

## **President's Message – Jan 10 Le Metis**

Happy New Year! I hope you had a peaceful and joyous holiday filled with love, laughter and the comfort of your family and friends. I am enjoying some quality time with my own family and friends after a busy 2017.

2017 was a very successful year for the Metis Government and our many affiliates. We are all committed to making positive advancements across all programs for our Metis Citizens. 2018 will see many more initiatives and advances. I look forward to sharing all of this information with you as we make continued progress.

Yesterday I was humbled to receive the Sovereign Medal from Lieutenant Governor Janice Filmon. The medal celebrates individuals who contribute their time and effort to the betterment of a community. This is not a medal meant for me alone. I share it with our Metis Government, who helps to achieve the vision I have for our Citizens. I share it with the MMF staff who run the programs and services. And I share it with you, the Metis Citizens, because you have allowed me to lead our Metis Government for 20 years.

Minister of Indigenous Services Jane Philpott has told me that our Metis Health and Wellness program should be expanded in this upcoming budget announcement. Our Metis Citizens deserve better access to healthcare at all stages of life. To be able to expand our Health and Wellness Program beyond the Prescription Drug Program we announced in November would be an important step in this direction.

We have important work to do this year in fully transitioning to a self-government model. I will be working closely with our Ministers and MMF staff to ensure this is carried out successfully. Together we will look at what we're currently doing that can continue as is, and what needs to change or improve under this model. At the heart of this work will be the Metis Citizens and the strengthening of our nation.

2018 is an election year for our Government. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of our current Ministers for their continued good work, much of which was highlighted at our Annual General Assembly in September. It's so important for Citizens to participate in this process. This is our first election year as a recognized self-government. Your voice matters. If you want to work on behalf of your Metis Citizens, I encourage you to run for office. More information will be available in future issues of Le Metis.

An exciting project is underway at our Home Office as we speak. We are developing a new website which will make information easier to access. It will look cleaner and you will be able to easily search for the information you need most. I'm personally excited about the new blog feature which will allow me to connect with our Metis Citizens in a more timely way. We will share a launch date as the project comes closer to completion.

I offer my best wishes for those who are sick or shut-in. May they be blessed with healing, health, and peace. I share my heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathies for all our neighbours, friends, and families who have lost loved ones. On behalf of our Metis Government, staff, and Citizens, I wish everyone a healthy, happy and blessed 2018!

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