



Le Métis

∞ EST. 1871 ∞

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



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Citizens, if you could see what is in my heart, I'm certain it would show you a glow that rivals the brightness of our logo on our newest building acquisition at 333 Main Street.

On Saturday, November 30, I was so proud to sign our modern-day Red River Métis treaty with Canada, represented by Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations Canada, Gary Anandasangaree. I signed the treaty as the representative of you, our Citizens, and Minister Anandasangaree signed on behalf of the Crown, as we once again treat with the country we love and helped to build.

Citizens, local leaders, and invited guests from across the Homeland and beyond came to bear witness to our accomplishment. Representatives of other governments, First Nations friends and relatives, Métis leaders, and so many others have our gratitude for coming to witness this historic day. I also thank the many hundreds of Citizens who tuned in to the livestream to see this historic event take place. I'm proud to share that we had hundreds upon hundreds of calls to our offices on Friday, some just congratulating us and some Citizens who wanted to share the excitement in their hearts about the achievement of this vision we waited so long to realize.

Many people have asked me what this treaty means. I could give an academic answer or a legal one, but I'd rather give you a practical answer, one that reflects what's in our hearts and minds. Our

treaty means permanent recognition by Canada, without a question. It means that our recognition is enshrined and protected, no matter who forms the government of this country. It means Canada must respect and recognize that we are a government, and it is on that basis that they must engage with us.

Our treaty sets these facts in stone, and confirms that we are not a group. We are not an organization. We are not lobbyists. We are, as we have always been, a government, and now all must recognize this fact.

Today, we proclaim with our hearts and voices united, that we are the Red River Métis, the true Métis. Our Homeland is not the postage stamp that was Manitoba in the beginning, nor are we contained within the boundaries of what is now Manitoba. I thank Canada for recognizing in 2021 that those boundaries were never ours, and that they cannot exist for our Citizens. I thank those from across the globe who have heard the call of our Ancestors and have come home to the National Government of the Red River Métis.

As Red River Métis, we know that many people outside our Nation don't know what we've gone through to arrive at this treaty. They don't know what our people suffered, just for being who we are. They don't understand that we were treated as worse than second class. We were pushed aside, always watching everybody else achieve and mark milestones. It has always hurt me, as a leader, when I've had to tell our people to wait for the next time, or to be patient in the face of being forgotten or pushed aside again.

This treaty makes sure that we will never be forgotten or pushed aside again. It also proves something else we know to be true – that the Red River Métis never give up. We never give up on pursuing what is rightfully ours. We will try and try until the work is accomplished.

Still, we are loyal people, and we gave our love to Canada even when it did not love us back. We kept our faith in democracy and fought to protect those that couldn't protect themselves in wars and in peace. It took 75 years to get the apology owed to our World War II Veterans. It took more than 100 years for our rights to be enshrined in the Canadian constitution. It took 143 years to prove that our land claim was a debt owed to us by Canada. Every acknowledgement and apology formed a part of our journey to this day and this treaty.

Through the treaty, Canada is saying that it recognizes us as who and what we are. Canada

isn't giving us rights. It is acknowledging that we always had rights. It acknowledges that we never abandoned our vision of who we are as a people – proud, hard-working people – who know that we can govern ourselves, just as we always have. We are the National Government of the Red River Métis, and we always will be.

Our treaty is the foundation upon which we will build pillars, that will ensure we can continue to stand up for our people and address their needs, no matter what. We will plant seeds among our pillars, and nurture those seeds, growing roots that support mighty trees and strong vines. We will wrap their strength around our pillars, and ensure that there is no one who can put down what we have raised.

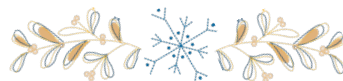
That is what this treaty gives us. It gives us strength. It gives us pride. It gives us assurance that our young generations will never, ever have to feel shame in their identity. This is the future that is ours to nurture, grow, and protect, until it is time for the next generations to nurture their own strength to add to the fortress we have built.

We cannot change the dark history that blighted our relationship with Canada and Canadians. But with this treaty, Canadians can be proud. Together, we have shown that we are a place and a people who can acknowledge past mistakes. We have proven that we are open and willing to making those mistakes right. Canadians can go anywhere in the world and brag that our country is one that can face the troubles of the past, mend them, and move toward a brighter future together.

Your Cabinet and I are committed to keeping this treaty moving through the systems of government in Ottawa, to ensure that it becomes law as quickly as possible. I feel confident that no leader of any party could see a reason not to support our treaty, and all will feel compelled to right the wrong John A. Macdonald did to our people out of hatred and prejudice all those many years ago.

I thank all the leaders in this country who have already shown their willingness and commitment to stand up and vote in favor of this treaty, to correct history for the future. I was proud to see that many of them sent representatives to bear witness to this historic signing.

I must also thank all the Red River Métis leaders of the past, who gave their all to bring us to this day. I know my heart continues to beam, as do the hearts of my Cabinet. We will never forget the sacrifices of our past fighters and dreamers, and we will never forget where we came from. Nothing was ever given to the Red River Métis, and we will honour the



efforts of all who made it possible for us to arrive at this treaty – we truly stand on the shoulders of giants.

Today, more than ever, I ask you all to believe in yourselves, and to believe in us, the Red River Métis. This is our treaty, our victory, and our proud history blazing a trail to a brighter future. The work our Ancestors left to us with heart and faith is not done,

but I know they can see how far we've been able to advance ourselves, and I know they are proud of each and every one of us.

I send my well wishes to Citizens who are honouring our traditions by harvesting from our Homeland to feed family and community. Stay safe and remember – your Red River Métis government has your back.

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. ∞

DECOLONIZING DATA: THE MMF'S TAKE ON INDIGENOUS DATA SOVEREIGNTY



This year, the MMF Housing Department presented their ideas about Indigenous data sovereignty and ownership at the National Conference on Ending Homelessness in Ottawa. Pictured left to right: Gbadebo Adedapo, Minister Will Goodon, Joshua Gobin, and Mehraz Sarker.

The topic of Indigenous-led research and data sovereignty has been making its way around the conference circuit thanks to the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF)'s Housing Department.

This year, the MMF Housing Department presented its ideas about Indigenous data sovereignty and ownership at the National Conference on Ending Homelessness in Ottawa.

"This conference is something that we've been attending for a few years now, particularly since we've had our rapid services team up and running. One of the things that we always know when it comes to the issue around homelessness and the different ideas and different ways of trying to get to the bottom of this situation is that we need to work together," said Will Goodon, Minister of Housing and Property Management. "We need to learn from each other and that's a big part of why we go to this national conference."

The MMF Housing Department was pleased to see just how well the turnout was for their presentations.

"One thing about (the conference in) Ottawa was – and it surprised me as well – our presentation was packed with people so the room that we were assigned was full," said Mehraz Sarker, former Research Associate of the Housing Department. "People sat on the floor. Everyone was interested in learning about maintaining and managing Indigenous data sovereignty and ownership."

Now acting as the Research Manager of the Early Learning and Child Care Department, Sarker feels that data should be collected, managed, and operated by the people and for the people who are impacted by the research.

"If we collect, let's say, qualitative data for our research, we should involve multiple Citizens in the process and eventually in the data collection and data analysis process as well. That way, we enhance their skills at the same time, ensuring that they understand the process in a cultural manner and in a way that enhances the betterment of life," said Sarker.

The significance of protecting Indigenous-led data practices was emphasized by Minister Goodon due to the past appropriation of traditional knowledge.

"When you look from a broader perspective, our traditional knowledge on what's happened to us and what has happened to other Indigenous Nations has been historically stolen and there was no compensation to Indigenous people, it was just taken," said the Minister. "And it may not be that big of a scale, but the ability to manage the information about our own Citizens is important because there is trust there. We can trust ourselves better than we can trust anyone else."

The Housing Department is actively working on creating a balance in Indigenous-led data sovereignty to protect information from potential abuse or misuse. Additionally, the department is providing Red River Métis-focused research to other institutions in order to support displaced Citizens.

"It's important for us to be able to share, because when we're working with other organizations like the Salvation Army or Siloam Mission or Main Street Project, to know what kind of services they may be

receiving there and what they're in need of so we can meet the needs of the individual," said Minister Goodon.

The need to keep data sovereignty and ownership within Indigenous communities led to the MMF Housing Department's decision to work with ID Fusion, a Red River Métis-owned tech company.

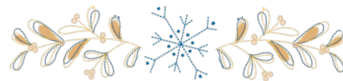
"They're a Métis-owned company, and we are finding ways to tailor the intake of information to the individual needs of our Citizens because our programs and wrap-around services are tailored to their needs," said the Minister. "But, at the same time, to find a way that we can share and collaborate, which I think is very important, is one of the things that I did learn when we went down to Houston."

In July 2024, representatives from the MMF Housing Department joined the Manitoba delegation visiting Houston, Texas, alongside Bernadette Smith, Provincial Minister of Housing, Addictions, and Homelessness to learn about the municipality's successful strategy to address homelessness through co-ordination and collaboration.

"On one hand, we know our people. We know our Citizens better than anyone else, they're our family, cousins, aunts, and uncles. So, we know culturally what they need, but at the same time, to go to different areas, different regions that have new ideas, there's nothing wrong with looking at new ideas," said the Minister.

Minister Goodon also highlighted the significance of establishing connections, both among MMF departments and external stakeholders.

"That's a big lesson and something that we can build with other external organizations in Manitoba, but also within our own departments and affiliates and how they can influence how we provide wrap-around services," he said. "Whether it's working with Health and Wellness, working with the (Métis) Justice (Institute), working with CRO (Citizen Registry Office), they're important parts of what we're trying to do, which is to help our Citizens who are at their most vulnerable."



Finally, Minister Goodon acknowledged just how important the entire MMF Government is in creating housing opportunities for displaced Red River Métis Citizens.

"I think it's important that we continue to do the work and that what we're doing – not just our

department, but what our government is doing – is extremely important as well. I give a lot of credit to MMF President David Chartrand who has seen the whole spectrum of housing from home ownership to rapid services and the importance of these topics are recognized," said the Minister. "Housing is one of the fundamental reasons why the Red

River Métis Government was created in the first place in 1967, and we've got a lot of work to do because the more we do, the more that needs to be done."

SEASONED MUSICIAN BRINGS MÉTIS PRIDE TO HIS LIFETIME OF MUSIC



Musician Johnny Dietrich has been performing since he was 11 years old.

At 77, Johnny Dietrich has journeyed through many musical venues, from the intimacy of crowded bars to theatres and everything in between. A seasoned troubadour, Dietrich first picked up a guitar and started singing at 11. His passion for music has only grown stronger with time.

"My grandmother and grandpa raised me since I was a baby. Back then, there was just music around because we had no electricity or anything like that," he said. "Grandpa played the fiddle, and my aunts and uncles played guitar and sang. I was around it all the time, and that's where it all started with me. My love of music was instilled in me then, and it's still there today. It's been over 65 years."

Dietrich often serenades crowds with his booming voice and seamless guitar skills, drawing audiences in with his well-crafted lyricism. Throughout the years, the musician has been a part of many acts, such as Kickin' Up Dust, accompanied by his sister Colleen Bryce and bass player Ken Wettlaufer.

"I play more on my own and maybe with a duo occasionally," said the musician. "When bigger things come up, like Ste. Madeleine Métis Days, then we'll go with (a three-piece band). There are only three of us in the group, and Kickin' Up Dust sounded better than the John Dietrich Trio."

The musician has performed at many Ste. Madeleine Métis Days and enjoys making the annual trip to pay his respects to the once-thriving Red River Métis village. He recalled being contacted to play for the first or second time the Métis Days started – over 20 years ago.

"I remember there was me, Barry Gladue, Garry Lepine, and a drummer. The hay rack was our stage, but that's how long ago that was, and I've been doing almost every one since. I was an emcee once, but I usually (prefer to) play there," said the performer.

Although Dietrich takes pride in playing cover songs, the Red River Métis musician has released two original albums: *Dreams Come and Dreams Go* (2004), and *My Old Hometown* (2008). The singer also released the single "When You Walked into My Life" in 2022.

"I've written all the songs on the CDs except for two. I've had songs (chart) on NCI-FM's Indigenous Music Countdown. One of my songs placed number one on the chart, and one of my songs went to number two. That was nice," he said.

The well-travelled musician has toured many places with different bands to showcase his talents and said every one of his performances is memorable.

"I've played in bars my whole life, but we would do fairs and do concerts with Jason McCoy (a Canadian singer-songwriter)," he said. "One of the things I started was called Voices of the Prairie (in Portage la Prairie) about 15 years ago, which always featured Métis artists. We would (host the) feature four times each year, and it was a big show in town."

Dietrich got his start with a rock 'n' roll band when he was 15, but was always drawn to country music. The Red River Métis performer has noticed many changes to the music scene over the years.

"When I was 21, I got into bars, and the bar bands were good. (Playing at a bar) is a good way to hone your craft, and that's where everybody starts," he said. "But then, the bars began getting loud, and the music started changing. It wasn't country music anymore. It was more country/rock. Everybody has their favourite bar and type of music, but it changed that way."

One positive change Dietrich has enjoyed about the music world is the ability to livestream his sets and reach a wider audience.

"I enjoy the Facebook concerts at home. I don't have to go anywhere and travel. I just set up in my basement, and that's it," he said.

The Red River Métis Citizen takes pride in his culture and does what he can to help out the Manitoba Métis Federation in any capacity. Dietrich

recalled being a part of starting the Portage Local around 35 years ago and hosting meetings at his house. He felt pride watching the Local grow from the ground up into what it has become today, and said he enjoys still being an active member.

"Anything that's Red River Métis around here, I'm involved in. I do a lot of emceeing for the major functions in the area, I do a lot of the music, and I'm always going to the meetings," he said. "I wear my sash all the time. I'm very proud of it."

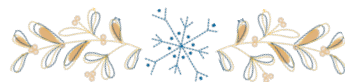
When he is not creating music or being involved with the Local, Dietrich can be found running his paint company, Sharp Decorating Limited. The Red River Métis Citizen is proud of his legacy and hopes it reflects well into the future.

"You can't have a Red River Métis function without music, whether it's the fiddle, dance, or singing. I'm always a part of that and always will be, hopefully," he said. "As far as my music goes, I'll play it until I die. Music has been a big, big part of my life."

MMF KICKS OFF THE HOLIDAY SEASON BY LIGHTING UP THE HEART OF THE HOMETOWN



Get into the holiday spirit with your Red River Métis Government on December 5! Watch as we light up 200 Main Street and spread Christmas cheer throughout the community. This is the time to come together in celebration as we make a positive impact by revealing our annual contribution to the Christmas Cheer Board. We have hopes that every family has a joyous Christmas this holiday season.



SAVE ENERGY & MONEY WITH MÉTIS ENERGY EFFICIENCY OFFERS

Efficiency Manitoba and the Manitoba Métis Federation are working together to help make energy efficiency upgrades easier for Red River Métis Citizens.

Qualified households can receive free energy-saving upgrades such as:

- ✓ Insulation upgrades
- ✓ New high-efficiency natural gas furnace
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