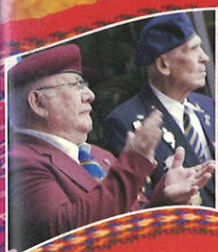


Otipemisiwak

VOICE OF THE MÉTIS NATION IN ALBERTA



Alberta Government Imposes Restricted Harvesting Policy



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

Michif:
"their own boss,
the independent ones"

Feature Photo (left):

Lorne Todd, from Donalda Alberta, creates mini Métis musicians like this one in his spare time.

Photo by Charity Borg

On Our Cover:

Bertha Clark Jones, who recently was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation displays one of her many hand made quilts. This one was created to celebrate Canada Day.

Photo by Charity Borg

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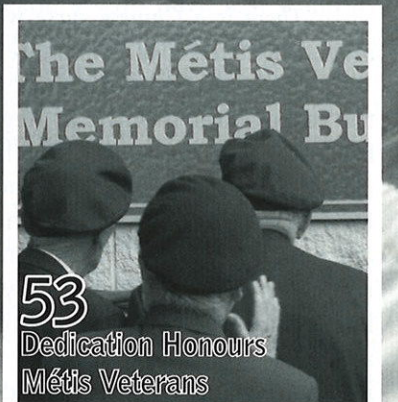
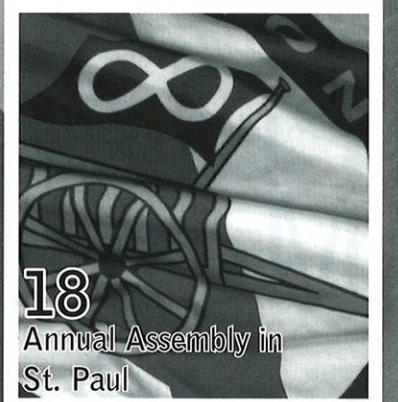
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Restricted Harvesting Policy



Otipemisiwak

The Voice of the Métis Nation in Alberta

Otipemisiwak is the only Official
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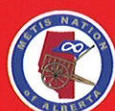
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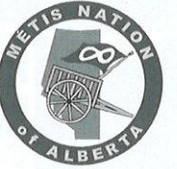
The Voice of the Métis Nation in Alberta

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 August 20th, 2007

Otipemisiwak
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President's Message

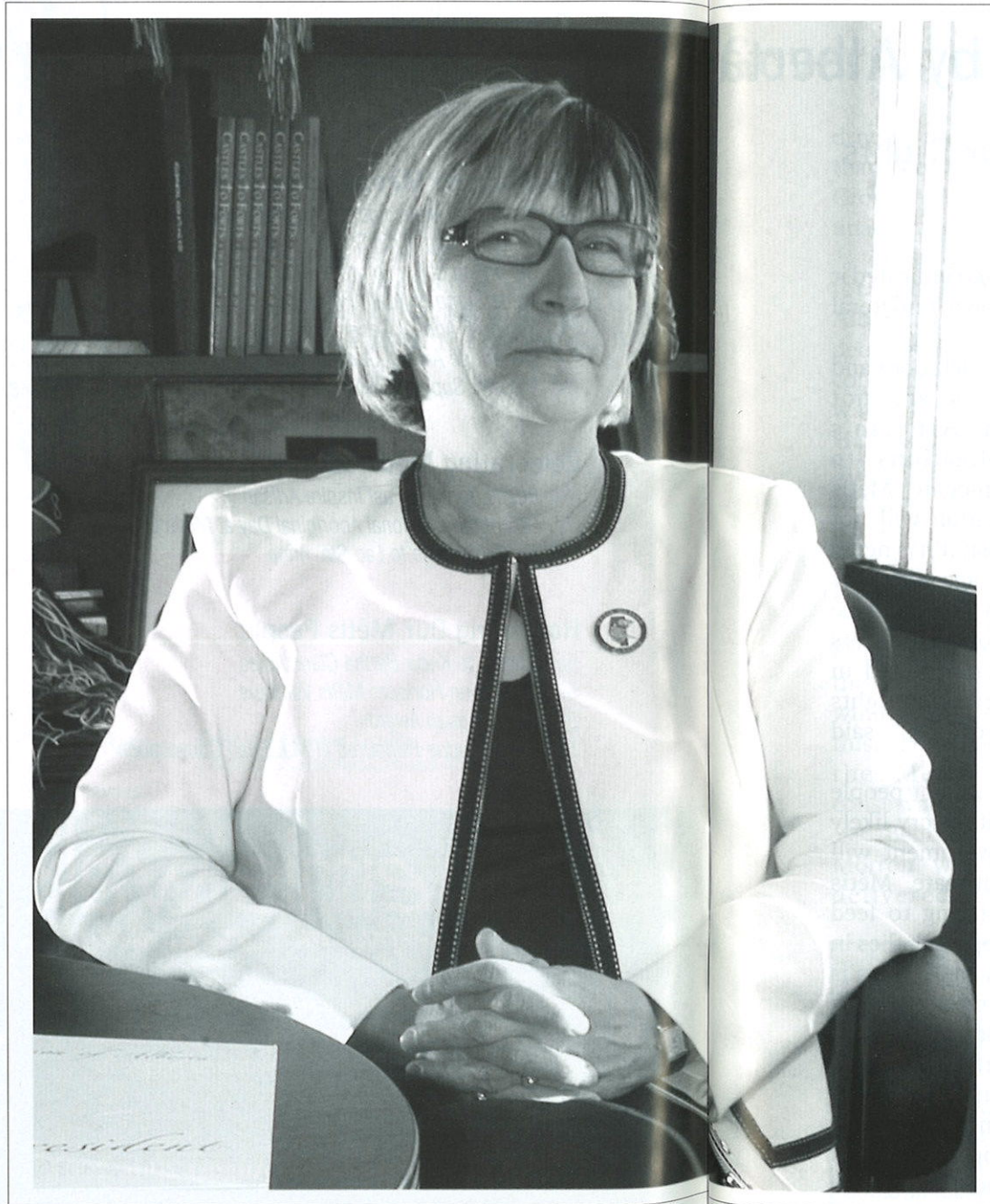
I once read a quote from Robert F. Kennedy that seems fitting for the recent happenings with the Métis Nation of Alberta:

"There is a Chinese curse which says, 'May he live in interesting times.' Like it or not, we live in interesting times..."

The last few months have been interesting, to say the least. After months of negotiation meetings with the Alberta government, our harvesting agreement is no more. It is disappointing and disheartening because for years we have fought for these rights and now they are being morphed into one man's ideal of what our rights should be. The following pages address the harvesting issue in more detail. The negotiating team and I will continue to fight the unfair restrictions imposed on us until we come to a solution that works.

I do not want to dwell on the negative. There are lots of positive things happening with the Métis Nation of Alberta:

- We all know education is the key to success in today's job market. Our Labour Market Development (LMD) team is continuing to work with the University of Alberta to develop the Métis Centre of Excellence. LMD has also initiated an accelerated business program with the MacEwan School of Business that is designed to assist Métis students. LMD was instrumental in developing the partnership with CFCW to promote Métis training and skill development across the province.
- On June 14th we honoured our veterans by renaming the Inglewood Building the Métis



Veterans Memorial Building. We must never forget the sacrifices our veterans have made that allow us to enjoy the freedom we have today. Naming our building in their honour is just a small token of thanks to them.

Our Annual General Assembly (AGA) is just around the corner and I would like to invite everyone to attend August 17-19 in St. Paul, Alberta. On the top of the agenda will be harvesting with the latest developments. Your input is crucial for the next step and I look forward to hearing what you have to say. The AGA is your chance to learn about the exciting things the Métis Nation of Alberta is doing across the province. There are always several important special and regular resolutions that will be discussed and voted on. The Annual Assembly is also a chance for us to celebrate and show off our culture, and connect with each other personally. As always, there will be a golf tournament and welcome reception on Thursday, a barbeque and jamboree on Friday night, a banquet and dance on Saturday night, as well as a trade and craft show all weekend.

Region 2 will be hosting a Métis youth conference in conjunction with the Annual Assembly. I invite those of you between the ages of 15-29 to come to St. Paul to participate in this event. The focus is to "Imagine a Career path of your own design," and there are many fun and educational activities planned over the course of the conference. This will be a great place to meet new friends, or reconnect with old ones and to learn more about the different

career options available.

I would also like to congratulate President Robert Doucette and his Provincial Council on their victory in the Métis Nation Saskatchewan (MNS) election. There is a lot of work ahead for the MNS and the Métis National Council as a whole. We have waited a long time for this election so all provinces could move forward together.

I want to offer my deepest sympathies to all our Readers who have lost a family member, friend or loved one recently. First who comes to mind is one of our Elders, Council member Fred Reid from Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement, who will be greatly missed; as well as Elder Bill Woodward from Anzac and one of our Métis Entrepreneurs, Leroy Flamond, from Strathmore.

There are many cultural family events coming up this summer including the Lac Ste. Anne Pilgrimage, the Hivernant Rendezvous, Back to Batoche, and Métis Crossing Annual Celebration just to name a few.

Please have a safe and wonderful summer and take some time to spend with your family and friends.

Respectfully,

Audrey Poitras

Audrey Poitras, President
Métis Nation of Alberta

Strengthening Our Métis Rights

Métis Nation of Alberta Deeply Disturbed by Alberta Government's Actions on Métis Harvesting

'Just Because Alberta's Current Politics Can't Accommodate Our Rights, Doesn't Mean We Will Not Exercise Our Rights'

Edmonton, AB (June 28, 2007) – Today, Audrey Poitras, President of the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) expressed her deep concern about the Alberta Government's conduct in negotiations with the MNA as well as the government's plans to implement a unilateral approach on Métis harvesting on July 1st, 2007.

"The Alberta Government has not been negotiating in good faith with the Métis people and does not plan to continue to accommodate Métis harvesting practices throughout this province. Our trust in this government was misplaced. Without question, this is a low point in the history of our longstanding and productive relationship with the Alberta Government," said Poitras.

Over the last 10 months, the MNA and the Alberta Government have been engaged in negotiations to arrive at a Longer Term Métis Harvesting Agreement. This longer-term agreement was to replace the Interim Métis Harvesting Agreement (IMHA) that has been effectively

accommodating Métis harvesting in Alberta since September 2004.

The MNA was participating in these negotiations in good faith, even though Ted Morton, the current Minister of Sustainable Resource Development, made cancelling the IMHA one of his leadership campaign promises to the Alberta Fish and Game Association. In April 2007, the Alberta Government unilaterally terminated the IMHA. The IMHA is now set to expire on July 1st, 2007.

On June 14th, the Alberta Government tabled a plan that bears no resemblance to the negotiations or the law. The Alberta plan excludes Métis in southern Alberta (even though Alberta's own research confirms Métis rights in southern Alberta), unilaterally identifies 17 "Métis communities" and proposes to draw arbitrary circles around these "Métis communities" with no factual foundation. In response, the MNA requested that the IMHA be extended for another 60 days in order for negotiations to continue. Yesterday, the Alberta Government

refused that request and indicated it will implement its own unilateral policy effective July 1st.

"These types of backroom and heavy-handed tactics are not consistent with Alberta's constitutional obligations to consult and accommodate Métis rights. The Métis Nation will not accept an approach that it has never seen before a week ago and that arbitrarily carves up the province and leaves many of our harvesters behind. We will stand united in support of Métis harvesting rights throughout this province," said Poitras.

Poitras added, "Our people must be aware that it is very likely that the Alberta Government will begin charging legitimate Métis harvesters who are trying to feed their families. This approach flies in the face of the *Powley* case. This is also contrary to the recent Alberta Court of Queen's Bench decision that held that Alberta is under a 'constitutional imperative' to accommodate non-Settlement Métis harvesting rights. It is apparent that politics have been

driving these negotiations, rather than the law or the honour of the Crown. This is disheartening and unacceptable," said Poitras.

Cecil Bellrose, MNA Minister for Métis Rights, added, "All Albertans need to know that this decision has nothing to do with conservation or safety. The MNA was willing to implement a Harvesting Policy and collect information on the number of harvesters, where they were harvesting and what was being harvested. Sustainable Resource Development does not have this type of information on any other Aboriginal peoples harvesting in this province. The Métis were willing to work with the province on this. How does having no data on the Métis harvest promote conservation?"

Bellrose added, "While Mr. Morton will be able to say he delivered on his leadership

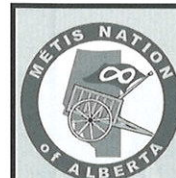
campaign promise to cancel the IMHA, he is doing a disservice to Alberta's fish and wildlife. Métis will continue to exercise their rights outside of an arbitrary regime that does not accommodate their rights. He is also doing a disservice to all Albertans because it will be the taxpayer, Métis and non-Métis alike, who will be footing the litigation bill over the next few years for his leadership promise."

President Poitras added, "We will bring this issue to our Annual General Assembly in August. Alberta Métis will decide how we will move forward together. We have many options available to us. Rest assured Alberta Métis will not let unprincipled politics run roughshod over Métis rights. This issue will not go away anytime soon for the Alberta Government."

The MNA is encouraging Métis to contact and write their MLAs. Poitras added, "Over the last few

months, the MNA was encouraged by the amount of support we received from rank-and-file MLAs on reaching an accommodation. We are very interested to find out whether these recent developments reflect a new approach in Alberta-Métis relations or whether it only represents the politics of few."

"We hold out hope that the positive partnerships we have had with the Alberta Government are not things of the past. Premier Stelmach was chosen as leader to build bridges and bring all Albertans together. The politics of division and fear was rejected. If we move forward with honour, respect and cooperation, the Métis Nation remains a willing partner to enable the Alberta Government to fulfill its constitutional imperative on Métis rights. But, Alberta's current approach shows anything but honour, respect and cooperation," concluded Poitras.



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.

MNA HARVESTERS LEGAL DEFENCE FUND

Send your donation to:
MNA Harvesters Legal Defence Fund
c/o MNA Communications
11738 Kingsway
Edmonton, AB T5G 0X5



Minister Morton's Misinformation

Edmonton, AB (June 29, 2007) – Today, the Métis Nation of Alberta issued the following to refute the misinformation that has been put forward by spokespersons for Minister Ted Morton and the Alberta Government. "We believe Albertans need to know the truth about what has taken place, not denials and political spin," said Audrey Poitras, President of the Métis Nation of Alberta.



Contrary to claims, the MLA Committee **did not** recommend cancelling the Interim Métis Harvesting Agreement (IMHA). The MLA's written report first recommends the current agreement "be amended through further negotiations." (*Report of the MLA Committee on Métis Harvesting*, p. 4 (para. 2)). Mr. Morton was the one that promised in his leadership campaign that he would cancel the IMHA. He achieved his promise, but that was not what the MLA Committee recommended.



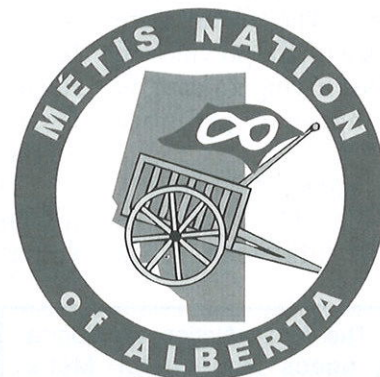
Contrary to claims, the IMHA was **not** "originally set to expire in April". In April, the Alberta Government unilaterally terminated the IMHA. The IMHA had a 90 day notice provision, therefore, the IMHA expires on July 1st. Alberta's claim is contradictory to the terms of the IMHA and the Alberta Government's own press release of April 3, 2007.



Contrary to claims, two courts did **not find** that the IMHA needed to be cancelled. Both courts found that the IMHA was not legally enforceable because Sustainable Resource Development, the department Mr. Morton leads, did not incorporate the IMHA into Alberta's regulatory regime in order to make it legally enforceable. In fact, Justice Verville of the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench found that the IMHA was Alberta's attempt to fulfill the 'constitutional imperative' to accommodate Métis harvesting rights throughout the province. (*R. v. Kelley*, [2007] ABQB 41 at par. 67)



Contrary to claims, **Alberta's unilateral approach has nothing to do with conservation**. Last year, Alberta licensed over 94,000 harvesters. The MNA estimates there are less than 3,500 active Métis harvesters in the province. As well, the MNA and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs arrived at Points of Agreement for an amended IMHA that would have seen the MNA implement a Harvesting Policy and collect information on the number of harvesters, where they were harvesting and what was being harvested. Sustainable Resource Development does not have this type of information on any other Aboriginal peoples harvesting in this province, but the Métis were willing to work with the province on this. Mr. Morton ensured these Points of Agreement were rejected and now he will get to act as the judge and jury on who is Métis and who can harvest in this province.



For background documents
visit www.albertametis.org

MNA Harvesting Frequently Asked Questions

What is the MNA doing next?

We are bringing this important issue to our members at our Annual General Assembly in August. At the Assembly, we will be getting direction on what to do next from our members. We need a strong mandate from our people in order to take on the Alberta Government. We have many options available to us: passing our own Métis laws, organizing fall hunts, protests at the Alberta legislature, using the courts, etc. However, whatever we do, we must be united in our approach. The MNA is encouraging as many Métis from throughout the province to attend. This will be an important Assembly. For those that cannot attend, please pass on your ideas and thoughts to your regional representatives or family and friends that will be attending the Assembly.

What happens if I go fishing or hunting after July 1st?

You must be aware that you may be charged. This does not mean that Métis do not have rights or that they should not exercise their rights. It just means the Alberta Government has decided to act unilaterally and not accommodate Métis rights, consistent with its constitutional obligations to the Métis people. The MNA will be assessing what the Alberta Government puts in place effective July 1st and will provide additional information to MNA members once we know.

If I get charged, will the MNA pay for my legal costs?

At the Assembly General Assembly, the MNA's membership will need to decide what the MNA will do if harvesters are charged by Alberta. This has significant cost implications for the MNA and a policy will need to be developed and approved. Until the MNA has an approved policy in place with respect to defending harvesters, the MNA cannot commit to paying the legal costs of all harvesters that may be charged. Each harvester will need to make their own decision on what to do over the next month.

What can I do?

The MNA is asking all members to contact or write your MLA to express your displeasure with the Alberta Government's recent actions. Call their office, send a fax or email or go down and meet them face-to-face. Negotiating in good faith has failed us. We now need to make our voices heard. We believe we still have many friends and allies across the province and in the Alberta legislature. We need to rally these friends against Ted Morton's unilateral approach. The MNA has prepared information materials you can use when you contact or meet with MLAs. Copies of these documents are available by contacting your regional MNA office or the MNA Head Office. MNA members can also assist by getting family members and friends of the Métis to sign the MNA's petition. Copies of the petition are available on the MNA's website at www.albertametis.com.

www.albertametis.com

Harvesting Update

By Audrey Poitras

As you have probably already heard in the media and will read about within this issue, our longstanding relationship with the Alberta Government has been severely damaged through the bad faith shown by the government in our negotiations for a new Métis harvesting agreement. The Alberta Government has unilaterally terminated the Interim Métis Harvesting Agreement effective July 1st and will be proceeding with its own unilateral approach on Métis harvesting. This development is extremely disheartening and is definitely a low point in the years of productive partnerships we have had with the Alberta Government.

Over the last ten months, we participated in these negotiations in good faith because we believed the Alberta Government would act honourably and fulfill its constitutional obligations to the Métis people, rather than letting the politics of fear and division overtake these negotiations. We were not naïve to the fact that individuals like Ted Morton wanted these negotiations to fail and they were doing everything they could do in backrooms to make sure that happened. We participated in good faith because we believed the province had earned our trust. What has become apparent is that our trust that the Alberta Government would do the right thing when it came to Métis harvesting was misplaced.

Instead of arriving at a new, mutually agreeable arrangement with the MNA, the Alberta Government will now be acting as the judge and jury on who is Métis and who has rights in this province. This is unacceptable and the MNA could not be a part of the regressive

approach proposed by the province. This approach is even more disturbing because it is none other than Ted Morton who will be making these decisions, in his role as Minister of Sustainable Resources Development. Based on his writings and well-known positions on issues, Mr. Morton is not a man that any people would want to have assessing whether they have rights. Unfortunately, he has now succeeded in getting the Alberta Government to let him be the judge

Contact or write your MLA to express your displeasure with the Alberta Government's recent actions.

and jury for Métis rights in this province.

As I said in our June 28th press release, even though Alberta's current politics can't accommodate our rights, that does not mean we will stop exercising our rights. We will now bring this issue our upcoming Annual General Assembly in August in order to seek direction from our members. I am encouraging as many Métis from throughout the province to attend. For those that cannot attend, please pass on your thoughts to your regional representatives or family and friends that will be attending the Assembly. We need a strong mandate from our people in order to take on the Alberta Government. We have many options available to us: passing our own Métis laws, organizing fall hunts, protests at the Alberta legislature, using the courts, etc. However, whatever we do, we must be united in our approach.

The MNA is also asking all members to contact or write your MLA to express your displeasure

with the Alberta Government's recent actions. Call their office, send a fax or email or go down and meet them face-to-face. Negotiating in good faith has failed us. We now need to make our voices heard. We believe we still have many friends and allies across the province, but we need to rally these friends and allies against Ted Morton being judge and jury on Métis rights in Alberta. MNA members can also assist by getting family members and friends to sign the MNA's petition. A copy of this

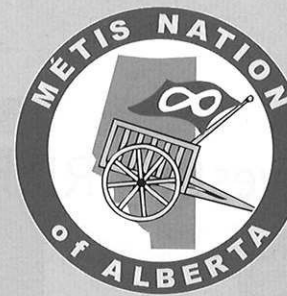
petition is available through MNA offices or on our website at www.albertametis.com.

For those of you who would like additional information on what

happened in the negotiations, I have also prepared a more detailed memo that attaches relevant documents from the negotiations. MNA members interested in obtaining a copy of this memo and its attachments can contact their regional MNA office or the MNA Head Office.

The only solace I can offer in times like this is that over the generations there have been many governments and individuals in positions of power who have attempted to hold the Métis people down and deny our rights. Today, those individuals and governments have come and gone, but the Métis Nation is stronger than ever and our rights are protected in the highest law of the land—Canada's Constitution. Together, we will once again overcome the challenges that have been placed before us.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the Assembly in order to develop our collective and united strategy to move forward.



DATE: July 12, 2007
TO: Members of the Métis Nation of Alberta
FROM: Secretary, Métis Nation of Alberta
RE: Special Resolution to Amend Bylaws of the Métis Nation of Alberta

According to Article 39.1 of the Bylaws of the MNA:

The Bylaws of the Métis Nation shall not be rescinded, altered or added to except by Special Resolution.

According to Article 4.11 of the Bylaws of the MNA:

Special Resolution means:

- a) A Resolution passed:
 - i) at an Annual Assembly or Special Meeting, notice of which has been duly given not less than twenty-one (21) days before, such notice also specifying the intention to propose the resolution, and
 - ii) by the vote of not less than seventy-five (75%) percent of those Métis Lifetime Members who, if entitled to do so, vote in person.

TAKE NOTICE that ONE Special Resolution to amend the Bylaws of the MNA, which is proposed to be introduced at the Annual Assembly of the Métis Nation of Alberta in St. Paul on August 18-19, 2007, was properly received in the Métis Nation of Alberta Provincial Office, a copy of which is attached to this Notice.

Copies of the Current Bylaws of the Métis Nation of Alberta may be obtained by:

- a) contacting the Métis Nation of Alberta Provincial Office at 780) 455-2200 or 1-800-252-7553;
- b) by writing or visiting the MNA Provincial Office at 11738 Kingsway, Edmonton, Alberta T5G 0X5;
- c) By contacting your MNA Regional Office; or
- d) by going to the Métis Nation of Alberta website at www.albertametis.com

SPECIAL RESOLUTION 79TH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY METIS NATION OF ALBERTA ST. PAUL, ALBERTA

WHEREAS: The Métis people of Alberta have put forward resolutions calling for a Métis representative structure that is fair, responsive and accountable to all the Métis people in Alberta; and

WHEREAS: The Métis people of Alberta in July 1994 supported and adopted the Métis Nation Declaration that stated:

The Métis Nation values self-reliance, self-sufficiency and individual and collective rights and freedoms. The Métis Nation possesses the right of self-determination, including the inherent right of Métis governance which may be expressed and implemented by its citizen at the local, regional provincial/territorial and national levels; and

WHEREAS: The Métis people value self-reliance, self-determination and self-government on the basis of existing aboriginal rights as recognized under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution; and

WHEREAS: The Métis people of Alberta believe that through Federal and Provincial funding, the Métis Nation of Alberta has the capacity to finance a structure of twelve (12) constituencies with one (1) elected representative per constituency and one (1) provincially-elected President.

WHEREAS: The mandate of the Métis Nation of Alberta is:

- To be a representative voice on behalf of Métis people in Alberta;
- To provide Métis people the opportunity to participate in Government policy and decision-making processes; and, most importantly;
- To promote and facilitate the advancement of Métis people through the pursuit of self-reliance, self-determination and self-management.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT: The Métis Nation of Alberta bylaws be amended to reflect a representative structure of twelve (12) constituencies with one (1) elected representative per constituency and one (1) provincially-elected President; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: The changes to the representative structure shall not take effect until the September 2008 election, and that the existing representative structure and provincial council will remain in effect and maintain its authority until the election identifies the new provincial council; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: The following amendment(s) be made to the existing bylaws:

1. All references or occurrences of the word Region(s) in the Métis Nation Bylaws be replaced with Constituency(ies);
2. The words "Region" and "Zone" be omitted from the bylaws;
3. All references or occurrences of the word "Vice-President" be removed at the provincial and regional levels with the exception of Métis Local Councils; and
4. All references to or occurrences of "Six (6) Regions" be changed to Twelve (12) Constituencies; and,

FINALLY BE IT RESOLVED THAT: For greater certainty, and, notwithstanding any other provision(s) that may derogate or abrogate this resolution, the Métis Nation of Alberta shall implement these changes in September, 2008.

MOVED BY: Bill Loutitt

SECONDED BY: Melanie Omeniho

Ontario Métis Court Victory on Métis Harvesting Rights

Ontario Court Confirms Province-Wide Métis Harvesting Agreement is 'Legally Defensible' and 'Highly Principled'

MNA Press Release

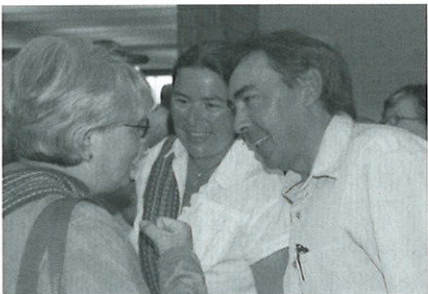
A recent Ontario court case upheld the province-wide Métis harvesting agreement the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) entered into with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR).

In July 2004, the MNR and MNO entered into an interim Métis harvesting agreement which recognized the MNO's Harvesters Card system and provided that valid MNO Harvesters Card holders, harvesting for food, would not be subject to enforcement procedures as long as conservation or safety was not at issue.

Subsequent to July 7th, the MNR unilaterally imposed an arbitrary line across the middle of the province and took the position that only Métis living north of its line could benefit from the accommodation agreement.

In *R. v. Laurin, Lemieux and Lemieux*, the MNO and three of its harvesters challenged the MNR's actions. Specifically, they challenged MNR's imposition of an arbitrary line.

In a decision released June 12, 2007, the Ontario Court of Justice agreed with the Métis harvesters and the MNO. The MNR could not unilaterally draw an arbitrary line based on its interpretation of the agreement. The MNO-MNR Agreement was meant to be province-wide. Based on the *Powley* decision on Métis harvesting rights and subsequent Aboriginal rights cases, the trial judge found that the MNO-MNR Harvesting Agreement "was not merely legally defensible but a highly principled response..." Based on the MNO-MNR Agreement, the trial judge dismissed the charges against all



three Métis harvesters.

Further, based on recent decisions from the Ontario Court of Appeal (*R. v. Shipman* and *R. v. Meshake*), the law in Ontario supports the position that Métis can harvest inside areas where they have a tradition of harvesting as well as outside areas where they have a tradition of harvesting through marriage or permission being granted through community acceptance processes.

"I want to congratulate the MNO and Métis lawyers Jason Madden and Jean Teillet, for their ongoing efforts in advancing the Métis Nation's hunt for justice. This decision is important because it affirms that province-wide accommodations are not only legally defensible, but a highly principled way to implement the *Powley* decision," said Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) President Audrey Poitras.

"This judgment supports recent proposals the MNA has put forward to Alberta and confirms that the best course of action for all involved is for governments and Métis to arrive at mutually agreeable accommodation agreements, rather than resorting to litigation which costs taxpayers money and erodes good will and cooperation between both parties," President Poitras said.



Above (from left to right): Gary Lipinski, Jean Teillet, Marc Laurin, Jason Madden, Roger Lemieux, and Tony Belcourt outside the Ontario Court of Justice in North Bay
Top Right: Louise Goulding (middle), President of the Moon River Métis Council (Mactier), and Gary Lipinski, Co-Chair of the Métis Nation of Ontario (right), talk to well wishers at the press conference following June 12th decision.



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Researching Our Ancestors

By Beatrice Demetrius and Monique Devlin

Like any object in nature, no two trees are exactly alike. Some grow straight, narrow, and tall, while others spread low over the ground and have branches interweaving over and under each other. Some trees are pruned into conforming shapes, while others are left to grow wild, their branches stretching towards the sun, their roots forming strange contortions which are incomprehensible to the casual observer.

Just like their natural counterparts, no two family trees are exactly alike either. Some are linear and easy to trace with each marriage resulting in corresponding births that in turn relate to new marriages and births. But most don't work that way. People travel, die, and remarry. Families relocate and records get lost. Pieces are hidden or buried for a variety of reasons, and over the years, mistakes are made.

That is why the task of researching a family tree in order to verify a connection to the Historic Métis Nation can be daunting.

It may seem hard to get started if you feel you don't have much information, but most people looking for their ancestors know their parents, grandparents and maybe their great-grandparents. They may know some dates of births or marriages and the location of some of these events. These are all excellent starting points for a search.

Most Métis families have been recorded throughout Canada in church records, government census, Hudson's Bay Contracts, Métis Scrip Records, as well as Community Books. Sometimes we think that because the church burned down, all the records were lost. In reality, in

most cases, that kind of information was sent to a diocese and was also recorded by the notaries living in the area who registered marriages,

births and deaths. Although many Métis children were born at home in remote areas, their births were still recorded.



Not only does the Genealogy Department offer free assistance researching family trees, it also holds a wealth of resources in books and other records such as letters, old newspaper clippings, and historical photos. Most of these records came from private donors. Over the years George and Edith Richardson (above) developed a close relationship with fellow Darwell resident Margaret Gariepy who asked them to help disperse her belongings after her passing in December 2006. Pictured above is Margaret's mother, Eliza, a pouch believed to have belonged to her grandfather, and the marriage certificate of Eliza and Charles Thebault (also spelt as Theobald), Margaret's parents. The Richardsons remembered Margaret as an intensely caring person who knit baby bonnets for premature babies in her spare time and loved to joke and laugh and considered her an "adopted" grandmother.

Reminder New and Existing Membership Applicants

It is your responsibility to keep your membership address and telephone contact information current.

Telephone: **780-455-2200**
1-866-678-7888
Facsimile: **780-452-6035**

Please contact our office with any changes as they occur.

Thank You!

Registrar and Staff of the Métis Identification Registry

There are many resources you can use to track your ancestors. The Métis Nation of Alberta's Genealogy Department is here to help. Over the past four years, the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) has provided **FREE** Genealogy Workshops across the

province as far north as Ft. Chipewyan. In November 2006, a Resource Centre was opened at the MNA head office, 11738 Kingsway Avenue, where you can come and do your research using the many collected and researched references.

We also have a computer to access the Internet where you can find resources on line. Our in-house Genealogist, Beatrice Demetrius, is available to help you in your search from Tuesday to Thursday, 1 pm - 3 pm.

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www.apeetogosan.com

MAP Out Your Past

By Monique Devlin

Ever wonder where your great grandfather was born?

Ever wonder what language he spoke, how many sisters he had, or where, exactly, he (and his family) was in 1885?

Maybe you were lucky enough to have a family member research your family tree, but want to know more than names and dates on a piece of paper, or maybe you have heard the stories from your grandparents, aunts and uncles but never had the chance to really look into the details of your family history yourself.

No matter what the motivation, if you are interested in doing some real digging into the



Dr. Frank Tough helped to explain how the online database could be used.

past, the recently launched Métis National Council Historical Online Database lets you explore historical documents and trace parts (if not

all) of your family's history from your own home.

The database allows you to browse or search through hundreds of high resolution copies of old census records, scrips and Manitoba Affidavits. As research continues, more documents will be added.

The initiative is a result of three years of extensive research by the Métis Archival Project (MAP) team, based at the University of Alberta Faculty of Native Studies, with help from student researchers sponsored by the Métis Nation of Alberta Labour Market Development Program and led by Dr. Frank Tough.

While the project has been ongoing in one form or another since 1999, May 2007 marked its official

unveiling at the University of Alberta. Representatives from provincial, federal and Métis governments gathered to learn more about the MAP initiative and how to use it.

"People have flown in and endured the pleasures of Air Canada, and Westjet (for this launch)," Dr. Tough joked. "One of the things we didn't let out is you didn't even have to come out. You could have just stayed at home and turned on your computer."

That is the beauty of MAP. No

matter where you are, as long as you have an internet connection, you too can explore the database. The MAP database includes hundreds of scanned historical documents, most of which were previously only available on microfilm or at Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa.

The program itself is very easy to use. You can search by name (first or last), date, region, or when and how the data was collected. There are tools included to start building a family tree and to learn more about the types of information collected

and its historical significance.

"Now that so much of this information has been collected and organized in a manner that is accessible, we can really start to put it to work," Audrey Poitras, President of the Métis Nation of Alberta said during the project unveiling.

If you want to check out the database for yourself, simply go to: <http://www.metisnation.ca/database/intro.html>.



The Métis Nation of Alberta *Genealogy Project*

The Métis Nation of Alberta would like to thank the following people for their generous donations to the Genealogy Project:

Glen & Leslie Brazeau
Alfred Berard
Ralph Cervo
Dion Clouthier
Tim Collins
Henri Forestier
Loretta Jobin
Shirley Koenig
Rogier & Lorette Leclercq
Donald Walter McCargar
Bob Phillips
Margery Pruden
Garry Rasmussen
George & Edith Richardson
Norma Spicer

If you have something of Metis historical value that you would like to donate to Metis Nation of Alberta Genealogy Project please contact us at 1-800-252-7553.

Thank You

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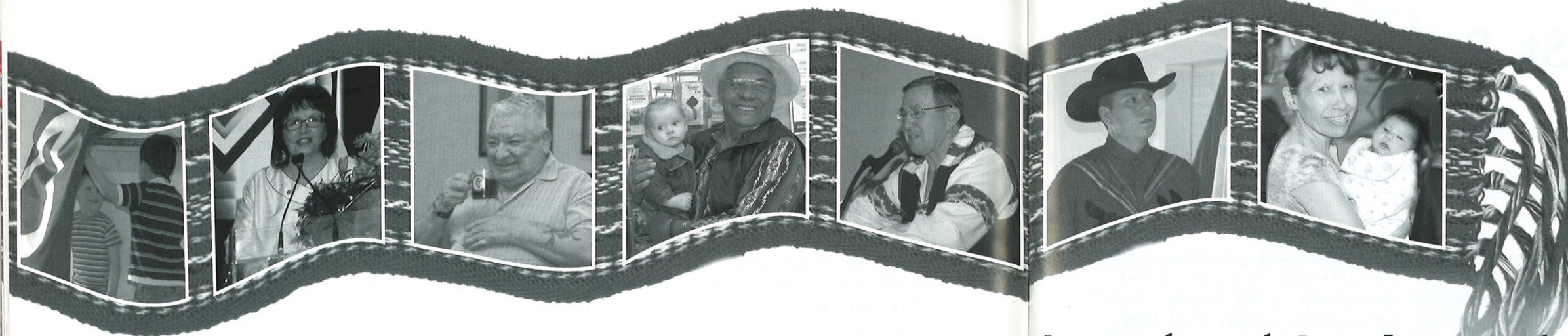
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*bring your musical instruments
don't forget your fiddle!*



Building the Métis Nation of Alberta

9th Annual Métis Entrepreneurial Leadership Awards

By Andrea Martin (with files from Monique Devlin)

On Friday, April 22, 2007, Métis Nation of Alberta Region III paid tribute to Métis entrepreneurs across Southern Alberta. Approximately 200 people gathered at the Coast Plaza Hotel in Calgary for the yearly awards banquet that celebrates Métis business owners.

The guest speaker for the evening was the federal Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Jim Prentice (via video message).

"The ongoing prominence of these awards, and the number of talented and successful entrepreneurs recognized over the years is a strong indication that the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and is prospering amongst the Métis people of Alberta," Prentice said. "The sheer variety of business initiatives that have been recognized over the past eight years are indicative of the depth of the imagination and strength of the Métis business community, and there is no doubt that this bodes well for future of Métis entrepreneurship in Alberta."

Master of ceremonies, Andy Popko, Vice-President Aboriginal Relations - EnCana, kept the event moving and did a fine job of entertaining the crowd.

A wide variety of talent was showcased. Brenda Blake and Dr. Neville Headley demonstrated the West Coast Swing, the MCFS Youth Dancers from Edmonton showed off

their jigging skills, Dorothy Walker sang the Métis Anthem and Faces of Our Nation, and Dean Malcolm with Les Jerome played the fiddle and guitar. Bill Baergen completed the

evening with his re-enactment of Louis Riel on trial, a performance that seemed to have a profound effect on most of the crowd.



Left: Apeetogosan Métis Development Corp was recognized for its contributions to MNA Region III
Top Right: MNA Region III President, Marlene Lanz, and Vice President Joe Chodzicki stand with Female Entrepreneurial Leader, Minnie Brautegam
Bottom Right: MNA Region III President, Marlene Lanz, presents Rob Harding of Parks Canada with the award of Recognition of Support and Service to the Métis Community



Photos by Monique Devlin



Award Recipients

Male Entrepreneurial Leader: Ken Fagnan, Fagnan's Furnace Services Ltd., Calgary

Female Entrepreneurial Leader: Minnie Brautegam, Mountain View Campground, Calgary

Youth Entrepreneurial Leader: Shane Landstrom, Mantilla Productions Inc., Calgary

Entrepreneurial Recognition Awards:

- Tyler Delorme, Highland Automotive Parts and Service Inc., Calgary
- Louise Crane, L Crane Consulting, Calgary
- Andrea Louise-Martyn, KLM Endeavors, Calgary
- Paul Bercier, Dreamcatcher Consulting, Calgary
- Gil Howell, President, Howell Interquip Ltd. and Cypher West Ltd.

Recognition of Success in the Corporate World: Lane Wells, Community and External Affairs, BP Canada

Recognition of Contribution to the Métis Nation of Alberta Region III: Apeetogosan Métis Development Corp.

Recognition of Support and Service to the Métis Community: Parks Canada

Annual Assembly in St. Paul

By Charity Borg

With its deep Métis history, beautiful surroundings, and hospitable nature (they even built the world's first UFO landing pad, just in case), St. Paul Alberta will be welcoming all members of the Métis Nation of Alberta for its 79th Annual Assembly August 16-19.

Attendees can look forward to a golf tournament, dance, trade fair and a special career conference for youth aged 15 - 29. The Assembly is an event worth bringing the whole family to.

"We very, very much encourage our members to come because then we can have our strong discussions on what is happening with our harvesting," said Karen Collins, president of Region 2. "There's going to be lots of issues, and people should be excited about our membership activities. And, of course, we really

want families to bring their youth so the youth can participate at the youth conference as well. They're our future leaders; they might as well get into the swing of things now."

The assembly starts with a golf tournament on Thursday and a meet and greet that evening. On Friday, there will be member reports during the day followed by a jamboree that evening. Meetings will continue Saturday, and will be topped off with a banquet and dance on Saturday night and Sunday will be a wrap-up day. The St. Paul Farmer's Market will be held in conjunction with the assembly on the Saturday as well. All activities will be within walking distance from one another.

This is not the first time the Annual Assembly has been held in St. Paul. The last assembly St. Paul hosted was in the late 80s.

"In the past we know assemblies

have been held in Bonnyville and we were kind of wanting to move them around a bit and we had some options. We did at the end of the day pick St. Paul; we have an active local there," said Collins.

The Annual Assembly is an opportunity for the Métis membership to get together and focus on the workings of the Métis Nation of Alberta.

"On the business end of things they get all of the reports, they get all the updates. It's an opportunity to pose questions to their leadership," said Collins.

There are several places to stay while in St. Paul including seven hotels and several surrounding campgrounds. There's even a campground near the facilities where the assembly is taking place. St. Paul has all the amenities that Edmonton has.

The Scholarship and Bursary Handbook



for Métis Students

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

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

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

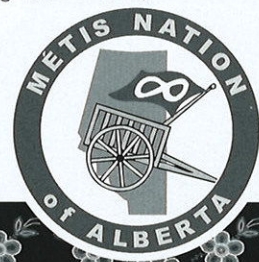
(780) 455-2200 or

Toll free (Alberta only)

1 - (800) 252-7553

Download your copy from

www.albertametis.com/awards.aspx



79th Annual General Assembly

August 16 - 19, Recreation Centre, St. Paul de Métis (St. Paul), Alberta

If you wish to register for the Trade/Craft Show, please do so by calling the MNA Head Office or the Region 2 Office or by going online to www.albertametis.com.

To sign up for the Jamboree call Roy at the Region 2 office.

For more information on the youth conference, please visit www.albertametis.com and look under "Coming Events" or call Susan at 780.826.7483.

For accommodations and/or camping facilities visit: www.town.stpaul.ab.ca or call the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce at 780.645.6800.

August 16, 2007

Golf Tournament
Welcome Reception

August 17, 2007

Tradeshow and Craft Fair
Registration
Reports
Youth Conference
Elders' Lounge
Workshops
Barbeque
Jamboree

August 18, 2007

Tradeshow and Craft Fair
Registration
Opening Ceremonies
Annual General Meeting
Youth Conference
Elders' Lounge
Banquet and Dance

August 19, 2007

Tradeshow and Craft Fair
Registration
Annual General Meeting
Youth Conference
Elders' Lounge
Closing Ceremonies



For further information please contact the Métis Nation of Alberta Provincial Office at 780.455.2200 or 1.800.252.7553. Or contact MNA Region 2 Office at 780.826.7483.

The MNA Tobacco Reduction Project

By Monique Devlin

Peer pressure can be a very dangerous thing. As young people try desperately to fit in with their peers they may do things that they know are dangerous or risky.

One of the most common activities that falls under this scope is smoking. Even though there are anti-smoking messages on the TV and the radio, in schools and even on the cigarette packages themselves, 21% of students in Grades 5-9 have reported trying some type of tobacco product (usually cigarettes).

The Tobacco Reduction Project was a Métis Nation of Alberta Initiative, funded by the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC), which strived to lower those statistics by allowing students to teach their peers about the dangers of recreational tobacco use. Positive peer pressure, in a way.

"When they were in the classroom, doing the presentation all the other kids were quiet, listening and learning" Tobacco Reduction coordinator Amanda L'Hirondelle said about the project.

L'Hirondelle worked with students in Grades 4-6 at Prince Charles Elementary School and Grades 7-9 students from the Rights of Passage School (both in Edmonton) to come up with presentation material such as display boards and interactive games to help teach their fellow students about why smoking is so bad.

"We had students who are smokers and those who are not doing the presentations so that we would get both sides of the story," L'Hirondelle said.

Mikaela Kumar, who was one of the "smoker" presenters, said that

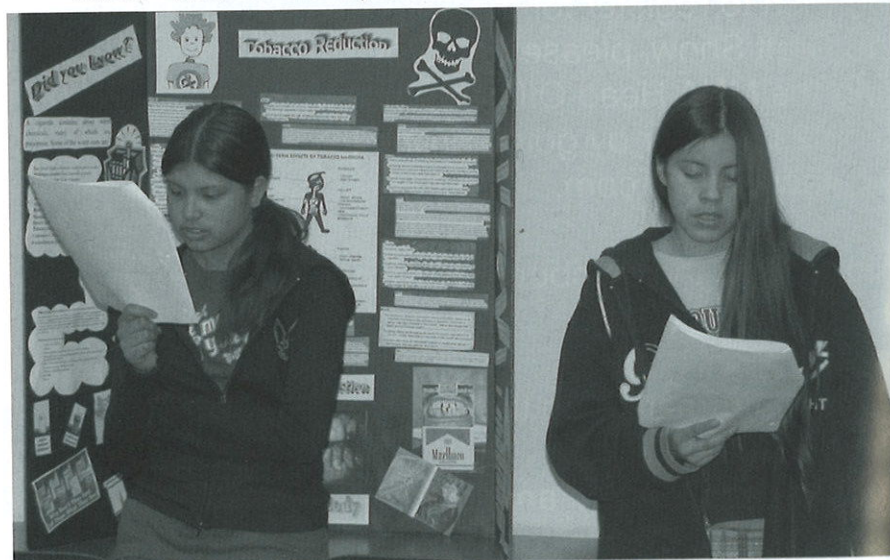
although she has tried to quit before, it was difficult because of a lack of support from her friends.

"We kind of tried a couple of times [to quit]," she said. "But it didn't work out because all of the people we hang out with are smokers."

Kumar went on to say that

maybe if more people had pressured her not to smoke, and she had better understood the harmful effects of tobacco, she probably would not have started in the first place.

There are plans to continue and expand on the project during the next school year.



Top: Mikaela Kumar (left) and Janell Adams (right) talk to their classmates about the dangers of smoking.

Bottom: Fran Hyndman, MNA Tripartite Manager, presents a Certificate of Completion of the Tobacco Reduction Project to student Nolan Shoane.

Métis Focus on Health Symposium

By Charity Borg

Keeping Métis health in check was the purpose behind the Métis Health Symposium. According to those who attended the symposium held in Edmonton on Feb. 26-27, rural and urban Métis have different sets of needs that are not being met.

Representatives from various Métis organizations, healthcare providers, and different levels of government gathered at Metis Settlements General Council to discuss what areas could use improvement. Urban Métis identified communication, identification, health assessments, and gaps in health services as main concerns. Rural Métis cited support, lack of dialysis services, chronic disease management, and lack of healthcare coverage to be issues.

In the area of communication, it was noted that there was a need to improve and coordinate dialogue

between the health region and Métis groups. Identifying individuals as Métis on health records would help increase the understanding of the health needs and service usage of Métis people. Also, health assessments would give health care providers a better understanding of health statistics, data and research.

It was also found that there needs to be better support (such as transportation) for people coming to Edmonton for services and then after-care plans for when the patient returns home. There also needs to be renal dialysis services available for rural patients because Edmonton is too far to travel for many people.

There needs to be more Métis-specific chronic disease management programs for healthy weights, asthma, diabetes, and arthritis. Finally, there needs to be better healthcare coverage for vulnerable Métis populations,

particularly those struggling with access, inability to pay upfront for medications, and lack of coverage for glasses, dental care, transportation, and Alberta Health Care Premiums.

At the symposium, groups addressed how these problems would be tackled. Organizations partnered together so these issues would not be such a challenge for just one group to handle. For addressing the lack of resources issue Capital Health, Alberta Health and Wellness and Urban Métis organizations have teamed up to gather information from community members in order to deliver better information to Métis populations.

All those in attendance left the symposium with a clearer vision of some of the challenges Albertan Métis are facing, and each respective organization involved is working on solutions to address the issues.

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Get Ahead of the Future at MacEwan

By Charity Borg

The Métis Nation of Alberta Labour Market Development (LMD) and MacEwan School of Business have partnered, offering an exciting new opportunity to Métis interested in furthering their careers.

The Management Studies program is a 12 month diploma program that connects students to the real business world rather than to the theoretical business world. Studies revolve around real-world cases and the curriculum is always being updated to keep up with the changing times.

"It is about time we get our Métis people out of entry level positions and into the role of leaders and management within corporations and organizations. Education is a key to that success," said Lorne Gladue, LMD Director. "This partnership with MacEwan is a step in that direction and we look forward to developing more opportunities with the college for our Métis people."

The financial burden of education is a deterrent for many Métis who are interested in pursuing post-secondary education. There is funding available to help cover the cost of tuition, books, supplies, and a training allowance. All Métis applications for funding will be processed through Métis Employment Services once they have been accepted into the program and funding will be determined on a per case basis.

"We want to ease some of the challenges people face while earning an education," said Lorne. "Being able to offer funding for students will help greatly reduce the amount of debt some of them would face if they had to go the route of student loans."

Management Studies focuses on the fundamentals for running a successful business such as communications, accounting, and marketing. There are courses in human resources, strategic management, and business law.

To help make the transition from either the workforce or high school, there is a preparatory term that starts in July prior to the September 24 start date. This term will prepare students for success in the Management Studies program.

Near the end of the course, there is a three week field placement that helps students get hands-on experience and apply their newly learned knowledge; these field placements are a great networking opportunity for getting a foot in the door. For students who want to continue their studies, credits earned in management studies can be transferred to other post-

secondary institutions.

Graduates of the Management Studies diploma have gone on to a variety of careers in the fields of finance, accounting, and entrepreneurship. They have also entered careers in management, hospitality, not-for-profit administration, and there are already several Management Studies graduates working for the Métis Nation of Alberta.

"With education the possibilities are infinite," said Lorne. "Métis have always been leaders, not followers. This is a great way to be a leader in the business world as well."

MacEwan is accepting applications for Management Studies. For more information contact the MacEwan School of Business at 780-497-5241 or Métis Employment Services at 1-888-486-3847.



The Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) president Audrey Poitras and MacEwan School of Business Dean, Elsie Elford, signed a Memorandum of Understanding during the morning of July 3, 2007, entering a partnership to improve educational opportunities for Métis people.

Pictured are: Karen MacKenzie (instructor), Lorne Glaude (MNA LMD Director), Audrey Poitras (President of MNA) Elsie Elford (Dean of MacEwan School of Business) and Joan Patrick (Management Studies Coordinator).

Training Opportunities for Métis Individuals

The Labour Market Development Unit offers custom designed training programs in high demand occupations. These programs provide the skills and certification needed to build a stable high paying career in the future job market. Get ahead of your future with one of these exciting opportunities.

Tuition, fees, books and income support will be provided to Métis clients meeting program criteria.

Métis Criminal Justice Program

A 32 week certificate in criminal justice specifically for Métis learners, will include physical conditioning, criminal justice courses and an 80 hour practicum with a police department. Starting in September at Lethbridge College

Power Engineering Program

For Fourth Class Power Engineers who want to advance in their career by gaining Third Class certification. The course includes 28 weeks of classroom and lab instruction as well as a 12 week practicum for hands on experience. Starting in September at NAIT.

Management Studies

Become a Métis business leader of tomorrow with a Management Studies diploma. Work in financial services, accounting, administration, marketing, hospitality or entrepreneurship with this one year program. Starting in September at the MacEwan School of Business.

Heavy Equipment Operator Training

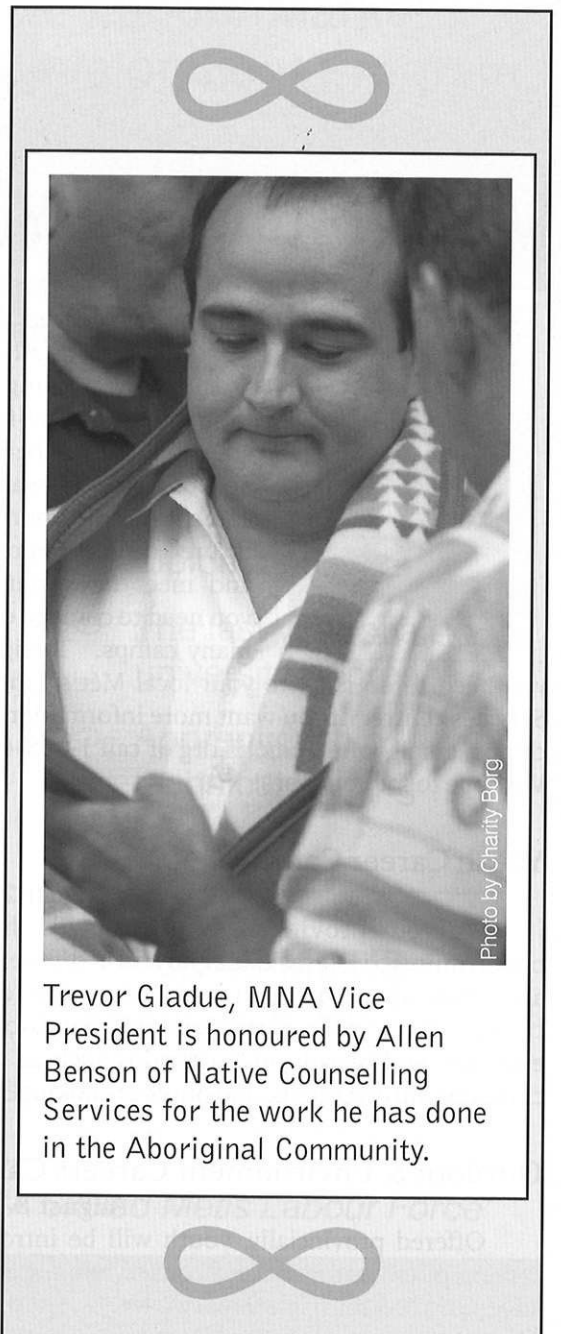
This twelve week program provides training on 3 pieces of Heavy Equipment including Track hoe, Dozer, Grader, Loader, Backhoe or Bobcat. Continuous intake delivered in Cowley, Alberta.

Métis Family Dayhome Program

Start your own home based business as a family day home provider. Earn a good income while raising your own children. Training, licensing, and start up support provided. The training starts in fall 2007 in Grande Prairie, Red Deer and Slave Lake.

Professional Driver Certificate

This 17 week program will lead to a Class One license with a Professional Driver Endorsement. The course includes classroom and in-cab training, a practicum and 15 weeks of paid work experience. Starting in September in Calgary, Edmonton, and Lethbridge.



Trevor Gladue, MNA Vice President is honoured by Allen Benson of Native Counselling Services for the work he has done in the Aboriginal Community.

To find out more contact Métis Employment Services at 1-888-48-Métis (1-888-486-3847).

Métis Summer Youth Programs



By Christie Ladouceur

This summer, the Métis Nation of Alberta has many exciting summer camp opportunities for Métis youth. If you are between the ages of 15 and 29, want to have some fun, try your hand at future career opportunities, and meet new friends, then you need to come to one of our many camps. To sign up, all you need to do is go to your local Métis Employment Services centre. If you want more information on these camps, email youth@metis.org or call 1-888-48METIS. We hope to see you there!

Youth Career Camp

August 2-7, 2007

Offered provincially, youth will have the opportunity to visit major employers in different sectors and learn about occupations. During this one week camp, youth will participate in hands-on career exposure and recreational activities such as canoeing, climbing, survival skills, and outdoor cooking.

Outdoor & Environment Careers Camp

August 8-23, 2007

Offered provincially, youth will be introduced to careers in environment and conservation sciences and adventure eco-tourism. Over two weeks, youth will earn

credits, canoe and wilderness certification, first aid certification, learn about mapping, aerial photos, survival skills, and wilderness excursion.

Fire Cadets

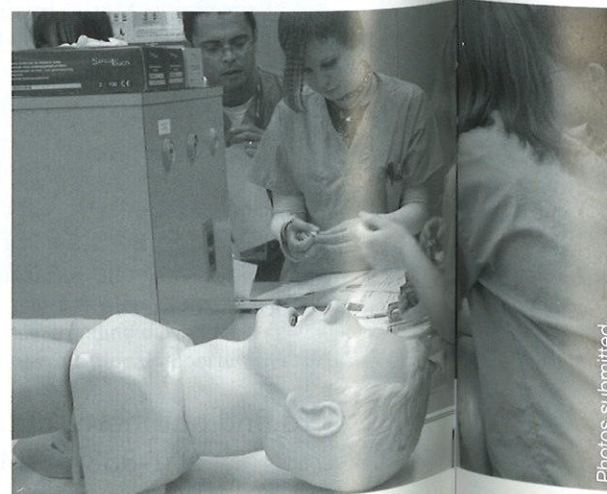
August 20-24, 2007

Cadets will be given real fire fighter training in areas such as vehicle extrication, fire hose usage, self-contained breathing apparatus, search and rescue, and fire extinguishing. Cadets will also experience an actual 'hot fire' in a safe, controlled environment.

Scrubs

July 16-20 & July 30 - Aug 3, 2007

This is an exciting hands-on opportunity to learn about careers in health services. Over one week, youth will participate in job shadowing, activities, projects, tours, and talks focusing on health careers such as dental health, diagnostic imaging, health records, nursing, pharmacy, physicians, rehabilitation services, respiratory therapy, medical lab technology, and support staff.



Emergency Medical Services Boot Camp

July 23-27, 2007

Do you know how to help a suddenly ill or injured person until emergency medical services arrive? Youth will find out by learning vital first aid skills from experts in the field.

Movie Making: Lights, Camera, Action!

July 16-27, 2007

Youth can become the next Steven Spielberg by learning the basics of story-telling. They will then learn how to bring a story to life on film by developing their skills in writing, acting, directing and using equipment in the right way.

Learn to Build Like a Pro

July 16-20, 2007

You can experience the housing boom first-hand and find out what it takes to build a house. Youth will learn from experts and experience the tasks home builders go through to complete their projects.

Junior Forest Rangers

July-August, 2007

This program provides work experience to students interested in the forest industry. Youth will be provided the opportunity to learn through educational tours and work experience such as: compass work and mapping systems, outdoor skills, wildfire operations, and prevention and issues facing forest management.



Métis Nation of Alberta Labour Market Development Program

Provides tuition, fees, books and income support for Métis students entering Post Secondary programs that are:

- ∞ Less than 52 weeks in length
- ∞ A 2-year college diploma program
- ∞ The last year of a university degree
- ∞ Apprenticeship technical training

Call Métis Employment Services at
1-888-48-METIS
(1-888-486-3847)
to find out more about Post
Secondary support for Métis students.
Call now as deadlines apply.

"A Skilled Métis Labour Force"

Region 5 Annual General Meeting

By Monique Devlin

While not advertised as such, it was hard to deny the focus of Region 5's annual meeting on April 14 was the new building the meeting was being held in.

With freshly painted walls and a not quite lived in yet feeling, the meeting was a chance for members of Region 5 to connect with each other and inspect the newly purchased office building in Slave Lake.

Bev New, Region 5 President, explained that ever-increasing rental costs at their old location made buying a building a viable option instead of continuing to pay rent.

While the building had to undergo extensive renovations for it to become usable as an office space, it now hosts offices for Region 5 staff, an office for the Region's Apeetogosan representative (whom they share with Region 6), as well as space for the new Slave Lake Métis Employment Services offices.

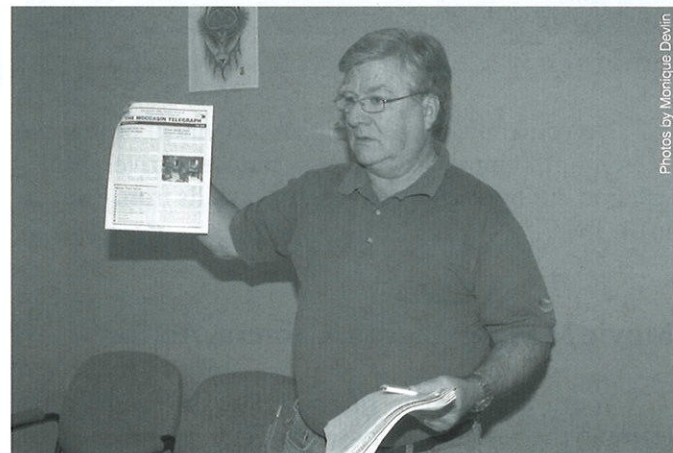
After New provided updates on the state of Region 5, George Vass, General Manager of Apeetogosan

offered advice to prospective entrepreneurs and later met with several potential clients.

"We have a lot of young people who come to us, and the banks won't touch them, but in a year or two years the banks want them. Most of our clients are now going to the banks, which is exciting, even though I am losing clients – that is the whole purpose of what Apeetogosan was made for, was to

help people become bankable."

Other presenters included Florence Gladue who spoke about some of the presentations she has made with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder prevention, John Ritchie, who gave an update on the happenings at Métis Crossing and Cecil Bellrose, Minister of Métis Rights who gave an update on harvesting negotiations.



Top Left: Bev New, Region 5 President shows off the recently purchased building.
Top Right: George Vass explains how Apeetogosan can offer help to those trying to start a business.
Bottom: The crowd was small but enthusiastic at the Region 5 Annual General Meeting.

Go Your Own Way

Métis Youth and Elders Conference

By Charity Borg

While growing up, they just made-do, explained elders in the storytelling workshop at the Métis Youth and Elders Conference in Calgary. One elder even reminisced about the way her mother prepared gopher as it was the only food source.

Youths listened intently to stories told by their elders during the Youth and Elder Conference held June 7-10.

It was not all about story telling, it was a sharing of ideas between generations. Constable Cindy Provost, an Aboriginal police officer, told her story during the Friday lunch break about why it was important to stay away from alcohol.

"I remember the smell of alcohol even before I knew what it was," said Provost. "I never had a good image of what cops were. I grew up not having a trust for cops."

Provost emphasized while growing up on a Blackfoot/Peigan reserve near Calgary that the police were the bad guys, always taking her family away from her. Her parents were into alcohol and the addiction to the substance put a strain on her family. Every Friday night was a party at her home which started out as laughing which led to crying, which led to fighting, all before she even started elementary school.

"School was a safe place. Just because some of that stuff happens at home does not mean you need to go down that path," said Provost. "But it's easy to let those negative words touch you."

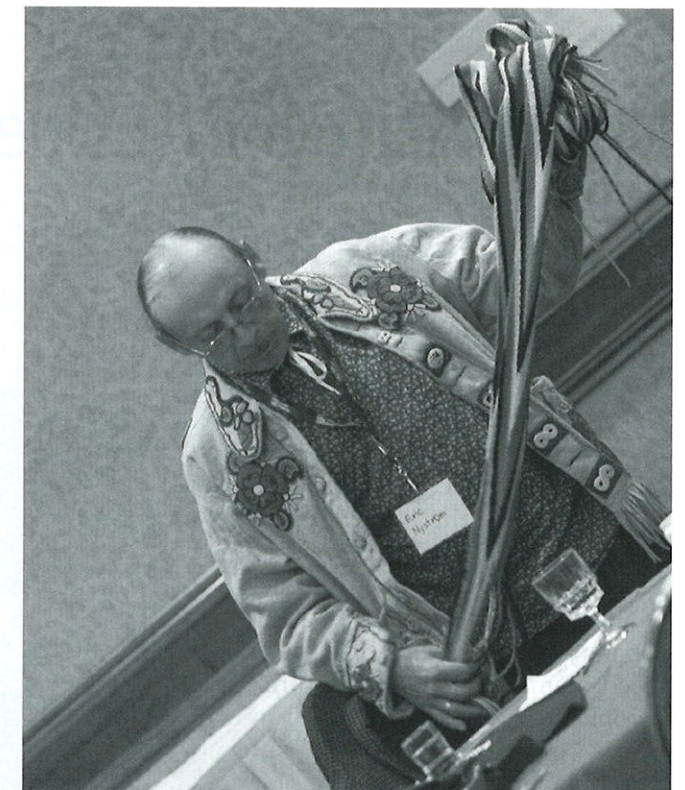
Provost emphasized that elders are who helped her lead a good life.

"They have lived their lives to make our lives better," she said.

Youth had the opportunity to learn their history from the colourful speaker Eric Nystrom who described why the Métis were pivotal to the fur trade in Alberta. Nystrom described why pemmican and bannock were important to the fur trade. Mostly it was because English food was perishable.

"Pemmican – it lasted indefinitely," he said. "That little handful of pemmican swells in the belly."

Nystrom went on to explain that bannock as it is known today is not the same bannock as it was 300



Above: Eric Nystrom explains the many uses of the Métis sash
Below: Elder Lloyd Norris describes his life experiences from a Métis perspective.



years ago. It was made from cattails instead of wheat. Current bannock is more Scottish because of the use of wheat flour. He also described the origins of the Métis sash. The sash had many uses such as a brace.

In addition to the Elder's sharing of stories, four workshops focused on preparing the young people for the workforce. Youth could learn about résumé writing, job searching, and finding the right career.

Métis Centre of Excellence in the Works

By Monique Devlin

MNA President Audrey Poitras signed a Memorandum of Understanding with University of Alberta Deputy Provost, Art Quinney, on behalf of the Governors of the U of A, to work in partnership developing a Métis Centre of Excellence designed to contribute to the education and training needs of Métis Albertans.

The Métis Centre of Excellence will provide the Métis Nation with the capacity to provide institutional mechanisms and infrastructure to become involved more effectively in all levels of education and skills development for the Alberta Métis community.



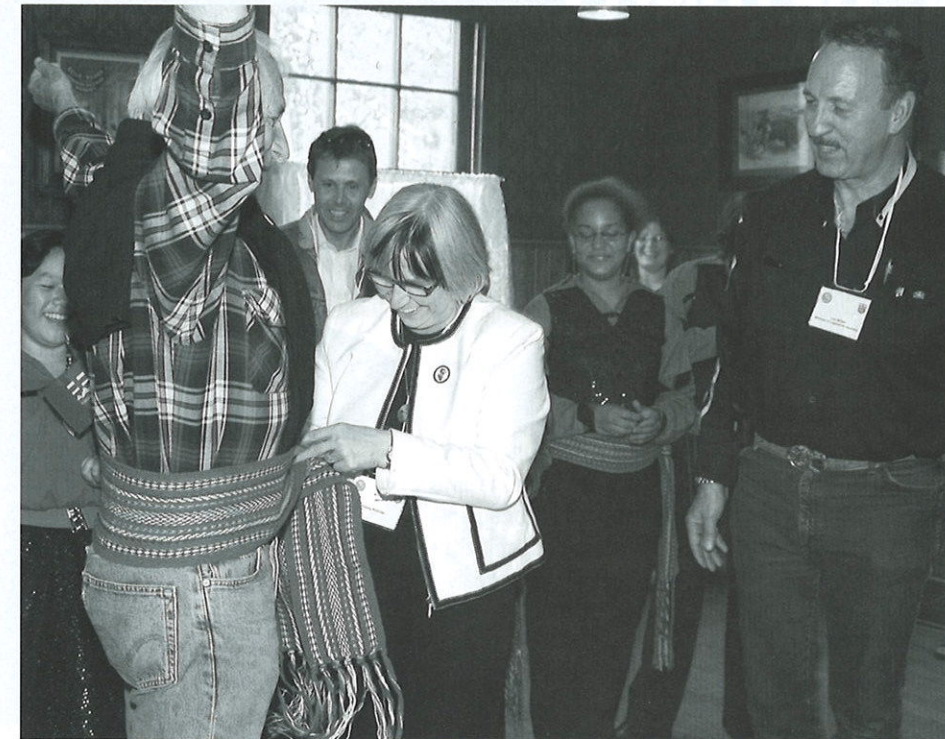
Native Seniors Centre 20th Anniversary

MNA President Audrey Poitras presents Native Seniors Centre President Jack White and Executive Director Anne Cardinal with a plaque celebrating their 20 year anniversary.

The Native Seniors Centre began as Métis Women's Council of Edmonton, based on a vision of wellness and fostering a sense of community among Aboriginal seniors in Edmonton. Today the Centre is a welcoming place for Elders who can drop in and participate in some of the many programs available or learn about the services available for Aboriginal seniors from the different levels of government.

Alberta Montana Bilateral Advisory Committee Meeting

By Monique Devlin



Montana Lt. Governor John Bohlinger was presented with a sash from MNA President Audrey Poitras during an Alberta Montana Bilateral Advisory Committee meeting in Edmonton Alberta. The meeting is held once a year, alternating between Alberta and Montana and allows the Governments each to meet and discuss common concerns and partnerships.

The MNA would like to thank Minister Guy Boutilier for the opportunity to promote Métis history and culture.

This year, the Métis Child and Family Services Jiggers were on hand to provide entertainment for the event.

Update your Membership Files

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

- Historical proof of Métis heritage (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

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www.albertametis.com



YOUR OPPORTUNITY

Starts Here!

Marketing YOUR Aboriginal Tourism Experience

Who's traveling in Alberta these days? Of the almost \$3 billion generated by the Alberta tourism industry in 2004, Alberta, BC and Saskatchewan residents accounted for 59% or \$2.3 billion of the total tourism revenue for the year. Travel Alberta can help you reach this important Western market through our Aboriginal marketing opportunities.

The Aboriginal experience presents a whole new frontier for tourists to explore. Encouraging Albertans to vacation at home will grow the Aboriginal tourism product base and increase revenues and pride within

First Nation and Métis communities. Collective Aboriginal marketing strategies benefits all partners and players – from First Nations and Métis communities and operators to the Alberta economy and tourism industry as a whole.

The Basic Building Blocks

How do we tell the world about the wealth of opportunities that exist right on our very doorstep? We have built a plan around the concept of 'bundling' First Nations and Métis experiences to maximize exposure for eager travelers. Bundling acknowledges the historical significance of sacred

bundles carried by Aboriginal peoples, and offers tourists a cohesive group of experiences using traditional methods of storytelling.

What is a bundle? A bundle is a collection of Aboriginal tourism experiences or products within a geographic region of our province. We currently have unveiled 10 bundles in the 2006 season based on geographic and cultural boundaries. For more detailed information on these bundles go to www.AlbertaAboriginalTourism.com.

Working for YOU

A council has been established to guide the growth of the Aboriginal tourism industry and provide direction with respect to Aboriginal tourism development, marketing and capacity building issues. Our 2005 – 2010 marketing plan outlines the need to aggressively promote destination awareness in all primary markets and enhance integrated support services to Aboriginal tourism operators.

Travel Alberta In-Province can help you understand your customers' travel and vacation needs, their habits and their preferences. We will work shoulder-to-shoulder with you to build market readiness and marketing opportunities. The single most effective way to maximize the results of marketing is to know your customer at least as well as you know your product. **What will motivate your customers? What pushes their buttons? What makes them single your product out from thousands of others and say 'look at this'!** We will help you answer these questions and grow your business.

Moving Forward in 2007

We will expand our current market-ready Aboriginal experiences and products from 74 upwards to 100 by:

- Communicating the opportunities to Aboriginal peoples across Alberta.

- Continuing to hold stakeholder gatherings around the province.

We will increase tourism industry awareness of existing Aboriginal tourism experiences and products in Alberta by:

- Distributing Bundle brochures to local Visitor Information Centres and Chambers of Commerce around the province.
- Continuing on-going communication with local District Marketing Organizations and Tourism Destination Regions.
- Posting program information on www.Industry.TravelAlberta.com

We will increase marketing awareness of available Aboriginal tourism experiences and products in Alberta and, moving forward, into British Columbia and Saskatchewan by:

- Distributing new Bundle brochures to local Visitor Information Centres and Chambers of Commerce around the provinces.
- Expanding our website www.AlbertaAboriginalTourism.com
- Continuing media promotion through the summer.
- Creating an E-mail newsletter.
- Providing media advertising, including:
 - Aboriginal tourism promotion in major & regional newspapers
 - Billboards

Are you ready to embrace this dynamic tourism niche? Join us as we promote Alberta Aboriginal tourism and

help your Aboriginal experience reach travelers across Western Canada.

For more information contact:

Don Wilson
Ph: 780.732.1630
Email: Don.Wilson@TravelAlberta.com
or
Kathryn Elzinga
Ph: 780.732.1631
Email: Kathryn.Elzinga@TravelAlberta.com

Please note: Our resources are only available to assist you in marketing your tourism programs and products. We can assist you in planning your marketing campaigns. We do not have or provide grants. We do not handle product development or feasibility studies.

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Alberta
CANADA





Lethbridge Annual General Meeting

By Monique Devlin

Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) citizens in southern Alberta met in Lethbridge this spring to celebrate the Local's AGM.

Intermixed with Local information were updates on the harvesting situation and workshops. The enjoyable day was also filled with some fine musical entertainment and excellent food.

The highlight of the meeting was guest speaker Jean Teillet, who was the lead legal counsel during the

ground breaking *Powley* case, and continues to work as an advocate for Métis rights across Canada, including our own harvesting issues here in Alberta.

She discussed her family's history (her grandfather was Louis Riel's little brother) and the state of the recognition of Métis rights across the country and how we fit into the Canada of today.

"I do not accept that Aboriginal people's place in this country is as victims or as poor impoverished

people waiting for a hand-out. That is not their role," she said. "[Métis people] are all taxpayers in this country...we are here as independent people and people that contribute and have contributed greatly to this country."

The day was finished off by a rousing performance by Wally Garioch, who performed his rendition of Louis Riel's address to the jury.

Making Musicians

By Charity Borg

Usually, after a long day of flying sparks and the buzzing noise, a welder will put down his soldering iron and take a break.

That is usually what Lorne Todd does, but sometimes he likes to create works of art to celebrate his Métis heritage. For the last 10 years, Todd has welded Métis statues in his spare time.

"I make guitar players – I make the band," said Todd. "The art side is a hobby."

At the Hivernant Rendezvous Spring Fling on April 14 in Big Valley, Todd had a fiddle playing Métis musician made from horseshoes and other small pieces of metal. The reason for taking up such a hobby is simple, according to his wife Barb.

"I made him do it," she joked.

Todd, from Donalda, welds the Métis musicians as a donation for fundraisers such as the Spring Fling. His art goes beyond making musicians. He has also welded together carts, candle holders, and lamps. Considering the statues stand less than a foot high they are delicate to put together.

"You only have one chance with them," said Todd.



Photo by Charity Borg

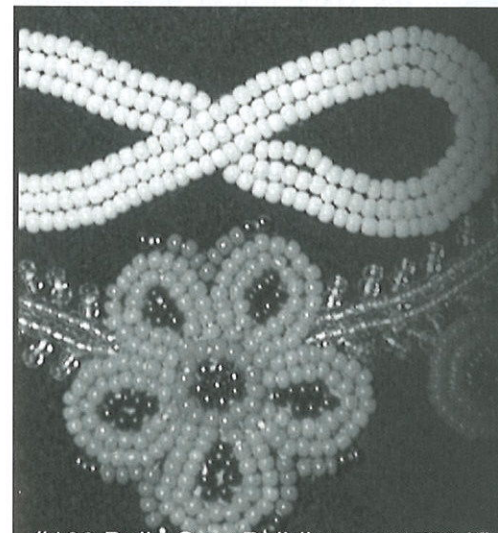
Corrections

In the Spring 2007

Edition of Otipemisiwak,

Page 22: The person presenting the information to the Elders is not Florence Senecal but is Joyce Harris from the Bonnyville Indian and Métis Rehabilitation Centre.

Page 11: The person posing with the deer is Susan Desjarlais.



Update Your Métis Nation of Alberta

MEMBERSHIP

New Toll-Free Numbers

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Top: Heavy Equipment Operator Jennifer Simms (right) talks to Chris Jones, CEO of Albion Sands Energy, the company she started working for the next day.

Bottom: Audrey Poitras, president of the MNA gives Chris Jones, CEO of Albion Sands Energy a framed picture in recognition to the contributions Albion has made to the LMD program.

Industry Supports MNA Labour Market Development Initiatives

By Monique Devlin

Industry officials and Métis community leaders from Local 1935 gathered in support of the Métis Nation of Alberta's (MNA) Labour Market Development program (LMD) June 13, 2007 in Fort McMurray. The event, with 100 people in attendance, was an awards banquet held in conjunction with the program's annual conference and was sponsored by Devon Canada, Encana, Keyano College, North American Oil Sands, Syncrude and Trans Canada Pipelines.

"I think it's wonderful that these organizations are taking such an active interest in our LMD program," MNA President Audrey Poitras said. "We have always believed that industry can take an active role in encouraging and helping develop the Aboriginal labour force by becoming committed partners and directing appropriate initiatives and resources to this process."

The highlight of the evening was when three former LMD clients spoke to the crowd about how the MNA helped them pursue their education and training goals: Armie Tremblay, a second year Millwright apprentice, Michael Jakeman, a law graduate who recently opened his own law practice in Fort McMurray, and Jennifer Simms, who completed the program for heavy equipment operators and recently accepted a job at Albion Sands Energy (the same company employing Tremblay).

"Tomorrow everything should be signed and completed and I will officially be a part of the team at Albion Sands as a heavy equipment operator," Simms said. "And I owe it all to the many people in this room. I can't thank you enough."

Simms specifically thanked Keyano

College, the MNA and Albion Sands for supporting the co-op program she took part in.

The MNA Director of Labour Market Development, Lorne Gladue, said he wanted to "express sincere thanks to the Board of Local 1935 and their President Bill Louttit for the welcoming barbeque and overall general support of the LMD program in the Wood Buffalo region."

A special thank you was also given to Albion Sands for covering the gas costs of the Coureur De Bois, the Mobile Metis Employment Services unit that tours the province helping provide employment services to remote locations. Albion Sands Energy is the joint venture company that operates the Muskeg River Mine on behalf of Athabasca Oil Sands Project owners Shell Canada, Chevron Canada, and Western Oil Sands.

"In February Shell was approached by the MNA to support their mobile Métis Employment Services Unit," Chris Jones Chief Operating Manager of Albion Sands Energy said. "Shell graciously accepted the opportunity to support this initiative by donating Shell gas coupons in the amount of \$1500 a month for a one year period."

The LMD program's focus is developing and implementing labour market strategies for Métis in Alberta and in addressing the increasingly acute labour market shortages in many sectors of our economy across the province.



Top: Armie Tremblay (left), a second year Millwright apprentice with Albion Sands and Michael Jakeman (right), a law graduate who recently opened his own law practice in Fort McMurray stand with MNA President Audrey Poitras (centre).

Middle: Nicely Put Together rocked the banquet with their blend of country, rock and fiddle music.

Partnership for a Stronger IT Future

Alberta Government, Métis, and First Nations Sign Unique Agreement with IBM Canada

By Monique Devlin

A new agreement offering Information Technology (IT) leadership to First Nations and Métis people in Alberta will create opportunities to increase their participation in the IT economy through employment, education and training, small business assistance and investment.

The agreement, signed by the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA), Loon River First Nation, Enoch Cree First Nation, Fort McKay First Nation, Treaty 7 Management Corporation, and the Elizabeth, Fishing Lake and Peavine Métis settlements, marks the first time IBM has entered into a partnership directly with First Nations and Métis people. The Alberta government facilitated the agreement and is a signatory.

"This partnership will help the Métis community move one step closer to jobs and careers in industry, and enhanced capacity with information technology," MNA President Audrey Poitras said about the new agreement.

The umbrella agreement allows for future agreements in specific areas: increasing IBM employment of First Nations and Métis people; developing IT skills through education and training; developing small business and investment; leveraging IBM's best practices in human resources; using technology to support better health outcomes in communities; and overcoming barriers to participation in technology, including rural and remote locations.

"IBM is committed to creating more opportunities for Aboriginal people within IBM, throughout the technology sector, and in the broader Canadian economy," said Dan Fortin, president of IBM

Canada. "The agreement we have signed today opens the door for us to work in partnership with the Alberta government, Métis and First Nations communities to deliver education, training and programs.



MNA President Audrey Poitras stands with Dan Fortin, president of IBM Canada after signing an agreement that will see IBM partner with Alberta Aboriginal organizations to develop an increased Aboriginal presence in the IT industry.



Otipemisiwak

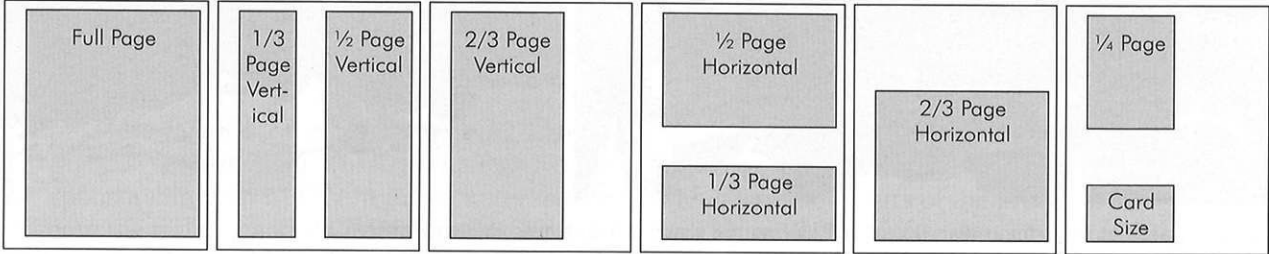
The Voice of the Métis Nation in Alberta

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.

ADVERTISING DIMENSIONS & RATES

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

	AD DIMENSIONS		RATE PER ISSUE
	width	depth	
Centrefold	15½ inches	9½ inches	\$1,470
Full Page	7 inches	9½ inches	\$788
2/3 Page Horizontal	7 inches	6¼ inches	\$590
2/3 Page Vertical	4½ inches	9½ inches	\$590
½ Page Horizontal	7 inches	4¾ inches	\$513
½ Page Vertical	3½ inches	9½ inches	\$513
1/3 Page Horizontal	7 inches	3 inches	\$395
1/3 Page Vertical	2¼ inches	9½ inches	\$395
¼ Page	3½ inches	4¾ inches	\$263
Card Size	3½ inches	2½ inches	\$133



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Email: communications@metis.org

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A Busy Spring and Summer for Region 2

By Melody Gosselin

Spring was busy for Region 2. We hosted two Business Mixers which are opportunities for Region 2 Métis Entrepreneurs to network with other entrepreneurs and major oil and gas companies, and other corporations. If you are interested in receiving an invitation to our next mixer and/or subsequent ones, please call Melody at (780) 826-7483. We are very excited to have received continued funding for

our Hidden Talents Youth Group. We enjoy having the youth participate in our program and look forward to more great activities in the following months to come.

We had the privilege to host 60 Grade 4 students from Duclos Elementary School for an exhibition of Métis culture. As part of the Grade 4 Social Studies curriculum, the children learned about the Métis. The children were treated to a jigging

exposition, cultural information, demonstrations of the Indian Dice Game, and bannock. A few of the teachers had an opportunity to try their feet at jigging as well, and of course this caused many giggles among the children. A great time was had by all. We sure enjoyed having the children come to enrich their learning about the Métis so they were able to go back to class and apply it to their studies.

The office is now getting



- 1: Kristen Cardinal plays the Indian Dice Game during the grade 4 field trip to Region 2 office.
- 2: Karen Collins presents a sash to Lucas McCaw, a student teacher at Duclos School in Bonnyville.
- 3: Theron Poitras and Karen Collins teach the Grade 4 students how to jig.
- 4: Melody Gosselin and Karen Collins model the different uses of the Sash.
- 5: Youth coming to check out the Hidden Talents youth group.

ready for lots of fun in the sun! Our summer starts June 21, 2007 with the Bonnyville Canadian Native Friendship Centre and Region 2 combining their talents and resources to host National Aboriginal Day Festivities in downtown Bonnyville.

Our next event is the Andy Collins Memorial Golf Tournament on July 27, 2007 at the Bonnyville Golf and Country Club. Please call the office for more information regarding this event.

Applications for the Andy

Collins Memorial Scholarship fund, which is funded by the proceeds of the golf tournament, are available for those of Aboriginal ancestry within Region 2 boundaries. Applications should be in by June 30, 2007.

Our summer events will conclude with the 79th Annual General Assembly which will be held in St. Paul on August 16-19, 2007. This will include a golf tournament on August 16 and a youth conference on August 17-19. We are looking for vendors for the trade show. If you are

interested in setting up a display, please talk to Roy Dumais. For information on the golf tournament, please contact Homer Poitras.

We have a new face in the office who is doing a tremendous job of coordinating the youth conference. We would like to welcome Susan Dahlseide to Region 2 for the summer. Any questions regarding the conference can be directed to her at the office.

The Region 2 office number is (780) 826-7483



MNA and CFCW Partnership

The Métis Nation of Alberta's (MNA) Labour Market Development (LMD) entered a title sponsorship with CFCW in Edmonton recently to promote the training and skill development services LMD has to offer to Métis. Audrey Poitras, MNA President, and Randy Lamay, General Manager of CFCW (above), signed a partnership agreement.

LMD selected CFCW because the radio station has the largest audience in the province and is heard by Métis in remote parts of the province. The sponsorship will focus on LMD advertising campaigns, signage at the West Edmonton Mall Station and a twice hourly promotion of LMD programs.

Celebrating Métis Culture

Beads from the Past Inspire Artisan

By Charity Borg

The hardest part of making the bag was the intricate beading, or so Melissa Jo Moses thought when she decided to take on the task of duplicating a rare Métis treasure now on display at the Royal Alberta Museum.

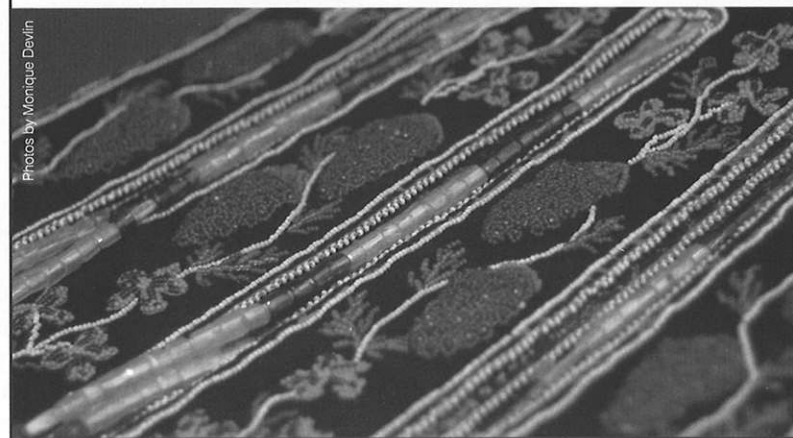
A Métis bag with fine beadwork is held behind a glass case. The bag, with fine glass beads, tightly woven wool, and silk ribbon, is a treasure to behold.

"I do beadwork and I love the art and I love that history," said Moses. "I wonder if she was an ancestor of mine and just that connectiveness and just seeing that skill that was involved, I mean it's so beautiful and I can follow her method and her way. I think I'm following her footsteps, following the mastery of her skill and I think we learn from that. To me nothing else can compare."

The bag was made by a Métis woman in the 1800s and was bought by James Carnegie, ninth Earl of Southesk, during his travels to Canada in 1859-60. Carnegie kept a journal of his travels across Canada including where he found some of the 43 treasures he bought during his journey. Carnegie's collection was stored away in his castle in Scotland for 147 years until the

family decided to auction off the collection at Sotheby's in May 2006. The Royal Alberta Museum was able to buy 33 of the 43 artifacts thanks to \$1.1 million of funding received

from provincial and federal governments. The name of the artisan who did the beadwork on the bag is unknown, which Moses thinks is a shame.



The bag Melissa Jo Moses is trying to recreate has hundreds of tiny beads, many of which are difficult to find today, in extremely intricate and complex patterns.

Moses teaches art at the museum and always emphasizes to her students that it is important to sign your work even if it seems trivial.

"When I teach my students I say please identify yourself, whatever piece it is," said Moses. "You may call it a craft, but it is a piece of art and artists always sign their names to the paintings. We should be able to as well."

So what is the hardest part of replicating such a work of art? It's simply finding the materials. The seed beads required are 18pt. which are very small. The larger the number on a bead size, the smaller the bead. Most places only sell 15pt. as the smallest available size. As well, some bead colours are next to impossible to find.

"I'm still having trouble finding all the right beads because I might find the right colour, but not the right size," said Moses. "I actually didn't think it was going to be that hard to find these beads but I'm realizing now that's a challenge in finding all the beads. I just can't go back to the 1800s to collect what I need—I wish I could."

In many ways, the design and pattern on the bag documents what the Métis woman who created it saw in her everyday life.

"I've done strawberries on bags, but I thought it was a modern thing and I didn't think there was someone in the 1800s doing strawberries on a



Photo courtesy Melissa Jo Moses

bag. So when I saw this, I was blown away," said Moses.

The way the Métis woman worked on the bag appears to be opposite to how beadworkers work today. The modern way to bead is to create an outline and then fill it in from there.

"She has actually taken little tiny flowers and there's a centre and then there's a little row of beads around that and it's built on itself to create this beautiful strawberry," said Moses.

"Seeing this bag and seeing what's been done before is amazing."

Celebrating National Aboriginal Day at Métis Crossing

By Charity Borg

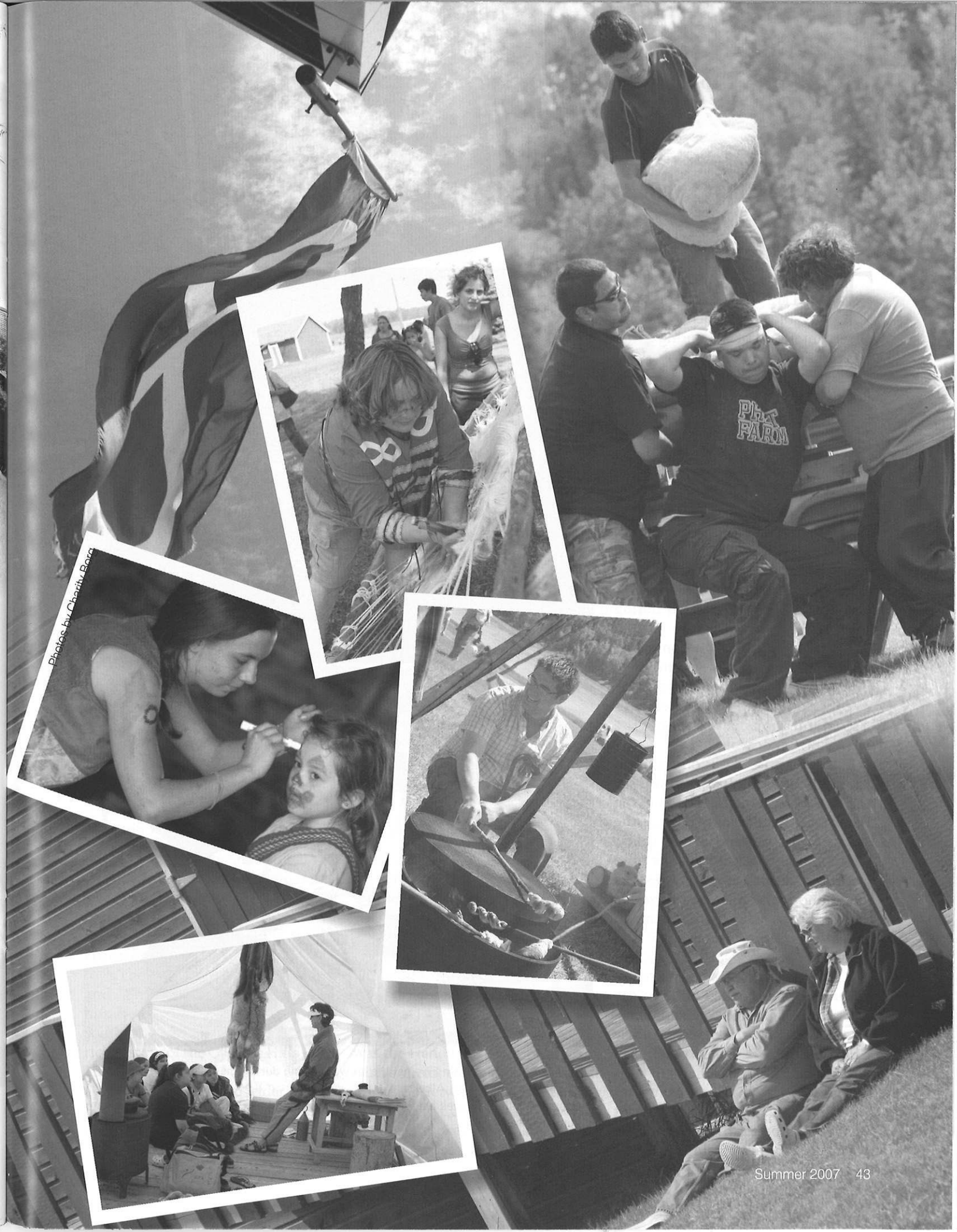
The people who gathered near Smoky Lake in the North Saskatchewan River valley at Métis Crossing could not have asked for better weather on National Aboriginal Day. There was plenty to do and see at Métis Crossing on June 21, including baking bannock over an open campfire, learning how to tan a hide, and watching the voyageur games demonstration.

It was a day for families and friends to spend time together. It was a relaxing time for visitors to take part in the many activities, wander through the museum or sit on the hillside to chat. People came from across the province to celebrate their Métis heritage at Métis Crossing.

Renowned Métis fiddler Darla Daniels accompanied the band who played for the Métis dancers who entertained the crowd in the mid-afternoon.



Photos by Charity Borg



Preparing for Hivernant Rendezvous 2007

By Charity Borg

Toe-tapping music and great food are what make Métis get-togethers so much fun. The Hivernant Rendezvous Spring Fling was certainly no exception.

The good times started when the Rocky Mountain Five hit the stage just before 6 pm in Big Valley on April 14. Although attendance numbers were down a bit this year, it didn't matter as people enjoyed the visiting and dancing as well as the delicious beef and bison stew and baked and fried bannock provided by Bill Smylie and his talented kitchen volunteers.

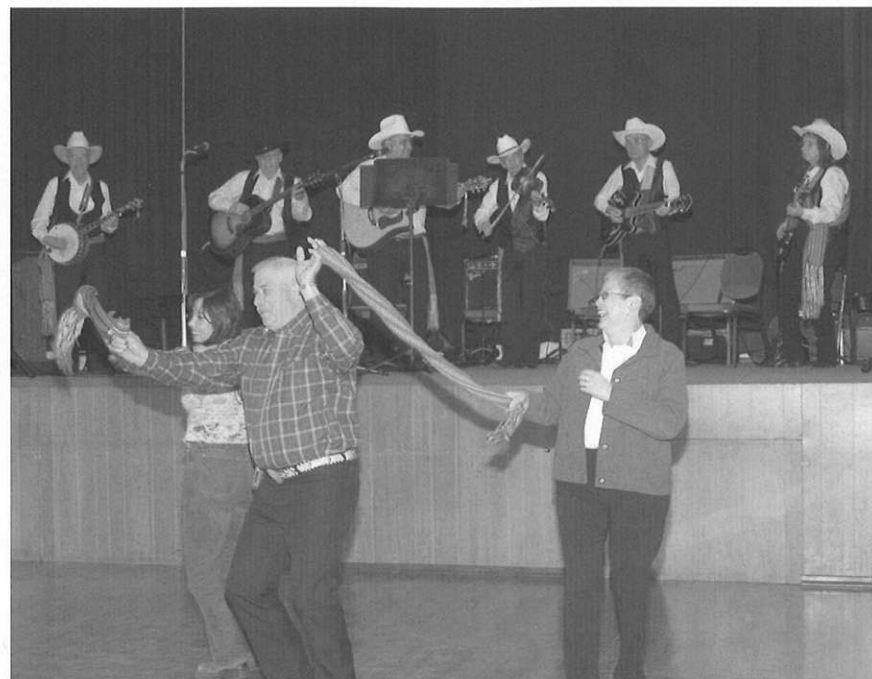
Andrea Martin won the beautiful etched glass mirror of a Red River Cart and a Métis homestead during the raffle.

"There were lots of comments on how good the band was and how much they were enjoyed by everyone," said Al Therrien, Communication Director of the Hivernant Rendezvous.

If you missed out on the band the first time around, you can still see the Rocky Mountain Five at the Hivernant Rendezvous during the August long weekend in Big Valley. The cultural weekend will feature genealogy displays, beading lessons and bannock making. New this year is the Alberta Hunter Education program for youth aged 16 and younger.

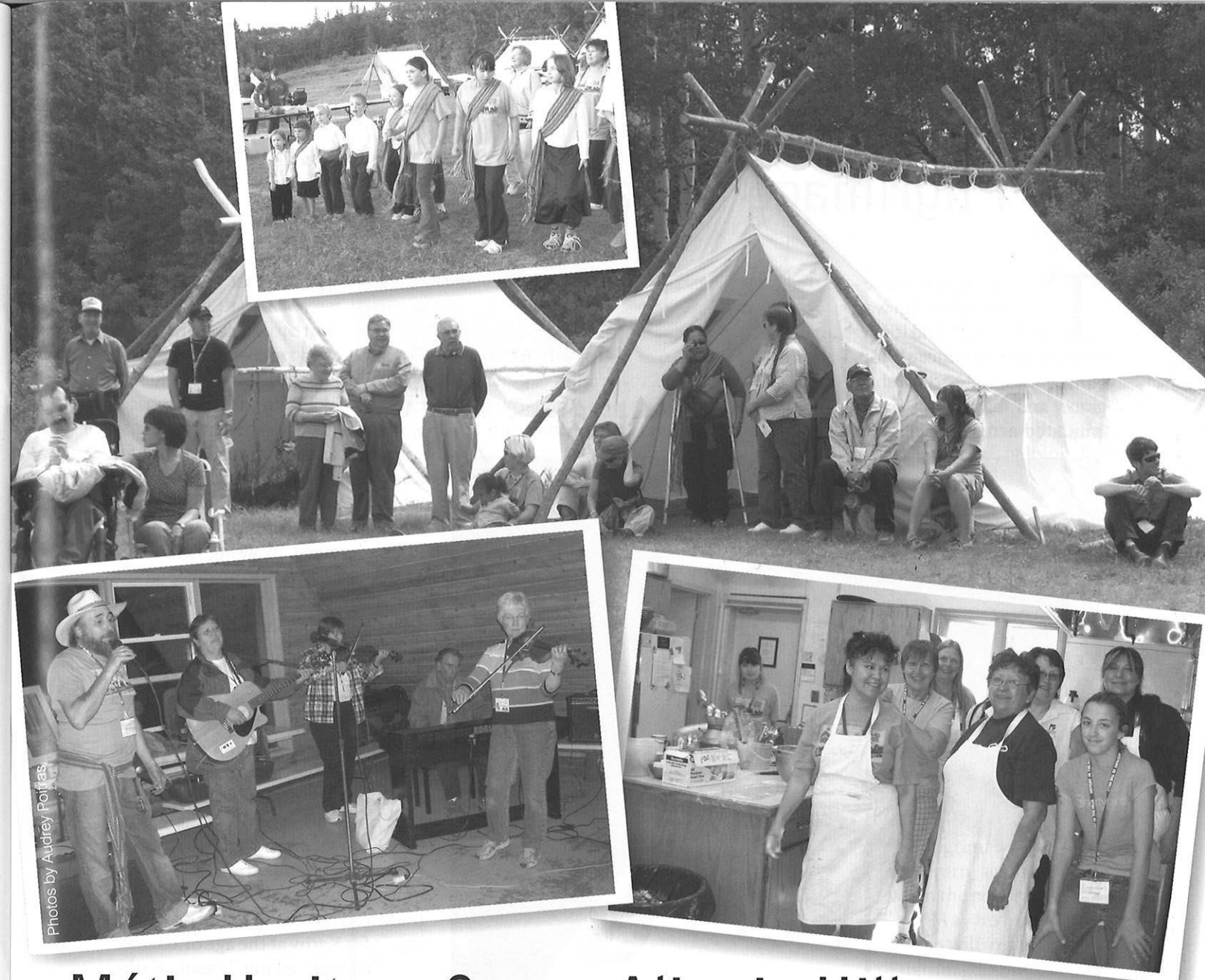
The Alberta Hunter Education program is a condensed two-day course and is limited to 15 students. To register for the course please contact Al Therrien at altherr@telus.net.

If you would like to volunteer your time to help make the Hivernant Rendezvous better than ever, please contact Al at altherr@telus.net.



Top: The Rocky Mountain Five get the crowd dancing during the spring fling dinner and dance in Big Valley, Alberta.

Bottom: Revellers enjoyed beef and bison stew prepared by Bill Smylie and his kitchen volunteers.



Métis Heritage Comes Alive in Hills

By Charity Borg

The smell of bannock filled the air, making the casual passerby salivate for the taste of the bannock being cooked over an open fire in Cypress Hills during History in the Hills.

The hills were alive with Métis and First Nations heritage as hundreds of people headed to southern Alberta to celebrate the rich history of the Cypress Hills June 13-16.

Métis fiddler and elder Teddy Boy Houle, along with an interpreter from the Miywasin Centre

demonstrated traditional Métis ways of life in the Métis Trapper's tent and offered history lessons on the significance the Métis people played in the Cypress Hills area. Houle also played the Red River Jig while interpreters taught their guests how to jig to the upbeat rhythm.

A little further down the path was the Hand Hills Michif Campsite where members of the Hand Hills Michif Society demonstrated how a Red River Cart was made. The members spoke of the history of the

cart and why it was important to the Métis. The members also had a gun powder display and wore traditional Métis outfits similar to those worn by Métis living in the area in the 1800s.

Other venues included Cree, Lakota, Blackfoot, teepees, as well as Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, Alberta Parks, and Travel Alberta. There was a hide tanning demonstration, an archeological dig was nearby to visit and get an interpretation of the finds.

The Pilgrimage to Lac Ste. Anne

By Charity Borg

The setting sun glazes across the shimmering water. The red, violet and orange light sets the mid-summer sky on fire. A sunset is a simple occurrence but the grace and beauty of the spirit is emulated across the heavens at the

end of each and every day. It is a gift from the creator.

Perhaps the healing powers of Lac Ste. Anne are a gift from the creator, as there certainly is evidence the gathering place is not without its miracles. Every year, canes are left

behind as proof that healing has occurred.

For Kathy Karakonti, the Pilgrimage is more than just a gathering of old friends and family or a week long celebration of spirituality. The Pilgrimage is a spiritual connection to God, and for Kathy who grew up in a very religious home, the long walk in the July heat to Lac Ste Anne was a way to pay homage. Walking to Lac Ste Anne was a kind of penance and a way of asking for a better life.

"My Parents used to walk to the Pilgrimage," said Kathy. "My dad developed arthritis pretty bad when he started walking. They started their walk from Villeneuve and he would use two canes to walk to Lac Ste. Anne. My mother used to accompany him and basically look after him."

Kathy's mother grew up going to Lac Ste. Anne. Although her mother used to travel by wagon, the tradition of walking to Lac Ste. Anne began for Kathy at the age of 10.

"It was trying," said Kathy. "Especially when you got older. I don't know why. I don't know if it was the devil pulling you."

Near the end of the 19th century, the buffalo hunt had come to an end, which also ended the gatherings at Lac Ste. Anne, since the people had moved on. Father Lestance, who was in charge of the mission at that time, decided to close down the mission in 1887 with the approval from the Oblate Council. Father Lestance travelled back to France where he had an epiphany while visiting the Shrine of Ste. Anne d'Auray. The epiphany from God was to not close the mission but to instead build a shrine to honour Ste. Anne. The first pilgrimage was held in 1889 and has become an annual gathering that has grown from only a few hundred people to the thousands who travel there today.



Photo by Charity Borg

Kathy Karakonti walked to Lac Ste. Anne since she was 10.

For centuries Lac Ste. Anne was a gathering place for Aboriginal people in the summer at the beginning of the buffalo hunt, according to an article written by Caroline and Rod Lorenz. The lake was named Manito Sakahigan in Cree; the English translation is Spirit Lake

The Métis' connection to the Lac Ste. Anne pilgrimage is very strong as it was a Métis man by the name of Pitch who travelled to St. Boniface to ask for a priest to live at the Lac Ste. Anne site in 1841. Although Priests were sparse at the time, Father Jean-Baptiste Thibault was sent west with Gabriel Dumont as a guide. In 1844, this was the first mission west of Winnipeg.

At the time her family lived in Calahoo, and then they later moved to Noyes Crossing near Onoway.

"The night before we'd go get ourselves all prepped up, massage the feet and all that. Then get up at five o'clock the next morning and start off. When we first started it was just country road, not pavement, oh it was tough."

"Sometimes you'd get blisters. And if your blisters busted before you got to the church..." Kathy winced thinking of the memory of walking on broken blisters. "Then when we'd get to the (Alberta) Beach that's when it would get tough with all the traffic. Then the hardest part would be when you got to Lac Ste. Anne. There's the bend, you can see the church - that's where it got the hardest. I don't know if it was the devil trying to take control, but that last half mile was the worst. But we'd make it. We'd say our prayer in the church and then we'd walk down to the lake and get blessed."

Walking made the experience more whole than it would have been if the family had simply driven.

"Just the way you felt when you made the journey," said Kathy. "It felt good being there."

"If you wanted to walk, you'd try to make a vow to God that if you make this journey hopefully the Lord would answer your prayers."

The main reason Kathy made the long trek as a youth was for her parents. Her father was left disabled from



Photo by Monique Devlin

arthritis and her mother had the task of looking after her father and Kathy and her siblings.

"I prayed for her to have the strength to carry on," she said "Growing up, seeing that, I made a vow that hopefully the Lord would heed both their burdens and it did over the years. I didn't expect anything to happen just like that."

"It made a difference over the years so I'm thankful for that. You can't expect life to be perfect."

Ste Anne in hopes of helping her mother become better again.

"It was very hard physically. It was a long walk especially when you're not physically able to do it anymore," said Kathy. "It was one of those things where I tried to get a little bit of her health back. Unfortunately it didn't work that way, but you can't expect all our prayers to be answered the way we want."

Losing her mother was a devastating experience for Kathy, and she has been unable to go back to the Pilgrimage, she hopes to return again one day when the pain eases.

Maybe one day Kathy will return to the Pilgrimage, but for the time being it will be a cherished memory.

While the majority of pilgrims to Lac Ste Anne drive, many people travel by wagon or invest in a good pair of shoes. Close to 40,000 people, mostly Métis and First Nations, travel to the Lac Ste Anne site near Alberta Beach. It is the largest gathering of aboriginal people as well as Catholics in Canada. The five day celebration is July 21-26 this year.



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Foot Stomping Good Time in Grande Prairie

By Ursel Flett

On April 28, 2007, Métis Local 1990 held their fourth Annual Talent Show at the 5 Mile Hall in Grande Prairie, Alberta.

Once again it was a successful event. This year the money raised will be helping many great Local 1990 programs including:

- *Elders Caring Shelter* - providing affordable room and board to homeless or at risk men and women over the age of 55.
- *Effective Parenting Program* - teaching young single parents appropriate parenting skills.
- *Cycle Break Program* - offering

life skills training to youth at risk who are trying to break the cycle of poverty.

This event was smoke and alcohol free making it a special evening for the whole family to enjoy. Contestants young and old kept the crowd applauding with outstanding vocals, fiddling, and jigging. The evening finished with a dance.

The Board of Directors and staff would like to thank everyone for showing their support. A special thank you to the contestants for giving us an evening of wonderful entertainment. We would also like to thank our many volunteers that

helped in every way possible.

A very special thank-you to Trevor Gladue, the Vice-President of the Métis Nation of Alberta for being our M.C. and to our judges Marlene Letendre, Al Findlay, and Ron Delorme.

We would also like to thank the band 24 Seven, the Métis Local Board of Directors and staff.

Each and every person involved, whether they were a board or staff member, a volunteer, or a local business person, made our talent show a success. We look forward to seeing you all again next year. Thanks to all of you.



Destiny Michalchuk won first place for Child Vocal.

Talent Show Results

Child Red River Jig

- 1st Cheyenne L'Hirondelle
- 2nd Abigayle Flett
- 3rd Justice Watson

Child Vocals

- 1st Destiny Michalchuk
- 2nd Kelsey Poitras
- 3rd Eternity Michalchuk

Teen Red River Jig

- 1st Cory Poitras
- 2nd Tiffany Barber

Teen Vocals

- 1st Neil Lamouche

Teen Fiddling

- 1st Kelsey Poitras

Adult Red River Jig

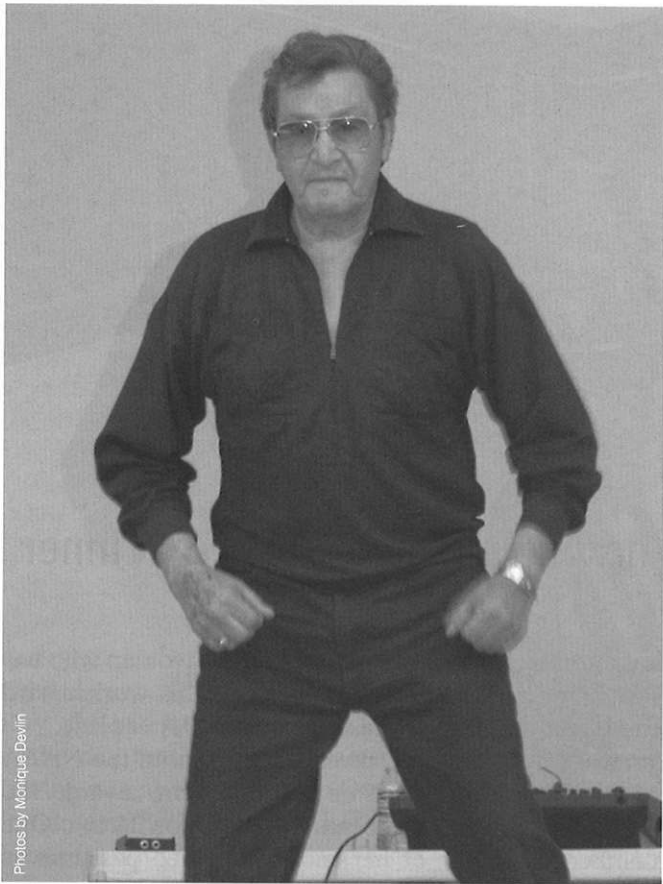
- 1st RoseMarie Aastveit
- 2nd Bill Chalifoux
- 3rd Marcel Auger

Adult Vocals

- 1st Ken Campbell
- 2nd Artie Chalifoux
- 3rd Monica Lizotte

Adult Fiddling

- 1st Carlyle Delorme
- 2nd Norman Danais



Left: Bill Chalifoux took second place in adult jigging.



Right: Cheyenne L'Hirondelle won first place for Child Jigging.

Bottom: Rose Marie Aastveit, who has just recovered from two heart surgeries but still managed to win first place in Adult Jigging.

Thank you to all our sponsors!

The Board of Directors and staff of Métis Local 1990 would like to acknowledge and sincerely thank the following sponsors of the 4th Annual Talent Show, held on April 28, 2007.

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- Grande Prairie Friendship Centre

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Honouring Our Métis People

Bertha Clark Jones

Veteran, Activist, & NAAA Lifetime Achievement Award Winner

By Charity Borg

The smooth road to Athabasca is lined with trees from Clyde corner through Colinton all the way to the mighty river in which the town is named after. Compared to the big city traffic on any given morning, the sparse traffic of the country roads was a welcome change. I looked forward to meeting Bertha Clark Jones, the recipient of the lifetime achievement award at the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards (NAAA) this spring.

As I traveled down the winding road into Athabasca, it did not seem as though I had arrived in a town at all; the businesses are all spread apart. I turned up the road I thought I was supposed to take, but as usual when I don't have a street address, I tend to need extra help. I discovered my little car can go four-by-four while trying to navigate a steep gravel alley where I thought Bertha's house was located.

There came a point when I feared that if I went any further I would need a tow truck to help me back out, so I called Bertha instead to find out if I was on the right track. Turns out I was not, and after giving me some revised directions, she said she would watch for me. I knew I had arrived when a friendly woman waved to me from her back door.

The cozy blue house was welcoming. Pictures of grandchildren adorned her dining room and living room walls. A large white quilt with a maple leaf hung over the sewing table. A Métis drum made by a family member hung on

the wall. Bertha is a woman who has lived a good life and has worked hard to make the world a better place.

Ever since winning the NAAA Lifetime Achievement award, life has been very busy for Bertha. One of her most cherished pastimes is

quilting, and this year she was behind on making a quilt for Canada Day. She had just managed to finish it the day before I arrived, despite having two phone calls from Ottawa looking to do a story on her. The beautiful quilt has a giant maple leaf

in the centre.

Quilting has always been a part of Bertha's life. "We've been quilting since we were kids because that's what the community women did," said Bertha. "Of course there were not all these fancy materials. They would just use bleach to take the print off the flour sacks and make those into quilts."

Part of the challenge was creating the batting to go between the two layers of the quilts. "I remember stomping around in a tub of sheep's wool to clean it. Can you imagine – in our bare feet! It worked. I think Dad washed it down before," said Bertha.

For a woman who likes to quilt and visit with people in her spare time, the NAAA Lifetime Achievement Award came as a shock.

"It was certainly unexpected," she said. "There are many more who should have received it besides me."

Bertha received the award for just being herself. She is a woman who will simply change something if she doesn't like it.

Bertha's observations on how Aboriginals, especially women, were perceived, were not to her liking. In the late 1960s Bertha helped found the Voice of Alberta Native Women (VANW) organization, which

developed into the Native Women's Association of Canada. Bertha was tired of seeing the issues of Aboriginal women ignored time and time again.

"When we would hold conferences we had women from all over Alberta, both Métis and Status, and they had a lot of concerns within their communities," said Bertha. "We started holding workshops in their communities and asking them if they'd like to form their own chapters."

According to Bertha, one of the main issues for Aboriginal women during the late 1960s was foster care. If social services needed to remove children from a home they would simply remove the children from their community and culture, instead of trying to find a solution closer to home. VANW went to the government to help fund a project to help keep these children closer to their families and culture.

"We trained women right from the community to improve Aboriginal homes within the communities so if the children were apprehended they wouldn't have to leave," said Bertha. "And it worked very well."

From there, the organization continued to flourish, giving women the knowledge and tools to improve



Bertha shows off the drum that hangs on her wall.

The quilt is one she was making for Canada Day.

their communities. After developing a program to deal with the problem of removing children from their community, VANW started to get into prevention work.

"We recruited women to work on a one-on-one basis with families in need of help. And that was really good," said Bertha.

After serving VANW for eight years, Bertha felt it was time for someone else to lead the organization. At that point, the grassroots movement had spread across Canada with Saskatoon looking to use the framework set up in Alberta to improve the lives of Aboriginal people in their province. Bertha agreed to be the President of

the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) until it got going. The federal government was quite helpful in getting the funding together to pay for the initiatives.

"After that, there were women in the community who got on hospital boards, school boards, worked with the RCMP. It was very good," said Bertha. "Before we didn't have communication with them [these organizations]."

Communication with government was a top issue for a lot of Aboriginal communities in that time period as well. Often people would see government officials come into a community but not have anything to do with the people within it.

"I'm sure that the people who came in there needed assistance too to understand some of the situations in the community. If you didn't live there then you didn't know."

Even today, Bertha continues her work with Aboriginal women. Recently she was asked to attend the Aboriginal Women's Summit in Newfoundland, and was impressed with the recent Aboriginal summit

in Edmonton this past May.

"I was very impressed to see the younger women involved," she said. "They spoke up about the concerns in their communities. I like to see women in the communities get involved. We can't always be up there; we have got to work at the grassroots."

When Bertha moved up to Yellowknife, her colleague, Bertha Allen, saw women's crafts not being valued. Most women in the Northwest Territories made crafts but had no outlet from which to sell their art.

"They would sell them on the streets for practically nothing," said Bertha.

"After that, there were women in the community who got on hospital boards, school boards, worked with the RCMP. It was very good,"

So, Allen worked hard to get their crafts into stores in Yellowknife and even Toronto.

During the 1960s' black gold rush in Fort McMurray, Bertha and her husband moved there for work. Her husband was a skilled carpenter and he built homes for company workers of Suncor. Bertha pushed for women to get involved in the trades too. An energy company had a town hall meeting and Bertha attended. The company talked about their need to hire more people.

"I said 'why aren't you hiring our women?' and the speaker said 'you know it's construction and we don't have the facilities for women,' so I said 'don't worry about that. We're bush women. If we need to go to the bathroom we can find a bush someplace.'"

"I'll never forget that. I was embarrassed and so was he, but it came out so naturally. The whole delegation just clapped and laughed."

Shortly after that

confrontation, the company started recruiting women and to this day the number of Aboriginal women working for energy companies continues to grow.

But there is another side to Bertha. During World War II she worked as a kitchen helper and then as a physical training drill instructor at an airbase.

"I joined up for what we call general duties because I didn't know what I could do with my education," she said.

Bertha had only completed Grade 9 and it was the only thing she could think to do at the time.

Following the war she moved to Calgary with her husband and had

three children. Her husband worked as a carpenter and with some coaxing from his brother, he packed up the

family to move to Peace Country to farm. It was an unsuccessful venture and the family moved to Fort McMurray in 1966.

Bertha still enjoys helping people out. Currently she sits as an Aboriginal Citizen advisor for Alberta Pacific in Athabasca keeping industry informed of Aboriginal concerns and making sure the areas where berries and medicinal trees are located are respected.

Bertha loves her hometown of Athabasca. So much so, she took me for a tour around the community showing me historical points of interest like land, churches, and the old hotel.

"I love Athabasca," she said. "People ask me 'are you gonna move?' I say no, not unless they haul me out in a box."

Other organizations Bertha has been involved with are: Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women, Judiciary Council, Region 7 Children's Authority, and Métis Local Past President.

Dedication Honours Métis Veterans

By Charity Borg

The Métis Nation of Alberta paid tribute to the sacrifices veterans made for the freedom of all Canadians by renaming the Inglewood Building the Métis Veterans Memorial Building on June 14.

Veterans watched with pride the unveiling of the new name at the downtown building located at 111 Avenue and 124 Street in Edmonton.

"I would like to express a very heartfelt thank you to all our Aboriginal veterans who gave and sacrificed so much with so little recognition," said Audrey Poitras, MNA President.

"We feel that our veterans should be remembered and honoured not just on one day, but on all days."

Veterans in attendance were honoured with a solemn slideshow tribute thanking them for their contributions.

"It's kind of neat and nice to have a building of our own," said Leo Goulet, a World War II veteran who was part of the unveiling.

The renaming of the building was announced on Remembrance Day last year and the official ceremony was held off until now in order to prepare the new signage.

Purchased by the MNA in 1999, the Métis Veterans Memorial Building is located near downtown Edmonton. It houses a wide range of tenants including; Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc., Pinnacle Business Services, Edmonton Métis Employment Services Centre, Alberta Family and Social Services, Edmonton City Police, MNA Judiciary Council and Clean Scene, a drug awareness program for youth.



Top: A group of Veterans admire the new sign adorning the Métis Veterans Memorial Building (previously the Inglewood Building).

Middle: Several Veterans shared the honour of cutting the ribbon for the newly named office building.

Bottom: Hugh Belcourt, Leo Goulet, and Oscar Lacombe in front of the Métis Veterans Memorial Building.



Photo by Monique Devlin

2007 Esquao Awards

By Monique Devlin

For 12 years, the Institute for the Achievement of Aboriginal Women (IAAW) has celebrated the accomplishments of Aboriginal women in Alberta with the Esquao Awards. This year, the highest honour, the induction into the Circle of Honour (the Dorothy McDonald Leadership Award), was bestowed on Métis Nation of Alberta President Audrey Poitras.

"It was the most moving moment that I've participated in the 20 years as an elected official in the Province of Alberta," Guy Boutilier, Alberta Minister of International, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Relations, said the day after the event, congratulating Poitras and elaborating that "It really was a celebration of your work and your leadership not only in Alberta but across Canada"

As world famous Métis fiddle player Seirra Noble played the Honour Song in the background, Elders and past Circle of Honour recipients honoured Poitras by performing a traditional blanket

wrap.

This award is given to Aboriginal women who are in leadership positions and are an example to others because they know the struggles many Aboriginal women have to overcome in their lives.

The Circle has embraced Pearl Calahasen, Thelma Chalifoux, Ethel Blondin-Andrews, Grand Chief Rose Laboucan and the original inductee, Colleen Klein.

"I want to thank all of you out there. Thank you for working with me, for supporting me over the last 11 years, men and women both," Poitras said, addressing the crowd afterwards. "Thank you very much, this is for you."

Poitras also thanked the founder and president of the IAAW, Muriel Stanley Venne, "Thank you for all you have done, thank you for always remembering the women and honouring them."

The awards themselves are the only ones that specifically celebrate Aboriginal women in the entire

world, and were started to help promote the beauty, resilience, and importance Aboriginal women hold in their community. Divided into categories such as education, arts and entertainment, culture, sports, politics, business and community involvement, the awards strive to celebrate all of the different areas Aboriginal women impact.

"Traditionalists say Aboriginal women are the key to reclaiming and healing our communities," Venne said in her message to the recipients. "They give us life, nurture us, are always there, and most importantly, they have gifts to share. The voices of our young girls, our women, seniors, and Elders—our women leaders, are a valuable asset that is currently underutilised."

As always, the awards were accompanied with great food and excellent entertainment including singer Bobbi-Jo Beaver, comedian Smokey Hontus, drum group Thundering Spirit, singer Lila Pariseau, and singer Jared Sowan.



Left: Métis fiddle player, Sierra Noble, plays the Honour Song.



Top Centre: Métis entrepreneur and philanthropist, Herb Belcourt, presents Métis artisan, Laura McLaughlin, with the Business Award.



Top Right: The Colleen Klein Children's Future Award winner, Rubye Lacombe addresses the crowd.

Bottom: Comedian and singer Smokey Hontus dances with some of the young women in attendance.

Facing Page: MNA President Audrey Poitras is inducted into the Circle of Honour.

The 2007 Esquao Award Recipients

The Circle of Honour - The Dorothy McDonald Leadership Award
Audrey Poitras

Arts & Entertainment
Christine Sokaymoh Fredrick

Business
Laura McLaughlin

Education
Laverne Arcand
Michelle Morin
Claudette Rain
Dr. Betty Bastien

Colleen Klein Children's Future Award
Rubye Lacombe

Angel of Hope Award
Peacha Atkinson
(in memory of her daughter,
Nina Courtepatte)

Social Services & Advocacy
Susan Cardinal Lamouche

Culture
Margaret Cardinal
Marion LeRat

Madge McRee Cultural Award
Alma Desjarlais

Community Involvement
Lucille Cook
Pauline Thompson

Community Involvement Sports
Doreen L. Cardinal

Clara Woodbridge Community Involvement
Barbara A. Courtorielle
Leigh-anne Sheldon-Houle

Health & Medicine
Doris Courtorielle
Claudia Simpson

Lifetime Achievement
Lena Bumstead
Mary Kappo

Christine Daniels Political Involvement Award
Doreen Lameman

Lorne Gladue Honoured at MacEwan Convocation

By Charity Borg

Lorne Gladue is known for his hard work and dedication around the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) head office. His perseverance and hard work in creating a better future for Métis people was recognized at the MacEwan convocation on April 21st with a Distinguished Alumni Award.

The Distinguished Alumni Award is presented to college graduates who have outstanding achievements and who have made significant contributions to areas such as community, business, arts, human development, environment, life-long learning, post-secondary education, and government.

Lorne was born in Elk Point and grew up at the nearby Fishing Lake Métis Settlement. He has worn

many hats during his lifetime including that of an RCMP constable, small business owner, and project officer with Human Resources Development Canada.

In 1991, he decided to continue his studies in the fields of Management Studies and Arts and Science at MacEwan College and was awarded diplomas in each of those areas in 1996. During this same period he also completed two years towards a degree in political science at the University of Alberta.

Currently, Lorne is the Director of MNA's Labour Market Development (LMD) program, which is recognized for strategic leadership, innovation, accountability, and results in providing employment opportunities and training for Métis

people. One recent strategy is the Mobile Employment Centre that travels throughout the province to remote communities to provide resources for people looking for work or to improve the way they earn their living.

LMD is also currently involved in a sponsorship with Newcap Radio with radio ad campaigns and title sponsorship of the CFCW studios. The ad campaign is to promote LMD employment services for Métis people. Lorne is also working closely with the University of Alberta to develop a Métis Centre of Excellence and is working with MacEwan to establish a partnership to increase Métis student participation at the college's management-related and health career programs.



NAIT Celebrates Asokan Graduates

By Charity Borg

It was a proud moment for Aboriginal graduates of NAIT's Asokan Project as they walked up to receive their well-deserved diplomas. This year, there were 16 graduates of Asokan receiving their diplomas in either administrative or accounting based systems during the ceremony on June 8.

Graduates, many of whom formed friendships while taking part in the Asokan Project, listened intently to the sage advice from their instructors and community leaders.

"Making the decision to further your education is not an easy one, nor is walking through those doors to your first class. But you have

completed that journey now, and because of that, the possibilities that lay before you are endless," Audrey Poitras, President of the Métis Nation of Alberta, told the graduates.

"Each one of you has the potential to do great things in your life. I hope you will leave this graduation ceremony with a passion to influence change in the careers you've chosen and worked so hard to enter."

Asokan is a Cree word meaning 'bridge.' This is appropriate, as Asokan acts as a bridge for women to gain skilled employment. Since its inception in 1991, it has been a

bridge to over 125 graduates.

Asokan is a fully funded accredited program for women looking to further their careers in the fields of administration and accounting. Completion of high school is not a pre-requisite of the program, however they are looking for people who have been in the work force. There is a four week work placement at the end of the program.

For information about Asokan, contact your local Métis Employment Services centre to learn about how to access funding through the Labour Market Development program.

Congratulations to all the Asokan Graduates!



ALLISON, Kathy
BELCOURT, Sabrina
CARDINAL, Crystal
CARDINAL, Priscilla
CARDINAL-JANZEN, Kora-Lee
DESJARLAIS, Frances
DION, Cheryl

DUROCHER, Joanne
DUTIAUME, Diane
EHRENBERG-DAVIDGE, Janet
GLADUE, Tammy
LAMBERT, Paula
LAMOUCHE, Shantelle
LANDRY, Chrissy

LAVAY, Amy
OMEASOO, Glenda
SIMEON, Dori
WIBERG, Chantal
WILKINSON, Rose

A Mystery from the Past

By Monique Devlin

In 2003 the remains of two soldiers were found near Avion, France while construction workers were building a gas pipeline. Artifacts found associated with these remains pointed to the fact that they most likely were part of the 49th Canadian Infantry Battalion of Edmonton which served in the area during World War I.

Pearl Sandor never knew her uncle Harry Knibb. He had left to fight in the First World War when Pearl's father was only 10 years old. He never returned.

On the night of June 8, 1917, Harry and his fellow members of the 49th Canadian Infantry Battalion took part in a night raid on the German front. That night, 38 members of the Battalion died. Of these, Harry was one of 16 who were missing and presumed dead.

At the request of the Director of Heritage and History from the department of National Defence, the Department of Anthropology at Lakeland University (Thunder Bay, Ontario) began collecting data so that they could identify or confirm the living relatives of these soldiers.

As part of this search, Pearl was located through a prayer she had left on an online message board in

remembrance of her father's younger brother who had recently passed away (he too had fought in Europe, but in World War II). But to make a connection, the researchers needed to find a male relative to provide a DNA sample to prove if this was indeed her uncle Harry. Because Harry had no children of his own, Pearl put them into contact with her brother Art.

It took nearly two years, but this April, one of the soldiers was identified—Private Herbert Peterson. The identity of the other soldier was never found, but it was confirmed that he was not Private Harry Knibb.

"We were still happy for that family," Pearl said when she heard the news. "It was a good thing that his family had closure, that they found his remains and could bury them."



Pearl Sandor had hoped the mystery of her uncle's disappearance would finally be put to rest.

Pearl hasn't given up hope that her uncle may still be found one day.

"Maybe they will still find more remains. There were 16 of them missing and who knows how widely developed this area is," she said. "The fact that the remains they did find were 90 years old and can still be identified in 2007 is amazing in itself."

In the area of Vimy Ridge in France alone, there are more than 1,600 graves marked with only "A Canadian Soldier - Known Unto God," identifying the resting places of unknown soldiers.



MNA President Audrey Poitras talks with Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach during the Opening Night of the Dreamspeakers Festival in Edmonton. Poitras and Stelmach, along with Edmonton Mayor, Stephen Mandel, helped usher in the weeklong Aboriginal film festival at the opening night welcoming reception on June 4 sponsored by the MNA. Dreamspeakers is an International Aboriginal Film and Television festival that supports and educates the public about Aboriginal culture, art and heritage. It is a resource for Aboriginal filmmakers, directors, scriptwriters, cameramen, technicians, actors, musicians, storytellers, artists and craftspeople.

COME JOIN IN THE 37th ANNUAL Back to Batoche "Spirit of the Métis"

July 19 to 22, 2007
at the

Métis Nation- Saskatchewan Batoche Site

(approximately one km north of Batoche National Historic Site)

5:00pm, Thursday, July 19th

- Opening Ceremonies—Métis Veteran's Hall

6:00 pm, Friday, July 20th

- Sasktel Hot Air Balloon Rides (weather permitting)

Old Time Dances each night

- music by award winning Métis musician Donny Parenteau and Métis musicians from across the Homeland

Saturday, July 21st

- Batoche National Historic Site
Community Appreciation Day – Pancake Breakfast

Sunday, July 22nd

- Mass followed by Procession to Gravesite

Free registration for:

Fiddling/Jigging/Square Dance Competitions

-Music by John Arcand

Voyageur Games Competitions

Family and children's activities

Gate Admission:

Adult – Daily - \$10.00, Weekend - \$20.00;

Youth (ages 13 to 19 years)– Daily - \$8.00/Weekend - \$15.00

Children – (ages 6 to 12 Years) Daily - \$5.00/Weekend - \$10.00

Children – (ages 5 and under) – Free.

Un-serviced Campsites – Free

Fee for electrical sites- \$50.00 for weekend

Arts/craft table rental available - \$100.00 for weekend

Food Concession/Vendors - \$200.00 for weekend

VOLUNTEERS GREATLY APPRECIATED

For additional information contact:

Bonnie Start, Event Coordinator

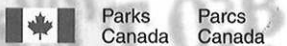
Phone: (306)249-3619

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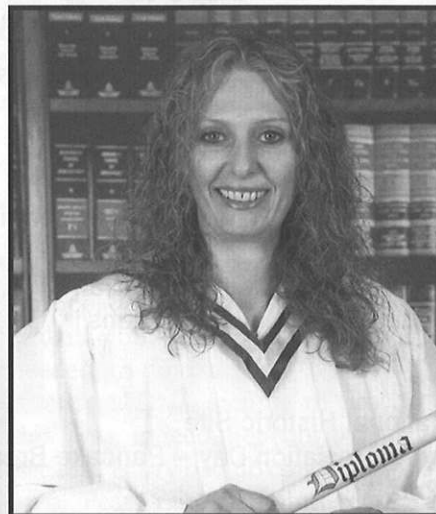
MES Success Stories



Haley Williamson
Region 4 – Hairstyling Diploma

I graduated from Marvel College with a hairstyling diploma and am now a full-time hairstylist at "Tintura Hair & Body Salon."

The Métis Nation of Alberta has been a huge help to me. They were generous in paying my tuition for college and supplying me with money for living expenses. I am incredibly thankful for having been given this opportunity to pursue my dream career. Thanks so much!

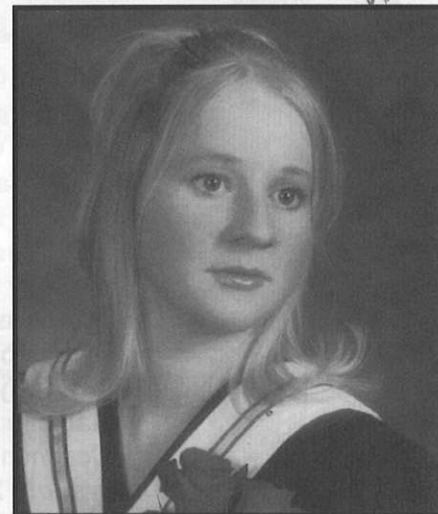


Pauline (Jo) Marple
Region 3 – Dental Hygienist

I am really appreciative of the assistance I received from the Métis Nation of Alberta in acquiring my Dental Hygienist Diploma, and of the support and encouragement of my Employment Counsellor. As a single parent and mature student, it was very difficult to return to college.

My sacrifices, perseverance and hard work in this very demanding course are paying off greatly. Since I graduated in June 2006, I have been working as a Hygienist full-time. The job is very fulfilling, and gives me international opportunities. In appreciation of all that's been given to me, I'm giving back by volunteering my dental services in developing nations and with the homeless in downtown Calgary.

At last my dreams have come true. I am able to be self-sufficient and to help support my daughter in her post-secondary education and to fulfill her dreams.



Kristin Sheptycki
Region 4 – Bachelor of Commerce

Kristin began her Bachelor of Commerce at MacEwan's transfer program, then completed her degree at the University of Alberta in December 2006, majoring in accounting. The Métis Nation of Alberta helped relieve the financial stress of the final two university semesters.

Kristin has also completed many courses from the University of British Columbia's Diploma in Urban Land Economics program. She is a candidate member of the Appraisal Institute of Canada and working towards the Canadian Residential Appraiser (CRA) designation. She is currently working for Powers and Associates Appraisal Services as a Residential Appraiser valuing residential properties.



Kevin Erasmus
Region 2 – Class 1 Truck Driver

Because of the assistance that the Métis Nation of Alberta has given me, I accomplished getting my Class 1 Drivers License and the certificates that assisted me in obtaining employment with E-Can Oilfield Services in Elk Point. I am currently working on a flush-by unit, which services oil wells. My goal is to gain the experience to eventually operate a unit for E-Can. I would like to thank you for your help and assistance.



Brenda Collins
Region 2 – Class 1 Truck Driver

I would like to thank the Métis Nation of Alberta, also each and every one who gave me the opportunity to take this course. This was a challenge that I have always wanted to take, even though it was tough. I made it and I have to thank Betty Desjarlais, my Employment Counsellor for encouraging me to take Class 1 Truck Driving. I have never been more proud of myself; I achieved something that I thought was out of my reach.



Lisa Coombs
Region 2 – 4th Class Power Engineering

I have just finished the 4th Class Power Engineering program at Portage College in Cold Lake. It seems like only yesterday I was working as a security officer, a job that wasn't going anywhere. I have no regrets taking this program, as it provides many opportunities and growth. Thanks to this program and the Métis Nation of Alberta, I am now employed full time with CNRL as a field operator.



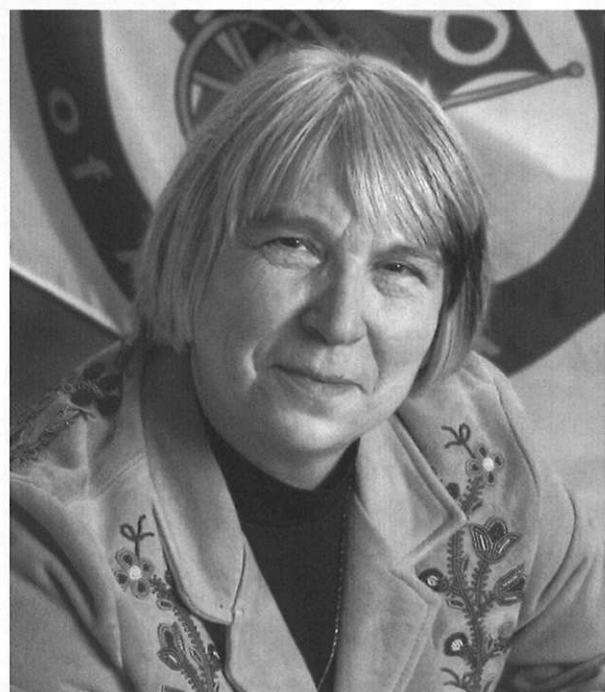
Shawn McKerry
Region 4 - Emergency Services Technologist

Thanks to the assistance of the Métis Employment Services, I was able to attend Fire Etc., Lakeland College's two year diploma program in Emergency Services Technology – Fire Specialization. The program included nine months of classroom and hands-on training, along with two months of on-site practicum with a full time fire service.

During this program I have become more physically fit, obtained excellent industry-leading training and instruction and the excellent qualifications to allow me to obtain not only a job but a career in the emergency services field as a firefighter.

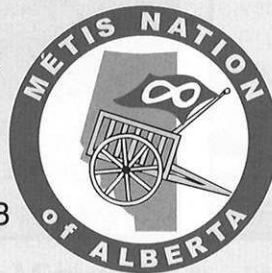
The members of my class were awesome and there will be friendships that last a lifetime. I loved the experience!

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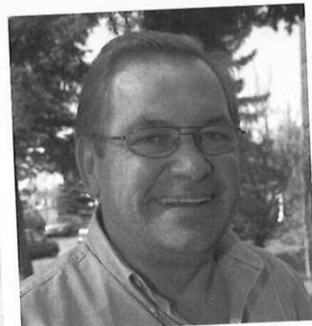
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The Devlin Side

Monique Devlin

While doing the "stew and bannock circuit" (the nickname for all of the traveling I get to do across the province to places, where I usually get to sample home cooking from the area) I had the chance to listen to Jean Teillet speak as part of the Lethbridge Local's AGM (after eating a huge meal of venison and bannock, of course).

For those who do not know, Jean was the lead council in the *Powley* case, and continues to work on harvesting and Métis rights related issues across the country.

It was fascinating to listen to her talk about ideas of the interconnectedness of Métis people, particularly our unique ideas of home.

She relayed a story about a group of anthropologists who were doing land use mapping in order to better understand Métis harvesting practices. During this study, the anthropologists asked one question that almost every other person in Canada would answer with ease, but one that most Métis people had a difficult time with.

The question?
"Where do you live?"

It seems there was never a simple answer. Often the question was refuted with a "what do you mean?"

The reason it hits so close to home for me, is that I often have difficulty answering that question myself.

Right now, I say Edmonton, but I usually follow up with a list of "if, ands or buts" such as, "I was born in Calgary, but I spent my teen years in BC, but I met my husband and went to school in Calgary, when I wasn't living in Wetaskiwin, in between living back in BC (Elkford, Penticton, Quesnel –

take your pick). Oh and if you include the time before I got married when I lived in Quebec and Ontario. Oh yeah, and I spent five months in...."

Well, you get the idea. And that is before I even start on where my family lives now and where they lived in the past. Again, there never seems to be a simple answer.

Even now, I come home with crazy ideas such as: "let's sell everything we own and buy a camper and travel across the country," or "lets apply to immigrate to Australia," or "let's see if we can buy a hostel in Creston."

My poor husband never really knows if he should take me seriously or not, especially when I start with "I have an idea, but just listen to it before you say how bad it is."

I have always had a little of the wanderlust stirring deep inside of me. I have never understood the concept of living in the same place for an entire lifetime. I am not saying it is a bad thing to do, just that with so many possibilities out there, with so many things to see and do, I could never let that sense of security that comes with staying where it's familiar limit me.

According to Jean, this need for movement is all part of being Métis. For us, staying put in one place just isn't who we are.

I am glad. Now if you'll excuse me, I hear there are some beautiful ocean front properties opening up in northern Manitoba...

-30-

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The program starts **August 27**. Contact your nearest Métis Employment Services centre for details and apply today!

This program is fully funded by the Métis Nation of Alberta for those applicants who meet criteria.

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