

President's Message

September 23, 2013

This September 28th and 29th weekend marks the MMF's 45th Annual General Assembly. With approximately 3,000 delegates expected, it remains by far the largest assembly in the Metis Nation Homeland. I can't emphasize enough that you should come down to the Keystone Centre in Brandon, and experience the year's largest Metis political, cultural and social event.

The MMF continues to provide responsible and effective Metis self-governance on behalf of the Metis Nation's Manitoba Metis Community. This representative government is always accountable to the Metis People. The MMF's effectiveness as well as its responsibility and accountability back to our grassroots citizens are due in part to our democratic reporting.

Our constitutionally mandated assemblies are a fundamental part of this democratic reporting. It is through the assembly that the will and authority of our People is both expressed and confirmed each year. After reviewing reports on past and current activities, and following discussion and debate, our Metis delegates give direction to their elected representatives.

At this year's assembly, our MMF Ministers will again report on their portfolio and departmental activities. There are over twenty reports touching on all aspects of your Metis government. These range from self-government negotiations, natural resources, and rights through to health, economic development, and community liaison reports. This is to name only a few.

There will also be reports on the audit and financials, our national office, and the Infinity Women Secretariat, as well as an MMF Land Claims update. Each year we take on an important and special theme for our Assemblies. This year's theme echoes our cheers in celebration of achieving our MMF Land Claim victory at the Supreme Court of Canada.

Our theme for the assembly is: "Our Time has Come." It has taken over 30 years of legal struggles to reach this milestone along our road to bringing justice to the Metis people. It has been a long hard road upon which we have travelled for over 143 years. Along the way there has been the founding of our province, the reign of terror, and a trail of many broken promises.

One broken promise was Canada ignoring its solemn constitutional obligation to set aside and properly distribute 1.4 million acres of land to our children. This was to give them a head start and provide for their future. You will recall when I became President, I pledged I would put our MMF Land Claim back on track and bring our case to the Supreme Court. Together, we have made good on that promise.

Together we achieved victory. Now we must take the next steps together. Since we started our MMF Land Claim struggle you insisted we must ensure tomorrow's children get the head start that was shamefully stolen from their Ancestors. You have made it clear that a future settlement be put into a trust fund to protect and grow a legacy.

At this assembly together we will have the unique opportunity to define this legacy. This assembly will be unequalled in remembering the past, celebrating the present and preparing for the future. Here, together as Metis Citizens, we will make important decisions towards implementing our vision of the future for our community and our children.

We must remember our Ancestors' political, legal and military struggles that have brought us to this moment in our history. Their sacrifices of yesterday shape our beliefs today and our thoughts for tomorrow. It is important that we make the right decisions honouring their sacrifice. I look forward to seeing you at our assembly to help create a legacy for our future.

I offer prayers and condolences for all who have lost family and friends. Please pray for the good health of those who are sick or shut-in and cannot attend this upcoming assembly. I ask that you be sure to give each other a hug. Our community, our family, and our friends are all we have. Best wishes to all.

Believe in yourself – Believe in Metis!

Meeqwetch,