McConnell said.

The RAM was unable to secure the entire collection as it was broken up and sold in 29 separate lots, but it did manage to acquire 33 pieces out of the 43 available. Many of the items brought record prices, including a Blackfoot beaded hide shirt that went to a private collector.

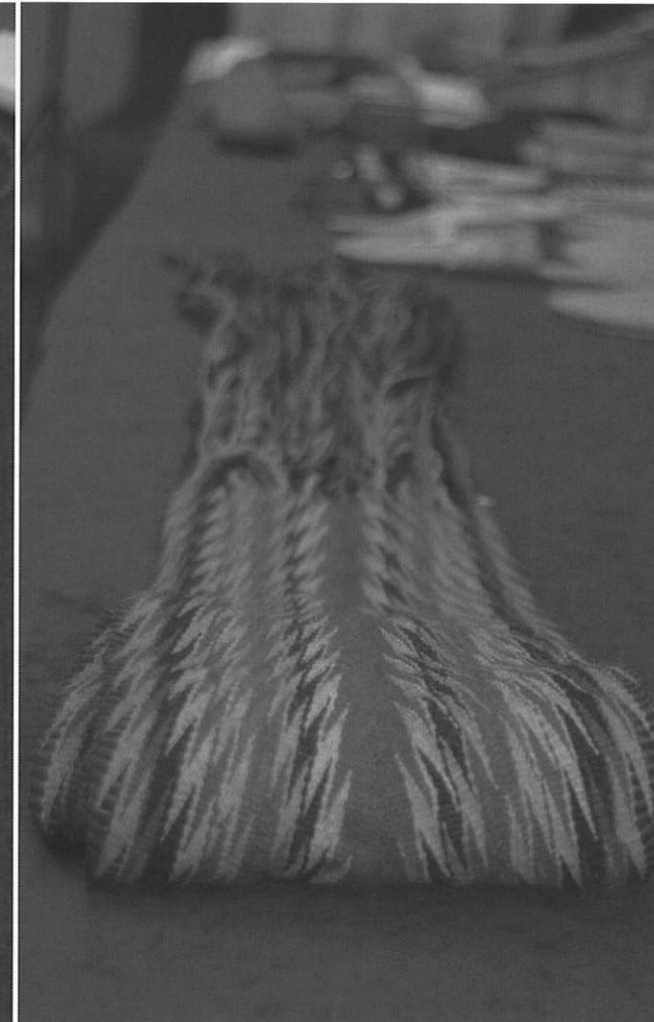


While McConnell is disappointed not to have obtained the entire collection, she is relieved that they were able to purchase as much of it as they had. She is worried that separated, many of the pieces may lose their historical significance as they are passed from one person to the next.

"How long before the next generation doesn't remember where it came from?" she asked. "Before an item becomes some shirt that has been in the family that someone once bought at an auction."

The museum does not usually make purchases of this scope (just over one million dollars in Canadian funds) due to funding constraints, but made an exception when it was learned the collection risked being broken up and dispersed among private collectors.

The pieces will be put on display for public viewing late in February or early March of 2007.



Some of the artifacts from the Southesk collection that were recently purchased by the Royal Alberta Museum.

left page, top:

Three Métis pouches made from fine deer hide decorated with silk embroidery. The centre pouch was also edged with pale blue silk.

top of page:

Métis beaded cloth octopus bag with wool tassels. From Red River.

Métis or Cree child's pair of quilled and beaded hide mittens with quill wrapped strings.

far left:

Métis or Cree pouch, possibly a watch pocket. Quillwork on birch bark, with beaded edging.

left:

Métis wool, possibly finger-woven sash. From Red River.

# Otipemisiwak

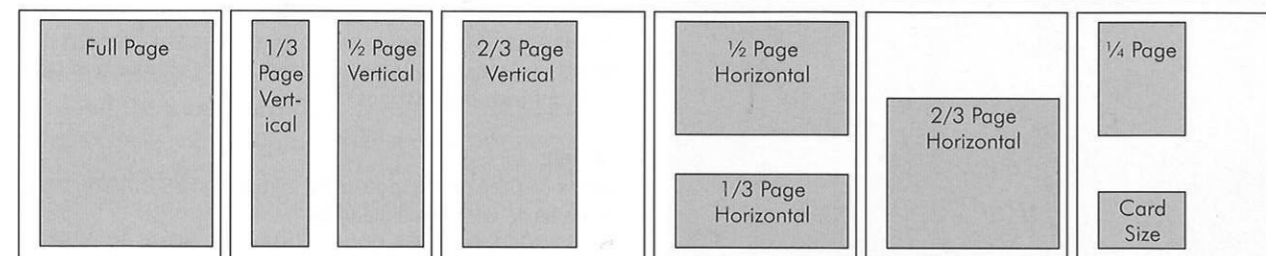
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## Health in the Hills 2006

By Roxanne McKenzie, Assistant Coordinator

In this fast-paced world, it is refreshing to have an opportunity to take the time to focus on ourselves. The second annual Health in the Hills: An Aboriginal Women's Health Retreat was held at Cypress Hill Inter-provincial Park July 14-16, 2006. The Miywasin Society with a grant from the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission along with support from the Métis Local eight and the Métis Trading Company hosted a successful weekend. The focus of the weekend was smoking cessation and women's health. We encouraged smokers to bring a non-smoking friend to participate in the retreat; their role was to provide support as we took it upon ourselves to develop a personal stop smoking plan.

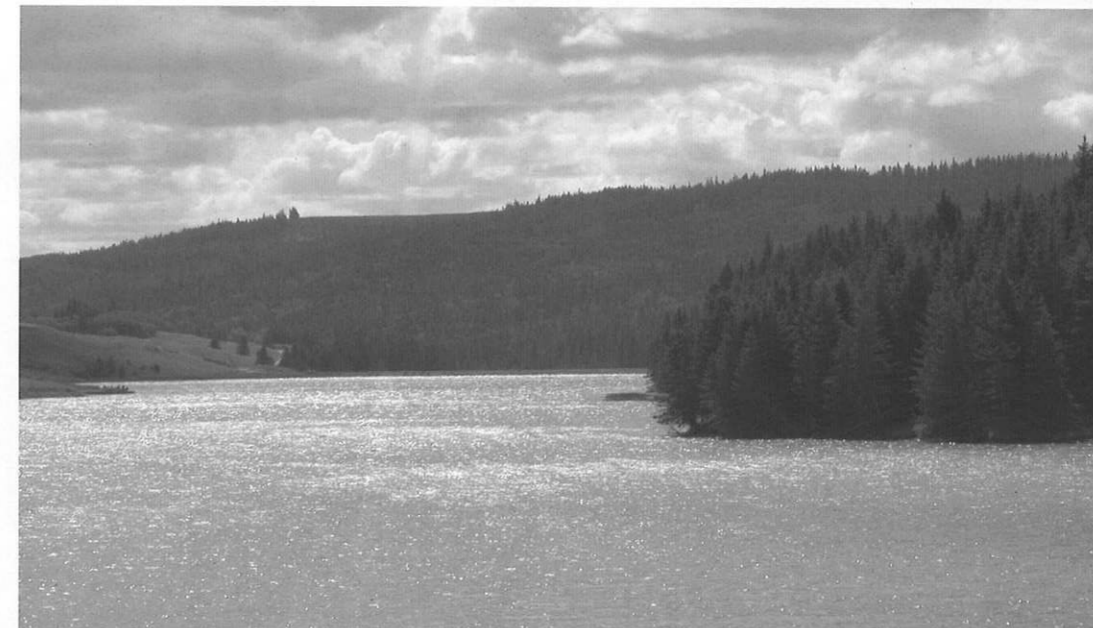
We arrived at our beautiful destination late Friday afternoon, set up camp, had dinner, then took some time to get to know each other. The second day of the retreat started with a morning Yoga class taught by Anjna Brahmhatt. She showed us breathing techniques we could use to help reduce cravings for cigarettes. Then we took part in workshops facilitated by Anne Joly of AADAC and Michelle Sauvé of the Canadian

Cancer Society. We discussed a range of topics including the effects of smoking, the dangers of cancer, and battling addictions. In the afternoon we took a walk along Battle Creek where Deb Lloyd of Buffalo Woman Consulting talked about living a balanced lifestyle using the philosophies of the Medicine Wheel and the traditional uses of tobacco.

The last day of the retreat focussed on stress-reduction and relaxation. The Silver Sage Massage Therapy Centre and Lucille Goldade of Aurora Healing Centre helped make this a truly relaxing day. We pampered ourselves with facials, massages, reflexology, and reiki. By the end of the weekend we were completely rejuvenated and ready to head back to our busy lives.

A special feature added to this year's event was a child's day program. While we were busy with retreat activities the children were busy with crafts, nature walks and socializing with new friends. They had a very fulfilling weekend as well.

Good luck to all of the participants and a big thank you to all the people who helped make the weekend memorable.





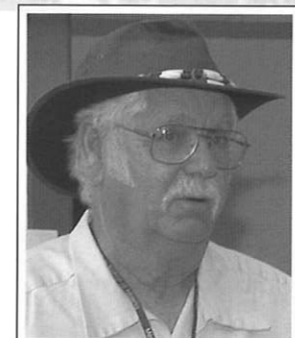
## MNA at the Capital Ex

By Monique Devlin

While the name may be different, the enthusiasm and fun behind Edmonton's Capital Ex celebration (formally known as Klondike Days) is as powerful as ever. Thousands gathered in the streets of the province's capital to watch the opening parade on a hot July morning, and the MNA head office was there to strut its stuff! Special thanks go out to Maurice Flood for lending us his truck and trailer and then navigating it through the Edmonton streets.



## Hivernant Rendezvous 2006



by Richard Lucier-Larson

From August 10th to 13th, Métis from around B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba gathered in Big Valley to celebrate their culture and renew friendships. Representatives of many of the old Métis buffalo hunting clans started to arrive Wednesday, and by Friday, there were four teepees and a couple of old style tents set up.

Because the rainy and windy weather did not cooperate on Thursday and Friday, outside sports were suspended until things cleared up Saturday afternoon.

The Big Valley Seniors Drop-In Centre was pressed into use for activities such as a bannock seminar and contest and children's craft sessions. All enjoyed Métis music and dance. There were genealogy displays, historic pictures, beading lessons, a display of artefacts from the Michif Museum of B.C., and of course, tea and coffee served with ample bannock with jam.

Friday evening was devoted to Métis dancing and music, which included the Hazzel Hoop dancers and the Region III MNA Youth dance troupe. Gary Lee and Ray St Germaine were our house musicians doing their usual excellent job.

Many thanks to Marlene and Joe with staff from Region III M.N.A. who attended and help make this a successful event.

Saturday evening, the participants moved to the Jubilee Hall for a dinner and dance, which was enjoyed by those attending. The entertainment was

interspersed with a chance auction and silent auctions for many fascinating Aboriginal items such as dream catchers, jewellery, books, artwork and moccasins.

Although the attendance was down for the outside activities and primitive camp, it certainly looked like people enjoyed themselves in spite of the bad weather.

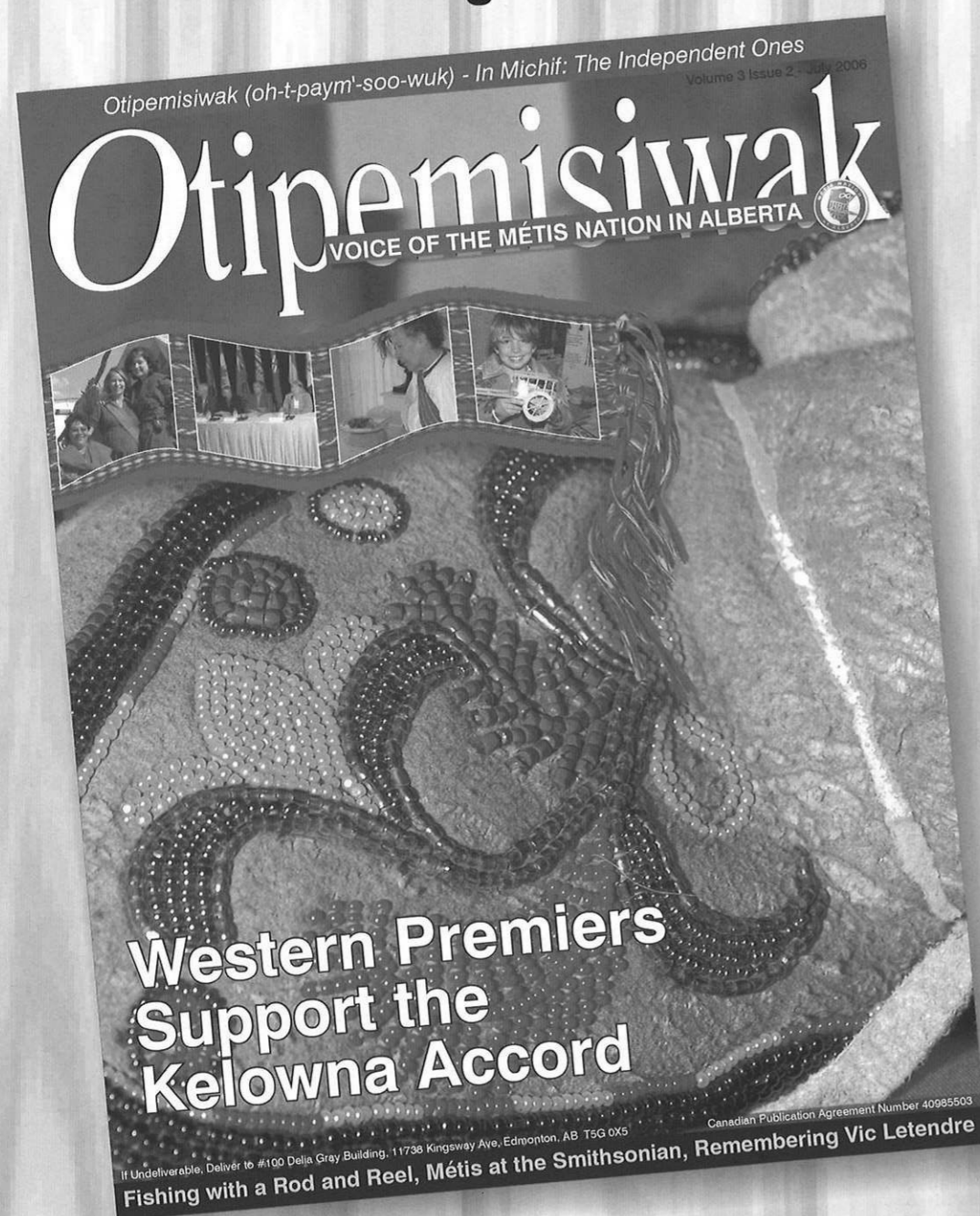
We wish to offer thanks to the many helpful citizens of Big Valley and area. Big Valley Café was adopted as the check-in centre for the event (even if Jeanette did not know it).

On Sunday, after a Métis breakfast at the Seniors Drop-inn centre, about 30 people travelled to the historic Tail Creek Métis Cemetery to raise and dedicate a large cross that will add a distinctive Métis appearance to the cemetery. Father Guy Lavallee from Manitoba celebrated Mass and blessed the Cross. This is part of our policy of keeping the Cemetery neat, tidy, and Métis.



Keith Hansen (Rosselle) stands by his ancestor's gravestone at the Tail Creek Cemetery

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## Opportunities for Aboriginal Entrepreneurs

By Stephanie Sarjas

If you are an Aboriginal entrepreneur thinking about starting a business or if you're looking for innovative ways to grow your operations, you can't afford to miss the chance to learn and network at "It's All About Opportunities".

For the fourth year in a row, The Business Link's Aboriginal Business Services is presenting this two-day Gathering of Aboriginal Entrepreneurs from across Alberta. (The Business Link provides business information and advice to Alberta's small business community.) It's all happening in Edmonton this October 23 & 24 at

The Coast Edmonton Plaza Hotel.

Qualified professionals will provide practical advice and information in various sessions on topics such as starting your business, marketing and promotions, business trends, cash flow, and business succession planning. This year, a special panel discussion will address the shortage of skilled labour.

Throughout the two days, you'll be able to network with fellow business owners and others who are considering starting a new business, as well as those who provide services to the Aboriginal business community.

You'll hear from successful Aboriginal business owners who will share stories of the challenges they faced, and the successes they have achieved in today's competitive world.

Register by October 10 for the economical fee of \$100.00 plus GST (\$125 plus GST after October 10). For more information and to register, contact Conference Coordinator Stephanie Sarjas at 780-422-7706 or through The Business Link's toll-free number 1-800-272-9675.

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- network
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- make professional contacts
- succeed in business!

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Stephanie Sarjas **Direct Line**  
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The Business Link 1-800-272-9675

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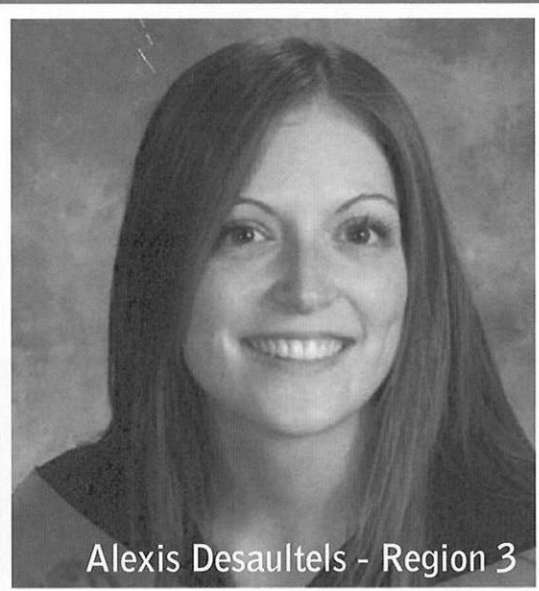
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# Honouring Our Métis People

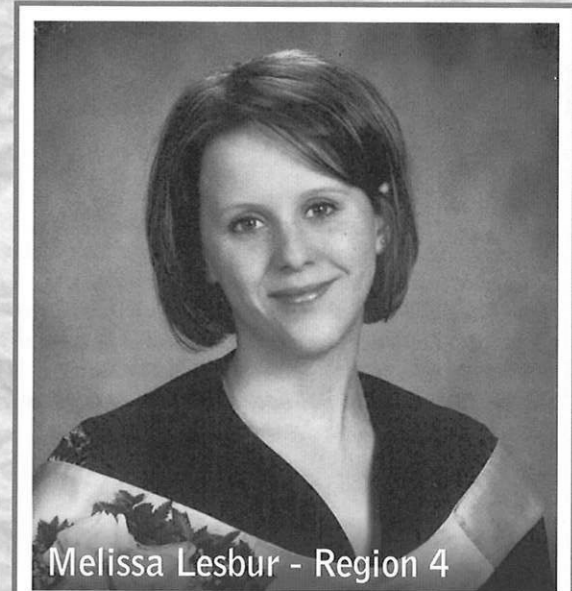
## LMD Success Stories



Alexis Desaultels - Region 3

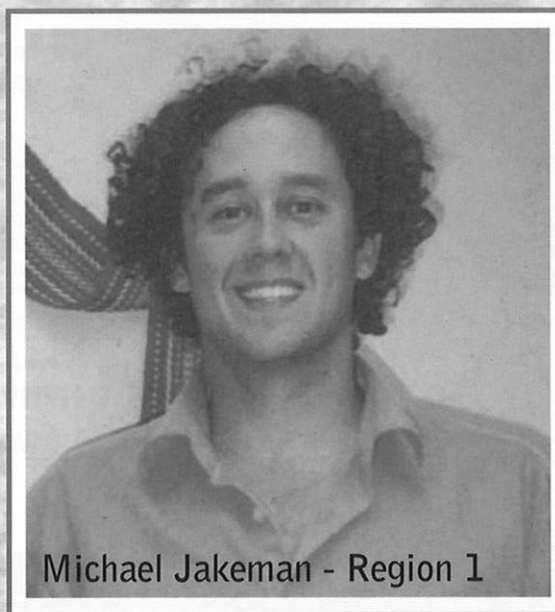
*After High School, I decided to take a year off before starting University. One year gradually turned into five. I wanted more for myself, so I went back to school, and my debts grew. For four years I worked part time and kept full time studies. What a relief it was to have the Métis Nation of Alberta lift some of the financial stress. I now have a great job as a Registered Nurse at Foothills Hospital. I love what I do, and the Métis Nation of Alberta helped me accomplish my dreams.*

*I am happy to say that I am a recent graduate of the Occupational Therapy program at the University of Alberta. Before I entered my last year of school, I met my employment counsellor, Laura Waniandy, at Métis Employment Services. She informed me that they would assist me in completing my final year with monetary support. Because of this support I was able to focus on my studies instead of having to work a part-time job to cover all my expenses. This was an invaluable opportunity for me. Whenever I had trouble, I was able to talk with my case manager and she would assist me in resolving it. I appreciate all the support I received from Métis Employment Services and my case manager, as it allowed me to successfully complete my degree and enter the occupation of my dreams!*

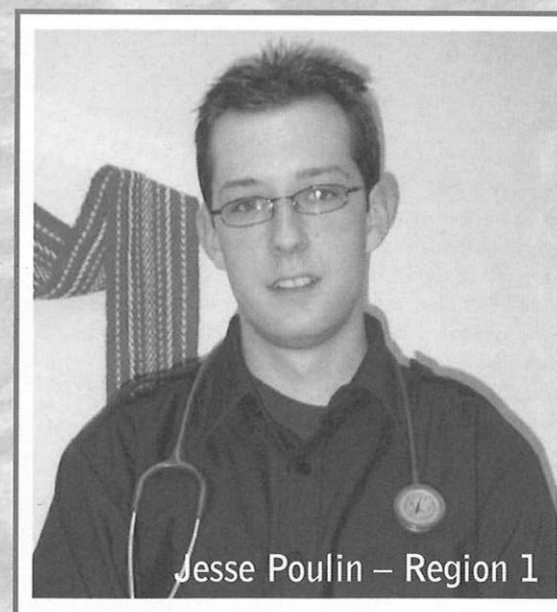


Melissa Lesbur - Region 4

*With all of the encouragement I received, I was able to attend law school in Victoria, BC. I was soon overcome by the heavy financial burden and I nearly quit school just prior to my last year. It was at this time that I received the extra support from the Métis Nation of Alberta, and I have now completed law school. I have been called to the Bar of British Columbia and have worked in Victoria for over a year. I am currently working with Federal Prosecutions at McConnon Bion O'Connor & Peterson and look forward to practising law in Alberta. In September of 2006, I will be starting a firm with two Fort McMurray lawyers under the firm name of Vinni Coombe Jakeman Barristers and Solicitors. I look forward to returning to my family and community where I will now be able to provide services to others."*

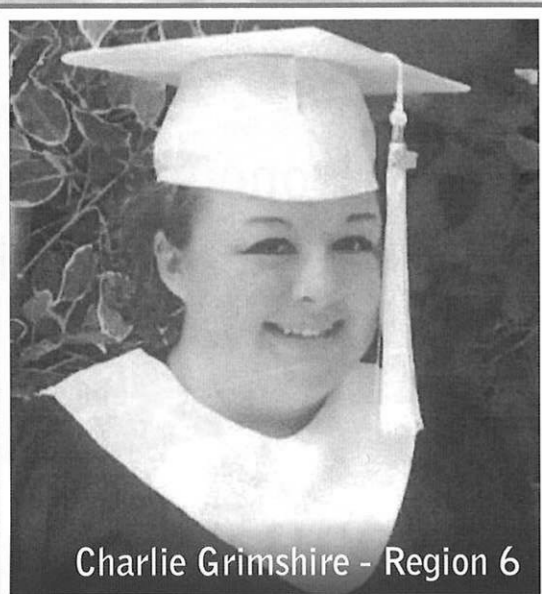


Michael Jakeman - Region 1



Jesse Poulin - Region 1

*Jesse used to volunteer at the local fire hall during his summer breaks from school, dreaming of the day when he could join the crew on an emergency call that could mean life or death. This is why the fire chief knew just who to call when he spotted a poster in the fire hall recruiting candidates for MNA sponsored training at fire Etc. in Vermilion. The fire chief recommended the long-time volunteer without hesitation. Jesse completed the rigorous training in Vermilion and successfully passed his EMT certification exam. He wrote the EMT exam in July and landed a job the same month with Canadian Industrial Paramedic working at an oil company in the Fort McMurray area as an EMT. Ultimately, Jesse wants to work in a fire hall somewhere in Alberta, but in the meantime, he knows he has to gain experience. He wanted to pass along his thanks for the training assistance and support provided by the MNA.*



Charlie Grimshire - Region 6

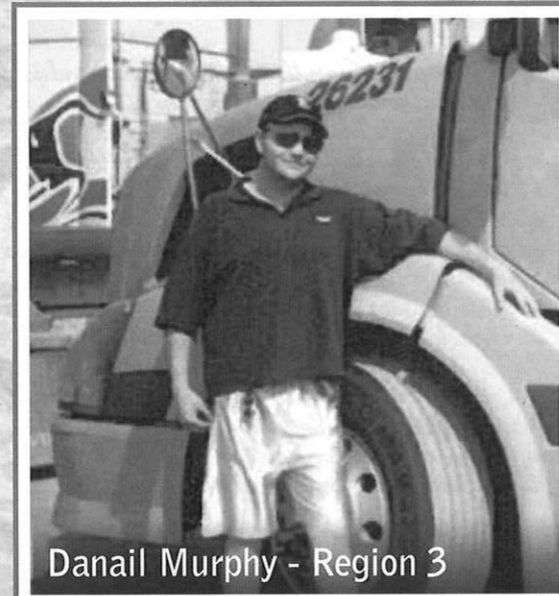
*I enrolled in Grande Prairie Regional College for a two-year diploma program in Business, majoring in financial services. Upon completion, I found a new career opportunity which allowed me to utilize all the skills and knowledge I had developed through the program. Without the financial assistance and support from the Métis Nation of Alberta, I would not have been able to fulfill my dream of becoming an integral individual within the business world.*

*I spent approximately one year exploring my options to see what best suited me. Though I never enjoyed school, I always managed to float by. So, the decision to go back to school was a hard one. I'm proud to say that with the encouragement from family and friends I was able to back to school thirteen years later and achieve a 3.74 GPA. I have graduated from the Bow Valley College Unit Clerk Program. I now am employed at the Foothills Hospital in the Emergency Trauma Department. So what have I learned? That you are never too old to chase dreams and that you should never be scared to take chances. Thank you, Métis Nation of Alberta, for giving me a chance at a better life with a higher quality of living.*

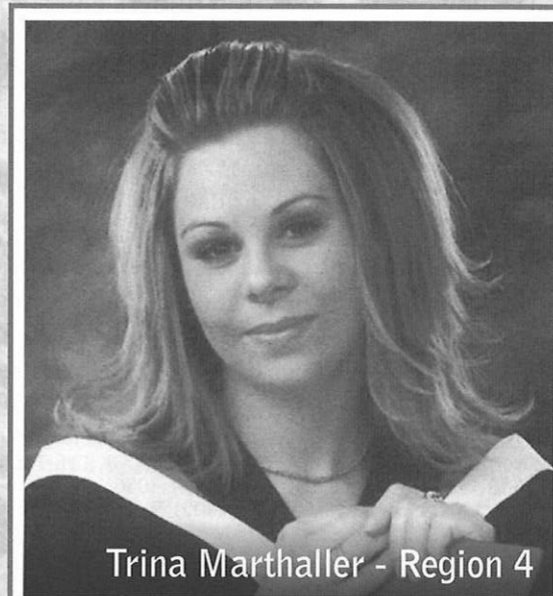


Kara Converse - Region 3

*After receiving funding from the Métis Nation of Alberta to obtain my Class One Drivers', I landed a job with one of Canada's top 50 best managed companies, Bison Transport. I truly thank the Métis Nation of Alberta for helping me in my success. Without their help, I would not have been able to achieve my goals.*

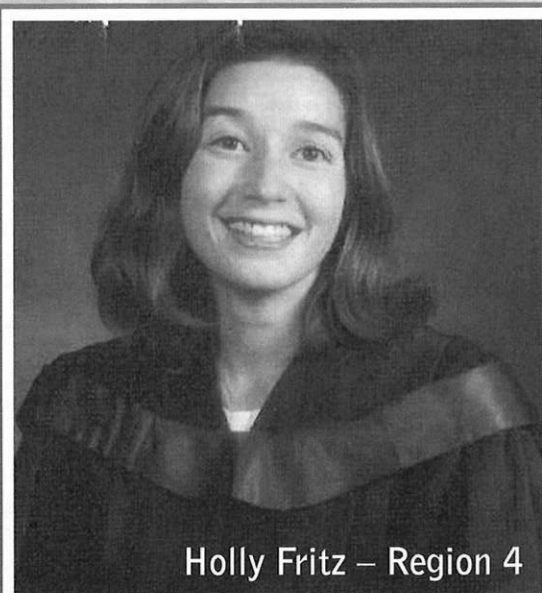


Danail Murphy - Region 3



Trina Marthaller - Region 4

*The service and support I received from Métis Employment Services in Edmonton really helped me strive to reach my goals. I recently graduated from the University of Alberta, Faculty of Augustana with my Bachelor of Arts Degree. Through funding from the MNA, I was able to focus on my studies and also on what I wanted to do in the future. I was offered a job with the Faculty of Augustana and will be starting work full-time in the fall.*



Holly Fritz - Region 4

*I want to thank the Métis Nation of Alberta for assisting me throughout my final year of Dentistry at the University of Alberta. The financial assistance was greatly appreciated, as Dentistry is one of the most expensive programs in Canada. I also appreciated the monthly phone calls from my employment counsellor, Laura Waniandy, to check up on me. After eight years of post-secondary education, I am finally entering the working world as a Doctor of Dental Surgery. Thank you for helping me to make all of this possible.*

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## Sash to Appear in National US Museum

By Monique Devlin

A sash, woven by Métis artisan Laura McLaughlin, will soon be on display at the National Museum of the American Indian (Smithsonian Institution).

McLaughlin was taking part in the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington DC early in July. She was one of over a hundred Alberta representatives exported for the festival in order to highlight the diversity of Alberta. This was also the first time a Canadian province was ever profiled by the Festival.

Albertan musicians, tradesmen, poets and artisans set up displays along the National Mall, the large park stretching from the Washington Monument to the United States Capitol. It was here that McLaughlin struck up a conversation with the associate director of the National Museum of the American Indian. They exchanged information, and the next day she received a phone call to

come to the museum and meet the director himself.

"I went there and met this director and I gave them an infinity shirt, and I gave them the first sash ever woven at the National Mall," she said.

The director told her the sash would be put on display and she was then offered a ride back to her booth on the Mall. The importance of what had just happened didn't sink in until she started talking to the Festival coordinator.



Laura McLaughlin

"She was more excited than I was," she said. "She was making such a big deal of it, then I realised how important this really was. She made me excited."

The sash will likely be displayed as part of an exhibit on Métis culture at the museum, which first opened its doors in 2004. According to its web site, the museum is the first in the United States dedicated to exclusively to Native Americans.

"Having my work accepted by the American Indian museum is the most exciting thing that has ever happened to me, or will ever happen to me, and I am totally honoured and humbled by it." McLaughlin said.

She was not the only Alberta Métis featured during the Washington festival. Bead and quill worker Mellisa Jo Moses was there and the a cappella group Asani performed two shows daily and had the chance to perform at the Kennedy Centre.

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# A Trip to Heinsburg

By Monique Devlin

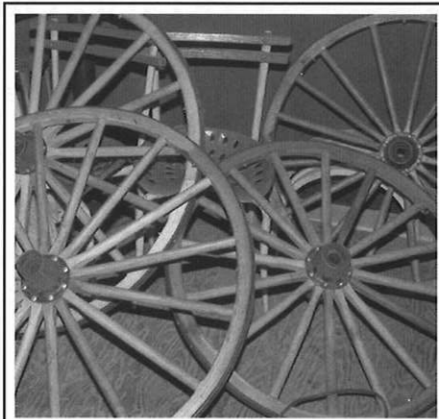
It is easier to take a trip back in time than one may think. This summer, I had the opportunity to meet with a couple whose lives are intertwined with the history of Alberta, and more specifically, the history of Métis in Alberta.

I met with Roy and Marjorie Scott on their homestead in the Hamlet of Heinsburg, perched on the banks of the North Saskatchewan River and sharing an edge of the Iron Horse Trail. Upon arrival, I was offered a bowl of freshly baked cookies and my choice of coffee or tea (they had made both) and was welcomed into their lives like a long lost granddaughter.

I was there to write a story about a man who builds red river carts. I had heard somewhere that he had just turned 80, but I figured I had made a mistake when I met the spry cowboy and his lovely wife. It was impossible that this man, who maintains his parcel of land and home, builds wagons, carts and sleighs for a living, and still manages to involve himself in the odd wagon trek, could possibly be 80. Plus, his

wife didn't look a day over 55. I said something to this effect, and was quickly corrected. Not only had Roy just celebrated his 80th birthday, Marjorie was 71 years old (although he did at first insist he was an older looking 35)!

One of the first things they showed me was a newspaper article describing Heinsburg as a ghost town, and Roy as a former cowboy. Roy disputes both facts. While



Top: Roy poses beside one of his red river carts. The wheels have been modified to better withstand paved and gravel roads. Above: At first glance, Roy's shop seems chaotic with wheels, wagon parts and tools covering every surface.

Heinsburg is small, there are still people living and working there and Roy still considers himself a cowboy—the word former was unnecessary and unacceptable.

"I actually haven't roped in an arena for 14 years, but I play with the rope," he said. "I've got a heeling dummy and heading dummy. I play with them, not every day, but at least once a week."

And while he doesn't participate any more, he still heads out to the rodeos and muses about going out one more time—just for the experience.

After tea and cookies, it was time for sandwiches, and then a tour of the property. Aside from the shops and assorted outbuildings (including a carefully stacked pile of lumber and trusses—the remnants of the Heinsburg curling rink), there are an assortment of wagons and carts lined up around the yard. Some are older than the Scotts themselves, while others have been rebuilt and are ready to hit the trail.

At first glance, it appears to be chaos, until you realize Roy knows

the history of each old cart and wagon (he is often able to trace their histories back to their original owners) and the reason why each refurbished one was created and where it has travelled in its lifetime. Some of the older carts will be salvaged for the wood and hardware and others are slated for a complete rebuild.

When Roy disassembles a wagon,

each salvageable piece is sorted into his workshop where he has a number of cubbies, each marked with the specific piece names. Those pieces he cannot salvage or find, he creates himself, either by carving it or forging it in his own blacksmith shop. Roy's shop is a study of controlled confusion—wheels of various sizes are propped against one wall and ancient tools hang on another—but when asked, he knows exactly how each piece will be used.

"I like my job, but I'm behind" Roy said. "Three sleighs, four red river carts, two wagons—these are all things I am in the middle of."

Roy has always been interested in building carriages and wagons, but it was not until 1991 that he attempted his first red river cart. Elk Point was celebrating its bicentennial in 1992 and Roy was commissioned to make a cart to be used in the main event, as well as for promotional purposes in parades and other happenings leading up to the celebration.

While researching red river carts, the couple discovered that although red river carts were used in the area, the first settlers came via canoe, and the carts were actually not used in the area for another 50 years.

"We got to looking into the historical side of things and realised a red river cart was not historically correct—but by this time they had done all this stuff anyway," Marjorie said. "I think they didn't even have the first red river cart down in the Red River Valley until 1810 or 1812, so I mean it took a long time to get them out here."

Since building that first cart, Roy has crafted many more—sending some on wagon treks and others to communities for special events and celebrations.

"We went to Batoche," he said "We lent three carts and three wagons, and then we went with our own wagons. It was a great experience because that's the way it was done then."

Roy is quick to admit that while his carts are in many ways historically accurate (he builds the carts based on designs from the Fort Garry Museum in



Roy, Marjorie, and their dog Boots in the lobby of the old Heinsburg train station.

Manitoba) he does not always use the proper wooden wheels.

"Most of mine, any one that is going to be used on the road, I just put ordinary wagon wheels on them, because the wheels you make yourself are not made to travel on pavement or gravel—they are made to travel on grass."

After touring the shop and the remainder of the

property, we strolled over to the old railway station that the Scotts hope to one day have turned into a museum and a campground. After returning to their home for more tea and cookies, I realized that most of my day had slipped by. I thanked the Scotts for their time and hospitality and promised to return another day.



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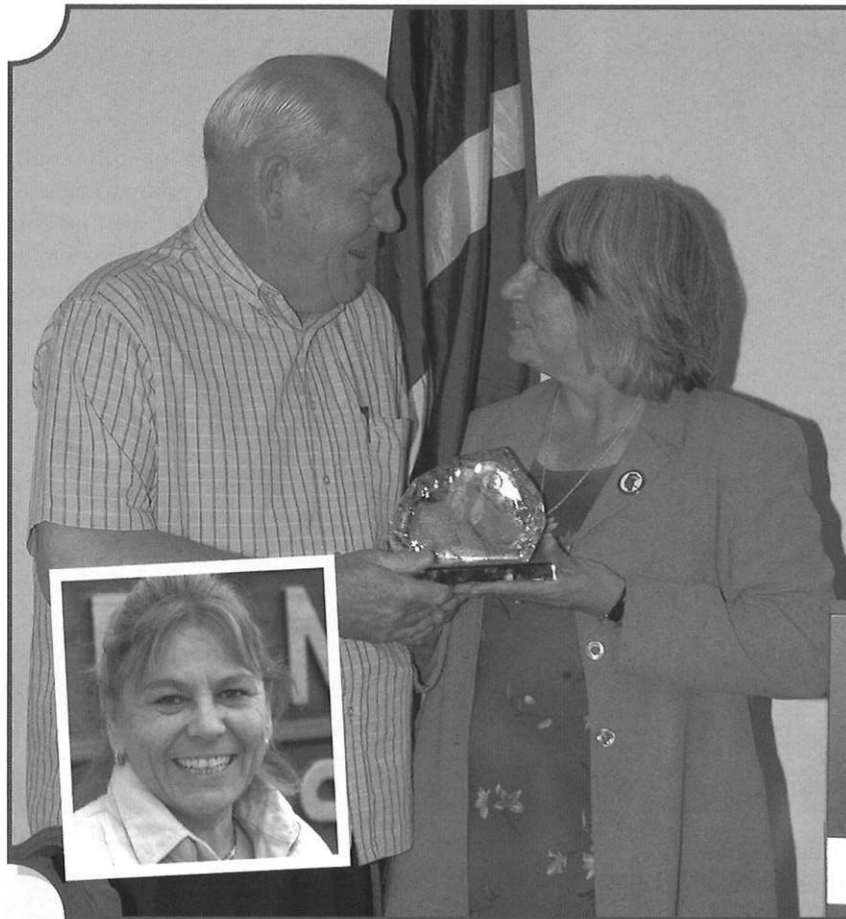
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## Happy Retirement

MNA president Audrey Poitras presents former Métis Urban Housing Corporation (MUHC) executive director Gordon Watson with an award of recognition at his going away party earlier this summer. Watson spent 19 years working with MUH and helped grow the small operation into a multi-million-dollar corporation.

Inset: The MNA would like to welcome Darlene Lennie to the MUHC as the new executive director and offer our support and best wishes as she helps the corporation reach its next set of accomplishments.

## NCSA Honours MNA Council Member

By Monique Devlin

Native Counselling services of Alberta (NCSA) honoured Marlene Lanz, MNA Region III president, in Edmonton on July 28<sup>th</sup> with a traditional blanket wrap.

"For the past ten years now, the organization has chosen to start recognizing Aboriginal leaders and non-Aboriginal people in the community who have contributed to the betterment of our community," Allen Benson, CEO of NCSA said when introducing Lanz.

"We always seem to recognize other people outside our own community, but we decided it is really important to start recognizing our own heroes in our community, and today we would like to do that."

Lanz, who found out about the honour only two weeks prior, was almost speechless upon acceptance. Once she found her voice, she thanked the NCSA staff, but made it clear that she feels that while she gets paid to do what she does, there are many other people working behind the scenes who deserve the honour just as much, if not more than she.



Marlene Lanz speaks at the annual NCSA staff meeting after being wrapped in a blanket.

NCSA was originally set up in 1970 to provide court worker assistance to Aboriginal people who had come into conflict with the justice system. It has since evolved to a more holistic organization, focussing on the healing and harmony of the entire Aboriginal community.

"Our main focus is to really work in partnership with as many people as we can. We are not there to

serve only First Nations, Métis, or Inuit—we will not turn non-Aboriginal people down," Benson said. "As an Aboriginal organization, we kind of believe that as Aboriginal people, we have a lot of skills and we should be able to share those with the non-Aboriginal population."

The honouring was part of the NCSA annual staff meeting, on the eve of the Healing our Spirit Worldwide conference.



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## APPLICATION FOR MATRIARCH

Regional offices are now accepting applications for this year's matriarch recognition. Matriarchs will be recognised at the Delia Gray Gala, November 16 in Edmonton at the Italian Cultural Centre.

### Who is a matriarch?

- ➔ A matriarch is an elder who has made significant contributions to her family and community.
- ➔ A Women who may not be otherwise recognized, but who embodies the true spirit of a Metis matriarch.

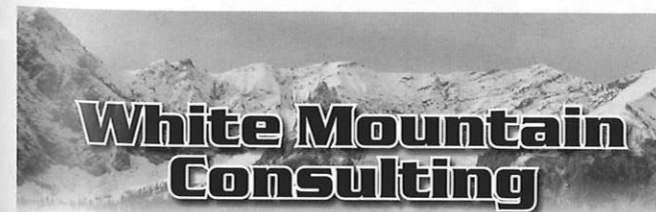
Applications are available at the regional offices or by calling the head office. The deadline for submissions is November 1st.

One matriarch will be chosen from each region.

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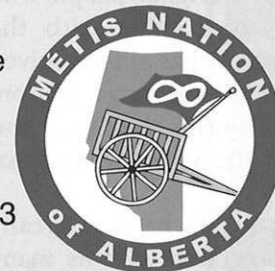
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## Editor's Insight

Patricia Russell

I drove through the town where I grew up, past my late mother's house, and straight on down the road to the sandy beach of Great Slave Lake, where the Hay River empties its muddy contents into one of the largest bodies of fresh water in the country. I am drawn to this place every time I visit Hay River, like a bird is pulled by some genetic marker to migrate north every spring. I come to the beach.

This is the playground of my youth where the log-littered sandy beach stretches and winds for what seems like forever. At least it did when I was seven or eight years old, back when life was uncomplicated and summer adventures blended one day into the next and the northern sun never seemed to set for long.

We'd collect and sell beer bottles; just enough to buy ourselves a fist full of hotdogs and a bag of marshmallows and then haul ourselves to the same spot on the beach practically every day, rain or shine. We did this on our own steam and found security in a small crowd made up of siblings and friends, none older than eleven.

I remember how hot the front of my legs would become from standing close to our raging bonfire of driftwood, collected by the armload and set ablaze using a single match and a piece of birch bark that someone found somewhere. We'd spear the hotdogs with long, fresh cut willows and cook them over the coals or stick them into the fire for that crusty, burnt flavour. I remember how quickly the driftwood would burn and that it always seemed to be my little brother's turn to go collecting wood to keep the fire going.

It was a simpler time. Who gives their kids matches these days?

My visit to the beach was brief yet conjured up years of fond memories of growing up in the Northwest Territories, where the landscape is as recognizable as the faces of my childhood friends and the bond to family is strongest. I shook the sand off my shoes and continued driving to Yellowknife where I accepted a job with the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. I have returned to my home in the North, to my immediate family, to my familiar space.

I want you to know that I have grown to consider the Métis Nation of Alberta an extension of my family; indeed, my Métis roots come from Lac La Biche. But I feel like I have moved away from my favourite Aunties and Uncles, my fun-loving twin sister, hard-working cousins, eager nieces and nephews, and distant relations that I have yet to meet.

I know that I have left the MNA a better person than when I started. I credit that personal growth to President Audrey Poitras, a leader who genuinely believes in protecting and building the Métis Nation, and that being Métis is a truth that comes from within our hearts. Madame President helped me to rekindle the 'Métis truth' that's always been in my heart even as a child growing up on the shore of Great Slave Lake. I will always be grateful for this priceless gift. Thank you.

I'll see you later.

-30-

# 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.



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The scholarships will be awarded at the Delia Gray Memorial Gala, November 16, 2006, and the recipients will be expected to receive their award in person this evening.

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**[www.albertametis.com/files/pdf/delia\\_gray.pdf](http://www.albertametis.com/files/pdf/delia_gray.pdf)**



Please be sure to complete the appropriate form (either the application form or the nomination form). Applications must include the completed application form (click link in the contact section to download a printable application form), a reference letter as well as a written section describing your qualifications. Applicants must also provide proof of registration and of which program and/or courses they are enrolled in. Nominations must include the completed nomination form as well as a letter from the nominator. Forms must be received no later than October 15, 2006. Late applications will not be accepted. The recipients will be chosen by a selection committee of representatives from the Gray Family and the Métis Nation of Alberta. A tax receipt (T4A) will be forwarded to the recipient. Applications/Nominations may be mailed or faxed.