

New Breed

Magazine

Christmas 1999



Happy Holidays

Covering Metis Nation issues and events

\$2.00

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MNS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As the President of the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan, I would like to take this opportunity to bring greetings to the membership and the many friends and partners who enhance our lives as Metis people. This is a special opportunity as it is the close of a millennium suggesting perhaps that this is the time to reflect on our historic past as a people and our role in developing this country of Canada.

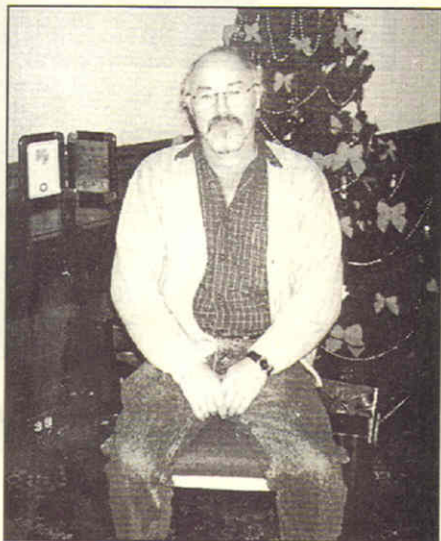
We have made many contributions in the past and continue to make contributions in the present. Our historic leader, Louis Riel, is still very much in the forefront of the minds of all Canadians, and as his life is remembered, so to is the struggle that he died for. It is an enormous challenge to our present leaders all across the homeland to retain the honour and dignity of past leaders as we attempt to move the Nation toward a good future. Although much time has passed since the death of Riel, the struggle remains the same. We look to the new millennium now as the era of our dreams.

Here in Saskatchewan, the Metis Nation has made strides toward control of those issues, which affect our daily lives, as well as gained some ground for retaining that control in the future for generations yet unborn. We struggle to live as a self-determining people. We struggle to reverse the negative historic relationships that Metis have held with other governments, such as the Government of Canada and the Government of Saskatchewan, in the past and build processes that place the Metis on equal and rightful footings. As we inherit the many programs and services once offered by these governments, we inherit also the bureaucracy. We struggle now to do things uniquely, to become the authority in these areas. We must work closely with our municipal governments as well as Indian Nations governments as we undertake new initiatives and development at the community level. The Metis first introduced the concept of regional representation that is an essential part of the governing structure of Canada. This was done through our involvement in the negotiations of the Manitoba Act, and since confederation, we have sought a voice in that representation framework.

We struggle for the recognition of our Rights as an Aboriginal peoples in this country. The courts have acknowledged, after significant research and documentation by our people, that the Metis have inherent rights that were never extinguished. We have been successful in determining, through the *Morin & Daigneault* case, that the Scrip process, at minimum, did not extinguish the right to hunt and fish for food. While this case deals primarily with North West Saskatchewan, we have to establish these rights throughout

the province. Our Aboriginal rights, including land and natural resources, will continue to be explored and examined as we move through the courts, one case at a time. This is an expensive process that may, however, have impacts on all Metis across the homeland, both present and future. The Metis National Council has prepared a partial *Metis Rights Agenda* that has been presented to the Government of Canada as the position of the Metis on topics such as these. This process is costly and time-consuming but ensures over time, representation and authority in those decisions which affect our lives. It is my hope that we can find a way to finance the continuation of the struggle for national rights. Some day all children in this country will be taught in school of the Metis, of the struggles and of the successes, and hopefully they will learn that the struggle of Metis is the struggle of all – rights and responsibilities and justice.

In closing, I would like to take this time to recognize the many contributions of our members who have invested their energy and their lives to the cause of Metis self-determination. The list would be endless, should I endeavour to name each one of you, but from time to time I do walk through my mind and reflect on the many great contributions of individuals. I wish each of you and your families a very Merry Christmas and hope that the turning of time to a new century will mean good things for all.



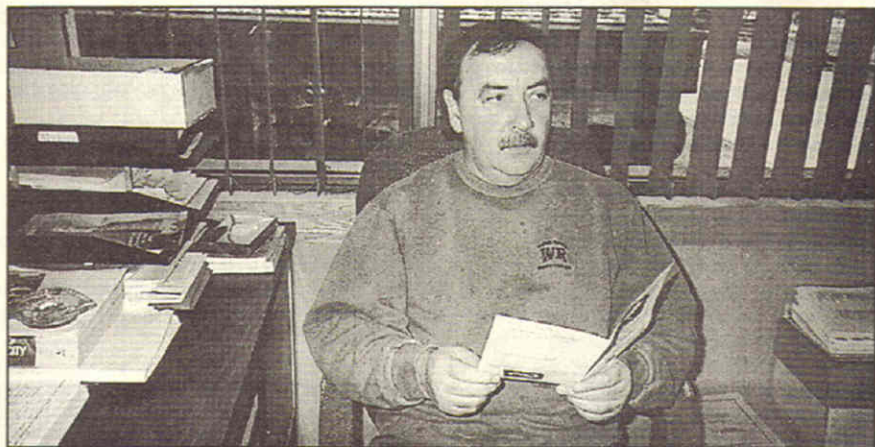
MERRY CHRISTMAS

FROM WWS VICE-PRESIDENT MURRAY HAMILTON

The Metis Nation has prevailed through many challenges in the past, which have only served to strengthen us.

I offer my most sincere wishes for you and your loved ones

This Holiday Season



I Wish You a Very Metis Christmas and Festive New Year

Seasons Greetings



From

Metis Nation -

Saskatchewan

Provincial Treasurer Allan Morin

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM MNS PROVINCIAL SECRETARY ROBERT DOUCETTE

Christmas is the time of year for families to celebrate together and for us to reunite as a nation of Metis people. I wish all of our New Breed readers a safe and happy holiday season. As you gather together with your loved ones, take the time to

remember those less fortunate and count your own blessings. I see the next millennium being one of progress for the Metis Nation, and look forward to being a part of it. Please enjoy the festive season and have a safe, happy holiday,





SEASONS GREETINGS

On behalf the Board of Governor's and staff at the Métis National Council I would like to take this time to wish everyone Happy Holiday. My personal seasons greetings go out to my family and friends in Saskatchewan, as well, I would like to send my seasons greetings to Clem Chartier, board members and the staff of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan. I would like everyone to know at this time that my thoughts and prayers are with you. Have a great New Year and see you in the next millenium.

Sincerely,

Gerald Morin
 President



SEASON'S GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES from the GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE OF NATIVE STUDIES AND APPLIED RESEARCH

The Gabriel Dumont Institute is a Métis controlled education and cultural institution. Its mission is to promote the renewal and development of Métis culture and to design and deliver educational and cultural programs for and about Métis people.

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Local Grad A Huge Success!!

In July of 1999 we held our first graduation ceremonies consisting of 30 diploma students with over 200 guests in attendance. Each one of these individuals worked extremely hard to achieve this goal, and we heartily congratulate and salute each and every one of them, and wish them much future happiness and success!

Success Story!



My name is Joan. I was first introduced to the Academy of Learning in June 1998. I was a single mother of four children, and was alone to take care of them. The first step that I knew I had to take was improving my education. I enrolled in Adult Basic Education. It was very difficult after fourteen years of being a homemaker, and then going back to school. This was indeed a challenge!

I attended upgrading from August 1996 to August 1998. When I was done there, I was referred to the Academy of Learning - North Battleford. In September 1998, I was accepted into the Administrative Secretary Diploma Program. I was very nervous! I didn't know much

about computers other than how to turn them on and off.

When I was married, my husband and I had owned a trucking business. I had done numerous jobs in helping to run our business. The job that I enjoyed the most was that of interacting with the people. After we separated, I knew that I would persevere education and learn what I needed in order to work the secretarial field.

In starting my course with the Academy of Learning in September 1998, I was very pleased with the friendly and helpful attitude of the staff. They were warm and there to lend a helping hand when I needed it. They were also encouraging, and supportive in helping me reach my goal.

Upon completion of my course in July 1999, I was offered the position of Facilitator-in-Training. I accepted this position and am now presently employed with the Academy. I enjoyed coming here as a learner and I really enjoy working as a Facilitator. I am now able to assist, encourage, and help the learners the way that I was assisted and encouraged. I am very grateful that I have this position. It allows me to give back to others that which I have been given.



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By Lorna Docken



3. Citizenship Act - This Act contains criteria around recognition of Metis status. It is in line with the national criteria, therefore will make the enumeration process go more smoothly.
4. Metis Nation Legislative Assembly Act - This Act dictates how the MNLA is conducted. It prescribes roles, responsibilities and processes for the assembly.

The MNS November 1999 Metis Legislative Assembly was well organized and productive. Highlights include the name of our governance structure changing from the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan to the Metis Nation - Saskatchewan and the passing of four Acts.

Acts are legislation which complement our Constitution. The MNS has used the current constitution as its "Rules" since 1993. The four new acts are as follows:

1. Senate Act - This act provides a framework for MNS Senate activities and spells out roles and responsibilities of the Senate. This helps establish a positive working relationship between the Senate and the Provincial Metis Council.
2. Elections Act - This act sets out rules to govern Metis Nation of Saskatchewan elections, thus eliminating confusion and costly judicial remedies.

Overall, the passing of the Acts will aid the elected



and non-elected Metis citizens in understanding their roles and conduct within the Metis Nation. The committee who drafted the acts did a splendid job.

The Assembly was very well attended and the social events were fun for everyone concerned. The Metis Women of Western Region 1A put on a fabulous banquet and the entertainment was second to none. MNS President Clem Chartier was pleased with the results of the assembly and wishes to thank the organizers and staff for all of their hard work as well as the members of the MNLA, who persisted through the passing of the Acts, amendments, and resolutions. Such cooperation builds a strong nation for all of us. Most importantly, President Chartier recognizes the role of the MNS Senate. "The Senators are as crucial to the future of the MNS as they have been to its past."



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LOUIS RIEL MEMORIAL DAY NOVEMBER 16, 1999, SASKATOON



LOCAL #11 ELDERS CHRISTMAS PARTY

SASKATOON — NOVEMBER 29, 1999



Traditional Métis Christmas and New Year's Celebrations

The Métis have always been a social people, and have been described as having a social life which mixed the cooperative tribalism of their First Nations foremothers and the *joie de vivre* - 'joy of life' - of their French-Canadian forefathers. Indeed, Métis people have long placed a great emphasis on maintaining relationships and friendships among families, extended families and communities. In the face of a great deal of oppression, the Métis have always made sure that they allowed themselves time for recreation and socializing, particularly when work was hard and the future was not always secure. Nowhere were these bonds of kinship and friendship better renewed than during Christmas and New Year's celebrations.

While Christmas Day was strictly a religious event for most Métis communities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there was a festive spirit among the Métis that oppression could not dampen. For instance, at Batoche, in the 1880s and 1890s, from Christmas to Epiphany, Métis families held ball room dances by "oil light" (*bals à l'huile*). A Prince Albert newspaper reported in 1889 "(a)t Batoche, during the holidays, balls are the order of the day. Two were held last night, one at Pilon's and the other at D(aniel) Charette's and youngsters had all the chances they wanted of shaking themselves up".¹ Métis Elders have recounted that some families spent Christmas by attending midnight mass, occasionally singing hymns in Cree or French, and then having a large supper and party known as *réveillon*. However, most celebrating during the holiday season was reserved for New Year's Day. As one Batoche Elder told historian Diane Payment "On Christmas Eve, we went to midnight mass, and when we got home, we ate a little, drank some tea and went to bed. The presents were for New Year's Day".²

Early on the morning of Christmas Day, families travelled by horse and sleigh to loved ones' homes, and stayed until late in the evening. Prior to this gathering, mothers and daughters prepared food for days to ensure everyone would be well fed. Christmas and New Year's fare included *beignes* (fried bannock), *boulettes* (meat

balls), *rababou* (stew), *chokecherries* or *saskatoon berries* served with cream and sugar, puddings, pemmican, wild game, as well as tea, home-made beer or wine. Unlike the commercialism which permeates Christmas today, traditional Métis Christmas celebrations were modest and within the family's means.

As one Elder has said "(w)e did not have Christmas gifts, only candies, apples and pastry".³

While Christmas was a religious event for the Métis, New Year's was a grand social celebration. It was not uncommon for several households in a community to hold a feast and dance on different nights so that people could visit and celebrate for many evenings in succession around New Year's Day. In the 1860s, at Round Plain, in what is now the area around Dundurn, a New Year's celebration lasted ten days!⁴ Manitoba Métis Elder Joe Venne had this to say about the Métis' festive spirit during the Christmas/New Year's holiday season: "(w)hen it came to the holidays, Christmas and New Year's, we used to go for two, three weeks at a time, dancing every night, partying every night. Other people didn't have that style".⁵

Children were an integral part of New Year's celebrations. On New Year's Eve, children also received presents from their parents, usually small gifts of food. One Elder related that "(o)n New Year's Eve children hung stockings at the foot of their bed and would wake up to find all sorts of treats".⁶ After receiving their presents, children on the morning of New Year's Day thanked and blessed their parents, and families hugged and kissed one another.

New Year's Day was usually held at the grandparents' home and was a special time for families as cousins, aunts and uncles attended. It was an occasion for social drinking, and the eating of all sorts of food with people

³ Ibid.

⁴ Dorion, Leah, Paquin Todd and Préfontaine, Darren R., *The Metis of Canada CD ROM*. Edmonton: Arnold Publishing and the Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2000.

⁵ Zelig, Ken and Victoria. *Ste. Madeleine: Community Without a Town. Metis Elders in Interview*. Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1987. (Interview with Joe Venne) p. 43.

⁶ Payment, *The Free People*, p. 55.

¹ Payment, Diane Paulette, *The Free People: Otipemisiwak* Batoche, Saskatchewan, 1870-1930. Ottawa: Minister of Supply Services Canada, p. 54.

² Ibid., p. 55.

travelling from house to house, dining, dancing and visiting. While visiting house-to-house, everybody would shake hands and kiss, a carry-over of French-Canadian tradition. New Year's Day was therefore known by some Métis as 'ochetookeskaw' or 'kissing day.'

Michif Christmas Songs

Jingle Bells

Les sonnants, les sonnants,
Sêwêwak tout le temps,
Ekwayikohk la fun dans la sleigh
It-otâ pâso-yahk.

We Wish you a Merry Christmas!

Noel pour lee zhawn di mootawyn
(3x)

Pi aen bel bon awnee. (Turtle
Mountain Michif)

Noël pour les gens de Montagne
(3x)

Puis une belle bonne année.
(Standard French)⁸

By the Gabriel Dumont Institute.

⁷ Dorion et al. *The Metis of Canada CD ROM*

⁸ Lilyhoule, Marion and Allery, Dorothy.
"Jingle Bells" and "We Wish You a Merry
Christmas!" in Lynne Whidden, *Métis Songs:
Visiting was the Métis Way*. Regina: Gabriel
Dumont Institute, 1993. p. 16



*Merry Christmas
&
A Happy New Year*

Weechitotan

Elt's'udi

Let's Help Each Other



Keith N. Goulet, MLA, his family and staff extend warmest wishes for the best this season has to offer.

LACK OF JUSTICE FOR METIS VETS

by Douglas J. Kovatch

Civil actions have been commenced for a number of Aboriginal war veterans, both of Treaty Indian and Metis ancestry. The Veterans all served in the Canadian Armed Services during the Second World War and the Korean War.

When non-Aboriginal veterans returned home, a number of statutory benefits were available to them. It seems that the most popular and frequently used was a loan program that could provide loans of six or sixteen thousand dollars to the veteran at 3 1/2 percent interest. Once the loans were repaid, it was possible for the veteran to obtain additional loans.

For some reason, which wasn't readily apparent prior to commencement of the action, these benefits were almost never made available to Aboriginal veterans. I was retained by a number of Indian veterans to commence legal action against the Federal Government, alleging discriminatory treatment, in that the Federal Government did not make the same programs available to Indian veterans. After the research was commenced on the Indian veteran's claim, I learned that most Metis veterans received either the same benefits as did the Indian veterans, or even less.

At the end of the First World War, the *Soldiers Settlement Act* was passed to provide a quarter section for veterans returning from the war. At that time, Duncan Campbell Scott was the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs. He wrote a letter expressing his opinion on the *Soldiers Settlement* land scheme. He stated that Indians had far more land in reserve status than they could ever use, and that no additional land should be given to Indians or placed in reserve status. He suggested that when an Indian veteran returned home, the Department of Indian Affairs would simply direct the band involved, to allot the veteran exclusive use of a quarter section on that veteran's reserve. It seems that under this system, the idea became very ingrained in the minds of Federal Government bureaucrats, the Indian veterans could not own land off reserve, and could not obtain land from the Federal Government under the *Soldier Settlement* scheme. This same attitude persisted and was instrumental in the development of the statutory benefit plans that would be available for returning World War II vets. As a result, at the end of the Second World War, Indian vets were directed back to their reserve, or voluntarily returned, and received exclusive possession of a quarter section on reserve. They were also able to receive a \$2,320. grant from the Federal Government, to purchase farm implements, supplies, or supplies for their home. There are many stories

about how these funds were administered by the Indian Agent and never actually reached the veteran at all.

This historical explanation may have all of you wondering what this has to do with Metis? I asked many Metis Veterans why they received nothing. For a long time I got no response. Finally one elderly gentleman looked at me kind of funny and said: "You have to understand. In those days, if you looked like an Indian, you were an Indian." Suddenly, things started to make a little bit of sense. It seems there were a number of cases where Metis veterans approached Federal Government offices regarding the provision of benefits, and were not advised that they could receive nothing. It seems that many of the bureaucrats employed by the government offices simply assumed that the Metis veteran was an Indian veteran who was not entitled to receive any off reserve benefits.

The official explanation advanced by the Government of Canada, by way of defence in the court action, is somewhat different. In their defence, the Government of Canada states that the benefits available to veterans were not automatically available to all veterans. In order to access those benefits, a veteran had to make application at a Department of Veterans Affairs office. The DVA offices were located in Saskatoon and Regina. According to the Federal Government in the court actions, very few veterans of either Indian or Metis ancestry, applied for benefits. Only those who actually did apply could receive any benefits. It is now well beyond the date in the 1970s when a veteran could make application for benefits. As a result, it is now too late for the Aboriginal veteran to make application for benefits, and (s)he is entitled to nothing, and I guess that's just too bad for the Aboriginal veteran.

This explanation of course, ignores the fact that in 1945-46, veterans returned to their home communities. Most, if not all of those communities were quite remote from Regina and Saskatoon. The transportation and communications systems of today were simply not existent. MNS Senator Vital Morin advised that after WW II, he returned to Ile a la Crosse. The road to Ile a la Crosse was not even constructed until the late 50s. In the late 40s, after WW II, it took him a week of travel on boat and foot to even reach Meadow Lake, much less Saskatoon. Is it any wonder that he had no knowledge of the veterans' benefits that were available, and made no application for those benefits at the DVA Office in Saskatoon? In the court action, we will argue that the Government of Canada owed a fiduciary duty to returning vets, to advise them of the benefits available, and to make

those benefits available to them. The Government's explanation that the vets didn't apply for benefits, is evidence of the Government's breach of fiduciary duty, as opposed to any legitimate explanation as to why Aboriginal veterans didn't receive benefits.

Individual legal actions are being pursued on behalf of approximately 40 individual veterans. For legal reasons, it was determined that it was best to pursue these actions on behalf of individuals. However, all of the actions are virtually identical. The actions are proceeding more slowly than we would like, but are proceeding. A fairly extensive examination for discovery of an official from Veterans Affairs has been conducted. We now must examine officials from Indian Affairs. It is my hope that these actions will proceed to trial in the spring, unless the Government of Canada comes forward with a settlement package prior to that time. In my view, the case for Aboriginal veterans is a strong and compelling one. It has a good chance of success. The major problem with the claim is not with the claim itself, but with the slow operation of our judicial system. The question is whether we can work the matter through the judicial system and obtain justice before most of the veterans have passed on. Or, will the victory only be a symbolic one, achieved after their death?



On behalf of the Clarence Campeau Development Fund we would like to extend our thanks and best wishes for a happy holiday season.

Merry Christmas!



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for their business

and wishes them a Merry Christmas

and Happy New Year

METIS CHRISTMAS STORIES FROM THE ELDERS

By Loma Docken

TOKYO (CRESCENT LAKE) SASKATCHEWAN

Seventy-Six year old Alex Allary remembers Christmas in Tokyo from when he lived there in 1923 - 48 and 1955 - 69. He remembers the Christmas concerts as being excellent and entertaining. He tried to never miss even one of them. At Christmas they did not exchange gifts, only cards within the family. They did not have big Christmas meals, rather they saved it for New Years. He best remembers house parties, dances and music, regretting that Metis traditions are not kept alive.



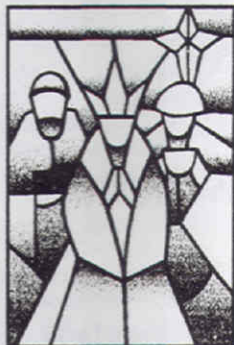
GREEN LAKE:

Terry Bishop is 65. She grew up in Green Lake where the family celebrated Christmas without presents. They enjoyed oranges, apples and la puchin after midnight mass where they rode to church in a sleigh wrapped in blankets. New Years was the big celebration where visiting and feasting took place. She remembers the firing of shotguns and partying without booze on New Years Day. The family had a tree with decorations made from candy, foil and paper. Her dad was a conservationist even in those days. She misses the socializing, respect of elders and feeling that everyone was equal. Today she tries to preserve the Metis traditions by having people over and serving traditional foods as well as telling youth about the olden days.



WILLOWBUNCH

Mary LeCaine Gumulcak grew up in Wood Mountain. Her Metis Mom was from Willowbunch. They had the best of two worlds. Her Sioux father tried to raise them as traditional Canadians so they celebrated Christmas like today and their mother celebrated New Years Metis Style. They attended Midnight Mass travelling by wagon with heated stones at their feet to keep warm, and celebrated New years house to house, celebrating with La Vin da pissenlit. She told of growing up in a mixed marriage. Her mom was a survivor who had to elope with her dad to be with him. She dearly misses the traditions and the home place. Because she married out of the Metis community, her children know nothing of our past. She tries to keep her memories alive by speaking Sioux with her Dad's relatives, feeling like she belongs. She still speaks four languages and is very happy to be involved with the local #11 elders program. She is happy to help out in any way she can



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The Board and Staff of

Metis Employment and Training of Saskatchewan Inc.

Are pleased to take this opportunity to wish

All New Breed Readers

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A Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year!



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*Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas
and a happy new year from the staff
at Provincial Metis Housing Corp.*



*Greg McLeod
Cliff Letendre
Charity Chaboyou*



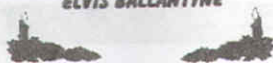
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Merry Christmas from
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ARE YOU READY FOR Y2K? There May be problems with computer run systems on or around January 1, 2000.

There is no need to panic. However you should prepare yourself as you would for any emergency situation. Make sure you have food and water for 2 weeks set aside. Also ensure that you will be able to keep warm.

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Metis Nation of Saskatchewan Youth Council

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North Battleford, Saskatchewan
S9A 3W2



Phone # (306) 445-6822

Fax#(306)445-9830

December 8, 1999

Dear New Breed Readers:

On Sunday December 6, 1999, the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan Youth Council held a Provincial Youth Council Meeting at the Best Western Inn, Saskatoon. The Youth Council held their elections for Executive according to Article 3.8 in their guiding policies and procedures, with which the council governs itself. The new treasurer for the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan Youth Council is Naomi Atkinson, the new secretary is Jennifer Brown, and I retain the position as Chairperson by acclamation. The MNSYC wish to extend Best Wishes and seasons greetings to yourself and your families. We look forward to working with Metis across the homeland in the new year.

Sincerely

Trevor D. Kennedy
Chairman/President
Metis Nation of Saskatchewan



SEASON'S GREETINGS EVERYONE!

The Metis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan's Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert Addiction Services Treatment Centres and Field Education board and staff would like to share their holiday spirit with everyone.

In past years, the Regina staff supplied gifts for under privilege kids that were hospitalized during the Christmas holiday. These gifts were given to the Nurses and asked to distribute to the less fortunate children on Christmas morning. This year we have chosen to adopt a family, the family consists of a single Mother and two small children ages 2 & 3. Our plan is to provide gifts for all three family members and include the entire trimmings for the traditional Christmas meal.

As they say, "It takes a whole community to raise a child." So, we encourage each and every one of you to share your Christmas spirit with someone, even if it's just a smile and a handshake or a hug.

The Christmas tree has meaning as it teaches us honesty and perseverance and that we must pursue our goals and live our lives in a straight forward manner knowing that we have many choices and many paths.

Tis the season to remember all of the former men and women who have attended MACSI's In-Patient, Out-Patient, Detox, Field Educator and Corrections programs. Whether your time with us was short or long, a part of you will always be remembered by us. Always remember to praise yourself and be kind and gentle always. Let the inner spirit within us glow brightly all through the upcoming year.

Continue to believe in your power, rights and responsibilities. Put them into practice, and remember to value yourselves as proud Metis. From all of us at MACSI - May the Creator Bless you all with Good Health and Happiness in the new year ahead. Remember, when celebrating this holiday season, don't drink and drive.

Metis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan Inc.
100 - 219 Robin Crescent, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7L 6M8
Telephone: 306.651.3021 or toll-free at 800.236.5204

SEASONS GREETINGS

FROM

The Honourable Buckley Belanger

Member of the Saskatchewan
Legislature

for the Athabaska Region



Dear New Breed Readers:

I wish to take this opportunity to wish all of you the best for the holiday season. May the next century and millennium be one of success for the Metis Nation.

God Bless you and your loved ones

SEASONS GREETINGS!

Lorna



Eric Cline, MLA

Saskatoon Mount Royal

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Saskatoon, SK S7M 0V3

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