

President's Message

August 11, 2016

Many people refer to the hot days of August as the 'Dog Days of Summer'. It is typically a time when everyone is enjoying the long days of sunshine resting and relaxing. Many of us are gathering with our friends and family, taking in everyone beautiful moment as we do such time honoured traditions of fishing, gathering and the typical Metis activities of good music, food and dancing.

This summer your Metis government has been also out celebrating with you at many of our cultural celebrations. From the Aboriginal Day Celebrations in Selkirk in early summer, to the Shell River Jamboree and Metis Days in St. Laurent, we have been having a great time getting together with you across our province.

During the Metis Days celebrations in St. Laurent, I was pleased to present the St. Laurent Minor Hockey with a cheque for \$10,000 to go towards the improvement on the arena's locker rooms and washrooms. I was also very excited to see Metis N4 Construction to also present a cheque for another \$10,000 towards these arena improvements. The success of N4 on the hydro project work we secured meant we were able to invest a portion of the profits into our Metis Youth. I look forward to seeing a champion come from this proud Metis town.

I have also enjoyed meeting many of you over the past number of weeks as we travelled across Manitoba to share the news about our Land Claim and listening to you share your thoughts on how we should build the framework agreement with Canada on settling our longstanding collective claim.

Just last week I was in Selkirk where we had a packed meeting with Local Executives and Citizens from across the Interlake Region. We got great feedback from our Metis Citizens. I heard many excellent ideas from those present about what we must include in our negotiations with Canada. Ideas such as access to healthcare and affordable medicines for our Elders and others in need of appropriate care; making sure our Children have access to educational opportunities; and strong economic development strategies to help ensure the long-term success of our Metis Community.

Again, I want to remind you to watch our website at www.mmf.mb.ca for important information about these community consultations that we are undertaking across Manitoba. Also, keep in touch with your Locals and your Regional Office for news about developments on this very important and exciting time for the Metis. Please share your ideas on what you want to see in the negotiations for our collective claim. You can send them directly to your Metis Government at ideas@mmf.mb.ca.

Summer is half over and we are still working hard. We have another 14 or so community consultations coming up before our Annual General Assembly scheduled to take place at Assiniboia Downs in Winnipeg on September 24 - 26. On September 23rd, the day before our AGA, we will have a land claims workshop. Mark your calendars for these important dates.

Our Annual Assembly brings together more than 3000 Metis delegates from across Manitoba. It is the largest gathering for Metis governance in all the Metis Homeland that stretches from western Ontario to the BC coast.

Our Assembly is a good time for businesses to showcase their work and products. Each year we have a great trade show that you can participate in. If you are a business owner, you will not want to miss this

opportunity to get in front of more than 3000 Metis delegates from across Manitoba. If you are a Metis entrepreneur, take advantage of this opportunity to show off your success and build relationships that could help bring your business to a higher level. Get in touch with Jasmine, our trade show coordinator, to book your spot at the trade show. You can reach her at (204) 586-8474. You can also find more information on our website at www.mmf.mb.ca/aga2016.php.

Finally, I send my prayers and thoughts to you all - especially to those who are shut-in or sick. I encourage you to keep meeting with each other, building those strong and lasting relationships that protect and guide our Metis Nation.

Meeqwetch,