



METIS MESSENGER

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LMN President sets example in Non-Insured Health Care for Labradorians



The METIS MESSENGER is published by the Labrador Metis Nation - an Aboriginal representative organization formed in the late 1970's to enhance, promote and protect Metis individuals, territory and culture through recognition and protection of their constitutional and inherent Aboriginal

Chris Montague, President of the Labrador Metis Nation, presents Donnie Sampson, of the Grenfell Regional Health Center, with a \$5,000.00 cheque to purchase a Striker Stretcher for Cartwright.

Since the Labrador Metis Nation currently has no funds for medical needs,

President Montague personally donates 30 per cent of his annual salary to an emergency medical assistance fund for members of the organization.

To date, Mr. Montague has given nearly \$60,000.00 to this fund. He has aided hundreds of members with personal costs incurred for

medical travel and non-insured health expenses, and regularly contributes to various causes.

Mr. Montague hopes that both the federal and provincial governments will follow his example and address the serious medical needs of the Inuit descendants of South - Central Labrador.

Working with the Province, how it looks to us.

It's no secret that the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Labrador Metis Nation don't always see eye to eye. So when the Premier recently made comments during a speech from the throne pertaining to working with the Labrador Inuit-Metis, the LMN were optimistic that a new leaf was turning.

The path we follow with our province has been a bumpy one. From the Hon. Tom Rideout's promise of staying arms length with respect to our hunters, to today having twenty one hunters facing the court system, including one of our elders, because they lead a traditional lifestyle.

In recent years, the LMN has been using the method of negotiation in dealings with the province. Our President has been actively corresponding with federal and provincial ministers and officials on a regular basis, expressing a strong desire to negotiate, rather than litigate and protest. With recognition from the Supreme Court of Can-

ada in the Powley Decision, and with three recent court victories in the Newfoundland and Labrador Supreme Court and Court of Appeals and the support of the Supreme Court of Canada, it is hard to dispute our aboriginality.

Despite the premier's promising words of cooperation and accommodation, President Montague has found the Newfoundland government to be as cold as ever. Sure, ministers are making time to "meet" with the LMN, but there is no meaningful dialogue at these meetings. It would appear that the Williams government already has a plan in place, and there doesn't seem to be any room for change. Their Supreme Court has told them that they must consult and accommodate the LMN, but informing and consulting are two very different things. As for accommodation, well, we suppose we'll have to agree to disagree.

We've been fighting this battle for years now, but we're making progress, one step at a time. Let's hope the Newfoundland government will someday stop wasting tax payer's dollars by forcing everything to litigation, and learn to reasonably hear the concerns and desires of its constituents, as the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador encourages. After all, a democratic government is ruled by the people, right?

Welcome!!

The Labrador Metis Nation would like to welcome Aaron Thacker. Aaron is a volunteer with Katimivik and will be volunteering at the LMN main office in Goose Bay for the next three months. Aaron will be helping out with a variety of different things in various departments around the office.

The Labrador Metis Nation would also like to extend a warm welcome to Amanda Turnbull. Amanda will be working as a membership assistant helping out with the on-going membership renewal process.



Amanda at her desk

Charting Success in the Fishery



The Metis Development Corporation (MDC), a subsidiary of the Labrador Metis Nation, is pleased to announce that in 2007/2008 they have purchased 93,000 lbs of crab. The MDC now owns three crab licenses, two shrimp licenses and one offshore shrimp allocation.

The Labrador Metis Nation is committed to bringing economic strength to the South Coast of Labrador, and feels

strongly that a future in fisheries is a means to do this. The inland shrimp licenses are committed to Charlotte-town, and the crab licenses are divided between the processing plants in St. Lewis, Mary's Harbour, Black Tickle and Cartwright. It is of high importance that not only the products be landed in Metis communities, but that a percentage of the crew be Metis members as well. The proceeds of the fishery are reinvested in the LMN organization, which is again distributed to Metis communities through programs and support. Labrador will find success when Labrador resources are harvested for the benefit of Labrador people.

The new year also marked the end of our contact with Katsheshuk Fisheries (Ocean Choice International) for our offshore shrimp allocation (SFA5). Renegotiation on this contract has been ongoing, and recently a new partnership has been arranged.

With companies throughout Newfoundland and the maritime provinces, Ocean Choice International is a leader in the Atlantic fishing industry. MDC is very pleased with the new contract, and is encouraged that our organization

has once again been able to enter into a partnership with such an outstanding company. Our future in fisheries is a prosperous one, and our success in business is truly exciting.

To read more on Ocean Choice International, please visit www.oceanchoice.com



Metis Friends and Family Day 2008

Metis Friends and Family Day (MFF Day) is a community event dedicated to the celebration and sharing of Inuit-Metis Culture. It is an opportunity for Metis members and non-Metis members to participate in cultural activities and access information related to the Labrador Metis Nation to encourage unity, cooperation, friendship and understanding. MFF Day has traditionally served as a fundraiser; however an equally important objective of this event has become low-cost family fun.



*Above: President Chris Montague showing everyone how to play the Metis Olympics.
Right Corner: Ticker Tom stopped by for a picture and to promote some healthy living*

Again this year's event was a success. Everyone who came out to partake in the activities had a great time. Metis Friends and Family Day is a fun filled event which gives something back to LMN membership and the community and demonstrates that the Labrador Metis Nation is dedicated to its people and their well-being.



This years MFF Day was held on Saturday July 19th from 1 to 4pm at Kinsman Park. This year's event included many different activities for both children and adults to take part in, such as the traditional food tasting tent which is always a big hit, a story telling tent, a kids corner where the children had the opportunity to build inukshuks, do soap carving and have their faces painted.

Status Update - Hunting Charges

As the Inuit-Metis community is well aware, caribou hunting is an important part of life in Labrador. In the past, Labradorians depended on these animals for survival. Today, most still prefer the lean, unprocessed meat. People anxiously await the arrival of the George River Caribou herd every year.



Modern society may have drowned out much of Inuit-Metis culture and heritage, but the importance of hunting and harvesting still remains strong. Without a second thought, meat that is brought home is automatically shared among family and friends. Those who are able to hunt do so for those who cannot, and everyone shares information on where the animals are located.

The caribou hunt is a cultural activity that is as important today as it was fifty years ago. It is no wonder that many Inuit-Metis cannot understand the neces-

sity of Newfoundland licenses. Conservation and safety are not the concern; traditional laws and practices have always looked after the resources. As populations increase, more stringent rules come into play. The Labrador Metis Nation began administering caribou tags several years back. These tags regulate the number of animals taken, as well as help supply important scientific data to monitor the herd.

Until recently, the Newfoundland government has practiced a restrained seizure policy toward Inuit-Metis hunters.

However, over the past several months, more and more of our members who have practiced their aboriginal right to hunt have been summoned by the Newfoundland government to defend their actions in court. To date, charges have been laid against twenty one hunters, including our elders and our councilors.

The Labrador Metis Nation had sought out one of Newfoundland and Labrador's leading law firms, Stuart McKelvey, to defend these hunters. Mr. Wayne Bruce has agreed to take the case, and has rolled all of the charges into one. This relieved the hunters from having to be present in court, which can be very costly, stressful, and time consuming.

Recently, Mr. Bruce discovered a conflict of interest between some clients with his company and the Labrador Metis Nation. Stewart McKelvey chose to withdraw from our case. We are now searching for another legal firm and most likely it will be Burchells, Haymen and Parish. We were very successful three consecutive times with this company, they know our file and we are very confident we will be successful again.

Reminder!!

The Labrador Metis Nation would like to remind all members to return all fishing logs as soon as possible. Fishing logs can be faxed, mailed, or dropped off to the LMN main off in Goose Bay, N.L

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*Liz's Diabetes Awareness walk
2008*

This was the 7th annual Diabetes Awareness Walk. Eleven communities in Labrador set out over the summer to walk and pay tribute to Liz Poole and to raise awareness of type 2 diabetes. The turn out was awesome! We had a grand total of 526 walkers who participated in Liz's Walk in 11 communities. There are still a couple of communities who will be carrying out their walk at a later date. We were very pleased with the high number of walkers thus far! Walking is one step to preventing the onset of this disease.

Guy Poole also picked up his 3rd leg of the journey of walking through out Labrador in memory of his wife Liz. He began walking on May 26th in Lodge Bay and arrived on June 6th in L'Anse au Clair. Thanks to all those who made Guy's walk possible and a special thank you to those who walked with him during those days.



Pictured above are participants of this year's Liz's walk in Goose Bay NL

Our goal is to get people moving and make them aware that diabetes kills! Liz's life was taken way too soon due to this dreadful disease. This walk is about reaching people and educating them about ways of living a healthier lifestyle and we believe we are doing just that and making a difference in the lives of Metis people.

A special thank you goes out to all those who participated and especially those who organized the walk in each of the communities and the many partners who helped make Liz's Walk a success.

Liz's Walk in Happy Valley Goose Bay was carried out in partnership with the Nunatsiavut Government and the Labrador Friendship Centre. Thanks also to local organizations and businesses who contributed to the walk. We look forward to increasing the number of participants in Liz's Walk even higher next year!

Congrats are in Order!!!



**We Sure Know how to
Pick 'em!**

Labrador Metis Nation Community Health Worker, Melita Paul, of Charlottetown, Labrador, received the Volunteer of the Year Award from the Canadian Diabetes Association.

Management and Staff at the LMN couldn't be happier for Melita. She certainly deserves the recognition for all of her hard

David Burden - May his Memory live on as Vibrantly as his Life



It is rare to find a youth so aware and involved in his society. David Burden, at only 17, was already on his way to building a full and well rounded portfolio. To take such an interest and active role in one's community shows that David was an individual who thought beyond his own personal interests, to those of the people around him. It is this sort of individual that leaves an impression on people, even those who

didn't have the privilege of knowing him better.

In December 2007, David Burden was elected to the LMN Council as Youth Councilor for the South Coast. During his short time on the council, David left a lasting impression there as well. His sudden passing in March 2008 came as a shock to all. It was incredible to see the thousands of lives that he had touched in only 17 years.

Chris Montague, LMN President, recalled during a conversation shortly after David's funeral, "I only met David a few times, but I knew that he was a remarkable person. He had such ambition and leadership."

In honor of David's memory, and in appreciation for his leadership and ambition, President Montague has decided to create a David Burden Memorial

Scholarship. This scholarship will be awarded to a student who shows leadership and involvement in their community, who will continue on in David's legacy as an active youth in their society.

To all of the family and friends of David Burden, Chris Montague and the Labrador Metis Nation extend their deepest condolences.

"And in the end it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years."

- Abraham Lincoln

Labrador Youth Leaders

In October 2007, all Aboriginal organizations in the Lake Melville area, as well as the Community Youth Network decided to form a partnership to create one big youth network for the areas youth. The youth network is made up of the Labrador Metis Nation, Nunatsiavut Government, the Labrador Friendship center, and the Charles J. Andrew Treatment Center. The name of this group is Labrador Youth Leaders. The point of starting this group was to provide more resources for all youth in the area, as well as to support and bring together all youth instead of having them segregated.

The start of this group has prevented the overlap of events which had previously been a problem. An example of some events that have been happening are swimming nights, movie nights/health chats, jazz dancing, cross country skiing, and a goggle relay presented by the RCMP. We also try to throw in some presentations for the youth at least once a month. We have had presentations on drugs, violence prevention and youth ventures among many others. These events and presentations continued over the summer vacation.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS

LMN members requiring emergency medical assistance are able to take advantage of several programs.

LMN President Chris Montague donates one-third of his annual salary to enable members to access needed medical care and service. For more information, please contact the LMN office at 1-709-896-0592, or toll-free at 1-877-896-0592.

The provincial government implemented the Medical Transportation Assistance Program in 1998 to assist residents who incur substantial costs when traveling via commercial air to access insured health services which are not available within their health region and/or within the province. For more information, please contact the office of the Minister Responsible for Labrador at 1-709-896-3099 or toll-free at 1-866-996-5670.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The end of summer is already here and sometimes we wonder where it went. There have been many challenges much success and some issues to be resolved. In whatever circumstances, our cause moves slowly forward.

Our summer began with our greatest victory. The decision of the Supreme Court of Canada to uphold the Province's duty to consult with the Metis Nation. Although the Provincial government would like to downplay the decision and contain it, the truth of our culture and ethnicity has been upheld by the highest court in the land. Already we are being informed of potential activities in forestry, in mining and in the Lower Churchill project. We have legally come of age.

There are still ideological battles to fight and wars to be won. We had a protest Fishery in Lake Melville that sent ripples through DFO. In spite of meetings with the Provincial Minister of justice and the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, two dozen of our hunters still face hunting charges in court. This whole episode is in direct contradiction to the recommendations of the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador, upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada. We intend to win this case early in the new year.

It is my belief that our future lies in the education of our people. Whether it be in a traditional, technical or academic sense. This year we were very fortunate to be able to offer bursaries to many of our university students. I commend the staff on their brilliant application of the remaining JETA funding. Unfortunately we no longer have that pool of funding and our committee must face some difficult decisions. We continue to push for our post secondary funding, which would come along with health benefits, if we were to obtain a land claim.



This summer I went to Ireland to further this cause. There I presented our position to an international archaeological symposium. Academic acceptance of our historic presence on the South coast of Labrador is vital to a land claim. This was another step in the right direction for our land claim.

Beyond this, our relationship with the Federal government is strong. They continue to morally and financially support our Powley implementation project. Part of this effort is our drive to strengthen and legalize our membership lists. They are working very hard to give our land claim a fair hearing. If we keep moving as we are, we will take our rightful place in our homeland. It is my intention to make this dream a reality.

NOTICE - New Application Forms are Now Available

As passed by resolution at the 2007 Annual General Assembly, the Labrador Metis Nation is undergoing a membership renewal. This process is essential in maintaining an accurate membership list, as well as adding strength and credibility to our Land Claim submission.

In order to be a member of the Labrador Metis Nation, all individuals must re-apply.

Membership applications are available online at www.labradormetis.ca. To have a form mailed to you, or for any inquiries, please contact Membership Assistant Amanda Turnbull at 1-877-896-0592 ext. 245, amandaturnbull@labradormetis.ca.

Student Success Story

Nista Simms

Nista Simms grew up in St. Anthony, Newfoundland, where she attended Harriet Curtis Collegiate and graduated in 1999. After high school Nista went on to the University of Victoria where she studied social work. Nista decided on this field of study because she wanted a career where she could help people.

While attending university, Nista notes there were many struggles and obstacles that she had to overcome. A full time student Nista was also a full time single mother to her infant son. She also faced financial difficulties. There were times when Nista felt as if she would never complete her degree as nothing seemed to be in her favor. But Nista was very determined and all of her efforts and determination have paid off.

When asked what her most rewarding experience educationally was, Nista said that completing her degree was extremely rewarding as well as finding out she was accepted into the social work faculty with a one week old son.

While studying, like many other students Nista needed some help financially; she looked to the Labrador Metis Nation. Nista was very familiar with the LMN as she had been a summer student with the organization for two years. Nista notes that she greatly appreciates the help and moral support from the LMN.

Nista sees her education as being a very empowering experience. She wants other people who are working towards their careers to know they can do it. Things may be tough, but are well worth it in the end.

Nista would like to extend a big thank-you to the Labrador Metis Nation for their financial support, as well as a special thank-you to Debbie Goudie, who allowed her to see what she was made of!

Nista is currently working as a district social worker in Flowers Cove N.L.



For information on Labrador Metis Nation student funding please contact:

Debbie Goudie at the Labrador Metis nation office in Goose Bay @ 709-896-0592 ext: 223 or dgoudie@labradormetis.ca

Or

Leeanne Fowler @ 709-896-0592 ext : 227 or lfowler@labradormetis.ca

Congratulations on all your accomplishments!!!!