

President's Message

December 1, 2014

Communication is a critically important part of our formal Metis governance structure as well as my personal quest to ensure the Metis People are kept up to date with the activities of its democratically elected representatives as well as the actions and positions taken by the MMF as their Metis Government. Education, knowledge, and communication are together the mortar that keeps the foundation blocks together to build and maintain a fully functioning democracy.

The large population and extensive distances covered by our Manitoba Metis Community requires that the MMF use a variety of media approaches and tools including radio, newspaper, and Internet in addition to holding meetings, assemblies and workshops throughout the province and beyond. As well, we continue to rely on the old-fashion yet effective "moccasin telegraph," which is now in some circles called the "buzz."

Every Saturday, many of you tune into NCI Radio's *Metis Hour x 2* where I tell our listeners where I am, whom I will be meeting with, and what the priority issues are for that week. Many listeners I am told will drive their trucks for miles, sometimes to the top of ridges, to get enough radio reception so they can hear the show. Also, every two weeks, the MMF publishes my President's Message along with other MMF updates in *Le Metis* which is found in the Grassroots News – Manitoba's Metis-owned and widely distributed Aboriginal newspaper.

For major events and issues, the MMF sends out news releases to the Canadian Press and to the main media outlets here in the province, such as the Winnipeg Free Press, CBC, and others, as well as to our MMF Regional Offices where they are often posted on the bulletin boards and windows. To make this information even more accessible, we are looking for ways to increase our communications reach. We have been experimenting with social media, including twitter and Facebook, as well as YouTube, and live streaming video such as we recently did for our Annual General Assembly (AGA).

Our news releases and twitter feeds are also posted on our MMF www.mmf.mb.ca website. On our site you can find breaking news, information about our ministerial portfolios activities, as well as upcoming events. Basic reference materials such as the MMF Constitution can also be found there. Our Constitution is the core document that sets out our system of governance and, as part of ensuring the electors are kept informed, states that the MMF must hold a regular once-a-year AGA.

At the AGAs the Board of Directors take the opportunity to inform our Citizens about the MMF's activities in the previous year. As well, it is an additional opportunity for the Delegates to provide guidance for the coming year through resolutions. The business to be undertaken at the AGA includes presenting the annual financial statements while the auditor must be present to answer questions and give additional information as may be required by the assembly. The same occurs at each of the seven Regional Assemblies that take place each year.

According to the MMF Constitution, one of the responsibilities of the MMF Locals is to inform the members within their Locals of all matters that affect the Federation. This is why it is so important that the Locals be active and that executives attend and participate in the MMF meetings and workshops so they can share with the Metis Citizens in their settlement all that they have learned. On the other hand, if, as a Local leader, you have a Metis Community event such as a fundraiser, meeting, wedding, or anything else your Local wants to share, please send it to us through your Region and we will get it in print or on the radio.

We are also developing an internal strategy and undertaking further processes to get updated and regular departmental information to our Citizens. While we will soon put that in place, please continue to follow the *Le Metis*, our website, and our radio show.

Upon closing, I offer my prayers for our friends, family, and veterans, who have passed on and my condolences to those who have lost a loved one. I ask that we all give special prayers for Paul Carrier, the father of our MMF Minister Andre Carrier, who passed recently. My hopes are with those who are sick or shut in. I offer my best wishes to all.

Meeqwetch.