

# New Breed

MAGAZINE



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PREMIER OF SASKATCHEWAN  
LEGISLATIVE BUILDING  
REGINA, CANADA S4S 0B3

### *A Message from the Premier of Saskatchewan*

*On behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan, I am pleased to have the opportunity to extend greetings to the readers of New Breed Magazine.*

*Since the 1970s, New Breed Magazine has celebrated the Métis culture and identity, advanced many vibrant Métis organizations and communities, and promoted Métis contributions to this province. It continues to be a prominent voice of the Métis people in Saskatchewan, opening a world of Métis culture and arts, history and current events to its readership. New Breed Magazine showcases successful role models for Métis youth, encouraging youth to achieve their goals and become leaders in the economic and social life of this province.*

*The provincial government has had a long-standing and very close relationship with Métis and First Nations people. Our vision includes working with Aboriginal people and communities to increase the participation of Aboriginal people in the social and economic life of Saskatchewan. Obtaining the trust and respect of Métis and First Nations people is a top priority for our government, and we will continue to build upon and enhance this relationship through cooperation and inclusiveness.*

*As Saskatchewan prepares to celebrate its Centenary as a Province in 2005, it is important that we note the contribution New Breed Magazine has made to the Province of Saskatchewan.*

*Please accept my congratulations on your past achievements, and my warmest wishes for continuing success.*

Lorne Calvert  
Premier



# *The Gabriel Dumont Institute*

## *A History in 750 Words*

*Article by Darren Préfontaine, photograph by Jesse Gardiner*

**T**he Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research (GDI) is the official educational affiliate of the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan (MN-S) and is directed by a 12-person Board of Governors, representing the MN-S' regions. GDI offers a variety of accredited educational, vocational and skills training opportunities for the province's Métis in partnership with the University of Regina, the University of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIASST), the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of

Technologies, the province's regional colleges and the Métis Employment and Training of Saskatchewan Inc. GDI, the only Métis-controlled educational and cultural institution of its kind in Canada, provides a wide range of program and services to the province's Métis including the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP), which has graduated more than 700 teachers (in Prince Albert, Saskatoon and Regina); Gabriel Dumont College (GDC), which delivers the first two years of a University of Saskatchewan Bachelor of Arts and Science



The Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies & Applied Research office at #2-604 22nd Street West in Saskatoon

Degree (in Saskatoon and Prince Albert); the Dumont Technical Institute (DTI), which develops and implements Adult Basic Education, skills training, vocational and cultural programs; Library Services, which possesses a substantial Métis-specific library collection; the Publishing Department, which has developed more than 75 Métis-specific resources; and finally, the Institute administers, on behalf of the Métis community, various scholarship and cultural development funds such as *The Métis Cultural Development Fund*, *The Michif Languages Initiative*, *The Napoleon LaFontaine/Gabriel Dumont Institute Scholarship Foundation* and the *SaskEnergy Scholarships*.

GDI was founded in 1976 at an Association of Métis and Non-Status Indians (AMNSIS) cultural conference. However, it took four years of hard bargaining, protests and even sit-ins at the Legislative Building by AMNSIS and community activists, before the provincial government relented and allowed for GDI's creation. In 1980, GDI began operations in Regina with the signing of an affiliation agreement between itself, the University of Regina and Advanced Education and Manpower, Saskatchewan. Shortly thereafter, a similar agreement was concluded with the University of Saskatchewan and centres opened in Saskatoon and Prince Albert. In 1980, the Institute's programs included SUNTEP, Curriculum Development and Research, Library/Resource Centre and a Field Liaison Program. The long-held dream to create an independent Métis and Non-Status Indian educational institution had become a reality. It still seems fitting that the passion and activism that led to the Institute's creation lent itself to an educational institution named after Gabriel Dumont, the beloved Métis leader.

In the early and mid 1980s, GDI grew considerably. In 1980, the Institute had its first of 14 consecutive annual cultural conferences - whereby the Métis and Non-Status Indian community celebrated Aboriginal culture. In 1983, the Institute began offering federally-sponsored technical and vocational programs through the "Saskatchewan Training for Employment Program (STEP)." In 1985, the Institute established *The Napoleon LaFontaine*

*Scholarship Foundation*, the Curriculum and Research Departments published several resources for the 1885 Resistance Centenary and GDI played a lead role in preparing cultural content for the 1885 Resistance Centenary celebrations at Batoche.

During the late 80s and early 90s, GDI rapidly expanded and then retrenched its programming. This program expansion occurred after 1987, when AMNSIS, the province's Métis and Non-Status Indians political movement, split, creating the Métis Society of Saskatchewan (later the MN-S). GDI's programming would henceforth be largely Métis-specific and would be directed towards the growth of the Métis' self-governing institutions. During this period, STEP programming continued unabated and in 1987, developed into a formal agreement with SIAST entitled the "Native Services Division", which at first offered counseling services to SIAST's Aboriginal students, but later morphed into distinct Aboriginal-specific course offerings; the Institute published an academic journal (*The Journal of Indigenous Studies*, 1989-1997); in 1989, GDI established, in partnership with Saskatchewan Justice, the province's first residential Community Training Residence for Aboriginal female offenders; created DTI in 1991 and affiliated it with SIAST in 1992; and in 1993, created GDC, all the while maintaining an active Research Department, which offered program development and implementation, community liaison, consultation and advisory services, and all other core programming including Administration, Curriculum Development, Library Services, Métis Studies and SUNTEP. This expansion came to halt in 1994-95, as the Institute over-extended itself, which led to the cutting of programs and a large staff lay-off.

Since 1995, GDI has more cautiously expanded its program offerings, specifically through DTI and GDC. During its quarter century of existence, GDI has served the cultural, educational and training needs of the province's Métis as an educator, skills trainer, curriculum developer, book publisher, archival/library/cultural artifact depository and a social justice advocate.

# Maria Campbell

2004 Recipient of the Molson Award for the Arts



**O**n May 30th, family, friends, colleagues and members of the arts community gathered to honour Maria Campbell, this year's recipient of the Molson Award for the Arts. Started in 1964, the Molson Prizes acknowledge the recipient's contribution to the cultural and intellectual heritage of Canada. These prizes are funded from an endowment given to the Canada Council for the Arts by the Molson Family Foundation. The Council administers these awards in cooperation with the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and, following a nomination process, a joint peer jury selects both recipients.

In awarding the Molson Prize to Campbell, the jury stated: "For her contribution to Canadian and Aboriginal literature and significant impact on the cultural evolution of Canada, the jury was unanimous in its choice of Maria Campbell for the 2004 Molson Prize in the Arts. The brilliance of her breakthrough memoir, *Halfbreed*, which changed perceptions of the Métis experience forever, has been followed by other significant work, making a profound contribution to Canadian theatre, film, television and radio. Her status as a teacher, mentor and inspiration to Aboriginal people and all Canadians is unparalleled."



Top: Maria Campbell and her brother, Ben

Middle Left: Rita Bouvier reads a selection from *Stories of the Road Allowance People*

Middle Right: Andrea Menard performs for the award presentation

Left: Edmonton Métis Cultural Dance Society provide entertainment

The award presentation, held at Wanuskewin Heritage Park, began with an opening prayer by Métis Elder Harriet Oaks, and was followed by performances by Andrea Menard, John and Vicki Arcand and the Edmonton Métis Cultural Dance Society. Also in attendance was poet and educator Rita Bouvier, who honoured Campbell by reading a selection from Campbell's *Stories of the Road Allowance People*.

# *Success Measured with Métis Pride*

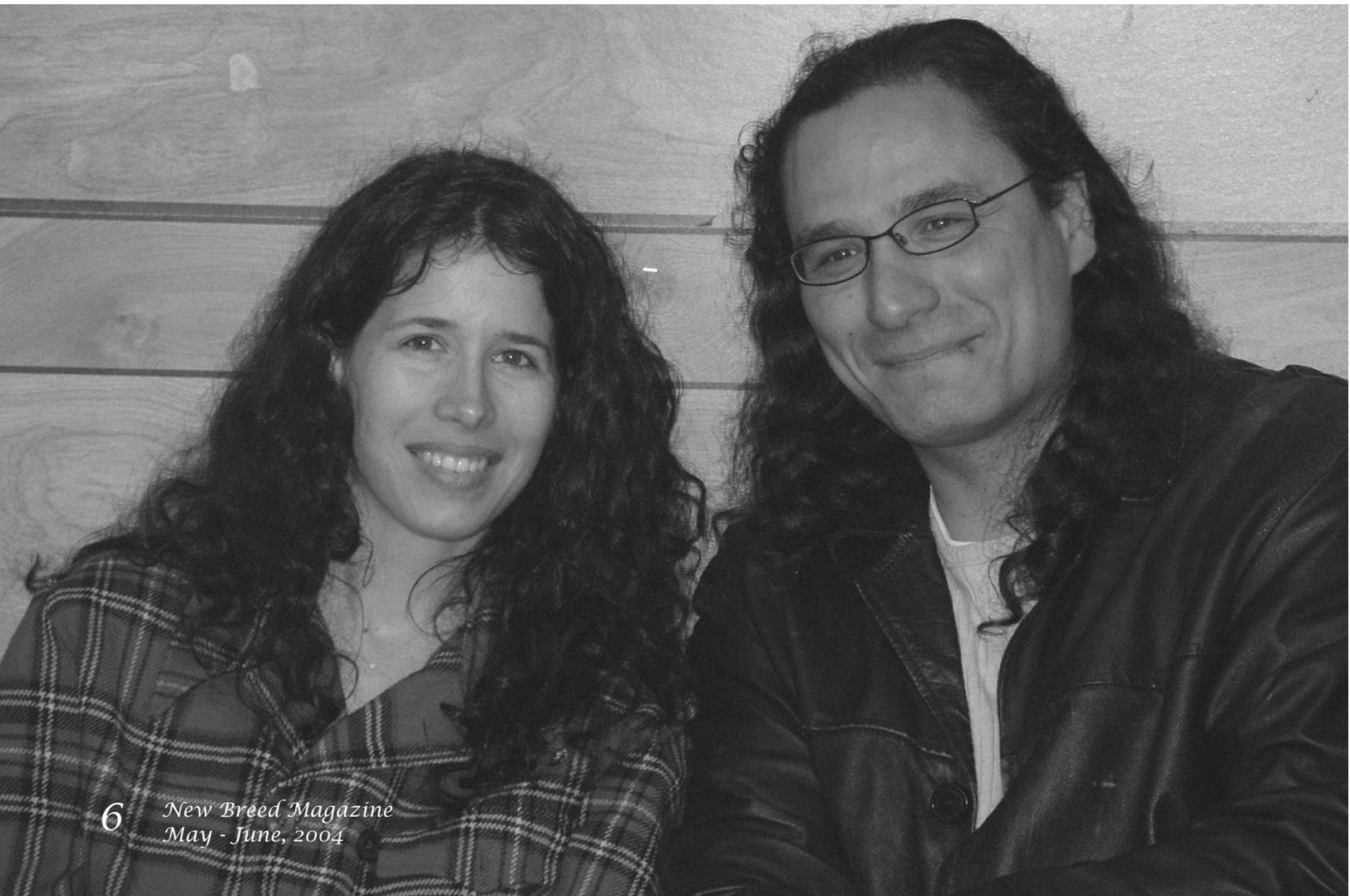
## *An Interview with Andrea Menard*

*Interview by Jessee Gardiner*

**O**n June 1<sup>st</sup>, over a great cup of coffee, I met with one of our Métis role models: Andrea Menard. I compiled questions that would get to the core of this curly haired, enthusiastic, and energetic Métis woman. Andrea has, and continues to work extremely hard for the success she now reaps. In her answers to the following seven questions, Andrea expresses her thoughts on being a Métis role model, her success, her ambitions, and her drive.

Jessee Gardiner: In many of your productions you have worked with a lot of talent. How does it make you feel knowing that you are one of our Métis youth's role models?

Andrea Menard: Well...when I first discovered that I was being toted around as a Métis role model, it made me feel uncomfortable because I did not feel worthy of that title or that position. I felt like, who am I to tell anyone how things are supposed to be? I didn't think that I deserved it. As the years went on, or as I started to understand what a role model is, I realized I don't have to do anything. It's the fact that I'm doing what I'm doing that is important. The truth is, I did walk through my fears. I was absolutely terrified to do what I did, because I had no role models, for me personally, in my life that were doing it. Especially from an Aboriginal community, I didn't have any role models.



JG: Who was or is your role model?

AM: Well... like I said, growing up I didn't have any. I didn't see any of Tootoo Cardinal's or Gordon Tootoosis's work, I knew nothing. I wasn't a T.V. or movie watcher, I was like everyone else watching Three's Company. I didn't really have any, because I didn't know that this was going to be my path. I hadn't even seen a play until I was in high school. With music, I just grew up singing with my dad, and he never did that for a living. It wasn't until I was in university and I met other people that were taking it as a degree. I said to those people, 'What?' 'What are you going to do, move to Hollywood?' As soon as I met some of those people, I started a band and I met a woman who was a single mother who was being a musician for a living. That was a huge inspiration to me. Later on, I met Maria Campbell and she became a huge influence on me. I saw someone who was not only practising her art, but she was a proud member of the Métis community as well. She wanted to help her people and bring her proud culture along with her in her success. She never forgot about her community, and that to me was different. I had seen different people go after success saying, 'I want to do this, and I want to be a big star.' I saw that type of drive, and I never really resonated with that. I resonated with success for the whole. That made sense to me, and that's something that I allowed myself to go after because of Maria and others like her. So, now I feel very proud or privileged to be a role model because if there is anything that I can pass on, I hope I can. I hope that there is some change that can happen.

JG: The character Velvet Devil is one of your greatest successes. How much do you feel that you drew from your own experiences to create this story?

AM: I think Velvet Devil is one of my greatest successes because she has been my greatest learning curve. If not for her, I would not have a CD released or have written a play. I wouldn't know all the vast experiences I have now because of Velvet. I just wouldn't have had the courage to do any of this. This character Velvet, she was insistent on being written about. It was like she haunted me, heh. I couldn't ignore her, and I didn't think that a lot of Velvet was from my own life. My own mother is very much alive and well. I didn't really know how much I had taken from my own life. This wasn't until I



Photo courtesy Andrea Menard

▲ Above: Andrea Menard

◀ Facing Page: Andrea Menard and Marcel Petit

looked back and realized Velvet Devil and her mother character Willie, are very different. Velvet is totally into fame and wants to be a star. This is the part of her that is the diva inside of her. That is Velvet. The mother character is another singer, who could sing on the riverbank and sing for God or sing washing dishes. This is what singing means to her. Velvet Devil came to life when I decided to quit singing and quit being in a band because I was not happy at all. My heart was not into this, because I didn't want to sing for my money. I didn't want to sing for that reason; I wanted to sing because I loved singing. I wanted to sing washing the dishes; that was me. So really, I didn't know it but these two characters of Mama and Velvet were me battling it out. The singer in me, wondering how to take the creator's gift and be in this world with it. A lot of people wanted me to make them famous and wanted me to 'take them to the top' because of my

voice when I didn't ever want to do that with singing. Acting, maybe, but never singing because it was too sacred to me. So that was the main thing that came from my life.

JG: If you could tell the Métis youth in one sentence what they can do to succeed in their endeavours, what would that be?

AM: Never give up! Never give up! No one is going to make you successful, you have to do it yourself. You cannot take no for an answer, and don't let your fear stand in your way because everybody has fear. Even the top person at the highest position in the world has faced fear; more fear than you could possibly imagine. The difference between you and them is, they kept walking through their fear. I have had so much fear it's almost crippling, but you walk through it anyway. You walk through your fear of success and you wonder why. Even getting a grant, where I've had more money than I've had in my life to make that CD and I was terrified I would screw it up. I thought, 'Don't give me this much money!' So, the thing is just don't let fear stand in your way and keep going after your dreams. Don't let anyone say that you can't!

JG: Where is one place that you wish to work that you already have not been to?

AM: Oh, I am hoping to work everywhere in the world. For film work, I want to work wherever a great script takes me and that means anywhere in the world. If I would like to take my play or have a significant run, my dream is to work significantly in every major city centre on the planet for three months each, because in this way you can really get to know a place. So, New York; I'd like to be there for three to eight months, living there. I'd like to go to LA and Paris. In London I would like to live for a year or so, and if there's ever a place I move to in Canada it will be Montreal. Then there's Toronto, Vancouver, Australia, New Zealand, and Italy; I would just like to live everywhere.

JG: When is your film of Velvet Devil set to release?

AM: Velvet Devil film is still very much in pre-production. I have a producer and a director involved, but that doesn't necessarily mean we have money from broadcasting. So, we need to raise the funds yet, and we just finished writing the treatment. The treatment is the stage of the film where it

determines whether the broadcaster will give you money to do the rest, even to write the script. So if they give us money to write the script, then we go on and they say, 'Well, we don't like it.' So, it still has several stages before it happens, but I feel really hopeful. I feel that that's a door that's opening and it's meant to be, just like Velvet had this life that was supposed to happen. So was this. Writing the treatment for the film version was really exciting for me. It's the most excited I've been since the CD. So, I'm really hoping... no, I'm sure it will, it just might not be on the time frame that I want.

JG: You are known as Constable Strongeagle on the APTN production *Moccasin Flats*, how do you perceive this character and is this character difficult for you to play?

AM: Uh. No, she is not difficult for me to play actually. She was written for me. I feel like she flowed, that I was meant to play her. So, that part was easy. How do I perceive this character? I think of her as a strong woman, very committed to her work, a bit of a workaholic, not so good at relationships, heh heh heh heh, and committed to her people and her work. I like her a lot. I like Amanda Strongeagle; I think she's cool.

This interview printed here contains only seven of the fourteen questions asked of Andrea. If you are interested in learning more about Andrea's interview, keep your eyes on the GDI metismuseum.ca for this and many other new resources, pictures, and Métis information.

**ATTENTION MÉTIS ENTREPRENEURS**

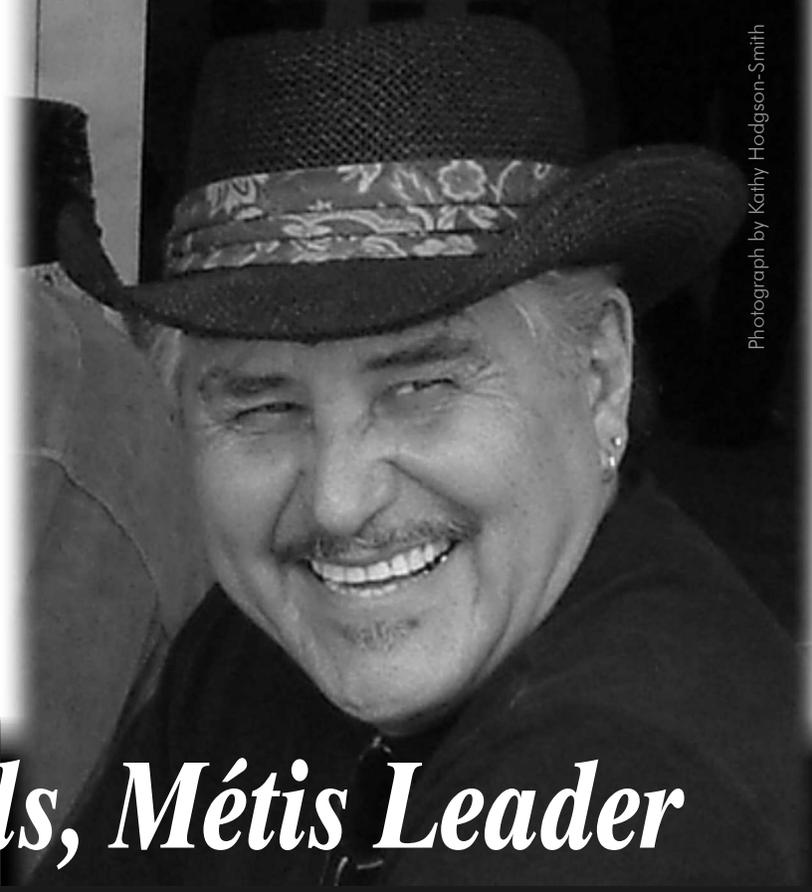
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## *Biography*

# *Harry W. Daniels, Métis Leader*

*Article by Cheryl Troupe from information provided by the Daniels family*

**H**arry Daniels is in good company. Only two people in history have negotiated the express inclusion of the Métis into the Constitution - Louis Riel and Harry Daniels. Harry W. Daniels was born and raised at Regina Beach, Saskatchewan, and despite his extensive travel, he continues to reside there today. Harry has spent nearly forty years active in the Aboriginal political arena fighting for the rights of Aboriginal people and involved in issues that concern Aboriginal people in Canada.

Harry got his start being involved in a variety of labour union concerns, and then in the mid-to-late 60s, he attended the University of Saskatchewan, majoring in Political Science. While attending University, Harry travelled to the United States and met with leaders of the Black Panthers and the American Indian Movement (AIM) to learn their political strategies and organizational techniques. By this time, Daniels was already garnering a reputation as an outspoken social activist and radical, so much so, that upon returning from the US, he was often under RCMP surveillance, having his phones tapped, and sometimes being followed by the RCMP.

Over the years, Harry has served the Métis community in numerous capacities. He was one of the founding members of the Saskatchewan Métis Society, and served as Executive Director for the

Métis Society of Saskatchewan in 1970. Also in the early 70s he served as Director of Field Operations for the Métis Association of Alberta, as a Research Consultant for Pe-Ta-Pun Development Corp. in Lac La Biche, Alberta, as a Researcher on treaty and Aboriginal Rights for the Indian Association of Alberta, and helped to organize the Métis Association of the Northwest Territories. In 1972, Daniels had his first experience with elected office, when he served as Vice-President of the Métis Association of Alberta. During this time he also was a representative for Aboriginal people at the United Nations Conference on the Environment in Stockholm, Sweden and later on the Non-government Organization Organizing Committee for the United Nations Habitat Conference.

In the 1970s, Daniels was one of the founding members of the Native Council of Canada, and from 1976 to 1981, served as President where he acted as the national spokesman for the Métis and Non-Status Indians. During this time he was also a member of the official Canadian delegation at the investiture of Pope John Paul II, the Chair of the Canadian Aboriginal Justice Council, and a Commissioner on both the Métis and Non-Status Indian Crime and Justice Commission and the Métis and Non-Status Indian Constitutional Review Commission. Since 1974, Harry served several

terms as President of the Native Council of Canada and of its successor, the Congress of Aboriginal People, until the year 2000.

In the late 1970s, as leader of the Native Council of Canada, he took part in the Constitutional talks in Ottawa, holding one of the Native Council of Canada's two seats. When, Indian Rights of Indian Women were refused a seat at the table by the Federal Government, Harry gave up one of his seats to the women's group. Mary Two Axe Early, filled that seat, giving women a voice in the Constitutional talks. As a National Aboriginal Leader, Harry gave his support to the Indian Women in their struggle for inclusion in the Indian Act. Reminding all of us that "our Mothers were Indian women and if they had no rights, then there would be no rights for any of us."

During the 1970s and 1980s, Harry was one of Canada's foremost Aboriginal Leaders in the National Constitutional negotiations. Most importantly, was the role he played in guaranteeing the inclusion of Métis among Canada's Aboriginal people in the *Constitution Act, 1982*. It was the first constitutional provision that generally recognized the Métis, and only the second time since the recognition of the Métis in Section 31 of the *Manitoba Act, 1870* that the Métis were expressly mentioned in Canada's Constitution,

He has been one of the most visible and charismatic modern Aboriginal leaders. As well, he is an accomplished author, writing numerous papers, articles, submission papers, and books on subjects relating to the Constitution and Aboriginal Rights, and Métis Rights. He is also an accomplished actor in Canadian film, radio and television.



Photograph from the Gabriel Dumont Institute Collection

In 1985, he received his masters Degree at Carleton University in Ottawa and has guest lectured on Aboriginal issues in countless universities across Canada. In 2002-03, Harry taught Métis history at the University of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, in the Department of Native Studies and will soon be receiving an Honorary Doctorate of Law from the University of Ottawa. We wish him well in the future and are proud to count him among our leaders. Louis would be proud.

## So Long Ago

by Gloria Fleury

*Many old people,  
Sitting by the fire,  
Watching the flames,  
Go higher and higher,  
Thinking of times,  
So long ago,  
The people, the places,  
They used to know.*

*A peeling old barn,  
Still standing there,  
Mangers, the ghosts,  
Of horses he fared.*

*Harvesting, haying,  
Good days on the farm,  
Work and some praying,  
Did no one, no harm.  
A tree, a branch,  
Where a swing use to be,  
A post, with no clothes line  
No children to see.*

*Memories, of children,  
All gone on their own,  
Still hear the footsteps,  
On their way home.*

*Many old people,  
Still, sit by the fire,  
Watching the flames,  
Go higher and higher,  
Thinking of times,  
So long ago,  
People and places,  
They once used to know.*

# A Nurturing Métis Leader

Article by Warren Dudar

**T**he award was really about the people I worked with, the people who understood and shared some dreams, and about believing in what we were doing and not being afraid of the challenges which arose" - Carole Gorgchuck

Carole Gorgchuck certainly stayed true to her message on May 13, when she rose to a different sort of challenge, receiving the YWCA Women of Distinction lifetime achievement award. Born in Saskatoon, Gorgchuck spent her earlier years either being involved in or developing several different organizations and causes. She got her start with the Indian and Metis Friendship Centre in 1972 before spending thirty years with Sasknative Housing Corp. Ltd. and Sasknative Rentals Inc. Gorgchuck's latest accomplishment, The Family Healing Circle Lodge Inc., is a new approach to addressing violence and abuse. The lodge was founded by a group of aboriginal women including Gorgchuck in 1995. Geared towards aboriginal victims, the present lodge, located at 128 Avenue Q South, Saskatoon, has room for five clients. It is in the process of hiring a full-time youth worker, and currently employs one full time and one ¾ time counsellor and one ¾ time receptionist.

Throughout her many journeys, Gorgchuck has crossed paths with people whose lives had been greatly affected by violence and abuse. Thus, Gorgchuck

explains that The Family Healing Circle Lodge offers individuals a needed "immediate escape from the abuse". Often, individuals simply "need to take some time out to reflect on their lives and get some counselling. Sometimes it's just the need to talk to someone. We have people who are literally bouncing off the walls with anger when they come to our doors".

Carole's dedication, ambition, and most importantly her ability to see the intrinsic value of each individual, sets her apart in the community of Saskatoon. Thankfully, her talent and goodwill have not escaped unnoticed. Apart from winning such a prestigious award, Gorgchuck feels her real trophy lies closer to her heart and is granted to her through the people that she helps, "Community life continues to be so important to me, there are many emotional rewards and I usually participated in a way which enhanced my own life tremendously".

The YWCA Women of Distinction Lifetime Achievement Award is awarded to women who have devoted many years of their lives to making a difference in their community and have been an effective role model, leader, mentor, "trail blazer" and social activist.

Visit [www.ywcasaskatoon.com](http://www.ywcasaskatoon.com) for further award information.



Photograph courtesy Carole Gorgchuck

▲ Left: Carole Gorgchuck



Photograph by Jesse Gardiner

▲ The Family Healing Circle Lodge

# All Rise for our Newest Métis Judge

Article by Jesse Gardiner, photograph courtesy Todd Ducharme

**A**s of Friday May 7<sup>th</sup> 2004, we, the Métis Nation are very proud to congratulate Todd Ducharme, the second Métis Judge to sit on the Ontario Superior Court. The first to receive this great honour was Helen Pierce. From Toronto, Ducharme was appointed to this prestigious position by the Honourable Irwin Cotler, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada. "We had a very moving conversation," Mr. Cotler said. "Those are the moments when you just feel inspired in this office. It was a very meaningful moment."

Having a strong sense of pride in his culture, Judge Ducharme is no stranger to Toronto's aboriginal community. He was the first Clinic Director of Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto and currently serves as a Director of Native Child and Family Services of Toronto. "Todd is a very well-respected legal mind, both in the aboriginal and the legal community," commented prominent Métis lawyer, Jean Teillet. "The Métis community will certainly be very proud of him today." Not only is Ducharme well respected in the Métis community, but he is also well known in the law community. In 2003, he became the Regional Bencher for Toronto, after receiving the most votes of any Toronto candidate in the Bencher Election, and the second largest amount of votes in the province as a whole. Benchers meet regularly to formulate policy on matters related to the governance of the legal profession. They also participate on Law Society committees and sit on hearing panels to hear conduct, capacity and competence proceedings.

Very well educated, and qualified for the position, Ducharme holds a Bachelor of Arts from McGill University in Montreal, a Master of Arts from Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, a Bachelor of Law from the University of Toronto and a Master of Law from Yale Law School. Judge Ducharme has taught and practised law in Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta and he is certified as a

specialist in criminal law by the Law Society of Upper Canada. He has also practised both as a defence counsel and as a standing agent for the Department of Justice. Despite this experience, Ducharme had not considered applying for the judgeship until hearing last January that Mr. Cotler had expressed a desire to see aboriginal judges on the bench. "I think it was very courageous for the Minister of Justice to comment on the under-representation of judges from the aboriginal community," Ducharme said. "I trust that I won't be the last aboriginal appointment Mr. Cotler makes."

For young, up-and-coming Métis, "Justice Ducharme is a role model for me and other young Métis lawyers, law students and youth considering a legal career. He stands as an example of the talent that lies within the Métis Nation to contribute to Canada's legal profession. It is a proud day for us," said Jason Madden, General Counsel to the Métis National Council.



▲ Tony Belcourt, President of the Métis Nation of Alberta, Judge Todd Ducharme, and Jean Teillet

“Two Thumbs up!”

- Newbreed's Dudar and Gardiner

## Product Review

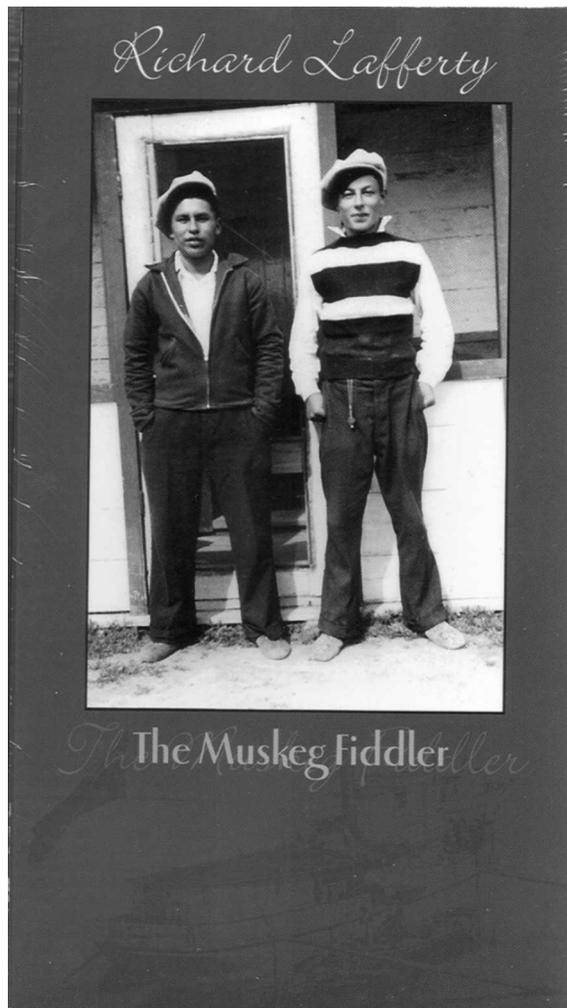
# Richard Lafferty: The Muskeg Fiddler

Article by Warren Dudar

**R**ichard Lafferty, one of the most accomplished Fiddle players of the Northwest Territories, joins his friends and family to share in their memories of growing up as a Métis in the great Canadian North. The importance of music as both entertainment and as a way of passing down stories and traditions, explained by the Lafferty family and their friends is merely a small portion of this fifty minute long video's contents. Including musical performances and a recollection of how the art of fiddling came to exist north of the 60<sup>th</sup> parallel, *Richard Lafferty: The Muskeg Fiddler* presents a variety of intimate conversation and storytelling. From the fiddlers sharing their more contemporary experiences to stories of the legendary fiddlers that they learned from, this video is an enjoyable display of a very important part of Métis Culture.

*Richard Lafferty: The Muskeg Fiddler* is available for sale at the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI), Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and can also be purchased at a variety of events where GDI will be setting up displays this summer.

Movie credits: 2002 Gabriel Dumont Institute.



Richard Lafferty is one of the most accomplished Métis fiddle players in the Northwest Territories. This video is about Richard Lafferty's life, his music, and his efforts to preserve Métis style fiddling in the Mackenzie River Valley. It is also a documentary about the history of Métis fiddling in the Northwest Territories. Learn about other Northern Métis fiddlers and their contributions to this artform. Join us for an adventure into Métis music north of the 60th parallel.

**Credits:**  
Gabriel Dumont Institute  
Federal Government of Canada  
Turtle Island Music  
Narrator, Leah Dorion-Paquin  
Producer, Leah Dorion-Paquin  
Studio Editor, George Parker  
Fort Providence Métis Council  
Photo Credit, Danny Bouvier and Jim Lafferty  
Graphic Design, Derek Bachman  
Greenduplex Productions

©2002 Gabriel Dumont Institute  
Total time: 50 minutes  
MADE IN CANADA

A special thank-you to the Richard Lafferty family for supporting the Gabriel Dumont Institute's Métis cultural mandate.

Canada    
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Fax 306.244.0252  
www.gdins.org

# The Métis Foxes Migrate North

Article by Jesse Gardiner, photographs by Jesse Gardiner and Kurtis Hamel

**T**hey travelled all the way from Harlem, Montana. On Thursday May 27<sup>th</sup>, the Fox family: Jim, Crystal and their children Vince (16) and Jamie (14), travelled 431 km from their home in Harlem, to John and Vicki Arcand's Windy Acres vacation farm, southwest of Saskatoon, where they were to spend a week learning to play the fiddle from John. The trip was part of a Master/Apprenticeship program offered by the Montana Arts Council.

The Montana Arts Council is committed to the preservation and encouragement of the folk and traditional arts in their state, and they recognize the importance of passing on the traditional musical arts through a mentorship-type program. The Montana Arts Council Folk and Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program encourages the passing on of folk arts by offering awards to individual master artists for the purpose of teaching their art and skills to a dedicated apprentice who wants to learn. Through this type of program the Arts Council is able to support the vitality of traditional artists and the gifts they have to offer. The folk arts are developed and carried on with families and communities. These arts or skills are usually learned by example and one-on-one instruction, rather than in school.

Jamie Fox has been playing the fiddle for 4 years and Vince has been playing for 6. Jamie started when she was 5, receiving a fiddle from her parents as a Christmas gift. Jamie took very good care of her fiddle and continued to make it screech trying to improve her talent. Vince did not



▲ Top: John Arcand, and Vince and Jamie Fox playing the *Fox Reel*. This fiddle tune was composed by John Arcand especially for the Fox family. Above: Young fiddle players participating in a Jam Session sponsored by the Saskatchewan Fiddle Association.

pick up the fiddle at the same time. Rather, he found Jamie's fiddle sitting on the kitchen table one day and immediately began to play. A natural talent, he began to play by ear, from songs he had heard. In an interview, Crystal Fox told us, "We figured he had an interest and a talent. So we got him some tapes with some headphones and he took off from there." He was nine years old at that time. According to Crystal, Vince's talents are a "true gift from God."

This trip is another step for the Fox family in discovering their cultural background. Before Jamie and Vince began playing the fiddle the family was unaware of their Métis culture. Along with John's instruction, the Fox family also got a chance to take in some cultural events, attending numerous functions in the short time they were here. They attended many of the events associated with the Gathering Our Artists Symposium, and the Saskatchewan Fiddle Association hosted a Jam session out at John and Vicki's acreage. The night started with a meal of hotdogs roasted over the fire followed by a couple of hours of music. There were fiddle players, guitar players, flute players, drummers and a piano player. Students of John's were in the jam session along with some local

artists. For the week that they were here, they experienced first hand the hospitality of Saskatchewan Métis.

With the support of their parents, the Montana Arts Council, and John Arcand, these youth will be able to continue the traditional Métis fiddling style. They have learned that there is a meaning in every song and that the tunes are played for certain reasons. They now have a greater understanding of the music they love to play. I wish them continued success as they travel back to Montana to continue their craft. This may not be the last time that we see these new friends. The Fox Family are considering travelling back to Saskatchewan for the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual John Arcand Fiddle Fest to be held August 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> at the Windy Acres Vacation farm. At this event there will be such things as: the Canadian Red River Jigging Championships, a seven-category fiddle contest, great concerts, workshops, and old time dancing. This will give Jamie and Vince the chance to be able to show John their progress and to ask for further direction. The relationship between student and teacher is very sacred, and I believe that the Fox family will hold a very special place in their hearts for John.



Above Left: Paul Leppin, President of the Saskatchewan Fiddle Association  
 Left: John Arcand teaching Jamie Fox  
 Above: Vince and Jamie Fox

# They Came from Across the Lands

## Aboriginal Artists

Article by Jesse Gardiner; photographs by Jesse Gardiner and Kurtis Hamel

**T**he weekend of May 27-29, 2004 was a success for Aboriginal artists. The Gathering Our Artists Symposium, hosted by The Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company brought together the most talented aboriginal artists from across the country. Included was a group of artists from different backgrounds who practised very different art forms.

The event opened on Thursday, May 27th with the production of "Indian Time" by playwright Drew Hayden Taylor. This performance concluded the Canadian tour of his play that began here in Saskatoon. Bright and early Friday morning, the day opened with breakfast then the rest of the day was devoted to diverse arts workshops.

There was a wide range of workshops that were taught by some very well known people in their fields. There were numerous "homegrown" presenters in attendance, as well as presenters from across Canada and one from New Zealand. Each of these individuals came to share their knowledge in their respective art.

John Arcand, along with his wife, Vicki, delivered a workshop that 'honoured those who came before us.' Guided by John's toe-tapping fiddle playing, the group discussed the origins of

some of the Métis tunes. The group discussed John's beliefs of where each of the tunes originated. The workshop was concluded with John playing various Métis tunes for the participants. It is John's belief that the Red River Jig was originally the Irish fiddle tune called the Great Simple Jig because there is a remarkable resemblance between the two songs. Another song, The Little Red Headed Boy, was requested by one of the workshop's participants because his father used to play this song when he was a young boy. Following the workshop, John and Vicki also provided the lunchtime entertainment for all of the Symposium's delegates.

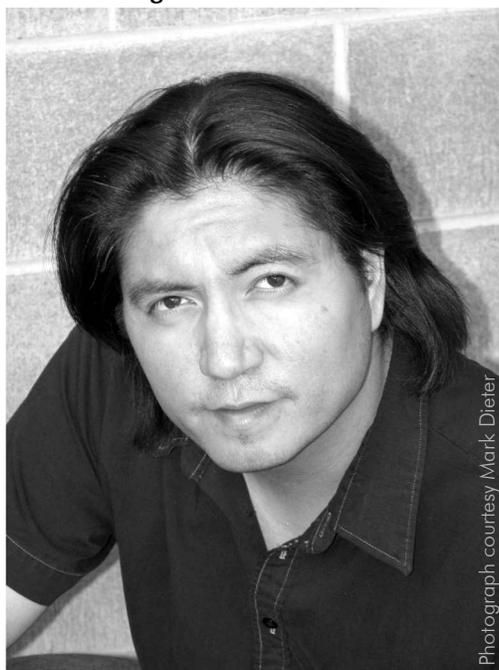
Andrea Menard shared her experiences and 'tricks of the trade' for aspiring singers or actors/actresses. Andrea, having made a name for herself in both music and acting, had invaluable information to share with the participants and even went over the different forms of a résumé needed for theatre, television, or for singing.

Maureen Belanger, a Métis actress, led a workshop titled "Improv with Ernestine!" where she and the participants discovered the world of improv.

From New Zealand, Freddy Martin also



Photograph courtesy Maureen Belanger



Photograph courtesy Mark Dieter

Far Left: Maureen Belanger, Métis actress

Left: Mark Dieter, Aboriginal actor

Facing Page, Left: Freddy Martin, Maori Performer

Facing Page, Right: John Arcand, Master Métis Fiddler and Vicki Arcand

participated, sharing Maori culture with the participants of the Symposium. In a workshop entitled Te Ohonga Ake (The Awakening), participants journeyed through drama, dance and song in a workshop that explored identity, internal integrity, spiritual being and knowledge of our being.

Others in attendance included Tasha Hubbard, the Saskatoon Native Theatre Company's Youth Ensemble, the Le-La-La Dancers, Alanis King, Drew Hayden Taylor, Mark Dieter, and Tomson Highway. A few of these artists were asked to perform to close out the day of workshops. Freddy Martin preformed a few Maori dances, one he described as a dance that was done many years ago when alcohol was first introduced into their culture. They had this dance to tell the settlers that they did not want the alcohol. Freddy also performed a dance of greeting, which was used when they were approaching another tribe's camp to show that they meant them no harm.

On Friday night, talent was showcased together with performances by Phil Boyer, Krystle Pederson, Chris Besenski, Louise Halfe, the Young Scouts, Freddy Martin, Skill Force Cru, Lindsay Knight, Raine Morin, John and Vicki Arcand, Mishi Donovan, Lisa Gariepy, Jay Ross, Vern Cheechoo, and Donnie Rain.

After the great night of entertainment, the symposium came to a close Saturday with a more laid-back approach. The delegates got the opportunity to listen, learn, and gain an

understanding of the wonderful and diverse backgrounds of the performing artists. Through the Q&A format, the delegates got an exclusive opportunity to meet the workshop presenters.

Saturday evening was another fabulous night of entertainment and was held at Saskatoon's Centennial Auditorium. The evening began with a dinner of roast bison followed by performances from George Leach, Jennifer Podemski, Tantoo Cardinal, Leela Gilday, Andrea Menard, Drew Hayden Taylor, Maria Campbell, John Arcand, and many more! Some of the highlights of the evening included Tomson Highway playing classical piano, the Le-La-La Dancers and Freddy Martin's version of "You Send Me." The evening ended with presentations to Gordon Tootoosis, Tantoo Cardinal and Maria Campbell for their enduring commitment to the arts and special acknowledgement of Maria Campbell's recent Molson Award for Literary achievement.

As a whole, the event was a success; from the opening performance of Drew Hayden Taylor's "Indian Time" to the closing remarks of Donna Heimbecker. Bringing together this much talent demonstrates the character of the artists and organizers. This shows that they are working toward the development of Aboriginal and Métis arts. Personally, I can't wait to see what happens next year.



# It's the Thought that Counts

Article by Warren Dudar, photographs by Jesse Gardiner

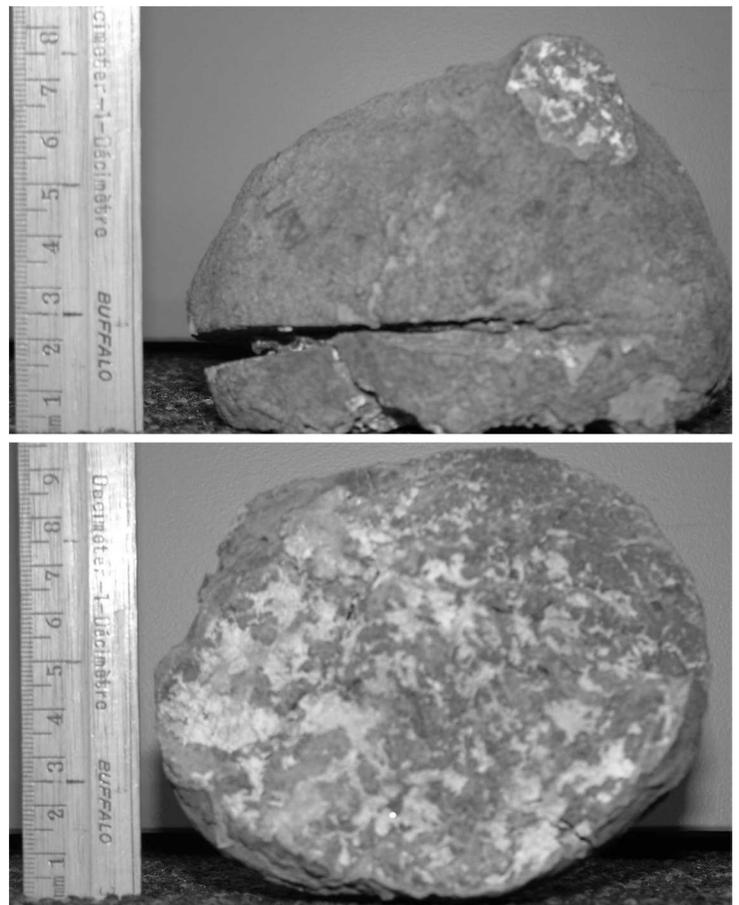
**R**ecently, Darren R. Préfontaine, the Curriculum Development Officer at the Gabriel Dumont Institute, received at the Museums' Association of Saskatchewan Annual General Meeting what was thought to be a petrified piece of pemmican in a leather bag. Préfontaine brought the artefact to work with him, where the Program Coordinator of the Publishing Department, Mr. Kurtis Hamel, took pictures of it and sent them to Dr. Ernie Walker, Department of Archaeology, University of Saskatchewan. Over the phone, Dr. Walker indicated that the object was more than likely a fungus called "Tuckahoe".

Ian Brace, also of the University of Saskatchewan Archaeology Department, explains, "Tuckahoe was assumed (incorrectly) to be remnants of buried pemmican; however, both leather and meat buried in shallow pits disintegrate readily as they are subjected to both dry and wet bacteria. Tuckahoe is almost always discovered under hardwood forest canopy (usually former or present stands of poplar trees) and is usually discovered when the soils are being cultivated, during root removal."

"Tuckahoe", taken from tockawhoughe, tawkee, or tuckah, comes from the Algonquin language and means, "it is round", as David Rose explains in his article entitled "Tuckahoe and Fungus Stone". Rose explains further that British settlers called the hardened mass "Indian Bread" because some Native Americans dug it up and roasted it or ground it into meal". Furthermore, tuckahoe "grows up to the size of a bowling ball, resembles a coconut, smells faintly of mushroom, and is edible when cooked". In another article, entitled "Tuckahoe is a Mushroom", Robert D'Ambrosio explains, "Through the years various medicinal properties have been attributed to tuckahoes, but the most startling of all is by Hobb in 1876, who described it as aphrodisiac".

Aphrodisiac or no aphrodisiac... even though the mysterious fossilized gift ended up being something other than what it was first presumed to be, it still led its curious recipients on a search that ended with unexpected information about another important aspect of Native American culture and history.

This item has currently been added to the collection at the Gabriel Dumont Institute museum, where it can be viewed by the public. Also, for photos of the artefact, visit The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture website, found at [www.metismuseum.ca](http://www.metismuseum.ca).



## Resources and Suggested Reading

Robert D'Ambrosio. "Tuckahoe is a Mushroom". [http://www.tuckahoe.com/tuckahoe\\_is\\_a\\_mushroom.htm](http://www.tuckahoe.com/tuckahoe_is_a_mushroom.htm)

David Rose. "Tuckahoe and Fungus Stone" <http://www.mushroomthejournal.com/coma/nfuspr00.html>

<http://www.tuckahoe.com/origin.html> - A study of the word's linguistic origin

<http://www.chinesenaturalherbs.com/bulkherbs/poria.htm> - Herbal uses

# Overcoming Those First-Year JITTERS

**W**ith the school year finally coming to an end and summer holidays slowly approaching, this year's graduates are surely looking forward to some well-deserved rest after completing final examinations. Now it is time to forget about school... but sometimes that is not the easiest thing to do for those who are continuing their education in the fall. These students only have two short months and, unfortunately, worrying about what lies ahead can sometimes dampen your summer activities. To help ease the anxiety, here is some information that

will hopefully make your summer as memorable as Bryan Adams' *Summer of 69*:

First, school is expensive - especially if you have to pay for it. Fortunately, there are several student loan programs, scholarships and bursaries available to students. Whether you attend the University of Saskatchewan, University of Regina, the Gabriel Dumont Institute, SIAST, or any other post-secondary education institution, there is money waiting to be scooped up by worthy enthusiasts. There are numerous funding opportunities, ranging from Business/Commerce to Education/Teaching to Technical Training specializations. For information on scholarships available to aboriginal students, visit the Gabriel Dumont Website at: <http://www.gdins.org/loansandscholarships.shtml> or your academic institution's website, including the University of Saskatchewan [www.usask.ca](http://www.usask.ca), the University of Regina [www.uregina.ca](http://www.uregina.ca) and SIAST [www.siastr.sk.ca](http://www.siastr.sk.ca).

Second, confirm deadlines and get applications in on time. For some scholarships, application deadlines are as early as June 1, but for many, deadlines range from August to September, so there is still time to apply. Deadlines are usually labelled at the bottom of the posting description.

Finally, remember what the wise Bryan Adams always said, "Those were the best days of my life". So enjoy the summer and try to forget that the -40 weather is waiting patiently for you to start the next school year.



Photograph by Jesse Gardiner

Article by Warren Dudar

## Best wishes

**Best wishes** from the Government of Saskatchewan to all First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people on National Aboriginal Day.

We proudly celebrate with you, and share in the promise, purpose and passion of this year's theme —

**Youth: Our Leaders, Our Focus.**

Maynard Sonntag  
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs



# METSI Embraces a Challenging Future

*Article by Donald Temis, photograph by Jesse Gardiner*

**T**he office of Métis Employment & Training of Saskatchewan Incorporated (METSI) has always been a busy, bustling centre of activity and there is no expectation of change, aside from the ability to change with the times and to develop innovative and ambitious programming to employ and train Métis people.

In the last two years, METSI has proposed, developed and implemented three new positions to help in the continuous struggle to achieve adequate representation of Métis people in the Saskatchewan workforce. The three positions, Apprenticeship Coordinator, Employer Coordinator and Corporate Circles Liaison, have all commenced duties in the last eight months.

Constance Hourie, Chief Executive Officer of METSI, is confident that the new positions have the potential to create substantial employment, training and apprenticeship opportunities and she eagerly looks to a positive future for Métis employment in the province.

"These positions were created to achieve three simple goals," Hourie said when asked about her new employees, "we want to create awareness of Métis people in the provincial employment market, offer training to Métis individuals who seek our assistance, and increase representation of Métis in the Saskatchewan workforce. I feel if we keep it simple and all focus on the same goals, we will be successful and be able to achieve a provincial workforce conducive to successfully employing Métis people."

Deb Donaldson, hired as Employer Coordinator in January 2004, has demonstrated initiative, a strong work ethic, and effective networking skills to fulfill the requirements of building partnerships with any and all interested business sectors and/or employers. The scope of the Employer Coordinator position is to serve as a link between METSI regional offices, Métis people, employers, training institutions, industry sector organizations and the government. Donaldson's

responsibilities also include fostering and maintaining fifty-four current partnerships initiated by Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs (GRAA).

In addition, Donaldson has been busy presenting to industry, employers and government officials, the Employer Coordinator strategy to increase Métis participation in the labour market industry. She is excited about the potential her position has to create widespread awareness of Métis people and their value to the Saskatchewan labour force.

METSI veteran Gabe Lafond, who initially held the Apprenticeship Coordinator position, sought to keep one goal in mind: find apprenticeship opportunities for Métis people. Lafond, who is currently Director of Programs, has worn a number of different hats while at METSI and has since had to pass on a few "torches".

On May 3, 2004, the Apprenticeship Coordinator "torch" was handed to Mike Gosselin, and, he and Lafond are now working to create a provincial database of Métis apprentices, developing an Apprenticeship Initiative as an addition to current programming and seeking partnerships with various industry, training and Métis organizations. Gosselin greets the future with open arms while noting that the Métis population continues to increase in number and on average becomes a younger population, while the province's population decreases in number and becomes older. In addition, the increasing depletion of skilled workers provincially and nationally offers seemingly endless opportunities for Métis people to achieve journeyman status.

The Corporate Circles Liaison (CCL) promotes job prosperity and economic development for Métis and First Nations people and is in partnership with Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology (SIIT). Susan Zwarych was appointed as the CCL on April 7, 2004, and has hit the ground running in her

tireless effort to advance awareness and participation in the initiative among all business sectors. The CCL is a new and innovative approach to fostering and building working relationships with Métis and First Nations partners by facilitating working-group sessions with employers, community agencies and Métis and First Nations organizations (e.g. Saskatoon Tribal Council, METSI).

The concrete goal of the CCL is to support the creation of 100 Individual Roundtables within Saskatchewan's industry, business and community sectors. Zwarych is eager to achieve success by actively campaigning about the Corporate Circles Initiative; understanding that Saskatchewan's economy subsists by means of small business and as such, each should have the opportunity to participate in this dynamic and gainful venture. In

addition, the CCL is responsible for aligning employers with resourceful, well-informed and practical individuals from community based First Nations and Métis organizations who can offer their knowledge regarding the theme of respective roundtable discussions.

The passing days continue to be exciting for the entire staff at METSI, especially the new recruits. The atmosphere is still energetic, busy and bustling with three more people added to the mix. If METSI's success was measured by their commitment to, ambition for, and resourcefulness in creating opportunities for their people, they would find themselves in the upper echelon of the Fortune 500 companies. Hourie wholeheartedly reflects that sentiment, "If we were paid by how much effort we put into our projects, simply put, we'd be rich."



▲ METSI staff members Mike Gosselin, Deb Donaldson and Susan Zwarych

The art of story telling will soon be a forgotten skill. This is a true experience that comes to mind when I rode a bus several years ago. Rather than using the pronoun I, I've portrayed a grandmother figure, which I am now.

## On a Bus Ride

by Gloria Fleury

**T**here is a Metis grandmother and she is riding a bus. She is getting old but she has much knowledge, experience and many interesting stories to tell from her longevity. Sometimes she finds, that no one will listen. At the moment she rides, sits patiently and looks out the bus window.

Presently the bus arrives at a small settlement which consisted of a post office - store combined, a dilapidated garage, a meeting hall, a few scattered houses and some shabby out buildings.

The bus reduces speed and halts. The curious old one peers out the bus window. She sees a young girl and a dog, standing on a dirt side road. The scene tells her that this young girl is leaving home. Wise in her ways, the old one perceives that the girl has school years behind her and life in the settlement has come to an end.

The old one imagines that the young girl is undecided and apprehensive about her future. How will the girl fulfill her dreams by staying in the settlement?

It was a great decision. Both her parents are elderly. The girl an only child, was born to them late in life. She knows it will break their hearts.

One day leads to another. Quite suddenly she realizes, that other young people will be out there also applying for jobs. She must go! With determination, she sorts her meagre clothing, packs her shoulder bags and suitcase. The girl called Danbee plans and prepares to catch the morning bus.

The old one's experience and emotions tell her that the good-byes are painful. In her mind she sees Old Dan, standing at the garden gate, a tall gaunt figure with his old felt hat squashed in his hands. Molly, a tiny frail woman has unshed tears and is wringing the print out of her worn apron.

The girl walks the mile to the main road with her life long friend, her dog Chien-Chien. While she waits, she glances to the settlement. There are cousins, aunties and uncles there.

She hails the bus, then the girl stoops to hug the head of the black collie dog. He wags his tail in farewell. The observant old *Kohkom* watches them closely. She no longer imagines. She is observing the real thing.

Once again, the girl hugs the dogs. "Go home

Chien-Chien. Keep watch over mom and dad."

With heart-felt hesitation, the girl enters the bus, finds an empty seat by the window. She hoists her bags to the rack above. The girl called Danbee is on her way.

The pondering old lady across the aisle wonders what lies ahead for this girl. Will she find a job? And if so, will she forget her heritage? She hopes this girl-child does not feel the heartache, one may find in the city.

The watchful old one, notices that the girl's clothes are plain. She wears a cotton skirt and a neatly ironed cotton lace blouse. On her tiny feet are flat, polished black sandals. Her long hair hangs on her shoulders, with a bit of a fringe on her forehead.

The girl turns ever so slightly, then glances at the quaint old lady across the aisle.

The old *Kohkom* notices worry, doubt and sadness, deep in the young girl's eyes. Her heart goes out to the girl called Danbee. She can sense the girl's unsureness and gives her an encouraging smile.

The girl smiles back shyly, at the *Kohkom* in the opposite seat, then the girl called Danbee turns away. She sits and presses her face to the grimy bus window. Through tears, the girl looks back to the gravel road.

A strange feeling comes over the old one. She felt she must do the same. The ancient *Kohkom* leaned over the bus seats. She stretched her tired body to look back down the road.

Back there on that lonely side road, sat the faithful black dog, watching the rear end of the bus depart. The dog lowers his head and drops it on his paws. He is also old and tired. He fears he shall not see his companion again.

With a burning in her throat, the old one also presses her wrinkled face to the bus window to weep silently.

Once there was an old lady and a young girl called Danbee. Their souls touched on a bus. Some where in the chapters of the girl's life, she will remember an old *Kohkom* who wept with her on a bus.

For the old one? She has one more story to tell, if anyone will listen.



# SUNTEP Spring Cultural Camp

Article and photographs by Bente Huntley

**S**UNTEP Prince Albert held its annual Spring Cultural Camp from June 9-11, 2004 at Amisk Adventures, located on Sturgeon Lake. The camp boasts an outdoor cultural village with several tipis, a sweat, a large gathering area and several smaller meeting locations, all outside. As well, there is a large camping and meeting area, cabins, canoes and a small canteen.

We headed out, rain or shine, on Wednesday morning. Many people tented and a few stayed in the tipis. It is a requirement that all of our students stay two nights and three days, so we totaled about 85 people which included many children. All of the students belonged to a specific buddy group and each buddy group was responsible for one meal, one Elder, and one clean up duty, which helped run the camp smoothly. At our spring camp all of the students still partake in their classes. Each class has a specific assignment while they are at the camp. In addition, there are a number of workshops set up for the students to choose from. In the mornings we always have the Elder's teachings. This year we were fortunate to have Elder Danny Musqua, Elder Vicki Wilson, Elder Sally Milne, Elder Rita Parenteau, and Elder Vivian Maebry. Their wisdom and teachings were amazing and centered around this year's theme "caring for our mother earth". Other guests who attended and offered different workshops were Ron Crain, Brad Parent, and Danny Nickel. The students could chose from hoop dancing, caribou hair tufting, tipi making and teachings, willow basket weaving, and sweats. A total of three sweats were offered and all were very well attended.

Our spring camp is a time to connect or reconnect with our Mother Earth as well as to bring the year to a fun and fulfilling close. Students are asked to walk softly on the earth and be thankful for the many gifts we receive. Most years we have been extremely lucky with the weather; again this year we had two beautiful days but were rained out on Friday. However, we cannot complain because we do need the rain as well. Many memories are created at the annual camps and we are indeed grateful for these opportunities to build relationships with the earth, with our fellow classmates and with our special guests.



# Anyone for Roast Rabbit?

Article by Warren Dudar, recipes submitted by Terri-Lyn Lenz

**T**he people of Nipawin's Métis community have been busy rummaging through torn pages of old recipe books, testing the quality of their memory, and sharing family secrets with others to try and come up with Nipawin's first Annual Métis Traditional Cookbook. Terri-Lyn Lenz of Nipawin Local #134 describes some of the book's contents, "All of the recipes are traditional ones that have been passed down by our elders and grandparents. There is bannock (baked, and open-fire), venison, rabbit, and even squirrel", just to name a few. Sunchoke, also referred to as the "Jerusalem Artichoke", is also among the list of about one hundred total recipes. The sunchoke is a vegetable (not an artichoke), which was cultivated by Native Americans long before the arrival of Europeans. "You can eat it either raw or cooked. When it is raw it kind of tastes like a water chestnut and when it is cooked it has a very nutty flavour," explains Lenz. "As of recently, it is just starting to be rediscovered".

The cookbook's contributors are all from Nipawin and area, except for the entries by Gale Leblanc of Ontario, who had already composed her own traditional cookbook. Apart from the actual recipes, there are small stories that offer tips and techniques on the different cooking procedures, such as a method for cleaning a rabbit. Also included are some extras outlining various aspects of Métis culture, such as a section on Métis fingerweaving and a write-up on the different Métis sashes. Nipawin Local #134 plans to put out a new cookbook each year, illustrating not only traditional recipes, but also family favourites. "We are going to try and do the traditional one once every five years", said Lenz. "But anyone can submit recipes to the one we are going to do every year". Recipes can be sent to the local's office at: Nipawin Local #134, Box 2287 Nipawin SK, S0E 1E0, 862-9744.

The cookbook is going to be available at *Back to Batoche Days* - July 22-25. It can be purchased at the Nipawin local's booth that will be set up at Batoche or from the local office. Congratulations Terri-Lyn, the crew at Local 134, and all of the book's contributors, for the delicious accomplishment that will help feed different communities for years to come and thank you from the Gabriel Dumont Institute, for contributing to the awareness and preservation of Métis tradition and culture. We all hungrily anticipate the book's release.

## Pigweed Greens

- As much pigweed as needed
- Water
- Salt

Pick your pigweed leaves when they are nice and green. Wash and place in a pan with as small amount of water. Sprinkle with salt and cook for 10 - 15 minutes, adding more water if necessary. These cook down a lot so you need quite a lot of leaves.

This was an old reliable green for the pioneers and a godsend in hard times. It tastes much like spinach.

## Roast Rabbit

- Several thin strips of bacon
- Salty water
- Seasoned flour
- One rabbit

Dress and clean rabbit thoroughly and soak in the salty water. Drain and dredge with flour mixture. Fasten the strips of bacon to the rabbit with toothpicks. Put a little water in a roaster and roast until done. The rabbit may also be stuffed with dressing if desired.

## Wild Strawberry Shortcake

- Biscuits for two

Take two small children and a clean lard pail and go out on a hill where the strawberries grow. This is best done in the June sunshine. Pick about 1/4 to 1/3 of the pail full. This will take quite a long time as the berries are very small and taste pretty good. Take the berries home where an aunt or kookum(grandma) will mash them and add a bit of sugar. This is served over the biscuits and is sufficient for two who are five or six years old.

# The Melfort Youth Empowerment Centre

Article and photographs by Donna St. Dennis

**T**he Melfort Youth Empowerment Centre is an ongoing project that has been in operation since November 2002. The Centre offers a safe, warm, welcoming environment for youth to participate in a variety of activities. The need for this type of programming is ongoing, as the number of youth in the community with a need for recreation and activities increases.

The Centre receives support from Métis Nation Eastern Region II and Métis Local #22. It is also supported by the Melfort District Planning Committee, which is comprised of numerous service providers in the community.

The Objectives of the Melfort Youth Empowerment Centre are:

- To provide a safe and welcoming environment where youth and families can go to spend time together;
- To provide recreation activities for youth;
- To provide skills to youth and families to help

them in areas such as nutrition; and,

- To help in the reduction of youth crime in the city by providing a safe environment and positive activities in which youth can participate.

Operated on a drop-in basis, the Centre is open after school on weekdays, evenings and weekends. The centre is open to all youth, but participation has been primarily, but not exclusively, Aboriginal. At present there is a regular group of youth in attendance, and on average over 100 youth visit the Centre each week. Participants are approximately 50 male and 60 female.

In the summer, the number of participants increases as more youth come into the community from surrounding communities and local reserves. Current program participation is between the ages of 8-15 with the exception of a few participants who are 16-17. In the summer, participants are split into two age categories, 8-11 and 12-15. During the



▲ Youth take advantage of the Centre's computer lab

school year, the younger children primarily visit the Centre after school and the older youth in the evening. There are always two adult supervisors at the Centre, as well as, parents who occasionally stop in to interact with the participants.

The participants develop social responsibility through cooperative activities and leadership, and communication skills through the workshops and activities offered. One objective of the Centre is to help youth contribute to a greater sense of pride in their culture and in their own accomplishments. It is very important to try and teach the youth the great importance of education and how very important it is to stay in school.

In the future, the Centre will address the issue of nutrition among youth and families. Nutrition is a priority to ensure mental well-being, accessible nutritious food, decreased substance use/abuse and active, healthy communities. The Centre would like to give participants a nutritious snack while participating in programs and the opportunity to gain knowledge that can help them in their lives.

The Centre is based upon the following principles: extended family; cultural context; flexible scheduling; sharing and speaking out; personal achievements; healthy living; leadership skills; and, furthering education. The Centre measures its success by: the number of regular participants; the number of first time participants; family participation; and, strong community awareness as to what is happening with youth. The

Centre will continue to measure its success while further examining drug use among youth, and the increase or decrease in crime in the community.

In January 2003, the Centre took part in an entrepreneurship workshop entitled "Lemonade Stand" where participants were to organize for a Lemonade Stand business and apply business basics. This was done by dividing the youth into four groups, with each group developing a business plan and a report on the planning and operation of their stand. This workshop was delivered by Visions North Community Futures Development Corporation from La Ronge.

In March and April 2004, the Centre held two, one-day interactive workshops. The first workshop focused on Personalities, Power and Control. Eighteen participants, aged 13-15, took part in this workshop, which allowed youth to assess their personal strengths and weaknesses that affect them in their lives, and will affect them in their future goals and career choices. In this workshop youth determined what kind of a personality they have - Popular Sanguine, Powerful Choleric, Peaceful Phlegmatic, or Perfect Melancholy - which allowed them to look at emotions attributed to these personality types, to see that characteristics contribute to their personalities, and to see how their personality can play a role in their career choices. Youth were also able to explore the ideas of power and control and how each affects their lives, friends, families, teachers and employers. This was



beneficial to youth as it tended to show how different personalities deal with conflict. The goal was to give participants insight into how to deal with relationships in a positive manner.

The second workshop focused on critical thinking and transition skills. Twelve youth, ages 13-15 took part in the workshop, which focused on developing problem solving skills to better guide them with the challenges they face. Mini workshops that discussed ethics derived from Aboriginal stories, Elders and the actions of Aboriginal people were also held. These ethics are used in the traditional practices of Aboriginal people and many people turn to them during their healing journey. The message was to listen and follow the guidance that comes from Elders, prayer, and solitude. The presenters at this session shared their personal stories with the participants to show the hardships that they had encountered in their lives and how they obtained the skills to better help themselves. The purpose was to show youth that they can pursue their own dreams by taking inventory of their own lives and by altering their attitude which can have a powerful impact on their lives. These workshops helped to enhance the participant's self-esteem and helped them identify their strengths and weaknesses, making them better equipped to make decisions and life choices.

On the final day, there was a presentation by Josephine McKay (PRWAC) that focused on role models and included a video highlighting Aboriginal

athletes, actors, actresses, singers and musicians, as role models. The message was that youth could be what they wanted to be. Through choosing a healthy lifestyle, by staying in school and through positive choices they too can become a role model for future youth.

Chris Lafontaine also gave a presentation on Internet business to show participants how the Internet can be used to conduct business. This presentation was very useful as it showed youth the opportunities available, if one is interested in computers, internet-based business, or being self-employed.

Following this presentation, a meal was prepared for presenters, community service providers and business people. The participants helped prepare the meal, and had over 117 people attend. This meal gave participants, service providers and the business community the opportunity to interact. Keynote speaker, Wayne McKenzie from Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs spoke to the business community on the ideas of a representative workforce model versus equity programs. McKenzie explained the importance of these programs and why it is necessary to begin to bridge the gap with Aboriginal employees for the future. He also stressed the importance of hiring youth.

This summer, the Centre will be hosting a number of cultural excursions for youth to enhance their understanding of Aboriginal cultures.



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