

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



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

If you didn't have a chance to listen to my State of the Nation at last weekend's Annual General Assembly, or through the live broadcast on Métis Hour x2 on NCI, I wanted to share a summary of my remarks for Citizens. Thanks to those of you who came to our Annual General Assembly and provided your Red River Métis Government with your will.

There are close to 3,000 people here in attendance – physically and virtually. Yesterday, the Assembly heard Calgary making motions, and there has been voting on all matters all the way from British Columbia and our satellite locations across the country.

Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister Rebecca Alty came all the way from Ottawa to be here today, and I'm glad. I strongly encouraged her to come here, so she could see what our Red River Métis Government looks like, and what we do. Now she knows who I represent when she looks at me across the table. She's going to understand that I have the backs of my Citizens, and they have my back. After today, Minister Alty has a stronger understanding of the Red River Métis when we speak together.

In addition to the Minister, there are many, many dignitaries here from all over Canada, and it sends a clear message to all our Citizens that we matter. If there are governments or people who didn't really pay heed to us in the years past, I can assure you they're taking heed of us now.

Part of this is because of the strength of our brand. Our brand is everywhere, as pointed out by some of the speakers today. When the Mayor of Winnipeg and I chat about downtown, I know he sees how we've started to change the face – the heart – of our city... where we once owned nothing in the downtown area. Then we owned a bit, and then it was 12 storeys. Now, we have 24 storeys I think, and a million square feet of downtown property. Think about that for a second. One million square feet, and we're not finished yet. We're still buying.

You may wonder why we're doing this. I can tell you why your Cabinet and I are doing this. It's because we're looking toward the future. One of the great things that Riel taught us is we have to take care of ourselves – and that lesson is going

to be very important. We never lose sight of that. We do not just think of tomorrow – we think in decades. I really try to contemplate things that are going to be coming to challenge us and work to protect us from those challenges.

We can't be worried about a political party that gets elected that may not like us or want to do anything with us – although by the law of the Constitution of the very fabric of everything that stands for democracy, they can't ignore us. We pay billions of dollars in taxes. Never forget that.

I don't want any government to come ever here and say, oh, we give you money. You don't give us anything. All you do is give us our taxes back. We've been paying you for a long time to manage our money and our business.

So it's important that we never lose sight of that fact – because society believes what is sometimes preached by governments, that governments are giving us things. That's not who we are. We're entrepreneurial people, we are businesspeople, and hard-working people. History has proven that over and over again. But we need to see the future – and we need to take control of that future.

That's why we're buying these buildings. Together, we are buying buildings – including another building in Ottawa. We just finished two leases that will fill up the entire building and we're expanding our investments elsewhere, including more pharmacies in the West.

Why is that important? These are economic development investments that bring back power to us – the power to decide what we want to do with our money and our future, to make our lives a better place and plan for our children to go into universities and colleges later.

We've assisted over 7,000 youth that are in schools and universities and college. There's been a 42 per cent increase in a year – from last year to this year's AGA. We're giving over \$9 million a year, every year, to our students. Think about those numbers. If there are 2,000 or more Citizens in school today, and more than that last year, then there are that many professionals coming out of post-secondary education very soon. Where are they going to go? Where are they going to work?

Hopefully for our government – but if not, for greater society. We got to find where we could get them inside that greater challenge that exists for their future.

That's why the economic file for me is so essential. I'm aging out. I will be leaving and there will be a new era. Today's Red River Métis Cabinet is the only one that has ever been acclaimed in all of our democratic systems that we fight for and protect. This Cabinet will not be the same next round. You're going to see some new people sitting there next year. Some new leaders are coming. Hopefully they're ready.

In the last several years, we've taken a portfolio from \$72 million set aside for the future to over \$100 million in interest earnings. That's the planning we've done on your behalf.

We've done more than plan for the economic future. Our treaty will be introduced this fall, and I know it will pass. We got the Bloc Québécois on our side. We got the NDP and we've got the Liberals in support of it.

Our treaty will not be brought forward in any kind

of bill with other pieces of legislation. I want our country to show how they feel about us, and whether or not they believe in us. We built this country. We've died for this country. We've paid the price, and we still pay a price today. We're treated like criminals for exercising our rights and we're not treated for our health. We just got trickles of funding for our education. We've got trickles of funding for our housing. The fact that we've accomplished what we have is because we're just good at what we do. But we deserve our treaty. We've worked for it and Canada needs to recognize that too.

I hope it's clear to all who are listening downstairs, upstairs, in the pavilion and across Canada. I want to make it very clear our government has a plan to go forward.

All of this is part of a greater strategy that started even before I became elected as your President. Where we are today is not an accident. So, how did I plan things? What did I do? One of the most essential things I focused on is our brand. The reputation, the brand and the name of our Red River Métis Government is essential. I protect that brand vigorously. That's why we showcase it in our buildings everywhere, our pharmacies, our businesses, our construction, all of our companies we have out there, and all of our departments. And everyone should be aware that we will protect that brand and our flag against anyone who tries to damage it or hurt it.

But I'll tell you something else. We have a strong plan, but it's not complete. I have great worries, and so does my Cabinet. I've asked other orders of government to show us their economic plan for us. But there is no plan. There is no plan to return our taxes to us in ways that allow us to thrive. We can't put a full plan in place without them. We are doing our part and we will continue to do our part. But we need these governments to do their part.

I look in rural Manitoba, and I know that unemployment is at 70 per cent in some villages. In fact, now our traditional economies have crumbled. We're trying to revive it, I'm very proud to say.

People might think, well, trappers don't make a lot of money. And sure, they're not making \$50,000 a year, but some of them are making enough money to have a good Christmas and bring extra things for the kids at the table. Through that program, we've bought over 7,000 furs, and we're still buying more. We're paying at a higher price for those furs, too. The reason is that we're trying to revive part of our culture through our artisans, as well as a traditional economy, because on the other side of it, we got artisans.

We have now purchased \$1 million of Red River Métis artisan pieces from our people's beading and artwork. Riel is often quoted as saying it is our artisans who will revive our culture. I wear my beadwork with pride, not only because it was made for me, but also because it represents the continuation of our cultural revival. This revival is a small part of a bigger plan, but it too is only part of the solution.

There are no factories going there tomorrow morning to replace all our traditional economies that are gone. That worries us as your government. If other levels of government aren't scared of what that means, they should be. If they want to create welfare society, they're going in the right direction. The people at home in our villages are hardworking people who don't have jobs and now they are slowly giving up.

Their kids are seeing their parents not working, so they're saying to themselves, why do I have to work? In our family, we just live our life with what we have. But there's got to be more than that. There's got to be more than a vision for our next generation.

There used to be a program that opened an asset in villages, like an open garage. In each garage door there were different services available, like carpentry, plumbing, electrical, small engine repair, and so on.

People in the community would go there to get their things taken care of, and they paid a smaller fee, which saved them a ton of money. Instead of going to the nearest repair shop that could be hours away, they had things fixed in town and brought money to those people in the village who had the know-how to do the repairs. This does more than just provide income. It provides pride and sets an example for their children. Your Red River Métis Government is ready to invest in an idea like this, but it will take partnership from other orders of government, including Manitoba. All it takes is courage and a bit of an investment. Sometimes small ideas can make significant change.

But there's a bigger issue on the horizon that we will have to tackle soon – a bigger issue coming. I hate this issue. I hate where we seem to be heading. There are First Nations Chiefs today who are trying to challenge us as Section 35 rights holders. Some are saying we do not and should not have Section 35 rights. It doesn't matter what they say – our rights are protected by the Constitution of this country and protected by the

law in the courts. But it seems some are taking political stands against us for political reasons.

I will commend Grand Chief Jerry Daniels. I wish he was here. In the summer, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding, so we could work together to ensure prosperity for the people we represent during this time of economic transformation in Canada. This was done for the greater good. But some of the Chiefs objected. They said it was because the Grand Chief didn't follow their rules. But if that was really the issue, why wouldn't you keep the memorandum and address your issues with the Grand Chief?

The Chiefs who ultimately ended up rejecting the memorandum don't realize that we don't need them. We never did. Look at where we are, how big we are and how strong we are.

It's unfortunate that these Chiefs can't see the benefits of standing together, using our economics together and supporting each other's businesses. We didn't hesitate for a second to lend our support when the wildfire evacuation happened. Not a second went by, not a discussion went by, not even a debate went by in our Red River Métis Government about whether or not we were going to support and do as much as we could for the First Nations who were evacuated. The first round of evacuations was 85% First Nations, and the second round was 95%. At no point did we say, well if you don't want to work with us, we won't support your people when they need it. That didn't even cross our minds.

So, you know, it just bothers me that we can see the strength of unity and they can't. Is jealousy that strong? Because it's about jealousy. This is not about rights. This is about a group who doesn't believe we should have what we have. It is 2025, and we're still there fighting on the essence of whether they can respect us as their neighbors and relatives. That shouldn't be a question.

When we play baseball or hockey, we play together as Red River Métis and First Nations. Why can't we work together in economics and business and natural resources? Imagine how many moose and other animals died in the wildfires. We've got to find out what damage was caused and how we help the wildlife population grow back. We all need to deal with this, First Nations and Red River Métis, as part of our shared responsibility for this land. I hate that we can't seem to work together on this. But if we're going to have this fight, they better understand we are not going to back down. Nobody's going to push us around. Not as long as I'm your president, never.

Like the First Nations, the dignitaries here at our Assembly have to understand in their hearts and minds that the Red River Métis are good partners. They should be working with us. We should be part of their strategy and part of their plan. That's what I hope that's what they take from here. Not thinking about how they can get you to vote for their party, but to work with us to advance our shared interests. They have party lines they are accountable for. But for the Red River Métis, there's only one party line in our world and it's our Nation. That's our party line. So, thank you very much.

Meegwetch,

President David Chartrand. LL.D. hon. D.M.



### Integrity in our identity: A commemoration of red river métis prosperity at this year's aga

"Integrity in our identity" was more than just this year's theme of the Manitoba Métis Federation's (MMF) Annual General Assembly (AGA) – it was a lived experience.

With record-breaking participation in this year's AGA, the spirit of the Red River Métis filled the Assiniboia Downs. From October 17 – October 19, Citizens from across the Homeland and Beyond Borders came together, with many more joining live from satellite locations – including Calgary, Saskatoon, Ottawa, and Thompson.

On Saturday, MMF President David Chartrand's State of the Nation Address emphasized the importance of maintaining Red River Métis unification and collective identity – declaring that no matter what we face, the Red River Métis will stand together.

"No matter the challenge, no matter the hardship, no matter the pain of past betrayals, we will not stop," he said. "We will stand united in defence of our unique and distinct identity. For over two centuries we have known and experienced the truth that we are stronger together. We have persevered throughout our history in protecting our families and our Nation."

As the Minister of Economic Development, President Chartrand highlighted the importance of investing with a long-term vision.

"One of the great things that (Louis) Riel has taught us is that we have to take care of ourselves and it's very important that we never lose sight of that," he said. "It's so important to recognize that we don't just think of tomorrow, we think of decades ahead."

Reflecting on his 28 years as President of the MMF, President Chartrand highlighted the progress made during his tenure, emphasizing his investment in creating strong brand recognition as a way of preserving and promoting Red River Métis identity.

"When you see our brand, the Manitoba Métis Federation brand, it tells you a message: that we matter," he said.

The President also spoke about how brand recognition goes beyond the MMF logo – it's about the unwavering support of Red River Métis entrepreneurs, artisans, trappers, and business owners who uphold our traditional ways of living.

"We have bought over 7,000 furs, and we are still buying more. We are paying at a higher price than anybody else and the reason is because we are trying to revive not only our culture, but also our economy," said the President. "And on the other hand, we have our artisans. We have now purchased \$1 million of artisan wears from our



Red River Métis pride was on full display as thousands of Citizens came together from October 17–19, 2025 to celebrate this year's AGA. President Chartrand emphasized the importance of maintaining Red River Métis unification and collective identity in his State of the Nation Address.

people which we have already sold half, keeping our dollars in the Red River Métis economy."

Looking ahead, President Chartrand also discussed the upcoming election season that will be taking place in 2026 at both the Local and National level. MMF Local elections will be completed by April 1, 2026, with National elections to follow. To stay up to date on all MMF election related information, visit **mmfelections.com.** 

Dignitaries travelled from near and far to take the stage at the opening ceremonies, including The Honourable Anita Neville, Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba; The Honourable Rebecca Alty, Federal Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs; The Honourable Ian Bushie, Provincial Minister of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures; The Honourable Bernadette Smith, Provincial Minister of Housing, Addictions, and Homelessness; The Honourable Obby Khan, Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba; Willard Reaves, Leader of the Liberal Party in the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba; His Worship Scott Gillingham, Winnipeg Mayor; Scott McMurchy, Assistant Commissioner and Commanding Officer of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Manitoba Division; Gene Bowers, Chief of the Winnipeg Police Service; and MMF

Minister Anita Campbell, Spokeswoman of the Infinity Women Secretariat.

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney gave his remarks via video message at the Assembly – where he advocated for Indigenous governance and its contributions to the country.

"Canada's new government is a steadfast partner of the Red River Métis, because as we build Canada strong, Indigenous leadership, prosperity, and opportunity must and will be foundational," said the Prime Minister.



Citizens came together with their National Government to discuss matters of importance relating to the Red River Métis across the Homeland and Beyond Borders.

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NO MATTER THE CHALLENGE, NO MATTER THE HARDSHIP, NO MATTER THE PAIN OF PAST BETRAYALS, WE WILL NOT STOP. WE WILL STAND UNITED IN DEFENCE OF OUR UNIQUE AND DISTINCT IDENTITY. FOR OVER TWO CENTURIES WE HAVE KNOWN AND EXPERIENCED THE TRUTH THAT WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER. WE HAVE PERSEVERED THROUGHOUT OUR HISTORY IN PROTECTING OUR FAMILIES AND OUR NATION. - MMF PRESIDENT DAVID CHARTRAND



During opening remarks, President Chartrand was presented a gift on behalf of the federal government, given by The Honourable Rebecca Alty, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs.

Premier Wab Kinew shared a video message highlighting the provincial government's ongoing support for the MMF and its continued investment in government-to-government relations. He noted that the two governments have been working closely together, including holding their first joint cabinet meeting in 2024 to align priorities and "plan for the growth of Manitoba." Kinew also announced that the second joint cabinet meeting will take place on December 16, 2025.

MMF department and portfolio reports kicked off on Friday, with many exciting announcements taking place throughout the weekend.

During her report, Frances Chartrand, Minister of Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC), put out a call to action for more Early Child Care educators across the province – particularly in The Pas Region – and shared the MMF's commitment to supporting anyone interested in joining the field, including covering the cost of their education. Minister Chartrand also announced the first ever Red River Métis Early Years Longitudinal Study, part of the President's 2022 mandate to "follow our children's lives as it relates to culture, heritage, and personal and professional development". Citizen consultations will begin in late 2025 and carry into early 2026.

Pemmican Publications, led by MMF Minister Julyda Lagimodiere, announced the release of several new books and Michif learning materials, developed for learners of all levels and created in partnership with the MMF's Michif Language Department and the Department of Culture and Heritage. Minister Lagimodiere also encouraged Red River Métis writers and illustrators to explore job opportunities with Pemmican Publications.

Closing out the reports on Sunday, President Chartrand shared updates on the Red River Métis Power Corporation, the Red River Métis Business Directory, and our growing partnership with Padcom – a potash mining company the MMF joined forces with earlier this year.

The Red River Métis Power Corporation is in the process of selecting a partner for a \$450-million project that will produce 200 megawatts of power – enough to light up Brandon, The Pas, Portage la Prairie, and several smaller communities across the province.

"We have been working diligently on this," said President Chartrand. "We have a good, solid board that meets regularly, and we are ahead of everyone in this game. We are very close to choosing who our partner will be. We will raise 250 million of our own money and the partner coming along will have to raise 49 per cent of funds to attach to the \$450 million project."

Since last AGA, 123 Red River Métis businesses have registered for the Red River Métis Business Directory, increasing our total businesses on the directory to 878.

To date, the MMF now owns one million square feet of downtown Winnipeg and owns over 80 properties across Manitoba and Beyond Borders, with a net worth value of \$125 million.

The MMF is also exploring a \$20-million investment in potash mining with Padcom. The investment will support the company's continued growth and contribute to the development of a second mining venture. The MMF will hold a 10 per cent stake in the second mine, with the project expected to generate millions in revenue.

Located on the third floor of the Assiniboia Downs, the Red River Métis Tradeshow highlighted Red River Métis excellence, featuring a wide range of business owners and entrepreneurs. The event also included information booths from various MMF departments and affiliates, showcasing programs, services, and opportunities for Citizens.

Outside of the building, Red River Métis children were able to join the fun at Mini AGA – connecting with community and taking part in cultural activities such as crafts, jigging, and learning Michif.

The fun didn't stop when the days wrapped up – the weekend was packed with evening festivities. The MMF's annual Monster Bingo tournament took place on Friday where Citizens, friends, family, and community members came together in hopes of winning one of \$50,000 worth of prizes.

Saturday evening brought Citizens together to honour of the life and legacy of Al Desjarlais. The night consisted of musical performances by Phil Desjarlais, Darren Lavalee, Russell Cook Memorial Singers, Mike Lazue, and many more who were there to celebrate the beloved Red River Métis



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CANADA'S NEW GOVERNMENT IS A STEADFAST PARTNER OF THE RED RIVER MÉTIS, BECAUSE AS WE BUILD CANADA STRONG, INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP, PROSPERITY, AND OPPORTUNITY MUST AND WILL BE FOUNDATIONAL. - PRIME MINISTER MARK CARNEY

musical legend. The concert roared in the main hall while Cribbage and Rummy tournaments and various kids' activities took place in the lower level.

The final day of the AGA was filled with energy as 11 resolutions were discussed, achievements were celebrated, and 17 King Charles III Coronation Medal recipients were honoured for their leadership and dedication to the Red River Métis Nation.

As the assembly ended, the MMF announced the results of the MMF Pickler Classic and the silent auction winners; proceeds from the silent auction went towards the Bereavement Fund.

AGA wrapped up with Citizens receiving chickens and produce, courtesy of President Chartrand, Clifford Waldner, and the Bonhomme Hutterite Colony.

The National Government of the Red River Métis would like to thank staff, Citizens, and Locals for their tireless efforts in making this an extraordinary weekend. If you were not able to attend, you can find reports, documents, and other AGA materials on the AGA website, and watch the event livestreams on the MMF's YouTube channel.



Longtime MMF staff who have spent a decade or more serving the National Government of the Red River Métis were celebrated on Friday for their years of commitment and hard work.

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SkyAlyne is committed to Indigenous participation in the FAcT program in support of the RCAF. We aim to create sustainable outcomes that align with Indigenous aspirations through engagement, employment, training, and procurement, in support of long-term capacity building.

The FAcT program requires a wide range of skills, from trades and skilled labour to advanced technical roles such as aircraft maintenance technicians and Qualified Flying Instructors (QFIs). We encourage Indigenous businesses and job seekers to register with us as potential suppliers and explore careers with Team SkyAlyne.

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