



# Le Métis

EST. 1871 ∞

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



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I recently had the opportunity to take a trip across the prairies, visiting many communities and seeing the sights of our beautiful Homeland as I made my way to meetings in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

The first stop was a Federal, Provincial, Territorial roundtable on Human Rights in Regina. Of course, our Citizens know that Canada still has much to address when it comes to honouring the rights of the Red River Métis. Housing, education, full implementation of Bill C-92, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* are some important examples. Others include a Red River Métis-specific economic development strategy that aligns with the Nation-to-Nation, government-to-government, distinctions-based approach that has demonstrated such positive results for our people. These remain outstanding issues that must be grappled with, negotiated and fully advanced, which I raised at this table.

I also informed the co-chairs of the table that being given three minutes to outline all our concerns and challenges was an impossible mission. I pointed out that the forum itself was not distinctions-based. Instead, it was a strange mix of service providers, Indigenous governments, and advocacy groups mashed together in a way that did not allow for meaningful dialogue.

I was there to make sure our voice was heard, but in no way did the meeting achieve a distinctions-based standard. It is my sincere hope that my words were heard and taken seriously, so that the format for a meaningful discussion between the provinces, territories, and the federal government also includes and honours the role of

Indigenous governments like your Red River Métis Government.

From there, we made the journey to Edmonton, to meet with our cousins from the Métis Settlements General Council. I was pleased to sit with President Dave Lamouche, Vice-President Sherry Cunningham and the elected representatives of the settlements of Buffalo Lake, Gift Lake, Kikino, East Prairie, Elizabeth, Fishing Lake, Paddle Prairie, and Peavine.

There is a different feeling to meeting with our relatives from the settlements – they are the only land-based Métis in Canada, and in many ways that makes them unique. However, they are very much like us, in that they are on a journey to find their rightful place in Canada's Confederation. They are governed by provincial Acts that were put in place at the time of their founding in 1938, with more provincial Acts coming into place as recently as 1990. The Acts say that the settlements are recognized as self-governing entities, recognized by Alberta. In reality, the Acts tend to treat the settlements as municipalities, with the resulting limits on their ability to fully control their own elections, among other things.

I was pleased to attend their Assembly of leaders to discuss our common interests, our respective challenges, and how we might work together in the future. These conversations have been ongoing for a number of years, as we've worked toward understanding one another. This resulted in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was signed by President Lamouche, Vice-President Sherry Cunningham, myself as President of the Manitoba Métis Federation, along with MMF Ambassador Clément Chartier.

The MOU is founded on mutual respect, and will ensure we work together to protect our shared and independent history and identity, enhance our bond and support our relationships with other orders of government, and honour our Veterans, Elders, families, Youth, and children.

Along with signing the MOU, I participated in a robust conversation with the central leadership and the elected representatives of the eight settlements. I shared some of the insights I have gained from rebuilding the MMF into the successful economic engine it is today, as well as our advancements in our recognition as a self-governing Nation by the provinces and federal governments. One representative made a comment that touched my heart. He said that this MOU is like adding the strength of the Red River Métis' 70,000 voices to the 7,000 voices of the settlements' population. I believe he is right. Working together with integrity, respect, and clarity about who each of our governing bodies represent is a powerful way to show Canada and the world that we are a powerful force when unified.

Of course, the MOU is only one step forward. Work is already underway to co-develop a Treaty with the government of the settlements, which will be a first-of-its-kind Treaty between Métis governments. As I told the settlements Assembly, we do not need Canada or any other colonial government to give us approval to move forward with an agreement between us.

Treaties have long been an important part of Indigenous governance, and the Red River Métis have been active signatories to many Indigenous Nation-to-Nation treaties in the past, including the Sweet Corn Treaty, the Prairie du Chien Treaty, and the Iron Confederacy. We can, and will, develop a Treaty with our cousins from the settlements, which will allow us to continue to work together, supporting one another when we have areas of common interest. I look forward to providing our Red River Métis Citizens with updates as we continue to build our relationship with the only land-based Métis in Canada.

Along with these important events, this journey was another opportunity to see the broad sky, the great plains and the rolling hills of the Qu'Appelle Valley and the gentler hills dotting the plains that make up our beautiful Homeland. I reflected on the tremendous resilience of our Ancestors, many of whom fled from the Red River Settlement to find homes deeper in the western prairies during the Reign of Terror visited upon our people. I thought of Louis Riel in Regina, the place of his judicially sanctioned murder, and all the hard work and sacrifice that brought us to this day.

If you haven't had an opportunity to drive across the three prairie provinces recently, I highly recommend it. You will see evidence of our people and our history in many places. Like me, you might see our beadwork in an antique store in Moosomin. You might see the Red River Carts along Highway 11, also called the Louis Riel Trail. You might see our Métis flags flying across the prairies. These are proof that our spirit was never extinguished by the hatred we received from Canada for many years. We are – as we have always been – the mighty Métis, Louis Riel's little Nation, and we never give up.

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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**TREATIES HAVE LONG BEEN AN IMPORTANT PART OF INDIGENOUS GOVERNANCE...WORKING TOGETHER WITH INTEGRITY, RESPECT, AND CLARITY ABOUT WHO EACH OF OUR GOVERNING BODIES REPRESENT IS A POWERFUL WAY TO SHOW CANADA AND THE WORLD THAT WE ARE A POWERFUL FORCE WHEN UNIFIED. - MMF PRESIDENT DAVID CHARTRAND**

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### THE SHOEBOX PROJECT: PRESERVING RED RIVER MÉTIS HISTORY

Every Citizen holds a piece of Red River Métis history, even if that history is a box of family photos stored away in the basement, the attic, or a bedroom closet. These photos are tangible memories of our Red River Métis families. They are also records of our collective life as a People. The Manitoba Métis Federation's (MMF) Red River Métis Shoebox Project seeks to digitally preserve these photos while ensuring the original photographs stay with families.

The Red River Métis Shoebox Project has already collected over 300 Red River Métis family photos helping build a fuller picture of everyday family and community life.

"The Shoebox Project is a photo archive of Citizen-submitted photographs, both historical and contemporary. Citizens are invited to share photos that they feel represent their Red River Métis heritage," said Bayard Devries, Program Coordinator for the Red River Métis National Heritage Centre. "We want to capture, preserve, and document the stories behind them, people within them, and add as much context as we can for future generations."

This means finding historical and contemporary family photographs that can help tell the stories of our People today, while preserving them for future generations.

"The initial idea was to preserve historical family photographs, the type that would be lost in shoeboxes... that's the name, that was the original intent," said Devries. "It's grown from just a photo archive with the intent to scan and preserve historical photographs to something that I think can be almost like a storytelling tool."

Devries does more than scan photos. He looks for the stories behind them, helping preserve our family histories and the records of who we are as individuals and as a People. These stories will be part of the Red River Métis National Heritage Centre scheduled to open in 2027.

"We've also begun capturing audio interviews," said Devries. "Knowing who or what's in the photo means everything to our Red River Métis family stories."

Through the Shoebox Project, the Red River Métis National Heritage Centre is helping create a place for those stories to have a home.

"We are developing a web app that we're going to hopefully someday share with Citizens... where people would be able to go and share their photos, see other photos," said the program coordinator. "We want to give people access to it."

Citizens who have photos to share, and stories to go along with them, can find Devries at MMF events, including the National General Assembly and Local or Regional Meetings. Citizens can also meet him at his office at 200 Main Street.

"We're always looking to take on more pictures... we've gone to MMF Regional offices and meetings with this wagon and this big scanner," said Devries. "I think the best way is to just reach out, book some time with me, come to the office, have a coffee, and share a couple photos if you have the time."

The MMF hopes to build a Red River Métis archive that reflects the rich culture, history, and pride of our Nation.

Have photos to share? Find the Shoebox Project booth at the annual Elder and Youth Gathering this summer or at this fall's National General Assembly or contact Bayard Devries at [bayard.devries@mmf.mb.ca](mailto:bayard.devries@mmf.mb.ca) to book a meeting.



Photos submitted to the Shoebox Project can be historical or contemporary.



Bayard Devries has been with the Shoebox Project since the beginning, working to archive our Red River Métis history.

“ WE WANT TO CAPTURE, PRESERVE, AND DOCUMENT THE STORIES BEHIND THEM, PEOPLE WITHIN THEM, AND ADD AS MUCH CONTEXT AS WE CAN FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS. - BAYARD DEVRIES ”



Devries has been developing a web app for the Shoebox Project to help Citizens navigate and learn about their own history.

### SHOP RED RIVER MÉTIS: JEREMY EUBANK

Jeremy Eubank, the co-owner of Never Better Studio, is ready to take care of all your sports team jersey design needs. Running as a custom branding solution provider for customers in Russell, MB and the greater Southwest Region, he ensures his small Red River Métis business does it all – from apparel to custom signage. Eubank and his hardworking team deliver heart, care, and professionalism to each client and project. To browse and book services of Never Better Studio, visit [neverbetteronline.com](http://neverbetteronline.com).



### RED RIVER MÉTIS YOUTH TAKES GOLD

Beyond Borders Citizen Elliss Angove played in Thunder Bay's 34th annual Goodwill Hockey Tournament from April 30 to May 1, 2026. The Red River Métis hockey player and her team, the Waawaate Warriors, took gold in the Bantam U15 division for the second year in a row, marking three consecutive years she has hit the podium at this tournament. It's with great pride that Angove represents the Red River Métis in athletic excellence from beyond borders. Congratulations to Elliss Angove and her team!





# 2026 NATIONAL ELECTION

The Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) National Election  
will be held on **JUNE 23, 2026**

## **MAIL IN BALLOTS**

The deadline for applications for mail in ballots for the  
MMF National Election is **JUNE 1, 2026.**

## **CHALLENGES TO NOMINATIONS**

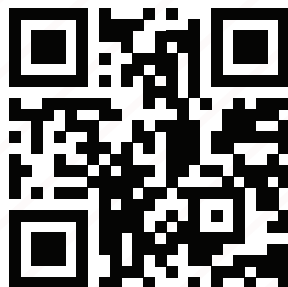
Challenges to any nomination as authorized by the MMF  
Constitution by CEO on or before **JUNE 1, 2026.**  
Challenges to candidates must be in writing and sent to  
the Chief Electoral Officer with all supporting documents.

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**For more information please contact:**

**[mmfelections.com](http://mmfelections.com)**

**Or scan the QR code below:**



**The MMF is the National Government of the Red River Métis**