

## **President's Message**

*December 8, 2016*

The Christmas Season is upon us. This past week the Manitoba Metis Federation hosted its Annual Open House. Each year we invite everyone in to visit the Home Office, talk to staff and your Métis Government representatives. It is a grand time of visiting, getting reacquainted, discovery and genuine fellowship between friends, colleagues and supporters. This year we again had a large number of people come and visit.

During our Open House, each department is brightly decorated and all kinds of healthy and fun treats are given to our guests as they explore the Home Office. When guests arrived they were greeted by members of the President's Office and given a 'passport' they use as they visited each department. When they visited a department, they are greeted by staff who 'stamp' their passports, provided information about what the department does on behalf of the government for the Métis Citizens and engaged them in fun activities. Once a guest had their passport filled out, they submitted the passport for a chance to win fun prizes. You can find some photos of our Open House in this issue of Le Metis as well as on our Facebook page.

I especially look forward to these times of celebration with our Métis Citizens. I know our staff also put in a tremendous effort in making our guests feel welcome. They have fun decorating their departments and entertaining our guests who come visit. It seems the Christmas Festivities really kick into high gear after our annual Open House takes place.

This year I am very pleased and proud of the work our Metis Child and Family Services Authority does in coordinating Christmas Hampers for Métis families during the Holidays. Our staff also participate in this worthy and important mission with great gusto and enthusiasm. Each year staff from all across the Métis Government take it upon themselves to raise money as a department or donate from their own pockets to make Christmas Hampers. It humbles me to see generosity in action at this time of the year. It warms my heart and gives me great pride to know that the Métis really are a 'Society of Generous Ones'. From time immemorial, we have always stood up for and looked after others. May we never give up in our well doing.

I am also excited to see how many of our departments have taken it upon themselves to support the Christmas Cheer Board by volunteering their time to make hamper deliveries. I look forward to participating in making deliveries to needy families across our city. If you have opportunity to volunteer for a worthy cause in your own towns and villages, I encourage you to do so!

In closing, I send my thoughts and prayers to those who are shut-in, ill or have cause for grief. Especially during this Christmas Season, remember those who have little. It does not cost much to extend a hand of friendship, love and support but yet the returns are huge. Be safe. Be festive. Be thankful and above all, be together. Merry Christmas.

Meeqwetch,