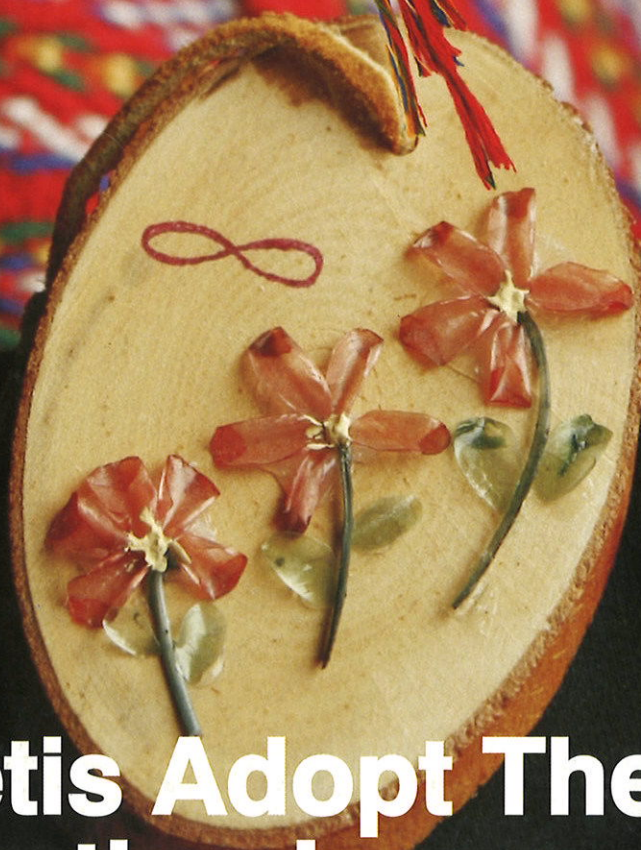


Otipemisiwak (oh-t-paym'-soo-wuk) - In Michif: The Independent Ones

Volume 4 Issue 2 - Autumn 2007

Otipemisiwak

VOICE OF THE MÉTIS NATION IN ALBERTA



Alberta Métis Adopt Their Own Harvesting Laws

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Canadian Publication Agreement Number 40985503

AGM in St. Paul, Fort Vermilion AJFR Wins 3rd Time in Row



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

Michif:
"their own boss,
the independent ones"

Feature Photo (left):

The Métis Child and Family Services Jiggers provided entertainment during the Métis Urban Housing pancake breakfast on July 20

Photo by Charity Borg

On Our Cover:

Fish scale art by Pearl Sandor. Pearl cleans, dyes, and then arranges the fish scales into flowers or other shapes, often using elements from nature as a base.

Photo by Charity Borg

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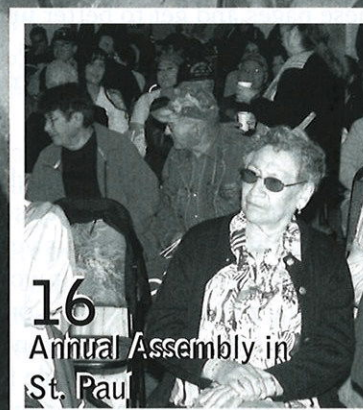
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Otipemisiwak

The Voice of the Métis Nation in Alberta

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

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Email: communications@metis.org
Website: www.albertametis.com

Otipemisiwak is published bi-monthly.

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Otipemisiwak welcomes written and photographic submissions. The editor retains the right to edit or reject all copy and photographs.

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Printing: Douglas Printing

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CANADIAN PUBLICATION AGREEMENT NUMBER
40985503

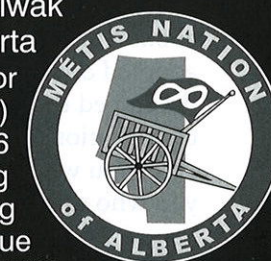
Otipemisiwak

The Voice of the Métis Nation in Alberta

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

Deadline for submissions is November 30, 2007

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President's Message

Welcome to the autumn edition of Otipemisiwak. I hope you take the time to read the many interesting stories within these pages and get to better understand some of the innovative initiatives the Métis Nation of Alberta has participated in to make our communities and our people strong and proud.

This year in St Paul, we made the historic decision to adopt our own harvesting policy. For those of you who could not make it out to this year's assembly, it was a very exciting time. I think it would be naive to think that we are all going to agree on everything all the time. While that would be wonderful, I also think that it is important that our people feel comfortable speaking their minds and letting their opinions be felt. That is part of what makes the Métis Nation of Alberta the strong organization that it is today. But when things really matter, that is when we do come together and that is when we are most powerful. While there was quite a bit of contention at this year's assembly, we all came together in the end to reject Ted Morton's heavy-handed and unilateral approach that attempts to abolish Métis rights in this province. Instead we adopted our own harvesting policy, one that has been developed through numerous community consultations across the province. I would like to thank all of you who helped develop our policy, and those of you who came together in St Paul to make it a reality.

I realize that there has been a lot of conflict in the last few months on both a provincial and national level.



While there is a lot of misinformation out there, there is a famous quote that says: "The test of democracy is freedom of criticism." The Métis Nation has grown so strong in the last decade that it would take more than a small chorus of voices to bring it down; instead the fact that these people are free to express their concerns is proof that we do have a strong viable nation.

One concern that was expressed very clearly at our Annual Assembly in the form of a resolution was that many of our members do not feel our system of six regions, each led by a President and Vice President, offers them fair representation. The resolution was accepted unanimously, and as a result there will be a special assembly this February to come up with a new method of representing the Métis people of Alberta. Contained in the resolution is a model of 12 constituencies throughout the province with one representative elected to each constituency. The framework for this model is being designed, and the resources to hold this meeting are being pursued. Please watch for more information in the upcoming issue of Otipemisiwak or go to current events section at albertametis.com

Another exciting event we have coming up is the Alberta Aboriginal Youth Achievement Awards. I would like to encourage those of you who know outstanding youth to put their names forward for recognition. Our youth are our greatest asset and there is no better way to encourage them to celebrate their accomplishments. For those young people still trying to find their way, whether they

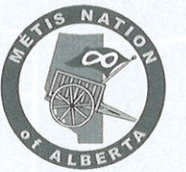
are looking for a career or searching for a way to make their mark in the world, our Labour Market Development program offers a variety of services to help them get ahead of the future.

Autumn is a time of quiet reflection and for reconnecting with family and friends as long summer days slip into cold winter nights. It is a time for harvesting food and preparing for the months ahead, but it is also a time of Remembrance; be it in the form of Riel where we celebrate our common hero, or Remembrance Day, where we celebrate fallen heroes the country over.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our Veterans, both young and old and all of the brave young men and women who are away fighting over seas and their families who support them. I would also like to offer my sympathies to all of those who have had family members pass away recently. This can be a very difficult time for everyone and my thoughts are with you.

Respectfully

Audrey Poitras, President
Métis Nation of Alberta



Strengthening Our Métis Rights

Métis Nation of Alberta Moves Forward on Harvesting Action Plan

"Our Action Plan focuses on four areas: exercising Métis rights, defending Métis rights, political action on Métis rights and public education on Métis rights"

The Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) recently reported on its progress in implementing the Métis Harvesting Action Plan that was unanimously adopted at the MNA Annual General Assembly held in August 2007.

"The MNA's leadership continues to move forward on our Action Plan that focuses on four areas: exercising Métis rights, defending Métis rights, political action on Métis rights and public education on Métis rights," said MNA President, Audrey Poitras.

Since August, the MNA has developed information sheets, checklists and a frequently asked questions document to assist Métis harvesters who are planning to harvest under Métis laws this fall. These documents are available through the MNA Head Office, MNA Regional Offices and on the MNA's website at www.albertametis.com. The MNA has also sent meeting request letters and information packages on Métis harvesting to all Alberta MLAs. As well, the MNA leadership has recently met with the Edmonton Journal Editorial Board and is planning a meeting with the Calgary Herald Editorial Board.

The MNA Minister for Métis Rights, Cecil Bellrose, has also appointed Captains and Deputies of the Hunt from communities throughout the province including Glendon, Magrath, Leduc, Trout Lake, Fairview, Fort McMurray,

Lethbridge, Drayton Valley, Lac La Biche, Robb, Brule, Valleyview and Cold Lake. Both Captains and Deputies will assist the MNA in implementing the Action Plan and getting information out to Métis harvesters this fall.

"Similar to the role Captains of the Hunt have historically played within the Métis Nation, these Métis harvesters will play the important role of communicating with our harvesters and working to ensure a safe and successful Métis harvest. The Captains will also be working with Métis harvesters and

the MNA to organize traditional Métis hunts that will be held in locations across the province, this fall," said Bellrose.

Poitras concluded, "I have recently written to the Alberta Government outlining how good faith negotiations can resume on Métis harvesting. I am optimistic

that negotiation and partnership on Métis harvesting will prevail over confrontation and litigation. Until then, the MNA will continue to stand united on Métis rights by implementing our Action Plan and defending Métis harvesters against Ted Morton's unilateral and regressive Métis harvesting policy.

"Métis Will Continue to Harvest as We Have for Generations"

Alberta Métis Adopt Their Own Harvesting Laws Prepare to Challenge Ted Morton's Policy on Métis Harvesting

Press Release

Edmonton, AB (August 20, 2007) – Over the weekend, Métis from across the province unanimously rejected the Métis harvesting policy put into place by Ted Morton, the current Alberta Minister of Sustainable Resource Development.

The decision was made at the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) Annual General Assembly held in St. Paul, Alberta, where delegates also unanimously made the historic decision to adopt a harvesting policy to govern the Métis harvest in Alberta.

"Our people have spoken. We reject Mr. Morton's heavy-handed and unilateral approach that attempts to abolish Métis rights in this province," Audrey Poitras, President of the MNA said. "Our people will continue to harvest for food, as we have for generations, regardless of Ted Morton's ill-conceived and unconstitutional policy. We will defend our harvesters based on our laws; since the Alberta Government's current harvesting laws fail to accommodate our rights."

On July 1st, Ted Morton implemented his own unilateral policy that completely excludes Métis living in southern Alberta, arbitrarily limits traditional Métis harvesting practice and creates a regime where his Ministry will



From left to right: Jean Teillet, Joe Blyan, Jason Madden and Cecil Bellrose

decide who is Métis and where they will have the right to harvest.

A proposed Action Plan on Métis Harvesting was brought to the MNA Assembly for direction from Métis citizens. The MNA Assembly unanimously adopted the Action Plan which focuses on four areas: (1) exercising Métis rights, (2) defending Métis rights, (3) political action on Métis rights, and (4) public education on Métis rights.

"We now have a solid and strong mandate to challenge Ted Morton's regressive policy and to defend our harvesters who are

following our Métis-made harvesting laws," Cecil Bellrose, the MNA Minister of Rights and Citizenship said. "Also, since Ted Morton made cancelling the IMHA an issue for his failed leadership bid, Alberta Métis will make his faulty policy an issue for the next provincial election. It is unacceptable that one man can attempt to abolish and ignore the constitutional rights of an Aboriginal people who have helped build this great province."

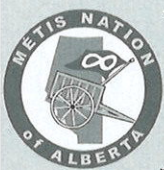
Métis harvesters are being cautioned that they may be charged

by the Alberta Government for harvesting, however, the MNA will provide legal support to harvesters meeting the requirements and following the terms of the MNA Harvesting Policy.

"The MNA remains committed to working with the Alberta Government in order to put into place a mutually agreeable accommodation on Métis harvesting," President Poitras concluded. "The MNA arrived at Points of Agreement for a Longer Term Métis Harvesting Agreement with the Minister of International, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Relations in May of this year, however, those Points of Agreement were rejected by Minister Morton and he put into place his own unilateral policy that bears no resemblance to those Points of Agreement or our negotiations with Alberta over the last 10 months. We are more than willing to come back to the negotiation table to implement those Points of Agreement."

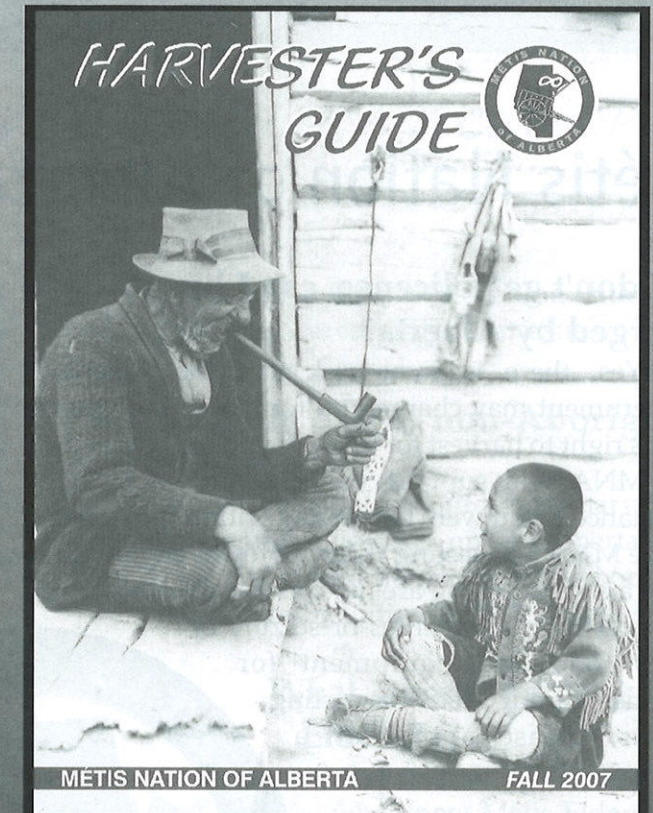
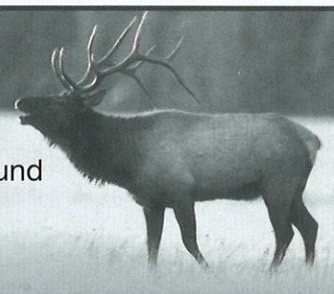
In September 2003, in the Powley case, the Supreme Court of Canada affirmed that Métis have constitutionally protected harvesting rights. Following that decision, the Alberta Government and the MNA negotiated and entered into the Interim Métis Harvesting Agreement (IMHA) to accommodate Métis harvesting. The IMHA effectively accommodated Métis harvesting in Alberta for over 2 ½ years until the Alberta Government cancelled the IMHA, fulfilling Ted Morton's failed leadership bid promise to the Alberta Fish and Game Association.

Métis harvesters are being instructed to obtain a copy of the MNA Harvesting Policy through their MNA regional office or on the MNA's website at www.albertametis.com. Additional information materials on the MNA's Harvesting Policy and Action Plan will be available to Métis citizens over the next few weeks.

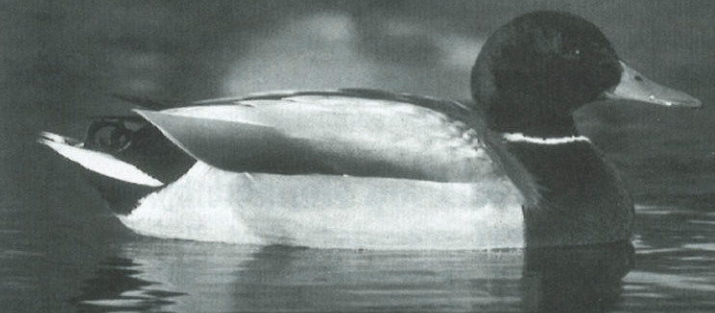
 The Métis Nation of Alberta needs your help! Métis harvesters are being forced into Alberta's courts to defend their constitutional right to harvest for food. The MNA Harvesters Legal Defence Fund has been established in order to help offset the costs associated with this defence.

MNA HARVESTERS LEGAL DEFENCE FUND

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



Request your free copy of
the *Métis Nation of Alberta
Harvester's Guide*
from the
Métis Nation of Alberta.



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

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Métis Nation of Alberta Harvesting Policy

If I don't get a license, can I be charged by Alberta?

Yes, there is some risk that the Alberta Government may charge you for exercising your Métis right to harvest for food. If you are charged, the MNA will support you and provide legal assistance if you were harvesting within the terms of the MNA Harvesting Policy. However, you do have a choice. If you are not comfortable with the possibility of charges or seizure of your food and equipment for exercising your Métis harvesting rights, please apply for a licence.

Do I have to get a MNA Harvester Identification Sticker?

No, the MNA is not issuing stickers for the 2007-2008 harvest. However, in order to be supported by the MNA, Métis harvesters must ensure they meet the eligibility criteria and are harvesting within the terms of the MNA Harvesting Policy. The MNA will likely begin issuing stickers in late 2008.

What do I do if I am stopped by a Wildlife Officer?

Be polite and show them your MNA membership card. Tell them you are exercising your Métis right to harvest. Provide them with the information they request such as your name, address, and contact information. You do not have to provide them with any additional information for their investigation. You do not have to provide them with your understanding of Métis rights.

Can SRD Wildlife Officers seize my meat, fish or gear?

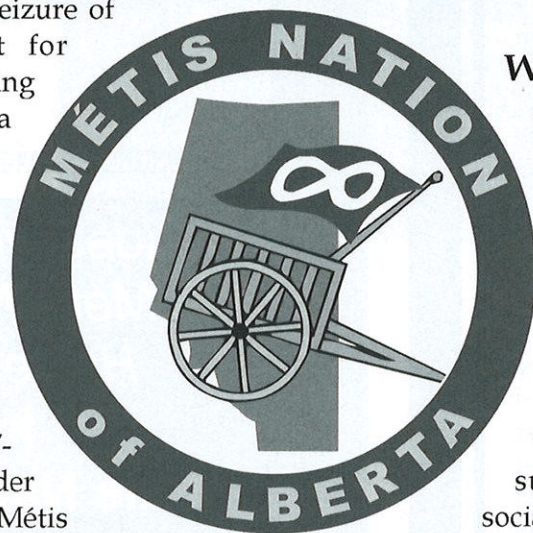
Yes, under Alberta's law Wildlife Officers can seize meat, fish, guns, fishing equipment and vehicles for investigation purposes. It is unusual for conservation officers to seize vehicles (boats or cars or trucks or ATVs), but you should be aware that an investigating Officer does have the discretion to seize.

What type of harvesting is covered?

The MNA Harvesting Policy covers taking, catching, fishing or gathering of renewable resources for reasonable personal or community use by MNA members. This includes plants, berries, fish, wildlife, wood and water, taken for subsistence, food, medicinal, social or ceremonial purposes and includes donations, gifts and exchange with other members of the Métis community. The Policy does not cover harvesting for commercial purposes or trophy harvesting.

Where can I harvest?

Under the MNA Harvesting Policy, Métis must be harvesting in an area where there is a Métis tradition of harvesting and where you as an individual have a tradition of harvesting. If those two requirements are met, Métis can harvest on all unoccupied provincial Crown lands in Alberta, in provincial protected areas and other occupied provincial Crown lands in Alberta that have an area designation for hunting, trapping or fishing and on any privately owned lands in Alberta



Frequently Asked Questions

where the harvester has been given permission by the owner or occupant to hunt, trap or fish (this permission must be obtained in advance). The obligation is on the Métis harvester to ensure they are harvesting in areas that meet the conditions above.

Can I hunt trophy animals or endangered species?

No, the MNA Harvesting Policy does not cover trophy hunting or endangered species. Any Métis doing that type of harvesting will not be supported or provided legal assistance by the MNA.

Can I fish in a closed lake?

If the lake is closed to all (including First Nations) due to conservation issues, then Métis are not to fish within it either. However, prior to such a closure, SRD should have consulted with the Métis in the area that use the lake. If the lake is closed to the public but is open to First Nations for food fishing, then Métis can fish there as well.

Can I fish with a rod and a reel?

The law states that government cannot restrict an Aboriginal right to harvest by legislating against particular means, manner or methods of harvesting. The choice to fish for food by rod and reel may reflect the fact that you only want a few fish. This is completely consistent with the Métis right to fish for food. Therefore, MNA has taken the position that Métis can fish using a rod and reel

for food and will defend Métis fishing with a rod and reel when conservation is not at issue.

Can I hunt with non-Aboriginal harvesters?

Yes, but you should ensure those harvesters have the required licenses under Alberta law. Your Métis right does not cover non-Aboriginal harvesters, including non-Métis spouses.

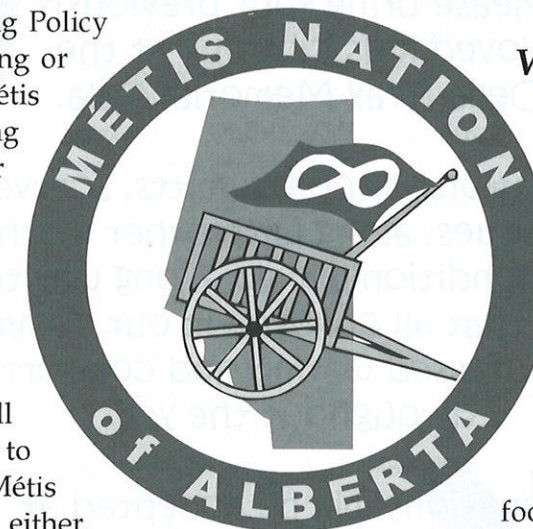
What about helping our Elders?

For those MNA members who know Métis Elders who require assistance in their food harvesting needs or require translation of these documents, please contact the MNA's Regional Offices or the MNA Head Office. Métis harvesters who are undertaking harvesting for the food needs of Métis Elders are covered under the MNA Harvesting

Policy, as long as conservation and safety are not issues. In addition, MNA Provincial Council members will be reaching out to Métis Elders who may need assistance or information.

What if I have questions?

If Métis harvesters have questions, they should contact their MNA Regional Office or the MNA Head Office. A listing of contacts is attached or available at www.albertametis.com.



delia's kids

Delia's Kids is a newly created charity that provides gently used coats, mitts, scarves, toques and other apparel to children in our community who need a helping hand.

This Charity was created by those who loved her; the children and grandchildren of provincial Métis elder Delia Gray, and the Metis Nation of Alberta.

Delia strongly believed in giving back to the community and Delia's Kids is a way to continue her legacy.



Please bring your previously loved kids clothing at the Delia Gray Memorial Gala.

Donations of coats, mitts, scarves and toques, along with other clothing in good condition will go a long way toward ensuring that all children in our community will be dressed warmly and comfortably throughout the yet.

Donations will be accepted at the Delia Gray Memorial Gala on November 16 at the Sands Hotel at 12340 Fort Road NW

For further information, please contact the MNA head office at: 455-2200 or 1-800-252-7553

Delia Gray



Resume Talks With Métis

The Edmonton Journal

This editorial appeared in the Edmonton Journal August 22, 2007.

The Stelmach government is headed for unnecessary conflict with the province's Métis over hunting rights after abruptly cancelling an interim agreement this spring.

In April, Aboriginal Affairs Minister Guy Boutilier invoked a 90-day termination clause to be followed by three months of good-faith negotiation to try and devise a permanent solution.

Those negotiations failed; and in July, the province then came up with new rules to govern where the Métis can hunt and who can qualify for subsistence licences.

The Métis nation is unhappy and rightly so. First, they were not consulted about the new rules now enforced by Sustainable Resource Development Minister Ted Morton's fish and wildlife officers.

Moreover, the province's definition of where Métis can hunt is far more restrictive than was being negotiated by the previous Klein

government.

Under the new rules, only Métis from 17 northern communities can qualify for subsistence hunting licences and they can only hunt in a 160-kilometre radius of those communities north of Edmonton. The Métis Nation says that ignores Métis who live elsewhere in the province.

Morton's department says a Métis from outside those communities who wants a licence must bring historical documents to the government—but the Métis nation says it's their job to determine who has Métis identity, not the provincial government's.

The two sides appear headed for a clash that will likely end up in expensive court battles. This weekend, the Métis nation annual assembly vowed to challenge SRD's new rules.

Why didn't the province continue negotiations when it appeared a long-term agreement was in the offing? In fact, an MLA committee reviewed the hunting

issues in 2006 and recommended the government continue negotiations on the basis of the interim agreement.

As recently as May 30, Boutilier agreed to move forward with recommendations both sides had agreed to, said Audrey Poitras, president of the Métis Nation of Alberta. Those recommendations included identity stickers for Métis harvesters, a ban on trophy hunting and an agreement to abide by the same safety rules that apply to other Alberta hunters.

The Métis feel their long-standing partnership with the Alberta government has suddenly been breached, says Poitras. And that appears to be the case.

Obviously, the Stelmach government has shifted gears on this complex issue. What's troubling is that neither Boutilier or Morton have given adequate reasons for their more restrictive approach.

Both sides should get back to the bargaining table to work towards the agreement that seemed to be at hand only months ago.

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!

Director and Staff of the Métis Identification Registry

Stronger Together

"Achieving Brighter Futures for Métis Communities"



Date: February 13-15, 2008

Location: Chateau Louis Hotel & Conference Centre
11727 Kingsway Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta

Cost: \$75.00

To register or for more information contact **Norma Spicer**
Toll free at 1-800-252-7553; (780) 455-2200 ext 226;
Email: nspicer@metis.org

Hosted by the Strategic Policy & Planning Unit



Please Name these People!



The MNA Genealogy and Land Research Unit is always looking for donations of historical material, such as old photos, letters and other documents. Unfortunately, we sometimes are unable to identify the people in some of the historical photos we have, and we are looking to our readers to help us with this task. The above family photo came to us along with some other photos relating to the Gairepy family. The photo of the three women was donated by Louisa Jobin-Adair, who found the photo with her mother's things, and is guessing that the women may be related to her mother in some way.

If you can help with these identifications, please call (1-800-252-7553) or write to the Genealogy and Lands Research Unit, 100 Delia Gray Building, 11738 Kingsway Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5G 0X5, Attention: Beatrice Demetrius.

Building the Métis Nation of Alberta

Fort Vermilion AJFR Crew Garners Bull of the Woods Hat Trick

By Monique Devlin

If the next generation of forestry workers is anything like the crews of Aboriginal Junior Forest Rangers (AJFR) out of Fort Vermilion and Lac La Biche, the future forests of Alberta will be in good hands.

The troupe out of Fort Vermilion once again triumphed over the competition at the Annual Bull of the Woods, becoming not only the first Aboriginal crew to win the event (back in 2005), but now also, the first of any crew to win the event three times in a row. Not to be outdone, the Lac La Biche crew finished in third place, proving a good showing all around. Both crews were sponsored by the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) Labour Market Development Program (LMD).

"This is absolutely awesome," Sylvia Johnson who is the President of MNA Region 6, (where Fort Vermilion is located) said. "They were the first AJFR group to ever win Bull of the Woods, let alone to win it three times in a row."

But for all the competitiveness underlying the event, it was obvious that each group's edge lied in their ability to work together as a team.

One of the key events was the Swede saw, where crew members sawed through a log with a hack saw,

the intent being to cut off a slice in the fastest time. There were three logs and each team was comprised of three crew members. Each person on the team would rotate through the tasks – one doing the sawing and the other two holding the log steady. But that is not all they did, as each of

the three took their turn at the saw, the two supporting the log would shout their encouragement and readjust the sawing crew members' safety glasses or hard hat if they slipped during the flurry of activity.

"It is teamwork at the utmost," Johnson said about the AJFR and

JFR program. "It has fostered a brotherhood among these youth."

The Bull of the Woods competition is the culmination of a summer long program joining youth from different parts of Alberta together to learn about wildfire and other forest management principles

under the Junior Forest Ranger program (JFR), which encompasses both non-Aboriginal (JFR) and Aboriginal (AJFR) crews. The competition gives the students the opportunity to display and put into practice the skills the learned over the summer months.

"The Junior Forest Ranger Program gives the students an opportunity to learn what Sustainable Resources and Development is all about," James Atkinson, an Aboriginal Junior Forest Ranger Program Specialist said about the program. "How we sustain our forests, forest management and how we implement conservation practices."

Students involved in the JFR program participate in activities such as compass work and mapping systems, wildfire operations and prevention, forest management principles, forest measurement, outdoor survival skills, recreational use of forests, timber harvesting and processing, and community enhancement projects. According to President Johnson, the Fort Vermilion crew did a multitude of work right in the community – from chopping wood for the elderly to building walking paths and helping clean up the community. In addition, the Aboriginal Junior Forest

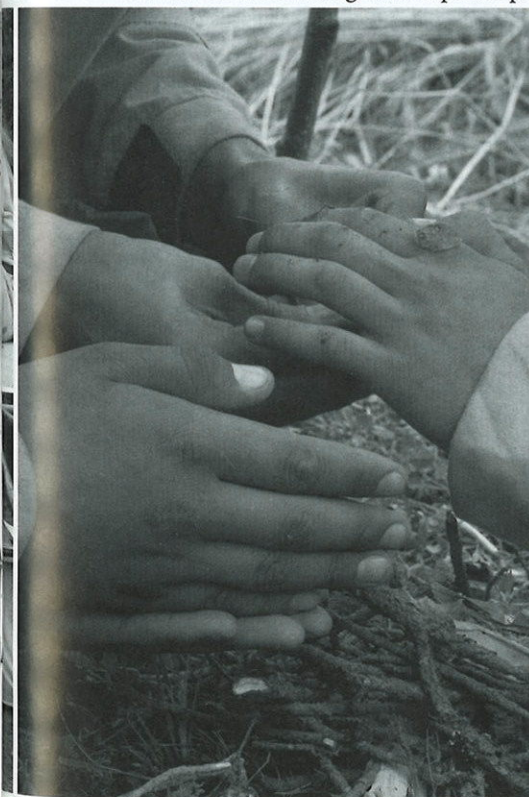
Rangers also take part in a week of cultural learning (medicine harvesting, traditional land use and importance of forests to Aboriginal communities).

According to Atkinson, one of the best aspects of the JFR and AJFR programs is that it gives the students an opportunity to learn about the many different forestry careers available and gives them direction on how to obtain those careers.

"I like spending time outdoors and I thought this was a good opportunity to have fun and find a career I would like to go into," Courtney McDonald, one of the Lac La Biche crew members said between events at the competition. This was McDonald's second year in the program, and she is hoping to pursue a year round forestry job sometime in the future.

In the meantime, for the Fort Vermilion crew, the camaraderie developed over the summer months doesn't stop when school starts again in the fall. Most of the youth involved in the program have a renewed interest in their studies, tend to get better marks, and become more involved in their community as a whole.

"The give-back to the community is unbelievable," Johnson said.



Left: Roy Paul and Clarence Queneznce (AKA "Budder") hold the log steady as Miles Flett attempts to cut off a small section.
Top: Theresa Joe (left) and Courtney McDonald (right) practice their knot tying.
Bottom: The triumphant Fort Vermilion AJFR crew won their third Bull of the Woods competition in a row.

Above: Crewmembers demonstrate teamwork as they light a fire.



Annual Assembly in St. Paul

By Monique Devlin

This year the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) held its Annual Assembly in the historical Métis community of St. Paul. The first day opened up with a golf tournament on the lovely St. Paul Golf Course, followed by a banquet, live entertainment, fashion show and a welcoming reception all held at the local recreation centre.

The town of St. Paul (formerly St-Paul-Des-Métis), welcomed the delegates with open arms, whether they were staying at one of the local motels, camping at the municipal campground or driving in from one of the nearby communities.

Friday opened with a free breakfast and several workshops throughout the recreation centre. Delegates were invited to learn more about genealogy or many of the

other services and programs offered by the MNA or browse through the craft and trade show. That night there was a barbeque style feast and an open jamboree that got most people out of their seats and dancing to the exceptional talent on display.

The business portion of the AGM had a heated start on Saturday.

The first issue of contention was the voting in of a chair to run the business portion of the meeting. It was an incredibly close vote, and it was decided by the floor to put the matter to a secret ballot (according to the MNA bylaws a vote can be put to a secret ballot if five Lifetime Members come forward within three (3) minutes of the announcement by the Chair of the results of the vote by a show of hands. The bylaws can be found by clicking on the "Métis

Nation of Alberta" menu item at the left side of the albertametis.com website). In the end Joe Blyan was elected as Chair, with Bruce Gladue in the role of Co-Chair. After that was settled, both the President and Vice President presented their reports.

As it has been reported in other publications, there were a lot of questions and concerns raised in regards to the President's report, as it dealt with some very contentious issues concerning the signing of a Métis National Council Health Bursaries agreement with Metco Ventures. Most of the questions came from the former owner of Metco Ventures and Region 1 Vice President, Rick Boucher. Audrey Poitras, MNA President, answered all of the questions allowed by the

chair and provided documentation to back up her assertions (even though she was often interrupted by heckling and questions and comments said out of turn). All documentation is available at the MNA head office.

Because most of the day was pushed back by the initial voting-in of a Chair, MNA Vice President Trevor Gladue was unable to complete the question and answer period of his report until the following morning. Instead, delegates were invited outside to partake in a special Ceremony honouring Métis Veterans, an event coordinated by and in conjunction with the youth conference.

After a brief break everyone reconvened in the Recreation Centre for a special banquet that cumulated with a "kookum's closet" fashion show and more musical entertainment and dancing.

On Sunday the conference

resumed to listen to the remainder of Vice President Gladue's report, the secretary's report, the treasurer's report and the report of the auditor. It was then that the new business was introduced starting with an overview of the harvesting situation.

Minister of Métis Rights and Citizenship, Cecil Bellrose, and Métis Lawyers Jason Madden and Jean Teillet were on hand to explain what has happened over the last year in regards to Métis Harvesting Rights in Alberta. Teillet, who was the lead counsel on the *Powley* case, likened the struggles each province is having implementing harvesting rights as a backlash to the inclusion of Métis people in the constitution.

"Because you (Alberta) was the furthest ahead (of all the provinces) in your harvesting agreement, you are now suffering the biggest backlash. It is not insurmountable, we need to keep fighting and keep

working at it," Teillet said.

After the crowd was brought up to date, an action plan was brought forward and delegates unanimously voted to implement the plan and to reject the Métis harvesting policy put into place by Ted Morton, the current Alberta Minister of Sustainable Resource Development. Then, the delegates unanimously voted to adopt the Métis made harvesting policy to govern the Métis harvest in Alberta.

Several other resolutions were passed, including one to re-examine the current structure of the MNA Regions and to work towards better communities for our children and for our Elders.

By early afternoon the new business had been dealt with; while the AGM got off to a fiery start, people left the assembly united on the harvesting front.

Open Letter from MNA Region 2

By the leaders, staff, and members of Region 2

Region 2 of the Métis Nation of Alberta would like to extend this letter of thanks to all who participated in, and supported the Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Alberta and the 2007 2nd Annual Métis Youth Career and Education Conference.

We are sincerely grateful to the Labour Market Development Unit for the continued positive relationship that we have enjoyed over the past few years. We also want to express to our membership, it's thanks to people like you who gather in the spirit of openness, cooperation and willingness that have helped us to achieve our goal.

We look forward to working with you on future initiatives and partnerships to help our youth to strive to reach their personal goals as well as take over the business of the Métis Nation as the future unfolds.

It is through the genuine

expression of interest, your generous contributions of time, and caring participation, that we make an impression on our youth that will serve to enhance and promote our common interests and goals.

All those who contributed, volunteered or provided space, helped us to inspire our youth to dream big and observe a mutual respect and understanding of the importance of positive community relations. We saw that our youth were inspired and our volunteers tired and that is one of the biggest indicators of success!

Some of the comments in the youth conference evaluation form feedback we received were:

- "There are people out there with all their goals completed."
- "It is okay to take a risk."
- "Excellent speaker content. I would recommend the speaker for their workshops."
- "It was meaningful; it gave me a

little help to get me through the day."

- "Teaching by a traditional Elder, good workshop, glad to have participated."
- "Military presentation exceeds expectations, they go for human rights; it was cool."

We asked the participants to evaluate the conference and of those completed and returned to us, we had 86 per cent tell us to do this again.

A thank you also goes to the Métis Nation of Alberta leadership and staff for their confidence in us to host both the AGM and the Youth Conference concurrently in Region 2.

It is through the support of all organizations, municipalities and businesses that we have achieved our goal of inspiring our youth and carrying forth the business of the Métis Nation.

Stand and Be Proud of Who You Are

Youth Conference Held Concurrent with AGM a Huge Success

By Charity Borg

The future leaders of the Métis Nation of Alberta met in St. Paul to discuss career paths and learn leadership skills at the Imagine a Career Path of Your Own Design Youth Conference.

But the conference was more than just learning about different job opportunities, it was also about learning from those who have experienced life.

"We know that it is our elders who have guided us along the way," said President Audrey Poitras. "It is important to learn from them, as they have already had to make many of the important choices and decisions you will soon be facing in life."

Many elders were involved with the youth conference. Elder Henry Suvee blessed the Mannawanis Friendship Centre with sweetgrass prior to the opening ceremonies on

Aug. 17, while many Elders were invited to speak about their lives and the importance of being involved with the Métis Nation.

During opening remarks, Métis Nation of Alberta Minister of Human Resource Development Sylvia Johnson encouraged youth to get involved with the happenings of the Métis Nation.

"You are the future, you are the ones who are carrying the torch, you are the ones going forward," Johnson said.

Region 2 President Karen Collins agreed with Johnson and shared her own story of how she ended up in Métis politics.

"My brother started taking me along to assemblies when I was nine or 10 because someone needed to look after the kids," said Collins.

As Collins entered her teenage years her brother told her that she

had to go to assemblies and listen instead of looking after his children.

"You learn from what you watch," she said. "I learned what we could be doing, what we should be doing."

The conference was held in conjunction with the Annual General Assembly and involved workshops on different career options, professionalism, culture, identify education, empowerment, entrepreneurship, public service, fine arts, heritage and governance.

The youth joined the Assembly participants for meals and nightly entertainment, even putting on two fashion shows. The first night they showcased works by Patricia Piche, and after the Saturday banquet they put on a show showcasing more historic fashions in conjunction with Métis Crossing and Lakeland College.

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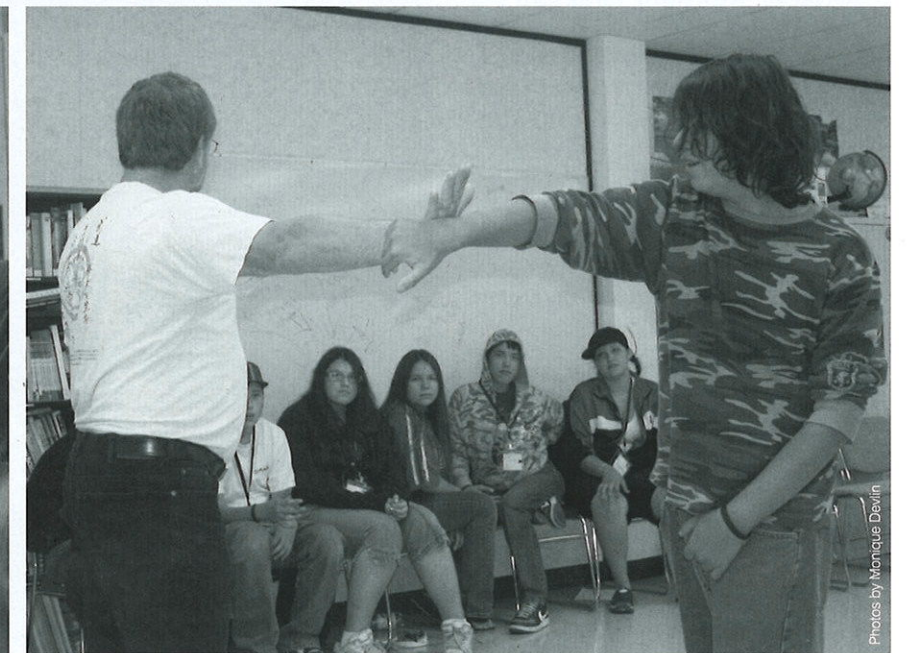
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- Change of Income
- Other changes that could affect your application

This information is crucial to Métis Urban Housing Corporation as it works to meet your Housing needs.

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Left: Youth involved in the conference attended sessions related to career choices, leadership, education, culture and identity.



Right: One of the sessions involved instruction of self-defence taught by Calvin Leckie.



Rocky Mountain House National Historical Site

Interpretive Project & Campground Management

By Beverley Webber

For the past 3 years, through a Partnership between Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3 and Parks Canada, a Métis Interpretive Project has been delivered at Rocky Mountain House National Historic Park.

Each summer season, a trappers tent is established focusing on the traditions and culture of the Métis highlighting their involvement during the fur trade as guides, interpreters, free traders, provisioners and company employees. This showcase educates visitors from around the world.

From May to September, guests enjoy tea and bannock, try their hand at hide preparation, and learn about the Métis. For example, they learn about the importance of Métis women to the survival of early explorers and to our Nation today.

Métis Local 845 has been involved in the program delivery which also includes the management of the Riverside Campground, a beautiful spot along the North Saskatchewan River just 12 km from Rocky Mountain House.

A wind-up supper was held at the campground on September 3, 2007 which was attended by Audrey Poitras, MNA President, Rob Harding, representing Parks

Canada, Scott Whiting, Site Manager of Rocky Mountain House National Historical Site, and Marlene Lanz, President of MNA Region 3.



Top: Gordon Poitras and Marlene Lanz stand by a York Boat at the Rocky Mountain House National Historical Site.
Above: On September 3, a wind up supper was held at the Site to celebrate another successful year.

It was a beautiful day, and everyone enjoyed the evening. An announcement was made by Region 3 President, Marlene Lanz, that the Memorandum of Agreement will continue with the Executive of Local 845 and Parks Canada based on the successful delivery of the Program through the Local for the past three years.

We are looking forward to many years of partnership with Parks Canada and future delivery of the Interpretive Program. An upcoming initiative will be to provide the opportunity to camp in teepees in the 2008 Season...Details of the upcoming Season at Rocky Mountain House will be provided next spring!



Each year a trapper's tent is set up to teach visitors from all over the world about Métis history and culture.

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.

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MNA Creates Innovative Child Care Program

PRESS RELEASE: Métis Family Day Home Program Addresses Alberta's Child Care Shortage

Alberta's parents are finding it increasingly difficult to find child care in our booming economy. Working parents seeking regulated child care options are experiencing longer wait times and often must resort to unlicensed babysitters with no quality guarantees. The Métis Nation of Alberta Labour Market Development Program has created an innovative pilot project to assist qualified Métis individuals in starting their own Family Day Home. The Day Homes started with this project will be for all children, adding much needed child care capacity for Albertans.

A Family Day Home offers licensed child care service in a family setting where care meets specific standards for caregiver-to-child ratios, health, safety and child development. A maximum of six children can be cared for in a Family Day Home.

Starting a Family Day Home allows individuals to work in a home-based business and to spend time with their own children while earning a good income.

The Métis Family Day Home pilot project will provide accredited Level I Early Childhood Certification, business plan development, and extensive mentoring to qualified Métis individuals. Participants may also receive income support while in training and a start up kit. The program will be piloted in three regions: Red Deer, Grande Prairie and Slave Lake / High Prairie during October and November 2007.

Interested Métis individuals from these three regions may apply by contacting Métis Employment Services at 1-888-48-METIS (1-888-486-3847) toll-free.



Shawna Bellerose, pictured here feeding her son, Wahwekesic

Best practices from the three pilot projects will be incorporated into a Métis Family Day Home Program that will be offered in communities throughout Alberta in 2008. Creating this self employment option for Métis individuals supports the mandate of the Labour Market Development program in building "a skilled Metis labour force."

If you'd like more information about this topic, please call Janet Gardner at 1-866-624-0691 or email her at jgardner@metis.org.

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"

Careers and a Whole Lot of Fun

By Bryan Hunter

Every year the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) provides the opportunity for youth from all over Alberta to converge and learn about careers and career related skills. They spend half of their day learning about careers and the other half spent gaining outdoor experience in areas such as rock climbing or canoeing. Fortunately enough, I was given the opportunity to mentor the camp and this year was no exception to the high standards of excitement set in years prior.

This year's youth truly received an opportunity from the MNA for a one-on-one experience with mentors, role models and youth alike. The six youth left Edmonton on August 2 for a weekend to remember at a well-known guest ranch within the outreaches of Hinton, Alberta. Black Cat Guest Ranch was six days and five nights of work, fun and the great outdoors.

Our first day began with the kitchen staff ringing the bell announcing breakfast being served. Walking into the main dining area was a memorable experience as we were greeted with the fresh smell of coffee and a polite, "Good Morning," from the Ranch owners. Breakfast was the most important meal of the day; it let us start the day off right. At breakfast we learned all about our activities for the day. The Inroads Staff were great coaches and leaders who scheduled and ran our day-to-day activities. It is an excellent program. Our mornings were spent in career oriented workshops which provided our youth several opportunities to learn about different career paths. For example, there was the option to learn mapping skills from a forestry school in Hinton. There was also the opportunity to go to the Brule Fire Department and



learn about fire fighting. The chief even provided the opportunity to let our group explore the brand new fire truck as well as practice using the fire hose. This experience was best expressed from one youth when he said, "Man that was cool." Other morning activities included working in a commercial kitchen as well as forestry field skills.

Though the mornings were filled with work and personal development workshops, the afternoons were the

complete opposite. After having lunch and sitting back in the ranch dining area or finding a relaxed place to eat our great bagged lunches, the afternoons were filled with exciting, fun and enjoyable activities. Our first afternoon was spent learning and developing skills in rock climbing; which later paid off as the Inroads staff gave the youth an opportunity to climb such rock faces as "Milkshake" and "Fur balls". Another great afternoon activity we participated in was canoeing; all the youth had the opportunity to paddle in a lake and down a creek that fed the lake. Due to a majority vote from the youth, the following two afternoons were spent horseback riding. On the first day we rode to one of the local viewpoints that allowed us to look at and appreciate the valley and surrounding areas. We also had the rare opportunity to see a tree with fresh bear claw marks; this reminded us about the respect we must have for the outdoors. The second day horseback riding was through local valleys and

back up to another viewpoint that overlooked black cat mountain. What a spectacular experience that brought us together as a group!

The days were so long and exciting it left the evenings with a sense of earned relaxation. The youth played board games and spoke of the day's events. Lights out was 11 p.m. nightly, and the time was rarely disputed with such an intense daily schedule. All-in-all, youth camp was an unbelievable experience that left us all with a lasting impression about career options, fire fighting training and the great outdoors. New friendships were created and our learning experiences forever enriched. Youth camp was an unforgettable experience; the memories are what will last forever.



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2007 Recipients of the Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. Bursary Awards

By George Vass

Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. (AMDI) has always been a strong supporter of lifelong learning. In order to be successful in business, you must continue to keep pace with current trends, innovative marketing strategies and ever changing technology. Education is primary in any business venture in today's world.

In order to promote continuing education, the Board of Directors of Apeetogosan recently approved the establishment of six bursary awards in the amount of \$1,000 each for first year post-secondary students. It is not necessary that the individual choose a major in business. The primary condition of the application is that the individual demonstrate an investment and commitment to the Métis communities they live in.

The Bursary Fund Committee had a very difficult time this year in making their selections. There are many strong candidates from within the Métis Nation of Alberta wishing to further their education. The

decision has been made and we are pleased to announce that the winners of the AMDI 2007 Bursary Award were:

Ms. Krystal Bourguignon
Ms. Cerynn Desjarlais
Ms. Charmaine Joe
Ms. Tara Johnson
Mr. Joshua Lavallee
Ms. Marissa McAteer

Our sincere congratulations to all six of these fine young people and we wish you much success in your career path.

If you or anyone you know may be interested in the AMDI Bursary Award, check out our website at www.apeetogosan.com or call our office at 1-800-252-7963 and ask to have an application mailed or faxed to you.

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Celebrating Métis Culture

Hivernant Rendezvous 2007

By Monique Devlin

One thing I love in the summer time is driving down the Alberta Highways watching as different storm systems move across the sky.

I also love going places I have never been before; especially if there is the promise of something new and exciting waiting at my destination.

This summer I packed up my tent, a few changes of clothes, some sleeping bags and my husband (well, I will be honest, he did most of the packing and all of the driving) and headed down to Big Valley, Alberta to take in the Annual Hivernant Celebration.

The fun started before we even hit the road. When people would ask what I was doing over the August long weekend, I would tell them that I was going camping in Big Valley.

All would assume that I meant the Big Valley Jamboree in Camrose, an annual celebration of a different sort (think huge crowds, country music and way too many young women in straw cowboy hats) that happens to fall on the same weekend. I would quickly correct them and tell them about the real Big Valley and the annual Métis celebration that takes place there the first weekend of August.

Located an easy 15 minute

drive south of Stettler, Big Valley is a pretty little village nestled alongside an ancient river valley. Every year, Métis people from across Southern

Alberta and beyond gather here to celebrate the Hivernant Rendezvous, an event billed as a non-drug, non-alcohol, and non-

political family gathering.

"For those of you who do not know the area, it is one of the first Métis communities in Alberta,"

Marlene Lanz, President of Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) Region 3 said when welcoming guests to the Rendezvous.

She pointed out areas such as Tail Creek, just up the road, which used to be the largest Métis settlement west of Winnipeg, and that Gabriel Dumont used to winter in the area.

It was the idea of the area being used extensively for "wintering" that gave the Rendezvous its name. A Hivernement was a winter town, where Métis families (called Hivernants) gathered during the colder months. Although the Rendezvous takes place in the height of the summer, it is the memory of those winter settlements that is being celebrated.

"It is always good to have you back," Big Valley Mayor, Len Walters said during the opening of the Rendezvous. "Though I am hesitant about saying welcome to Big Valley, because while most of your ancestors were already out here, mine were still scurrying around in the bush of Northern Ontario."

After the crowd was welcomed, the younger children were invited back to the buffalo hunters camp to learn how to make an assortment of crafts, while the adults were welcome to sit and

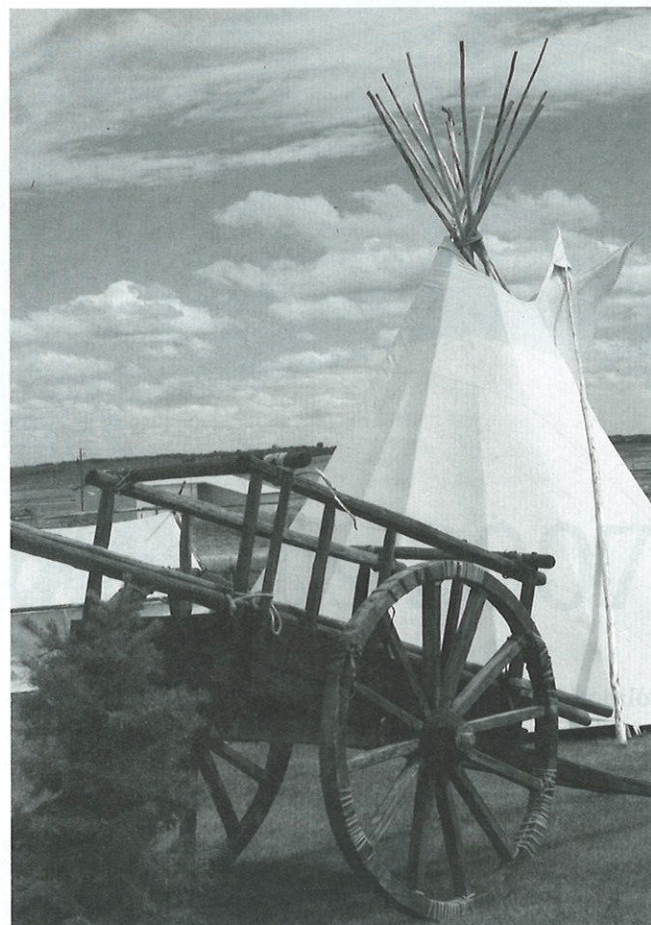


listen to story teller Eric Nigstrom, browse the adjoined craft booths, explore the 1885 camp, or wander around the historic town of Big Valley, including the old railway station that was the scene of the arrival of the "Métis special" train the night before. While all this was going on, 10 students were taking part in an Alberta hunter Education course, sponsored by the Hivernant Métis Cultural Society (the same organization that puts on the Rendezvous itself).

In the afternoon the games began out by the traditional camp. While several dark clouds passed overhead, the rain never came and everyone was invited to participate in a variety of traditional competitions that had both young and old doing such diverse things as baking bannock over an open fire and throwing tomahawks at painted targets.

That night everyone gathered back at the community hall to enjoy a feast and dancing. Impromptu jigging lessons were offered that led to a contest and several different dance demonstrations. Louis Riel (OK, the talented Wally Garrioch playing Riel) even made an appearance, leading the crowd through part of the Riel trial.

The next morning my husband and I packed up our tent, returned our borrowed sweaters and headed back home, already planning our trip to next year's Hivernant Rendezvous.



BOARD OF DIRECTOR POSITION

Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. (AMDI), an affiliate of the Métis Nation of Alberta Association, is a for profit Aboriginal Capital Corporation delivering a range of Financial and Business Advisory Services to Alberta resident Métis and Non-Status Indians through its office in Edmonton. AMDI is currently inviting applications for a Board of Director position. Principally, the Board of Directors provides quality direction to the total affairs of the business that will ensure the development and growth of the company in products, services, markets, and financial results. Accordingly, this is a volunteer position of considerable responsibility and substance, requiring a significant time commitment.

Qualifications for AMDI's Board of Directors include:

- 1) Should be an Alberta resident Métis or Non-Status Indian;
- 2) Must have a successful business and / or related Professional background;
- 3) Must possess exemplary character, integrity and background; and
- 4) Must be willing to sign an oath of confidentiality and undergo external checks as may be appropriate;
- 5) Cannot apply if previous bankrupt or under bankruptcy protection;
- 6) Possess experience serving on Policy Governance Boards and provide contacts for reference purposes;
- 7) Willing to commit the time to attend four face-to-face meetings per year as well as a minimum of four teleconference meetings per year averaging 3 hours per meeting.

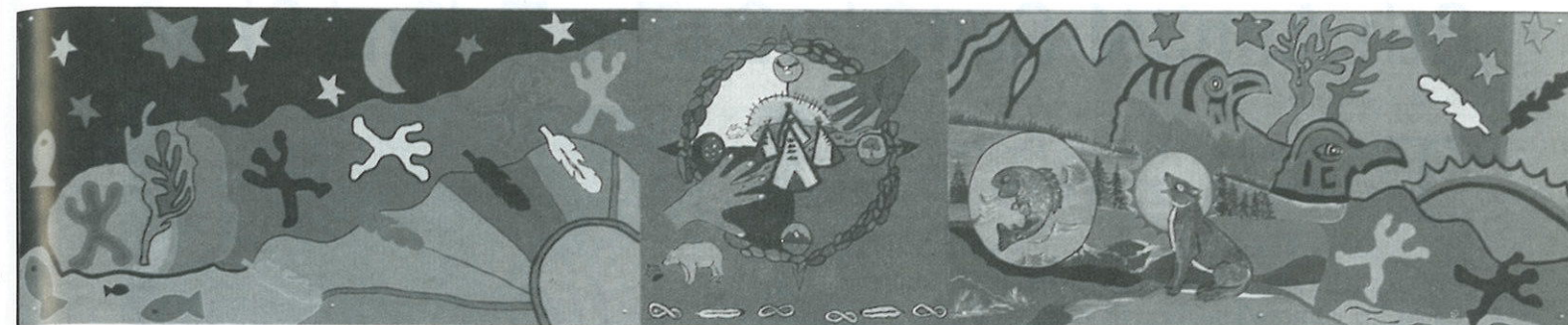


Interested parties should submit their résumé, together with a minimum of two references and a brief note clarifying their interest, to:

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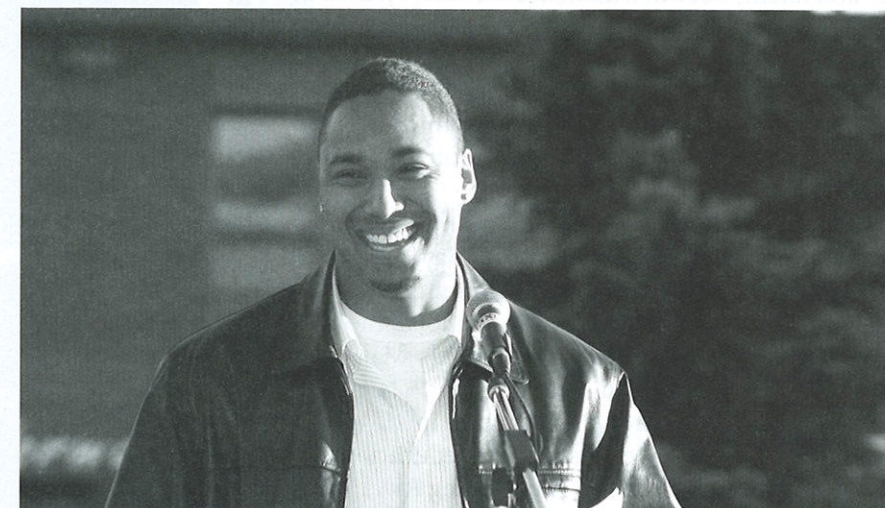


New Artwork Adorns Region 4 Building

By Monique Devlin

J.R. LaRose, a member of the Edmonton Eskimos was on hand to help unveil a new mural adorning the MNA Region 4 building in Edmonton. The mural was created by nine Aboriginal youth under the direction of Latin American Mural artist, Pedro Rodriguez De Los Santos, and locally based Aboriginal artist, Duane Linklator, as part of the Seeing Ourselves in the City: Aboriginal Youth Mural Art.

The idea behind the project was to provide the youth a visual medium that allowed them to dispel negative stereotypes and highlight the aspects of their culture that are important to them. Also on hand was Akina Shirt who sang Oh Canada in Cree; the Métis Child and Family Services Jiggers; Aboriginal hip-hop group Freshly Squeezed and

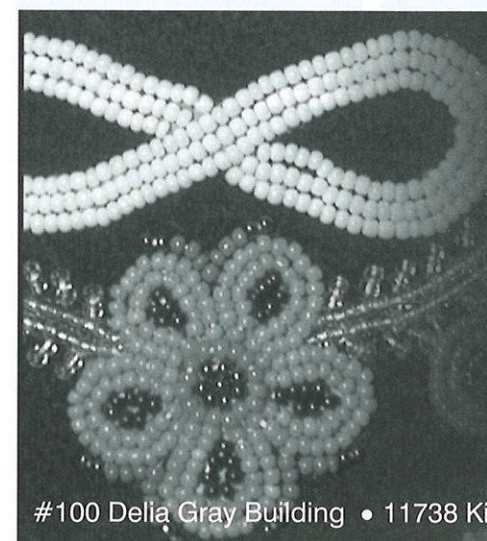


J.R. LaRose, of the Edmonton Eskimos, helped to unveil the new mural (top) now proudly displayed above the main entrance of the MNA Region 4 office.

solo artist Mary Thomas.

The project was part of the River of Hope/Land of Vision: Creating Social and Ecological Community Among Indigenous Youth - Learning Through Nature

Program. Anyone wishing to see the mural is welcome to stop by the MNA Region 4 office at 11724 - 95 Street, Edmonton. It is situated above the main entrance.



Update Your Métis Nation of Alberta

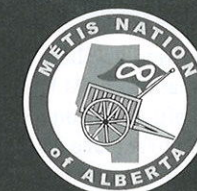
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8th Annual Grande Cache Talent Show

By Monique Devlin

This September the hills of Western Alberta were alive with the sound of music.

Fiddlers, jiggers and singers gathered to delight the crowd at the Askaska Curling Rink in Grande Cache to compete in the 8th annual talent show hosted by local 1994.

Accompanied by the sounds of the Muskeg River Band, the competitors faced off depending on age and talent, but often audience members joined in by dancing in the aisles and off to the side of the stage.

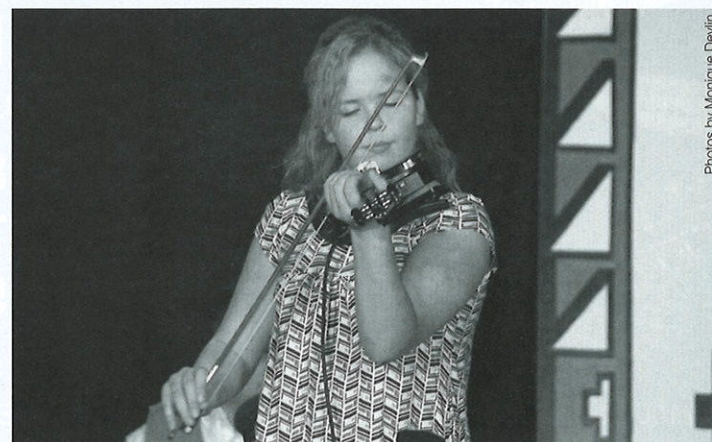
The big winner of the event, Cory Poitras, proved to be a triple threat by taking third place in adult singing and first place in both adult jigging and fiddling.

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the new Rose Findlay Memorial Scholarship to the first two recipients, Evonne Rohatinsky and Jamie Snieder. The scholarship was created to honour the memory of Métis Matriarch Rose Findlay, who passed away last year. The award is for students with strong community involvement who are pursuing their post secondary education.

Between competitions, the Muskeg River Band invited the crowd to participate in dance numbers or just provided ambient music while co-hosts Trevor Gladue, Métis Nation of Alberta Vice President and Graham Neil, the arts and culture reporter from CTV news kept the crowd entertained. Vice President Gladue presented Neil with a sash to thank him and to help teach him about Métis culture. The event, which is a yearly fundraiser for Local 1994, was recorded for rebroadcast on CTV.



Above: Wayne Lambert won first place in adult vocals.
Top: Graham Neil, Al Findlay, Jamie Snieder, Trevor Gladue
Middle Left: Cory Poitras won third adult vocals, first place fiddle and first place youth jigging
Middle Right: Katlyin McKenna won first place youth vocals
Bottom: Kelsey Poitras won second place for youth vocals and first place youth jigging.



Photos by Monique Devlin

Grande Cache Talent Show Winners

Adult Vocals

- 1st Wayne Lambert (Heart Lake)
- 2nd Stan Hitchcock (Grande Prairie)
- 3rd Cory Poitras (St. Paul)

Senior Vocals

- 1st Ed Poitras (St. Paul)
- 2nd Rose Aastveit (Dawson Creek)
- 3rd Joe Deause (Grande Cache)

Youth Vocals

- 1st Katlyin McKenna (Grande Cache)
- 2nd Kelsey Poitras (St. Paul)

Fiddle

- 1st Cory Poitras (St. Paul)
- 2nd Wayne Lambert (Heart Lake)
- 3rd Ed Poitras (St. Paul)

Youth Jigging

- 1st Kelsey Poitras (St. Paul)

Adult Red River Jig

- 1st Cory Poitras (St. Paul)
- 2nd Ed Poitras (St. Paul)
- 3rd Rose Aastveit (Dawson Creek)

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High Prairie AB T0G 1E0
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Grande Prairie AB T8V 2V5
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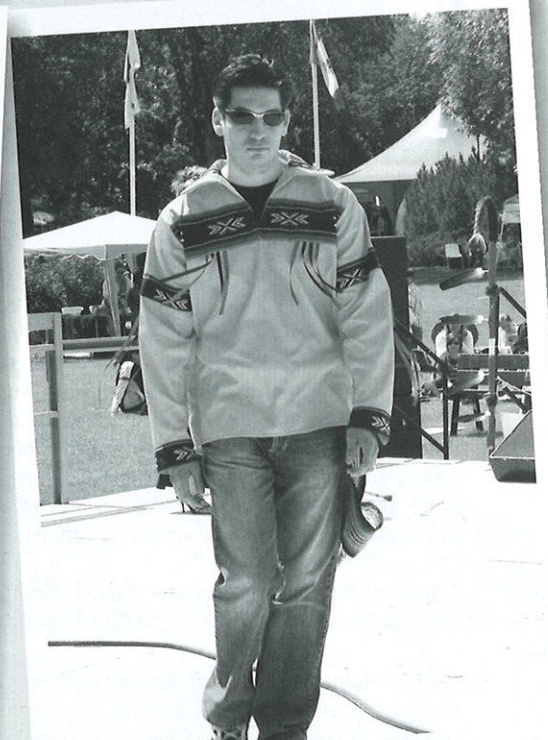
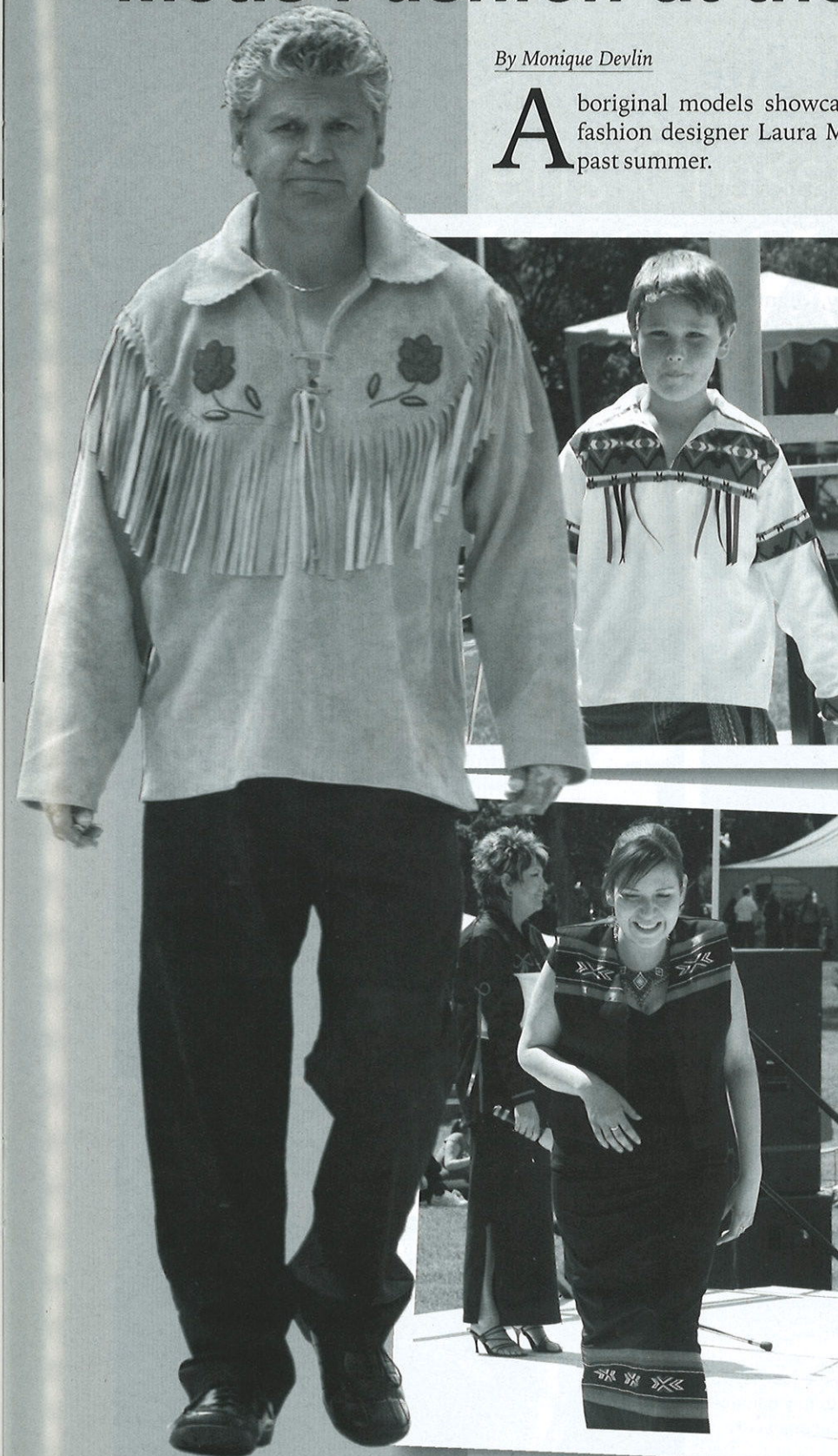
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Métis Fashion at the Legislature

By Monique Devlin

Aboriginal models showcased clothing created by Métis weaver and fashion designer Laura McLaughlin at the Legislature Grounds this past summer.



Lac Ste. Anne Now National Historical Site

By Charity Borg

For hundreds of years the Lac Ste. Anne pilgrimage site has been the gathering grounds for aboriginal people to rejuvenate their spiritual connections. This pilgrimage continued that tradition.

July 26, during the opening ceremony, dignitaries from aboriginal groups, clergy and politicians gathered to celebrate the unveiling of the plaque officially declaring the Lac Ste. Anne Pilgrimage site a National Historic Site of Canada.



Photos by Charity Borg

Above: The plaque reads:

"Lac Ste. Anne Pilgrimage Site

A long-established annual meeting place for Aboriginal peoples, this lake became a Catholic pilgrimage site in the late 19th century. Since 1889, First Nations and Métis have travelled here in late July to celebrate the Feast of Saint Anne. This Saint, widely revered as the mother of the Virgin Mary and the grandmother of Jesus, embodies the grandmother figure honoured in many Canadian Aboriginal societies. Lac Ste. Anne is an important place of spiritual, cultural and social rejuvenation, central aspects of traditional summer gatherings for indigenous people."

Top right: Volunteers carry an effigy of Jesus after the opening ceremonies of the Lac Ste. Anne Pilgrimage July 22.

Bottom right: Thousands of people every year make the journey to the holy waters of Lac Ste. Anne at the end of July to pay homage to Jesus. It is the largest gathering of Catholics in Canada every year.



Métis Crossing Voyage

By Monique Devlin

Despite the dreary weather overshadowing this year's annual Métis Voyage event at Métis Crossing the weekend was a smash hit.

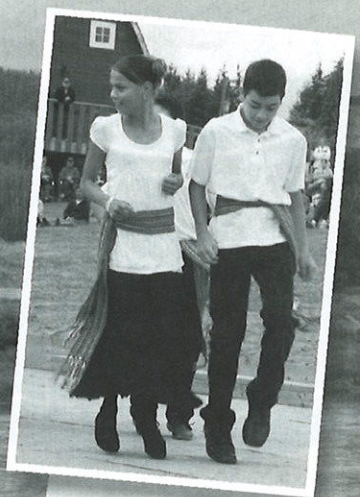
Families and friends gathered together along the banks of the North Saskatchewan River the weekend of August 25 to experience our exciting culture at Métis Crossing and to watch the riverbanks come to life.

Fiddling and jigging were the order of the day; as well as a comedy duo to entertain the crowds gathered around the main stage. People could learn hands on at the historic village where guests were invited to learn how to weave a sash, do some beading or tan hides. While artisans demonstrated fish scale art and loom weaving at the machine shed. For the young ones there were plenty of games around the grounds and in the discovery tent as well as a petting zoo (complete with puppies).

Visitors were also free to explore the site, including the River's Edge nature trail and the interpretive centre located in the barn, featuring displays about how the Métis lived, worked and played.

Métis Crossing is the first Métis owned and operated cultural interpretive site of its kind in Canada and provides a central location for Métis from all over the province of Alberta to gather and celebrate their unique culture and heritage.

Photos by Monique Devlin



Honouring Our Métis People



Proud to be Métis

By Charity Borg

Art Thibert has lived his life as a proud Métis. He believes every Métis person has the right to be proud of who they are and of their history. To Art, the word Métis is more than just a label to describe a new kind of people. For him it is an identity.

Helping His Family

Born as the last baby in his family in the small French-speaking Manitoba village of St. Rose du Lac in May, 1934 Art knew his destiny was a future of hard work, as he had to keep up with his older siblings.

During WWII, money was tight for families across Canada with rations for food and gas only going so far. It was during that time that Art learned how to hunt and helped keep his family fed during that troublesome time in Canadian history.

"During the war, I used to go out there with my little dog; we used to go out for chicken and partridge in the fall," said Art, with a slight francophone accent.

"They look at the dog while the little dog barks," he said. "That's when I used to take a wire on a long stick and put that on their head, all while they were looking at the dog, and take them home."

According to Art, chickens were also easy prey as they are not the brightest of creatures. In fact, Art laughed at the fact that sometimes the chickens

would put their head into the loop of the snare all on their own while being fascinated by the barking furball.

Art's family would later eat the chicken along with homemade bannock. A point of pride for Art is that he is able to make his own bannock.

While both his parents were Métis and fluent in Cree, they never spoke it around their children, as they did not feel it was necessary for them to learn the traditional language.

"They talked Cree but they wouldn't talk to us. The only time they talked Cree around us was if they didn't want us to hear what they were saying," said Art.

A Life of Hard Work and Community Service

Art went to school until he was 14 years old then started his long working career. His first paying job was working on a farm where he worked until he was 22. After, he went to work in Winnipeg for a while. He then headed to Vancouver to toil as an iron worker until he got hurt on the job.

"I went to the hospital. After my surgery I came to [Alberta] and I worked in Medicine Hat as an iron

worker – worked there for a year. Then I came to Calgary and I've been here since," said Art.

It was in Calgary that Art got involved with the Métis Association of Alberta (MAA) in 1970 (The MAA was the predecessor to today's Métis Nation of Alberta).

"Stan Daniels was the president at that time and I was involved with them for 30 years," Art said.

Art became involved with the local in Calgary and even went on to start a local in Red Deer.

"[I] formed a local there and got involved with the MAA and was involved off and on. I was on the board of the MAA for a while," he said.

As with getting involved with any organization, there were ups and downs. The best part about being involved with the Métis Association was helping his fellow Métis to improve their lot in life with housing, education and friendship.

"It was good. I learned about the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP), Alberta home mortgages and everything," said Art.

During his involvement with the Métis locals, Art also got involved with the Calgary

Friendship Centre. While on a hiatus from working in the steel industry, he had picked up some accounting skills. Because of this, for roughly five years, he acted as treasurer to the Friendship Centre.

Over the years that Art was involved with the MAA, he was able to watch the organization grow and flourish into the Métis Nation of Alberta.

"Stan Daniels, he was good," Art said. "It took us a long time to get where we are."

"If it wasn't for Audrey we wouldn't have hunting rights and everything. She did good. I'm proud of her for that."

During Art's lifetime, he has seen more and more people embrace their heritage and once again be proud to be Métis.

"They were Métis but they hid it," he said. "Now people are much more accepting of who they are," he said.

"When I was at the local we operated in Calgary, [there were] over 4,000 [Métis people], but there were only 400 on my list [with the association]," said Art.

Art's advice to his children and grandchildren is universal to all Métis: be proud to be Métis and support the Métis Nation.

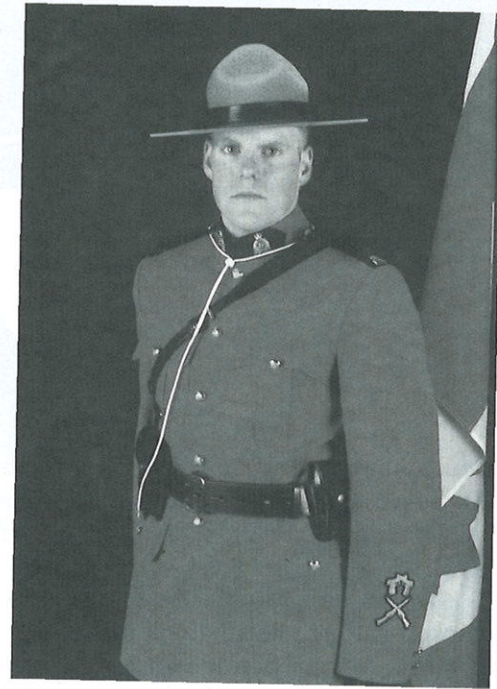
LMD Success Stories



Jesse Morrison, R.C.M.P

The Métis Nation of Alberta helped me considerably in achieving my career with the RCMP. I was first sponsored by MNA for an Aboriginal Community Policing Certificate program at Northern Lights College, completing in 2003. While applying to the RCMP, I then continued my education on my own with Lethbridge College's Criminal Justice program. In 2005, I was approaching admission to the RCMP training at Depot. I was young and financially limited from years of being a student, and so I needed some assistance with living expenses, so I could focus on my training at Depot. Being so close to achieving my goal, the MNA assisted me once again to complete my RCMP training.

The road to becoming an RCMP Constable is not an easy one, but I received extensive advice and guidance from Métis Employment Services throughout my development. I am now working to better the lives in my community and the Métis Nation.



Moe Clark, Graphic Design

I am honoured and grateful to say that because of the Métis Nation of Alberta, I was able to complete my degree in Graphic Design at the Alberta College of Art & Design with success. Because of the support the Métis Nation offered me for my final year in this intensive program, I was able to not only devote my energy and focus

to school (without the concern for working a job), but I was

also inspired to learn more about my Métis ancestry. With the connections and constant contact that my involvement with the Métis Nation brought me, I was also able to participate in the community and further my awareness about the culture. As an artist, the visual realm is not the only place where I devote my focus. I have been performing spoken word poetry for the last three years, and I was able to do more writing this past year. With a poem that I wrote and performed for the CBC about my Métis history, entitled "Intersecting Circles", I was invited to travel across Canada to perform in PEI for a show about the history of Alberta. I feel honoured and blessed to have received the support that I did for this final year of education. I know without doubt that this support and involvement will be a positive benefit to me for my entire life. I am proud to be Métis, and to discover each day, where my roots come from and what makes me who I am now. Thank you again.



Pam Kehler, Bachelor of Management

Without the Métis Nation of Alberta and Métis Employment Services the final year of my Bachelor of Management degree would not have been the great success that it was. I am forever grateful for their assistance. I can not express the difference it has made in my life. I now have the education and support that will allow me to achieve my dreams and I look forward to a bright and successful future.

I have now returned to my previous employer in the service industry, and am striving for an upper management position.

Danielle Hetu, B.Sc. - Nursing

I have just recently completed my Bachelor of Science in Nursing thanks to the help of the Red Deer Métis Employment Services. They helped me with my tuition and books for my last year of this degree program. I feel that with their help I was able to focus on my studies and my family throughout my last year of schooling without the stress of finances. After the completion of my degree I was able to get a job at the Red Deer Regional Hospital as a Registered Nurse. I would like to thank Métis Employment Services for all the help and support that they have given me throughout my studies and I truly believe that I would not be where I am today had I not received the help that they gave me.

Vanessa Petkus, Film Production



Vanessa completed the Film Production program through SAIT. Vanessa has started her career off with success. Vanessa has worked as Assistant Production Co-ordinator on a television series shooting in Calgary called Xweighted. This is a documentary series shooting for six months.

This is just the beginning for Vanessa, who plans on gaining experience, making contacts and eventually, working as a producer in the film and television industry.





Angela Perreault, Chemical Technology

My name is Angela Perreault and I am a current graduate from the Chemical Technology program that was offered at NAIT. With the help of the Métis Nation of Alberta I was able to complete my final year of studies and further my career in the oil/gas industry as well as forensics. I have recently found employment with a company called "Gibson Energy". I am very proud of what the Métis Nation of Alberta did for me to help reach my goals and make my dreams a reality. Thank you for everything!

Angela Tourand, Bachelor of Kinesiology

After high school I decided to pursue a degree in Business Administration. However, after receiving my BA Certificate, I decided this was not my passion. I set a new goal of earning my Bachelor's Degree in Kinesiology. With the help of the Métis Nation of Alberta, I was able to follow this dream!

In December 2005, I graduated from the University of Calgary, having earned a Bachelor's Degree in Kinesiology, with distinction. I went straight from the education world into the workforce, beginning employment with Columbia Health Center, Grande Prairie. I began as a Kinesiologist and soon moved into the position of Rehabilitation Coordinator. My employment has been an excellent opportunity to follow my passion and put my knowledge and skills from my degree to good use! Thank you Region 6 for assisting me on the path to my career.



For more information on our program contact the nearest Métis Employment Services or call 1-888-48-METIS



Alberta Aboriginal Youth Achievement Awards

The Alberta Aboriginal Youth Achievement Awards provides an opportunity to recognize the achievements of Aboriginal youth and share their successes with others from across the Province of Alberta.

There are eight award categories. Two Aboriginal youth will be selected overall for each of the categories, with the exception of Category #1 in which there will be three youth chosen (one First Nation, one Metis and one Inuit youth) for a total possibility of 17 youth awards.

Category 1: Culture & Heritage

Has the youth worked towards preserving and promoting their First Nations, Métis or Inuit Culture & Heritage? Did they develop or enhance skills in traditional First Nations, Métis or Inuit activities such as dancing, artwork, or music? Do they show a commitment to the preservation of their culture in their community? Does this person speak their traditional language? Does this person encourage other community youth to learn to speak and understand their traditional language? (This category will not feature both jr. & sr. age categories, but rather best overall in the 3 categories: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit)

Category 2: Volunteer Services

Have they been involved in volunteer services in the community? Did they provide services to youth groups, Elders or other community organizations? Have they been involved in helping fundraise for non-profit groups? Did their services help preserve or contribute to the delivery of community services or protect or enhance the quality of community life?

Category 3: Academic Achievement

Did they complete a certified academic program such as secondary or post secondary education, certification or upgrading of academic or technical qualifications? Have they made special efforts to improve or enhance their academic standing? Have they received any special recognition of their academic standing? Have they received any scholarships or bursaries for their academics?

Category 4: Athletic Achievement

Do they excel in organized sports, either individually or as part of a team? Have they demonstrated a commitment to a healthy lifestyle by their commitment to physical fitness and by following a healthy lifestyle? Have they contributed to promoting or raising awareness about the benefits of participating in their sport?

Category 5: Career Advancement

Did they develop and implement a course of action to help them achieve their career goals? Did they succeed in the area of business development either as an entrepreneur or employee? Have they identified or developed innovations in their chosen pursuit?

Category 6: Personal Achievement

Did they overcome challenges to achieve personal goals and betterment of themselves? What problem-solving and decision making skills did they demonstrate that helped them to achieve their goals?

Category 7: Walking the Red Road

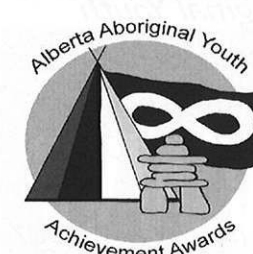
Has this person worked to overcome addictions and/or promote sobriety to other young people within the community. How does this person overcome barriers and/or promote healthy living and choices for other young people?

Category 8: Community Leaders

How has this person demonstrated over all leadership in all of the above categories? How has this person's leadership made a difference in their community?

Please Remember:

Individuals can be nominated for more than one category, however separate nomination forms are required for each category nominated.



For More Information:

Contact Christie Ladouceur

1-800-252-7553

youth@metis.org

www.albertametis.com



Alberta Aboriginal Youth Achievement Awards Nomination Form

Please print clearly, incomplete responses will not be accepted.

Nominee Information:

Nominee's First and Last Name

Nominee's Address (street, city/town, postal code)

() ()

Phone Number Facsimile Number

Nominee's Email Address

Nominee's Date of Birth (mm/yyyy/dd) Age

In which age group is this person being nominated?

☐ Junior (10-17 years of age) ☐ Senior (18-29 years of age)

Nominator Information:

Nominator's First and Last Name

Nominator's Address (street, city/town, postal code)

() ()

Phone Number Facsimile Number

Nominator's Email Address

Relationship to nominee

Nomination Category:

Please select one category based on the category descriptions on the previous page.

- ☐ Category 1: Culture & Heritage
☐ Category 2: Volunteer Services
☐ Category 3: Academic Achievement
☐ Category 4: Athletic Achievement
☐ Category 5: Career Advancement
☐ Category 6: Personal Achievement
☐ Category 7: Walking the Red Road
☐ Category 8: Community Leaders

Submission Checklist

For each category chosen, please provide:

- ☐ A completed nomination form
☐ A 2-page description
☐ Three letters of support
☐ Copies of other supporting documentation

How do I nominate an Aboriginal Youth?

Step 1) Fill in the attached nomination form. Individuals nominated in more than one category are required to submit separate application packages for each nomination category.

Step 2) Write a two page description of the Aboriginal youth's achievement and attach it to the application. Please respond to the following questions: a) Why is their achievement significant or unique and why does it stand out as deserving of special recognition? b) What challenges or obstacles were encountered and how were they overcome? c) What impact has the achievement had on their family, and their community? d) How will the community benefit from the nominee receiving the awards?

Step 3) Obtain and attach 3 support letters to the nomination form. The letters must contain contact numbers and mailing addresses.

Step 4) Submissions must be completed and post marked no later than 4:30pm December 7, 2007

Mail Completed Nomination Package to:

Métis Nation of Alberta
Attn: Aboriginal Youth
Achievement Awards
#100, 11738 Kingsway Ave
Edmonton, AB T5G 0X5

Deadline: 4:30pm, December 7, 2007

Feeding the People, For a Cause

By Charity Borg

Gloria Swan-Badger led her team of chefs during the recent Métis Nation of Alberta Annual General Assembly in the kitchen morning, noon and night. The sweat beading on their foreheads as some stood over the hot stove, fingers sore from gripping knives and long hours preparing more than 1,000 meals a day.

Gloria's team was not doing it for the money. They were not doing it for the love. They were volunteering. Their cause was to raise money for cancer treatment for people they know who are battling the disease and to donate the money to cancer research.

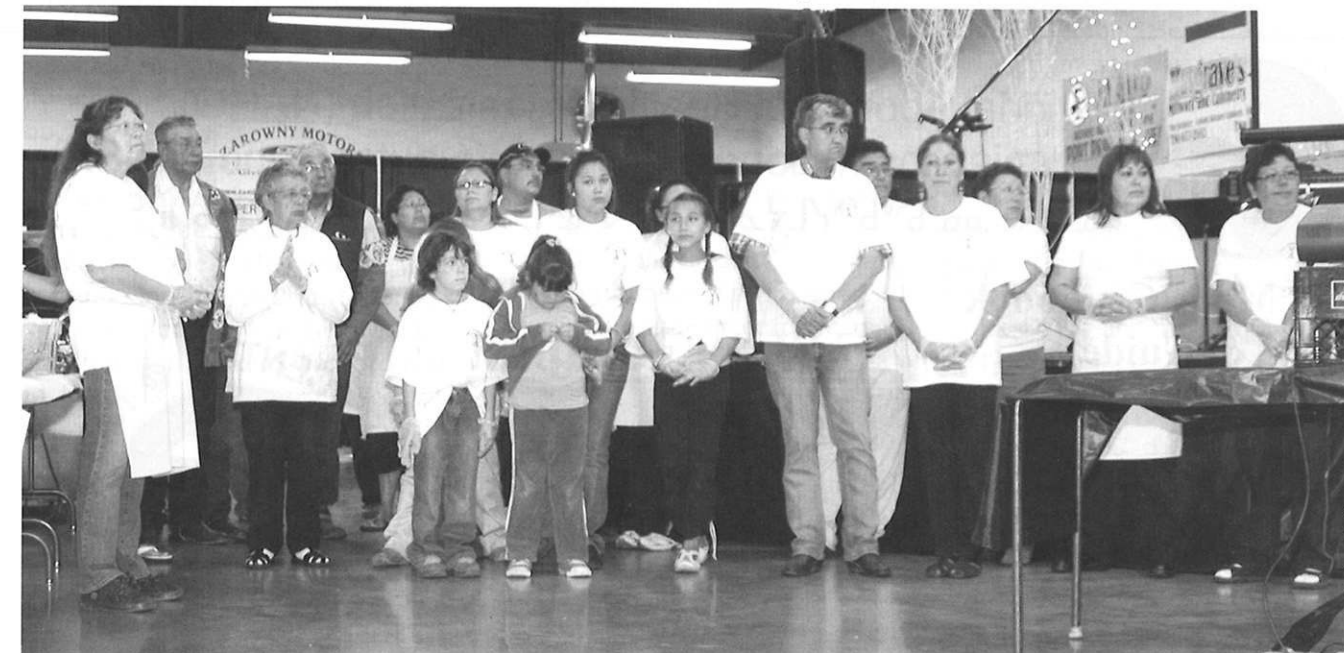
Swans for Charity ambitiously took on feeding hundreds of people during the Annual Assembly to raise money to help Métis pay for expensive cancer treatments. The cause started a few years ago when Gloria's brother was diagnosed with cancer. Her brother kept it a secret from the family because he didn't want to worry them with expensive treatment that he had to travel to the United States for. When her brother finally told them he had cancer, the family immediately sprung into action for him.

The treatment he was seeking was \$5,000 per treatment and he needed three in order to improve his

chances. Within a week the family had managed to collect \$5,000 to help pay the expensive costs. Unfortunately the treatments were not enough—he passed away.

To honour her brother's memory, Gloria, her family and friends hold a golf tournament each year to raise money for cancer research. The weekend prior to the Annual Assembly the Swan family hosted their annual golf tournament.

The food was excellent and the Swan family hopefully took a well-deserved break after assembly.



The Swan Family (and a number of friends of the family) shortly before serving dinner during the banquet Saturday night.

www.albertametis.com

Continuing the Rodeo Tradition

By Sylvia Johnson

Picture this: a rodeo cowboy out of Fort Vermilion makes it big time. He qualifies and wins at the Canadian Finals Rodeo in Edmonton and takes prize money for bareback bronc riding on all of the major circuits, and even represents Canada in the 2002 Olympics in Salt Lake City, USA.

Kenton Randle was on top of the world, a bareback bronc riding pro, and then the worst happened. He started blacking out and having vision problems and was soon diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour. Although treatment was attempted, and thousands of dollars were raised to help cover the costs,

he passed away less than a year after being diagnosed, leaving behind a loving wife, three teenage boys and his extended Fort Vermilion family. On the day of his funeral more than 300 cowboys came to pay tribute.

Now his three sons, Justin, Chad and Clinton, are out there trying to keep his legacy going. They win some, and of course, lose some but in the end what is important is that the boys are driving their dad's old truck and camper, using his ropes and other equipment.

It is so noble but so sad.

Many of the other cowboys now, without thinking, see Kenton's

truck pull in and they say, "Oh look, Kenton!!!" and then realize that would be impossible, that instead it is his sons.

But it is not just Kenton's sons, but also the hamlet of Fort Vermilion remembers their Rugged (his nickname) cowboy as well. He is featured on their website, <http://www.discoverthepeacecountry.com/htmlpages/fortvermilion.html>, and as you enter Fort Vermilion, there is a big bucking bronc sign saying the "Home of Kenton Randle, National Bucking Bronc Champ."



National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO)
Organisation nationale de la santé autochtone (ONSA)
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The Métis Cookbook & Guide to Healthy Living

Call for Recipes!

The Métis Centre at NAHO is collecting new contributions for the second edition of its highly successful *Métis Cookbook & Guide to Healthy Living*. Please send traditional or contemporary Métis recipes, with stories or photos to the address below. Remember to also include your name, address and phone number (and e-mail address where possible). All photos will be returned to the sender.

Send your recipes, stories or photos by December 28, 2007.

Métis Centre – Recipe Collections
National Aboriginal Health Organization
220 Laurier Avenue West, Suite 1200
Ottawa, ON K1P 5Z9



Email: mdyck@naho.ca
Fax: (613) 237-8707

For more information contact Miranda Dyck @ 1-877-602-4445 ext 596.



Tradition of Running and Team Spirit Begins

By Charity Borg

The air was crisp and leaves were floating through the air, twisted from their branches by the cold autumn wind. Junior high students braved the cold in typical junior high fashion: without coats. However in cross-country running, a coat can become a nuisance as a runner begins to heat up.

The run was the first ever Rites of Passage interschool cross country run and the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) hopes the meet will continue and grow in years to come.

Four schools were involved for this first year, students were brought in from the Amiskwaciy Academy and the Rites of Passage school in Edmonton as well as the Alexander and Hobbema/Samson Reserves.

Tenita Littlechild from Ermineskin School was one of the over 70 students who participated. Dedicated to her sport, Tenita goes for a run twice a day.

"I was in cross-country for three years," she said. "We all practice after school."

Awards were given for best girls and boys team in each grade, and each school went home with at least one award for team effort.

The MNA sponsored the cross country meet to:

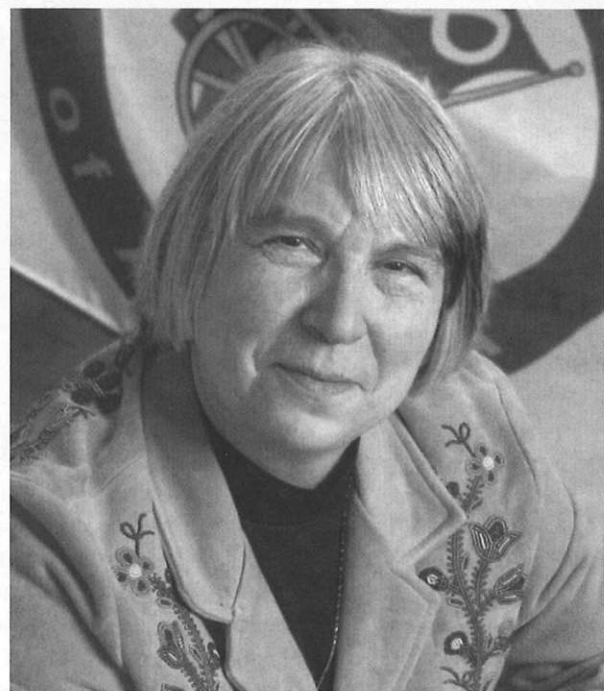
- encourage students to take part in extra-curricular team athletics;
- support the building of positive, caring and healthy peer relationships by taking part in a team;
- support the building of positive, caring and healthy student-teacher relationships by having teachers serve as coaches; and
- build the capacity and supply equipment for coaches to sustain the meet for years to come.

David Sloan, the former MNA's Education Manager, came up with the idea for the cross country meet as part of his annual strategic business plan and obtained funding from the University of Alberta School of Public Health to sponsor the equipment costs for the meet and running of the actual event. David continued to work with the Rites of Passage School to organize the event even after he moved onto his new high school teaching position with Jasper Place High School. The MNA would like to thank David and wish him all the best in his new position.



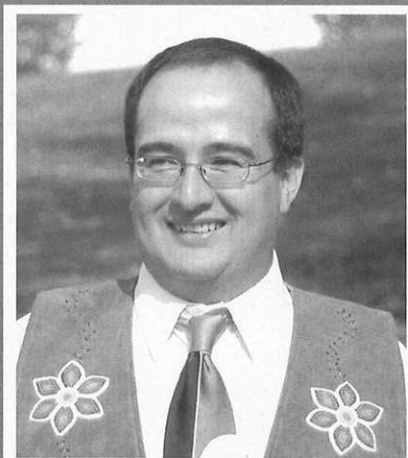
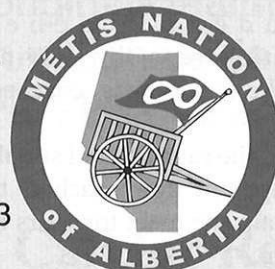
Students from four different Aboriginal schools participated in the first annual MNA-sponsored Rites of Passage cross country meet on a chilly October morning.

PROVINCIAL LEADERSHIP



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Audrey Poitras

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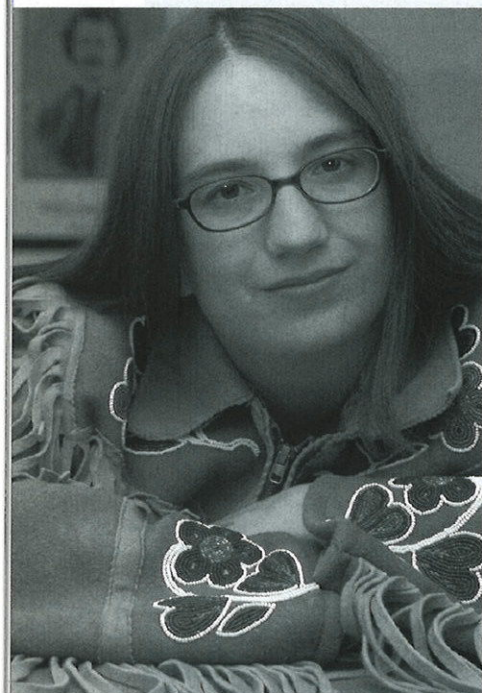
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The Devlin Side

Monique Devlin

In the world of journalism it is called crossing over to "the dark side," an offhand Star Wars reference that essentially means leaving the side of all that is good and joining the side of evil.

That is how those of us who were once journalists and are now working in the public relations field are often seen. The reason being that journalism is supposed to be primarily about objectivity and the unbiased truth, while public relations is mainly about reiterating the positions and goals of one person or organization.

I had no problem leaving journalism to work towards improving the lives of Aboriginal people at a not-for-profit organization. I have no conflict when I feel it is understood that I wear my bias on my sleeve, so to speak. I work for the MNA, so of course, that is the perspective I will lean towards in my reporting and coverage of events when writing for Otipemisiwak. I believe in all levels of government respecting Aboriginal rights and perspectives. I believe the MNA is fighting the good fight, yet I understand that the average newspaper or television reporter has to show both sides to present a fair story. Both the positive and the negative—that is what fair reporting is all about.

But there is a big difference from someone who crosses over and is open and honest about their biases (and let's be honest, no one, no matter how they strive, can ever be completely unbiased) and someone who hides behind the cover of journalism to present their bias. And I have to say

that some of the coverage of events surrounding the MNA and the MNC has left me nothing short of sickened and outraged. I have read stories where the "facts" were so off-base they made me laugh out loud and others that were so slanted to one side that I had to look twice to make sure that these were in fact "independent" publications. I have read outright lies and shameless self-promotion. Some of these matters have made me embarrassed about my past life as a journalist.

The saddest thing is that these were not mainstream publications coming down hard on Aboriginals, but independent, Aboriginal-specific publications that present themselves as fair and balanced news sources, when in fact they seem to have a base, not in the grassroots communities, but with various political agendas and power struggles.

Again, I can never pretend I am without bias, but I try to present what I see as honestly and fairly as possible. Neither I, nor anyone I work with, would ever lie to make a point, nor would we ever create facts or sources to suit our needs.

I just hope our readers, and the readers of other publications look twice when they read something that only presents one side of a situation and question the motivation as to why the other side is not being represented or why something is even put forward in the first place.

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National Definition of Métis

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

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

Defined Terms in National Definition of Métis

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

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

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

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



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