



# Le Metis



## President's Message

Author Irving Stone spent a lifetime studying greatness, including people such as Vincent Van Gogh, Charles Darwin and Abraham Lincoln. When asked what common thread ran through the lives of the exceptional people he has studied, he replied "They are beaten over the head, knocked down, vilified and for years they get nowhere. But every time they're knocked down they stand up. You cannot destroy these people. And at the end of their lives they've accomplished some modest part of what they set out to do."

This too is the story of the Metis people. We were beaten over the head when we were called nothing more than half-breeds suggesting we were not quite a people. We were knocked down by the federal government when they failed to keep their promise to protect us and supply an inheritance for our children. We were vilified when they referred to Metis as "dangerous classes" needing to be civilized and assimilated during the residential school era. We fought for over 140 years before the Supreme Court ruled and agreed with us that the federal government has indeed failed to keep their promise made in 1870 when the Metis helped bring Manitoba into Confederation. Every time someone tries to knock us down we stand up again. The Metis people cannot be destroyed.

Our patience and perseverance is winning out. By now you have heard about our 50 year struggle to seek justice for the Summerberry Trappers. I was honored by these Trappers to negotiate on their behalf for the loss of their trapping rights on the Summerberry

Marsh. This fight lasted 50 years! We never gave up. We never surrendered. We succeeded in securing an inheritance for these trappers and their immediate beneficiaries from Manitoba Hydro. These trappers and their families have expressed their thanks and appreciation for the hard work we have done on their behalf. I also want to commend Scott Thomson, CEO of Manitoba Hydro, and his team for working with me and my team to settle and right this historic wrong. Having good leaders who also understand the value of righting a wrong to negotiate with on the other side makes it easier to settle matters quickly and amicably for the betterment of those we serve.

I also want to recognize the struggle and perseverance of our First Nations friends who are finally getting the opportunity to turn their page regarding the attempted cultural genocide they faced through the Indian Residential Schools. I hope they will receive healing and reconciliation through the recommendations for action that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission have made to the federal government.

However, the Metis have not yet received their opportunity to turn the page on the abuse and hurt we suffered through the residential schools system. During that dark time of Canada's history, the federal and provincial government shirked their responsibility for the Metis people. They played football with our children and our families. They tossed us back and forth - each pointing at the other as being responsible for the Metis people and we suffered atrociously because of it. Our children were separated from families and forced to attend residential day schools. Here they suffered physical, sexual, emotional and cultural abuse. That is absolutely unacceptable!

There was truly no Metis agenda attached to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, but they did recognize that the Metis and others have been left out of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement in their calls to action. In Call to Action #29 the Commission asks the federal government to quickly address and resolve the outstanding legal claim we and others have.

Then there is the 60s Scoop where First Nation and Metis children were forcibly and needlessly removed from their families and communities. The federal government is being accused of initiating this practice, and they may very well be the prime catalyst for the 60s Scoop, but in Manitoba it was the provincial government who stole our Metis children. At the time, the government of Canada did not publicly acknowledge its jurisdiction and responsibility for the Metis. It was the government of Manitoba that took our Metis children from their families and from the Manitoba Metis Community. The Manitoba government cannot escape accountability for the harm inflicted on the Metis children of our province. Children were not only stripped of their family and identity but were often subject to intolerance and violence.

Since 1986 the Manitoba Metis Federation has reunited approximately 100 Metis families through our Lost Moccasins initiative. We have no idea how many children are out there and lost. The absence of adequate information and lack of funding resources has restricted the search and rescue of our children who were wrongly taken from their homes.

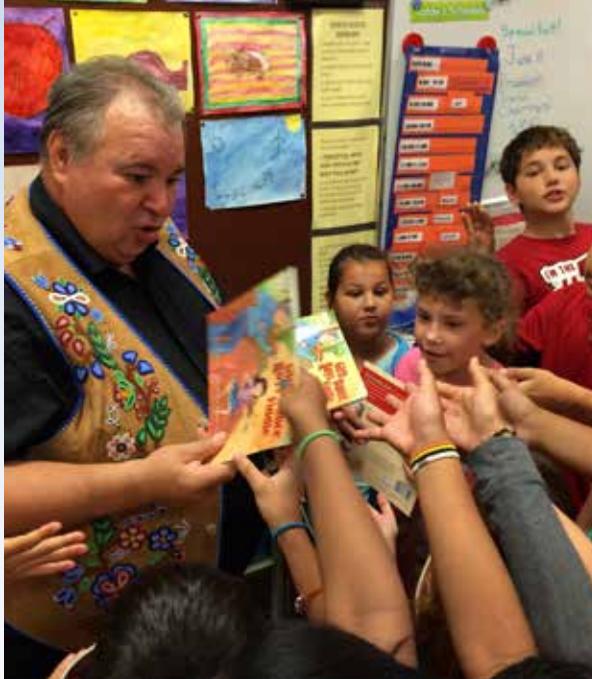
Make no mistake. The Manitoba Metis Federation will not let these injustices slide. We will keep pushing. Already in regards to the residential schools there are class action lawsuits that are being prepared by individuals who were affected by that blatant attempt at cultural genocide and abuse suffered at the hands of those who were supposed to care for them.

May it be said of the Metis people and its leadership that we did not give up, that we could not be silenced and that in the end, we accomplished what we set out to do.

In closing I offer my hopes for our Metis people who are sick and shut in. I also offer my prayers for those who have departed and my condolences to their family, friends and neighbours. My best wishes to all.

Meeqwetch,

 *President David Chartrand, LL.D. (hon), O.M.*



Children from Margaret Park School in Seven Oaks are excited to receive books from President Chartrand. The children are learning about Manitoba's Aboriginal people and invited the President to talk about the Metis.

## Inspiring Young Minds

President David Chartrand recently visited Margaret Park School in Winnipeg to help inspire young minds as they learn about the province and country they live in. Over 60 students gathered to learn about who the Metis are, how they helped form Manitoba and bring it into Confederation, and how knowledge sharing and education is an important Metis value.

During his presentation, President Chartrand shared how his mother helped instilled in him a desire for education and bettering not only himself, but others around him. She taught him that if he wanted people to do good, he must do good too.

Students were also shown examples of Metis culture as they learned about how Metis beadwork tells a story and the meaning of the Metis sash. They learned how the Metis embraced their heritage of being born of Indian mothers and European Fathers. He explained how Metis people who were born into two very different worlds were able to harness the best of both and develop their own unique culture,

language and tradition in the face of strong adversity.

The children showed keen interest in what he shared with them by asking many questions about Metis culture, traditions and leadership. President Chartrand encouraged the students to study hard and do their best in school. He told them that with a good education they will gain valuable knowledge and skills to help make a difference in their world.

After his presentation, President Chartrand presented the children with copies of the book "Girls Dance, Boys Fiddle" written by Carole Lindstrom. The book tells the story of young Metisse who insists on playing her fiddle for Grandmother's birthday when everyone knows girls are supposed to dance and leave the fiddling to the boys. Could it be because Metisse feels the rhythm of tradition in more than one way? The book is published by Pemmican Publications and can be ordered online at:

<http://pemmican.websites.ca/>

## Pipeline Labourer Training Program

Manitoba Metis Federation Metis Employment & Training in partnership with Enbridge is recruiting people interested in becoming skilled labourers in the pipeline construction industry.

**Individuals that successfully complete this program will be referred for entry-level positions with Enbridge contractors, and will have the opportunity to advance into skilled labour and trades training programs offered by the employers.**

If you are an unemployed or underemployed Metis, Non-Status or Inuit person and have a sincere interest in pursuing employment as a skilled labourer please contact

**Amy Dowsett, Recruitment Coordinator  
Metis Employment and Training Recruitment.**

(204) 586-8474 Ext. 357 or  
[amy.dowsett@mmf.mb.ca](mailto:amy.dowsett@mmf.mb.ca)

**Application Deadline: June 26, 2015**



**Metis  
Employment  
& Training**

## Accessible and Affordable Housing for Metis

The Manitoba Metis Federation has partnered with the province of Manitoba to build new affordable housing for Metis families over the next five years. There are three phases to the development plan and includes new housing in Winnipeg, Brandon and Selkirk. Phase-1 has been completed in Winnipeg.

Phase-1 includes three new homes that have recently been built on 132 Hallet Street in Winnipeg's North Point Douglas neighbourhood. Each of the three 1,025 square-foot units occupies a separate floor in a three-storey triplex building. Each of the units holds three bedrooms and is complete with new appliances, washer and dryer. These are great family homes on a quiet residential street close to major bus routes and schools.

The MMF Housing department is currently working with Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation on plans for Phase-2 in Brandon. Phase-2 is expected to be located on 23rd Street in the west end of Brandon. This phase will provide four affordable homes through two duplex-style houses. Each duplex will include a 1-bedroom unit and a 3-bedroom unit. The homes are set to be a mirror image design of one another, and will sit across from each other.

Phase-3 will see similar homes being built in Selkirk.

Support for these new homes the MMF is constructing comes through a five-year, \$5.5 million commitment from Manitoba Housing. Many of the contractors and trades employed to complete the construction are Metis companies and tradespeople. Not only are the new homes supporting Metis people through accessible and affordable housing, but Metis people

are also employed helping them also to succeed and better themselves.

For an application or more information on affordable housing options please contact Manitoba Metis Federation Housing department at (204) 586-8474 extension 349.



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