



Le Métis



President's Message

who Pallister is, who his friends are, and where his concerns lie. Your Métis Government is here for you, standing up for you with integrity and ensuring that your voice is heard.

My third wish is that every single one of our Métis Citizens goes to the polls this September and votes. We are voting for our families. We are voting for our futures. We are voting for priorities and programs that are vital to us.

Pallister has called an early election date of September 10, 2019 – the single instance of the premier looking to the future – more than a year before the fixed election date! Why is Pallister scrambling? What does he fear Manitobans finding out? The election day is one single day before the scheduled court date for the MMTP. This tells us what we already know – from our Children to our Elders, Pallister has complete disrespect for the claims, rights, and interests of the Manitoba Métis Community.

Our answer to his disrespect: “Métis Votes”.

This is your call to show up to the polls. Will you join me to say you care about education, food, housing, health care, fishing rights, and the Constitutionally Guaranteed Rights of the Citizens of the Métis Nation?

Together, our votes will be a thundering voice. Only then will Pallister hear.

We the Métis have fought for decades to have our distinct rights recognized. I offer my best wishes to the Métis organizations of Ontario, Alberta, and Saskatchewan on the recent signing of self-government agreements with the federal government. They have many tasks ahead of them as they create new constitutions, new referendums, and more.

The Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) is in a completely different place; we have won our land claim, and we will be negotiating our agreement as we move forward towards a comprehensive claim and a self-government agreement negotiation. Our legal footing is much stronger, broader, and equal to a modern-day treaty. In 2002, the Métis National Council adopted the following definition of “Métis”:

“Métis” means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry, and who is accepted by the Métis Nation.”

In 2003, the Supreme Court of Canada confirmed that the Métis are a rights-bearing Aboriginal people. Its judgment set out the components of a Métis definition for the purpose of claiming Aboriginal rights under section 35 of the Constitution Act.

What this all means is there is only one Métis Nation. Hopefully we'll all agree that we have a definition – one that the MMF adopted over 10 years ago. That's the definition we'll hold, and protect solidly.

And speaking of solidarity, the 14th Annual Indigenous Day in Selkirk was the biggest yet, and I gratefully thank the over one hundred volunteers who managed this huge event! Warm thanks to MMF Ministers Jack Park, Alfred Anderson, Monica Buors, the Mayor of Selkirk Larry Johannson, City of Selkirk Councillor April Hourie, and many, many more supporters. Our presence is strong!

Cabinet Meetings were recently held, and a sash was hung on an empty chair in honour of the late Jean Desrosiers, Minister of Agriculture and French Language. Senior representatives from each region highlighted priorities which included daycare, housing and real estate development.

Our next full meeting will be just before the Ste. Madeleine Days, July 19-21! The lineup is extraordinary. What a gift to celebrate our culture! I personally invite you to come and be a part of this very special weekend.

Another special moment was when I had the honour of attending a 50th wedding anniversary of Lawrence and Georgina Belhumeur in Birtle, Manitoba, on June 29. I want to wish this wonderful couple many more years of love and happiness together.

I offer my thoughts and prayers to those who are shut in, sick or caused to grieve. Let us bond together in the spirit of support. Enjoy this gorgeous summer – while we prepare for the future.

Meeqwetch,

I have three special wishes for the Manitoba Métis this summer, beyond my daily thoughts and prayers.

First, I hope that you are all able to savour this glorious summer rooted in our Métis traditions of music, dance, food and special gatherings. Second, is that you keep keenly aware that as soon as summer is over, we face a critical battle for our province – and our Métis rights. Because simply put, Manitoba is in chaos.

Look at it this way: Our youth will soon be back in school. Manitoban students rank poorly in Canada. This is terrible news, and an embarrassment for Manitoba. But Métis children specifically rank behind non-Métis children in Manitoba. Our youth are more likely to be deemed not ready for school. This is an outrageous failing on the part of Pallister! Should Métis children have less of a chance at a successful, prosperous future than other children in Canada? We look to the future, and the Métis nation says no. No longer will we be discounted. We will own our Métis destiny.

Why won't this Pallister government look to the future? Over and over they put us all at risk. Health care is a disaster, citizens are homeless. Pallister's reckless cancellation of the Manitoba-Minnesota Transmission Project (MMTP) clearly targets the Métis, and is likely to cost Manitobans \$200 million in damages as we go to court. This is wasted money! Money that could serve Manitobans – who are struggling for basics like safe housing and food on the table.

But food, housing, health care, and public education are not the issues of the wealthy, which sums up

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

Canada Day Celebration at Lower Fort Garry

On July 1, 2019, flags of friendship and reconciliation fluttered side by side against a dazzling blue sky.

It was the second annual Canada Day Métis Friendship Celebration at Lower Fort Garry. Alfred “Buck” Anderson, MMF Vice-President and Minister of Culture and Heritage was be-sashed and ready to start the party bright and early. A notable number of attendees were also right on time for the 9:30 start to enjoy fresh bannock, jam, and drink hot coffee to fiddle music. More and more people steadily joined the crowd under a large white party tent. Beyond being an annual national milestone, the opening remarks revealed the day held a deeper level of significance.

Lower Fort Garry is significant in itself. Just upstream from the junction of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers, this 85-acre National Historic Site of Canada is an extensively preserved former fur trade post. It was here the negotiation and signing of Treaty 1 occurred.

Today, the Treaty No. 1 Legacy Flag Installation flies the flags of seven First Nations: Peguis First Nation, Sagkeeng First Nation, Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation, Long Plain First Nation, Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation and Swan Lake First Nation. This Park installation, an important act of reconciliation and recognition of the Treaty signed between these First Nations and the Crown was missing a flag, though.

On Canada Day, after prayers, and an acknowledgment of Elders, Youth, and all other

visitors, Park Superintendent David Elias recognized the contribution of the Manitoba Metis Federation to the day’s success. He then directed our attention to the Métis flag that had been raised all week, flying right beside the Canadian flag, and further good news was heralded.

“A permanent site will soon be arranged to recognize the Métis Nation as a partner in Confederation and Founder of Manitoba,” Minister Anderson told the crowd, to cheers. “The Métis flag will be flying permanently at Lower Fort Garry.”

Soon after, the fiddling fired up again, and a full day of singing, dancing, and jigging commenced. The historic site was in full operation, and one could wander over and interact with costumed interpreters recreating activities of early fort life. Despite the heat, Lower Fort Garry was bustling with a multi-cultural crowd of all ages, a true reflection of Canada’s diversity.

Minister Anderson took a moment between greeting friends old and new to gaze up one more time at the Métis and Canadian flags flying together at the site’s entrance.

“There’s even more culture than usual today. I’ve been working on the presence of the Métis Flag here for probably ten years. People can see these flags as they drive by, and the symbolism of the Métis right beside the Canadian flag is timely and important. I hope the next celebration we’ll all attend here is recognizing our Métis flag’s fixed spot.”



MMF Cabinet Meeting in New Brunswick

The Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) Cabinet held its most recent meetings and retreat at the end of June in beautiful St. Martins, New Brunswick.

The MMF senior leadership team was graciously hosted by Métis Entrepreneur Marc LeClair and his wife, Lynette Davis. The couple own and operate the spectacular St. Martins Country Inn, located along the shores of the Bay of Fundy.

The meetings were bittersweet in nature as there was a glaring absence. A sash was hung on an empty chair in honour of the late Jean Desrosiers, Minister of Agriculture and French Language. Our friend and mentor passed away earlier this year.

Meanwhile the meetings were robust and productive with your elected representatives and senior leaders from each region reporting on issues that are critical to the Citizens they represent.

Just some of the more important and pressing topics included housing, daycare, real estate development and finding ways to better engage our Citizens in the upcoming provincial and federal election campaigns.

The second part of the meetings was focused on financial matters and their related business plans. All ministers and regional representatives have been tasked with providing updated business plans and projected outcomes for the projects they want to see happen in their locals.

MMF President Chartrand wrapped up the meetings by emphasizing the need to continue to engage and inform the Métis Nation and its Citizens about the programs being diligently worked on and how they can get involved.

The next Cabinet meetings are scheduled to take place on July 18 and 19, just before Ste. Madeline Metis Days.



MMF donates \$2,500 to SHAD student

The Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) is donating \$2,500 to help one exceptional Métis high schooler attend the prestigious SHAD summer program.

Garden City Collegiate student Gracie Grift was selected from over a thousand applicants to attend the enrichment program in Calgary.

When the MMF heard Grift was raising money to subsidize the \$5,700 cost, President Chartrand was more than happy to lend a hand.

Gracie Grift received the cheque from President Chartrand on Thursday, June 27. The program began on July 1 and continues until July 27.

Grift is a citizen of the Winnipeg Regional Association. In her grade 11 year, she was Student Council president, a volunteer at her local hospital, a AAA hockey player and a debate team competitor – all while staying on the Honour Roll.

It's no wonder she was selected to participate in SHAD to attend lectures, workshops, labs and group projects focused on science, technology, engineering,

arts and mathematics. Moreover, SHAD is designed to enrich high school students' education, prepare them for post-secondary studies and recognize their potential for making change.

Shad Canada was founded in 1980, offered exclusively to grade 10 and 11 students in Ontario. Now, it operates on 17 campuses across the country – including the University of Calgary, where Grift is attending. Notable alumni of SHAD include tech entrepreneur Michelle Romanow (of popular tv show "Dragons' Den" fame), author Neil Pasricha and NASA geobiologist Darlene Lim.

"These exceptional students from all parts of Canada spend the month of July together with their peers and mentors," said Tim Jackson, president and CEO of Shad, in a media release. "We hope they end the month not only dreaming big, but empowered with the tools and passion they need to take risks, roll up their sleeves and get going."

Grift will be entering her grade 12 year at Garden City Collegiate in the fall.



Thursday Night Métis Soirées kick off at Riel House

Toes were tapping down at Riel House National Historic Site during the first Thursday Night Métis Soirée of the summer on July 4.

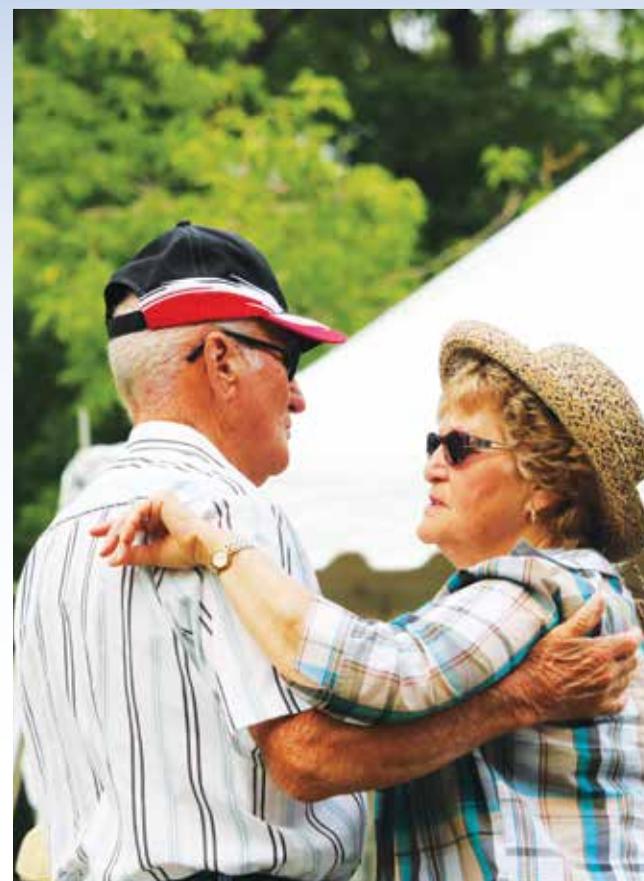
Each summer from the beginning of July until the end of August, the Louis Riel Institute and Manitoba Metis Federation sponsor the Soirées to give the community an opportunity to celebrate Métis music and culture. The Soirées are completely free to attend, with the organizers encouraging guests to bring lawn chairs and set up in the grassy shade behind Riel House to enjoy Métis entertainment from 6:00 pm until 8:00 pm.

Patti Kusturok is the host and producer for the Soirées this year. A talented fiddle player herself, Kusturok performed at the first Soirée of the summer alongside Jeremy Rusu on accordion and Lionel Desjarlais on guitar. Together, they played a diverse mix of traditional Métis songs and originals written between the three of them.

“Please tell all your friends about what’s going on here at Riel House every Thursday in the summertime. It’s completely free as you know,” said Patti Kusturok, addressing the crowd of nearly 100 people. “It’s a nice way to get out and enjoy some old-time fiddle music.”

Historical interpreters at Riel House were in attendance, dressed in traditional 1880s clothing. Throughout the summer, the interpreters guide visitors through the Riel House grounds and teach them about the way of life for Métis people back in Louis Riel’s time. The interpreters are on hand during the Soirées as well, offering beverages to guests and encouraging people to get up and dance to the music.

There are seven more opportunities to catch the Thursday Night Métis Soirées this summer, with Jason Lepine and Riley Dutiaume performing this coming Thursday, July 11.



Entertainment Lineup:

- July 11 **Jason Lepine; Riley Dutiaume**
- July 18 **Gerald St. Laurent**
- July 25 **Al Desjarlais; Jim Dutiaume; Dean Malcolm**
- August 1 **Johnny Dietrich; Patti Kusturok**
- August 8 **Yvette Audette; Alexandre Tétreault; Dennis Connelly**
- August 15 **Gerald St. Laurent; Nic Messner**
- August 22 **Diana Desjarlais; Erin Okrainec**

