



Le Métis

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YOUR RED RIVER MÉTIS GOVERNMENT'S BI-WEEKLY NEWS.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Every year, your Red River Métis Cabinet tries to set time aside in our busy schedules, remove ourselves from our daily work, and focus on thinking about the big picture of our government and where we are going. Your elected representatives all wear many hats, from serving Citizens in the Regions and attending Local events to managing their portfolios and meeting with their counterparts in other orders of government.

Members of your Cabinet are also spouses, parents, and grandparents, with just as many demands on their time from their home lives as their work lives. Taking a few days to clear our minds and reset ourselves as a team is important.

We don't always find the time to make a retreat happen, but when we do, we are able to truly consider what we have accomplished and where we need to go in the future. Taking that time to look beyond our responsibilities is as critical to our success as a government as any other tasks we undertake.

Our focus for this retreat was looking at a vision for a sustainable future. As Citizens heard me say during the recent election cycle, you can't be a government if you can't afford to be one.

We have built ourselves to be a government that can continue to sustain the services and programs we offer our Citizens, as well as future generations of Red River Métis. That means we need to make sure that we have the funds to continue this important work, expand it where needed, and ensure it can continue through hard times. Economic Development, Health, Education, and Housing were all part of the discussions. These are critical portfolios that provide services and supports that our Citizens count on, and they need to be sustained. Health is an area where we know there is an unjustified prejudicial policy within Canada that excludes us from receiving the help the First Nations and Inuit receive. It is a policy that must end, as it is causing hardship on our people, particularly in rural and remote areas.

We are actively working on holding Canada to account on this front, but in the meantime, we continue to offer services to our Citizens – such as diabetes testing, foot care, and other supports out of our own revenues. I will continue to update you on the progress of our health advancements, as well as the other areas of focus from our retreat in the coming weeks and months.

I want to thank Marc LeClair and his partner, Lynette Davies, and their staff for their warmth and hospitality, which allowed us to focus on the work at hand. The food and the many other thoughtful considerations they put in place were appreciated by all.

Just as important to our retreat is the camaraderie we build together as a Cabinet, Minister to Minister and portfolio to portfolio, as well as with the senior staff who support us every day. The work we do together as a Cabinet is intense and sometimes challenging. Having strong relationships makes the communication and understanding amongst us all more effective and stronger. Laughter, teasing, and shared memories create foundations for relationships that last a lifetime. That foundation is not only important for our work, but also for each of us as members of the broader Red River Métis Community.

It is through moments like these where it becomes clear that we are strongest when we work together and are united by a common purpose. This was the key to our successes in the early days of our nationhood, and it is the key to our future as well. We may disagree, and we may debate issues that are important to us, but when a decision has been made, we are once again united in our purpose.

Our retreat reminded me once again of how important our governance model is – not only in how it functions, but how it is rooted in our history and our traditions.

We also took a moment during the retreat to reflect our thoughts on Orange Shirt Day, or National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, which took place on day two of our meeting. We can never forget what was done to our people during the dark times of residential and day schools, another attempt to erase our identity with shame and hardship designed to make us fit into the white world.

Of course, we recognize that the residential school system harmed many more First Nations people than Red River Métis people. However, one child's pain cannot be measured against another's – all who suffered at the hands of this horrific system, as well as those harmed by the day school system, have an equal right to healing and peace.

I hope you are as proud as I am of the people you have elected – their fighting spirit, their willingness to work together and learn from each other, and their care and passion for working for the betterment of the Citizens they represent. Your Red River Métis Government has grown in leaps and bounds over the decades, and it is now a large and complex operation with many, many moving parts. Without the tireless dedication of your elected officials and the incredibly hard work of our staff, we simply would not be what we are today.

Again, I want to thank our Citizens who continue to believe in my leadership and my mission to change the lives of our people for the better. I am very honoured that you have given me another acclamation and I will spend the next four years doing the work of advancing our Nation, finding our rightful place in Canada's confederation, and ensuring we are not left out and not discriminated against or looked upon as lesser within this country we helped create.

Until we meet again, I offer my prayers to all our families, Citizens, friends, and neighbours, and my deepest condolences to those who have been caused to grieve. My heart is with the friends, family, and community of our lost loved ones. I ask my people to send prayers to our families and help those who are grieving. I will keep you all in my prayers, as always.

Meeqwetch,
President David Chartrand, LL.D. hon. O.M. ∞

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NIYAAN LI MICHIF: A COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE ARTWORK PROJECT HONOURING RED RIVER MÉTIS HERITAGE

Citizens are creating artworks that will come together in a landmark installation right in the heart of the Homeland.

With anticipation for the Manitoba Métis Federation's (MMF) Red River Métis National Heritage Centre (RRMNHC) at an all-time high, excitement around the newest collaborative art project is rising to match it.



Each leaf, created by Citizens from across the Homeland, will join others to form an art installation that celebrates Red River Métis heritage.

The Community Collaborative Artwork Project, also titled "Niyaan li Michif" – which translates to "We are Métis" – is led by talented Red River Métis artist, Tracy Charette Fehr.

The installation, to be housed in the RRMNHC, will come to life as a flowing tapestry of branches, leaves, and natural shapes, and will be created through the use of stitching, embroidery, fabrics, family photographs, beading, and more – all tying back to Red River Métis roots.

"When people think about textile art, sometimes they think of blanket... I didn't want to go that route," said Charette Fehr. "The materials that we use reflect some of the trade that we've done. Using fur to some degree, beading, embroidering – those are all part of our culture. So that will be represented physically."

Charette Fehr has been running workshops that will continue until December 1, 2026. Registration in the project is completely free, and Citizens anywhere across the globe can participate.

Over 100 art kits have been sent out, with a goal of 300 completed artworks for inclusion in the installation. No experience in sewing, beading, or making art is required – anyone can participate, regardless of age.

"Tracy feels pretty strongly that she's there to support and to teach," said Candace Hogue, Curator at the RRMNHC. "Citizens don't have to be professional artists; they can come and contribute."

Once registered, each Citizen will receive an art kit complete with embroidery thread, several pieces of patterned fabric, Mod Podge, and crafting odds and ends. Citizens can use as much or as little of the materials as they see fit.

"Some people will use it, some people might not use much of it," said Charette Fehr. "It might just be kind of playing with some of the fabrics, seeing what they want to use. Somebody might want a more minimalist kind of look, but I tend to be a maximalist."

Since July, Citizens have been attending the workshops and learning from Charette Fehr – even those who did not grow up particularly connected to their heritage.

Lindsay McCombe, one of the MMF Citizens taking part in the project, has been taking this opportunity to connect with her Red River Métis roots.

"I wanted to be a part of it and honour my grandmother who I miss dearly. I wanted to honour her through art," she said. "The opportunity to have something that I created be a part of something so historic is the most exciting thing."

Another participant, Linda Williams, got involved in the project after she saw a Facebook post about it. The workshops have given her the opportunity to connect to her family history in a creative way.

"I've been a part of five workshops," she said. "It seems that we can join in whenever we're comfortable doing it on a drop-in basis. The work so far has opened my eyes to a lot of history in my family, and I'm really excited to see how I am going to relate to others working in this project – I'm excited to see the end result of this."

The project has many hands on it and will be pulled together by Charette Fehr and a small team of Citizens. With experience leading a large-scale art project, the Red River Métis artist anticipates that it will be an emotional and dynamic experience when it all comes together.

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- LINDSAY MCCOMBE

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"They're all going to be very individual, but at the same time there has to be some colours that bring it together... we will have to be able to link the pieces," she said. "It will reflect on our connection to each other, our identity, and our cultural pride. It will represent all of those communities and all of the people."

Like the traditional Red River Métis sash, each colour of the textiles being used in the project will also reflect core values, with reds and prairie tones front and centre for visitors to see.

"They're going to see our natural environment," said Charette Fehr. "The colours will [reflect] more of a prairie kind of landscape. We've got the reds, which will represent many things – such as the Red River. Red is kind of a sacred color, so there'll be elements of that."

The RRMNHC will house other ancestral belongings and artworks as well, including the "Our Grandmothers" collection – which was acquired by the RRMNHC in 2025. "Niyaan li Michif" will hang suspended in the RRMNHC's Great Hall, greeting visitors upon entry.

"We chose the space in the Great Hall and the themes of assembly and awaken deliberately," said Hogue. "It's going to be multipurpose in terms of that space with exhibits and our peoples' stories surrounding it around the perimeter. It will be a very celebratory space so it was ideal... the artwork will greet visitors and Citizens."



Each kit comes complete with all the materials you need; Charette Fehr will guide participants through online or in-person workshops to work with the materials.



Kinship is also a big part of Red River Métis traditions, which is something Charette Fehr places an emphasis on in her work.

“Our genealogy and our family history is so important,” said the artist. “In a Métis gathering, you always find another cousin, you find another family that you might be related to or connected to [in] your community. That’s what people will see when they’re in [the RRMNHC], these networks of connection. Connection through the branches and leaves, which can also symbolize [a] family tree.”

If you or someone you know is interested in participating in the Community Collaborative Artwork Project, visit mmf.mb.ca/community-collaborative-artwork-project. Stay tuned to the MMF Instagram and Facebook pages for more updates.



Participants get to connect with their Red River Métis Community and share their art as a part of a historical instalment, which will find a home in the Great Hall of the RRMNHC once completed.

SHOP RED RIVER MÉTIS: DYLAN FUNK

Red River Métis business owner Dylan Funk knows how to run a successful general store. Wanless General Store, located in The Pas Region, is something Funk takes pride in. Having been open for over a year now, the store carries a variety of different products to meet every Citizen’s needs – anywhere from fuel to locally made art. Come visit the heart of the Wanless community! Get a taste of what Wanless General Store has to offer at facebook.com/p/Wanless-General-Store-61558078203201/.



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2026 **MMF**
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY



RECOGNIZING
OUR PLACE
IN HISTORY



Health & Wellness

Are you a Red River Métis Citizen living with Congenital Heart Disease?

We want to hear from Red River Métis patients and caregivers about their healthcare experiences.

For more information, please contact Dr. Anna Chudyk at Anna.Chudyk@umanitoba.ca



This work, led by Dr. Anna Chudyk, was approved by Committee for Harmonized Health Impact, Privacy, and Ethics Review. Participation is voluntary and your information will be kept confidential.



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