



In This Issue:

- *Proud to be Métis*
- *Tonto*
- *Christmas Greetings*
- *The Quilt of Belonging – Dogrib*
- *Home Ownership*
- *Moccasins*
- *Aboriginal Place Names W-Y*
- *Raven and Seagull*
- *Indian Giver*



Proud to be Métis by Michelle Jan Price

I was born in North Battleford Saskatchewan to two 16 year old kids. My mom stayed home with me while my dad worked as a labourer. My parents had left home at an early age and quit attending school because of their difficult home lives. Right off the bat I was at a disadvantage. A Short time after my brother was born in 1983 my parents separated. I lived with my mother and moved frequently from then on. During my childhood I had lived in 25 homes, in 12 cities, across 4 provinces, attending 11 schools. My aboriginal ancestry runs profusely thru both sides of my mothers' family. From a young age I got the impression, from society and even my own family, that being Métis or Indian was something to be

ashamed about. It wasn't until my Mom tried to better herself in her twenties, that she learned more about our culture. From that time on the both of us had become interested in learning more about our history. Luckily at that time we were living in Manitoba; where there is plenty of history and information about the Métis people. My Mom and I read all about Louis Riel, the Red River Rebellion and the fight to preserve the Métis culture. I can remember one day when I was 11 years old, being at a park in Winnipeg, overlooking the Assiniboine River, sitting under a large monument of Louis Riel, secretly wishing that I was, in some way, related to that man. It wasn't until 20 years later that I learned that Mr. Riel was at one time a teacher to both of my great, great grandparents in Montana in the late 1800's!

In April of 2010 I was accepted to the Human Services program at the New Brunswick Community College in Fredericton, NB. I was very excited when I received the acceptance letter in the mail since I was initially on the waiting list and didn't think I would get a seat for this coming school year. I believe that social work has always been my calling. I grew up on public assistance, have been in foster care on two occasions, utilized food banks, experienced addiction issues and have lived in shelters for women and children. For me, this is a way to give back to the community and offer my compassion, understanding and experiences to others that are in need.

The Human Services program is going to allow me to work with people in need on a more professional level. I want to be able to bring compassion to a sometimes cold and impersonal system that treat people like a number rather than a person that needs help in bettering themselves. I am committed to completing this program and finding meaningful employment because I want to show my son that an education will give you the freedom to do what you love, but more so to prove to myself that I can do it! (Continued Next Page)



Proud to be Métis (Continued from Page 1)

I feel exhilarated when I think of the possibilities this program offers. People that receive the Human Services diploma work in many areas. I may be employed by the Provincial / Federal Government, the private sector or by a non-profit organization. Working in crisis intervention, suicide prevention, addictions, youth group homes, or working with physically and mentally challenged people. The opportunities are endless. I am most interested in a career that involves working with disadvantaged children and or the homeless.

My family and I have been living in Fredericton, New Brunswick for 2 years. We moved from Abbotsford, British Columbia. We decided to move across the country to be closer to my partner's mother and father. They are in their late seventy's and we thought it was important for our son to get to know his grandparents. Shortly after our move to Fredericton, I became very depressed. I started to abuse alcohol to cope with my feelings of loneliness and isolation. That was probably the most difficult time in my life. It got to the point where I had to make a choice. I'm thankful today that I made the choice to go to rehab and get healthy. I realized that the depression had a lot to do with being so far away from family and not having a connection with others like me within the community. After my revelation, I was determined to get more involved with the aboriginal community. I am grateful that the native groups out here have welcomed me into their circle even though I may be thought of as an outsider. The Métis are not as pronounced in New Brunswick as we are out West.

I have offered my time to the Fredericton Friendship Centre as a volunteer, since I'm not currently working. My family and I are looking forward to this summer when we are all helping out for aboriginal day celebrations. I have been learning more about the aboriginal arts and getting involved in making traditional crafts. I'm glad to just have somewhere to hang out and share stories with others. I really feel like if it weren't for the good people of St. Mary's First Nation and the Friendship Centre I would still have feelings of isolation in the community.

I am determined to reach my goals and follow my dreams of helping others despite the obstacles I face.



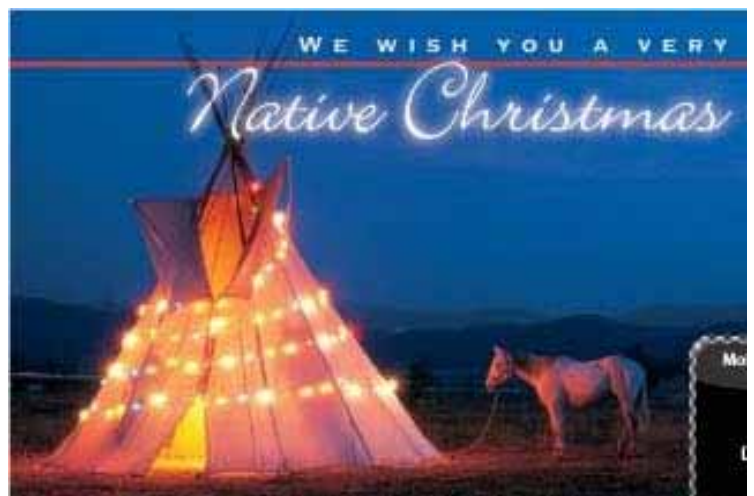
Who Remembers Tonto and kemo sabe?

Based on information from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tonto>

Tonto was a fictional character, the Native American companion of The Lone Ranger, a popular American Western character. Tonto appeared in radio and television series and other presentations of the characters' adventures righting wrongs in 19th century western America.

Tonto made his first appearance on the twelfth episode of the radio show (which aired on station WXYZ on February 25, 1933). Though he became well-known as the Lone Ranger's friend, Tonto was originally created just so the Lone Ranger would have someone to talk to. Throughout the radio run (which spanned 21 years), with only a few exceptions, Tonto was played by English actor John Todd.

The character was portrayed on television (arguably the most well-remembered version today) by Jay Silverheels who was a Canadian Mohawk Indian born on the six Nations Reserve in Brantford, Ontario. This was by far the highest-rated television program on the ABC network in the early 1950s and its first true "hit".





The Quilt of Belonging

Copied from: <http://www.invitationproject.ca/listing.php?Listing=1080>

Dogrib



Block-maker Celine Mackenzie Vukson carefully chose elements that would reflect her heritage and history. The Dogrib are known for their resourceful and recycling nature. She used the beaded “uppers” and a leg part from a pair of mukluks (made by her mother years ago) to show the Dene way of life and ability to survive in an extremely cold climate. A variation of a popular design--the northern wild rose--is produced in bright pink beads on a navy stroud background.

Caribou hide segments are edged with “pinking” made in the traditional manner, folding over a piece of leather and cutting it with sharp scissors. The pink and burgundy twisted yarn is a reminder of her mother’s perseverance in learning how to make such yarn as a young bride. The pieces of hide honour all Dogrib women who, while they cared for large families, would sit for hours huddled against the cold scraping, stretching and tanning hides. And finally, precious pieces of sinew thread, made three decades earlier by her grandmother, were used as a tangible connection to her Dogrib roots.

Historically, known as nomadic hunters and trappers, the Dogrib are now located in the Northwest Territories between Great Slave Lake and Great Bear Lake. The Dogrib are also called *Thlingchadinne*, meaning “Dog-flank People”, in reference to their legend that tells how the Dogrib are descended from a supernatural dog-man. They are among the most numerous members of the Dene Nation. Over 2,000 Dogrib still fluently speak their native language, belonging to the Athapaskan language family.

Their nomadic lifestyle meant that the Dogrib had a different idea of home than the typical Western conceptualization. Home was not the caribou-hide shelter they carried on their travels, home was the vast territory of forests, lakes and rivers surrounding them. This meant that everywhere they went they were still at home, an indication of their close relationship to the land. They hunted primarily from the Bathurst caribou herd, but supplemented their diet with fish. Dogrib women like to use exquisite beadwork, fancy silk and wool embroidery stitches and an abundance of fur trimmings on their clothing, often made from caribou hide and fine wool stroud.

In August 2003, the Dogrib signed an historic self-government and land claim settlement with the federal and territorial governments. The *Tli Cho* (which means Dogrib) agreement gives 3,000 Dogrib ownership of the 39,000 sq. km. of land in which they are located. The words of this agreement are derived from those spoken by honoured and respected Chief Monfwi when he signed Treaty 11, 82 years earlier.

Ownership

Copied from the Ripple Effects newsletter

The Nisga'a will become the first aboriginal government in Canada to allow individuals - native or non-native - to own homes, raise mortgages, and buy and sell property on First Nations land. Mitchell Stevens, the new Nisga'a president, has said it will transform the fortunes of the Nisga'a nation and its 6,000 citizens, forever.





New Baby in the Family?

Take a look at the Algonquin baby moccasins at <http://www.quemeez.ca/>

They offer baby moccasins, handmade by Algonquin beaders and featuring authentic designs. Available in sizes 1-10, perfect for newborns to toddlers. Other designs are shown on their website.

Raven and Seagull



From http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raven_in_mythology

A legend from the native peoples of the Pacific Northwest tells of how at the beginning of the world, Raven was the one who brought light to the darkness. When the Great Spirit created all things he kept them separate and stored in cedar boxes. The Great Spirit gifted these boxes to the animals who existed before humans. When the animals opened the boxes all the things that comprise the world came into being. The boxes held such things as mountains, fire, water, wind and seeds for all the plants. One such box, which was given to Seagull, contained all the light of the world.

Seagull coveted his box and refused to open it, clutching it under his wing. All the people asked Raven to persuade Seagull to open it and release the light. Despite begging, demanding, flattering and trying to trick him into opening the box, Seagull still refused. Finally Raven became angry and frustrated, and stuck a thorn in Seagull's foot. Raven pushed the thorn in deeper until the pain caused Seagull to drop the box. Then out of the box came the sun, moon and stars that brought light to the world and allowed the first day to begin.

Aboriginal Place Names

W to Y



Waasis (New Brunswick) – The Mi'kmaq word meaning "animal".

Wabamun (Alberta) – This comes from the Cree word meaning "mirror".

Wagmatcook (Nova Scotia) – This originates from the Mi'kmaq word *wagam'tgug*, which means "where water flows clean".

Wakaw (Saskatchewan) – The Cree word meaning "crooked".

Wasagaming (Manitoba) – From the Anishinabe word meaning "clear lake".

Wascana (Saskatchewan) – From the Cree word *oscana* which means "bones".

Waskesiu (Saskatchewan) – The Cree word for "elk".

Wawa (Ontario) – From the Anishinabe word *waawaa*, meaning "Canada Goose".

Wetaskiwin (Alberta) - This is a Cree word meaning "place of peace".

Wikwemikong (Ontario) – An Anishinabe word meaning "bay of the beaver".

Winnipeg (Manitoba) – From the Anishinabe word meaning "dirty water".

Yukon – From the Gwitchin word *yu-kun-ah*, meaning "great river".



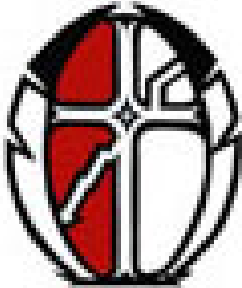
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See us at:

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New Submissions!

We are always looking for new interesting submissions to add to upcoming issues of the OMFRC Newsletter. If you have something you would like to add to the newsletter please call or email us! We'd be happy to consider it for an upcoming issue.

Indian Giver

From: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_giver



Indian giver is an English expression used in North America to describe a person who gives a gift (literal or figurative) and later wants it back, or something equivalent in return.

The term "Indian gift" was first noted in 1765 by Thomas Hutchinson, and "Indian giver" was first cited in John Russell Bartlett's Dictionary of Americanisms (1860) as "Indian giver. When an Indian gives anything, he expects to receive an equivalent, or to have his gift returned."

The phrase can be offensive, particularly to Native Americans.

It is unclear exactly how this expression came to be, but the consensus is that it is based on Native Americans having a distinctly different sense of property ownership as opposed to those of European ancestry. One theory holds that early European settlers in North America misinterpreted aid and goods they received from Native Americans as "gifts," when in fact they were intended to be offered in trade, as many tribes operated economically by some form of barter system, or a gift economy where reciprocal giving was practiced. It is also theorized that this stereotype may have been coined or exaggerated by the conquering European groups to denigrate the native people as dishonest and thereby justify their conquest.

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