



# Le Métis

∞ EST. 1871 ∞

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



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This week, I have invited both the Winnipeg Region and Infinity Women Secretariat to contribute updates on their recent activities.

#### Andrew Carrier, Vice-President, Winnipeg Region

The Winnipeg Region led by Minister Andrew Carrier along with Regional Directors Minister JoAnne Remillard and Minister David Beaudin has had an active and productive first quarter. With the dedicated efforts of our 16 active Locals, we've been deeply engaged in advancing the important work of building and strengthening our Red River Métis Nation.

Just as our Nation prioritizes empowering Youth, our Region remains deeply committed to honouring our trailblazers and Elders. In that spirit, I, alongside your Regional Executives, were proud to present five Citizens with the King Charles III Coronation Medal during a special ceremony recognizing their outstanding contributions to our community.

Congratulations to Shirley Langan, Linda St. Cyr-Saric, Eric Chartrand, and former Winnipeg Regional Executive Claire Riddle on receiving the King Charles III Coronation Medal. We also had the honour of posthumously awarding Elder John Lee, with the medal graciously accepted on his behalf by his daughter Cheryl Lee.

We recently held a consultation with the Region's Local Executives regarding the Local By-Law within our Constitution. As our Nation continues to grow, with more and more Citizens returning home to our Red River Métis Government, it is essential that the Local By-Law accurately and fully reflects the evolving roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities of our Local representatives.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all our Local Executives for their active participation and the thoughtful feedback shared during the consultation. Your insight and commitment are truly appreciated. I look forward to the outcomes of this important process as each Region has the opportunity to engage with their Local leadership in turn.

As the largest Region in the MMF, we take great pride in offering quality programming for our Citizens, especially our Youth. In February, we were pleased to see some of our young Citizens take part in an introduction to Archery session. Participants learned how to handle a bow and arrow and tested their skills at hitting the target. We extend our sincere thanks to the MMF's Sports and Youth Department for their partnership in delivering this valuable program. Teaching our Youth the traditional skill of archery not only connects them to an important aspect of our Métis harvesting heritage but also gives them a meaningful opportunity to build relationships with fellow Red River Métis Youth.

In addition to traditional activities, we are committed to offering programs that equip our Youth with essential life skills. Recently, several young Citizens participated in a Level C First Aid and CPR/AED training course. Through this program, they learned vital skills such as CPR, wound care, and choking response, and received certification in the use of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) and other potentially life-saving techniques.

Alongside our life-skills programming, we continue to offer culture-based opportunities for Youth to learn the Red River Métis style of fiddling and keep our traditions alive through jigging classes. This investment in our Youth, and in our culture, helps ensure that these cherished traditions are passed down for generations to come.

We're excited to watch our junior fiddlers and jiggers grow in confidence and skill. Our sincere thanks go to fiddling legend Patti Kusturok and jigging instructor Dean Davis for their dedication to sharing these cultural teachings with our young Citizens.

Red River Métis Youth and their families recently had the opportunity to attend *Blue Beads and Blueberries*, a play presented by the Manitoba Theatre for Young People (MTYP). Thanks to MTYP's generous donation of tickets, our families were able to enjoy a meaningful theatrical experience that celebrated storytelling, traditional knowledge, and the reimagining of ancestral stories through a Youth-focused lens.

On behalf of the Winnipeg Region's staff and elected officials, I extend heartfelt thanks to all Citizens of Winnipeg for your energy, your engagement, and your active participation in the work of our Nation. Thank you for standing proudly with us, here, in the heart of the Homeland.

#### Anita Campbell, Spokeswoman, Infinity Women Secretariat (IWS)

With over 2,400+ members and a staff of 25 in two locations, Infinity Women Secretariat (IWS) has been rapidly growing in the last few years. Yet, our core values remain consistent: to create a sisterhood where Métis women feel empowered and supported, with a sense of belonging to their Red River Métis Community.

Our team has been hard at work advancing the women of our Nation. In support of this activity, Spokeswoman Campbell and the IWS Board have attended several functions to enhance collaborations with various women's groups within Manitoba. IWS attended the Joy Smith Foundation, "Illuminate Hope Gala" on February 20, helping take bold steps in the fight against human trafficking.

On March 8, IWS celebrated International Women's Day with the Asian Women of Winnipeg. We are planning for our biggest Annual General Assembly to date, for September 13 & 14, 2025.

IWS, collaborating with the MMF Information Technology Department, is using Artificial Intelligence (AI) and has developed an AI named "Infinity," to help protect and preserve the Michif language. "Infinity" is learning Michif at a rapid rate, guided by the Michif Speaker Advisory Committee, and will be ready soon to teach a new generation of language learners!

March 2025 marked a monumental milestone for IWS with the grand opening of its first Little Infinity Child Care Centre. It offers 55 spaces for children to grow up proud of their Red River Métis heritage and confident in their identity, guided by the IWS Board of Directors and supported by a Red River Métis women-led Parent Advisory Committee.



Plans are underway for the second Little Infinity Child Care Centre to be built within our IWS Transitional Housing Facility. The Facility will provide a safe and supportive home for up to two years for survivors and families in violent situations; tailored wrap-around services and trauma-informed support with employment, education, on-site childcare, and greenhouses, will be available. Be on the lookout for a naming contest for this facility!

As part of the Pey Key Way Ta Hin Program, IWS is networking with community partners, law enforcement, and victim service agencies to strengthen relationships. MMF and IWS stand with MMIWG2S+ survivors and family members, raising awareness about the epidemic.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) continues to have a profound impact on the well-being of our members. We are strengthening the capacity of IWS to help members break the cycle of violence experienced in communities. IWS is enhancing this program through system navigation and outreach support for survivors of GBV, family violence, and family members of MMIWG2S+. IWS is conducting more consultations and workshops, creating more educational resources/toolkits, and expanding social media campaigns. Through intentional digital outreach such as the online GBV Portal, we created accessible pathways for members to connect with relevant programming, build community, and access personal growth development and empowerment opportunities.

The new "Confidence through Culture for Healthy Relationships" project will foster a sense of belonging through Red River Métis culture, identity, and kinship, promoting the emotional well-being of IWS Youth members. The Youth Dating Violence Prevention Program will introduce the "Circle of Courage" model, emphasizing relationships, bonding, trust, community, and belonging.

The IWS Summer Student Employment Program is back bigger and better than ever before! Now in full recruitment with Métis Employment and Training, we've surpassed our target goals with both students and employers.

IWS encourages active involvement in IWS social media platforms, and the "IWS Youth Members in Action" spotlight celebrates the accomplishments of Youth members who excel as leaders within their Red River Métis Communities. In March 2025, IWS launched the second "Adulthood 101," an innovative, eight-session virtual workshop series designed specifically for IWS Youth members aged 15 to 29. Our goal is to generate confidence and connection through a relatable, welcoming environment where Youth feel safe to be themselves, share their stories, and build meaningful relationships with one another. IWS is creating meaningful peer connections that reinforce a strong sense of identity and belonging.

With funding secured to extend the "Enhancing Engagement, Consultation, and Advocacy to Support Red River Métis Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQ+ Individuals" project, IWS is developing a Research and Data Strategy which aims to enhance data sovereignty. IWS, collaborating with the MMF Department of Engagement & Consultation (E&C), presented the ECA Strategy, which is guiding engagement, consultation, and advocacy with IWS members.

In partnership with the MMF Department of Economic Development, IWS is strengthening the Red River Métis women's entrepreneurial ecosystem with our Business Navigator Business Support Program, offering one-on-one business navigation sessions to new and upcoming Red River Métis women entrepreneurs. Further, IWS is proud to partner and collaborate with the Louis Riel Capital Corporation Métis Women Entrepreneurship Program to offer workshops and networking opportunities for our members!

Recently announced, the IWS project entitled, "Moving Red River Métis Garden-to-Table," will create new opportunities for members to engage in gardening that will grow into nourishing food. Our Gardening Wellness Challenge (Gals who Garden) will address the physical and mental well-being of IWS members. Members will be participating in weekly challenges over a 16-week period, showcasing their gardening, cooking, and creativity, connecting via Zoom, and interacting through a private social media group. Traditional Red River Métis recipes created from their garden

harvest will be submitted for the first ever Red River Métis Matriarchs cookbook being planned! IWS is a proud affiliate of the MMF – National Government of the Red River Métis, and remains committed to its mandate of uplifting and empowering the women of our Nation.

Conclusion

Don't forget that advance polls open this week from April 18-21, with election day taking place on April 28. More information about where and when you can vote is available at elections.ca.

Our Red River Métis priorities have been shared with all parties vying to form the next federal government, and we will be sharing their responses on our website very soon. Make sure you pay close attention to our website and social media platforms, where we will share responses with Citizens to help you understand each party's position on partnering with us to advance our Nation.

As we head into the Easter weekend, I wish all Citizens a peaceful and joyful time spent with family and friends. Easter is a time of new beginnings and celebration, and I hope each and every one of you take the time to reflect on the blessings in your life. I encourage everyone to remember the vulnerable members of our community – those who may be lonely, or struggling with mental health challenges. My mind also turns to single mothers, who have stretched every dollar so they can provide a feast and some special Easter treats for their children this weekend. Sharing a plate of food, a bag of chocolate Easter eggs for the kids, or even a kind word and a hug can make a big difference in someone's life. Each of us has the power to make a positive difference.

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.* ∞

CELEBRATING RED RIVER MÉTIS EXCELLENCE ON THE SLEDGE HOCKEY MANITOBA TEAM

Whether it's on or off the ice, Red River Métis athletes are bringing their A-game this para hockey season.

MMF Spotlight sat down with four Red River Métis athletes to discuss what para hockey means to them.

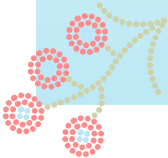
Fourteen-year-old Isaac Vint, who plays centre forward for the Sledge Hockey Manitoba team, has been playing the sport for over a decade.

"I was four years old. We were at a doctor's appointment, and someone just gave (my dad) a pamphlet about para sports," said Vint. "And then we went to a game of sledge (hockey), and I saw how fast-paced it was, and I've been playing (ever since)."

Similarly, nineteen-year-old winger Teo Roy has been playing for years and comes from a long line of hockey players.

"My entire family for the past generations have all played hockey," said Roy. "So, when I was born, my family got me into watching this sport and everybody in my family played it. They're like, 'oh, you should try it,' but being born with a disability, I wasn't able to skate. So, when I figured that sledge hockey might be an option, I tried it out for fun and fell in love with it automatically."

Not all the athletes have been playing from an early age. Sixteen-year-old left wing Rainey Delaurier and thirty-one-year-old defensemen Cole Maydanuk







both started their para hockey careers later in life. Delaurier is one of the most recent players to join the team after falling in love with the sport at camp. Since then, he hopes others can see just how great the sport is and how many opportunities there are for athletes interested in playing para hockey.

"I think like try it first and you'll just fall in love with (it). That's what happened with me. I just tried it once and (I) was like 'holy, this sport is amazing.' And you could go on to Team Manitoba and then to Team Canada. There's just so many levels, and so many great people in this community," said Delaurier.

Maydanuk emphasized the importance of community, highlighting how powerful it is to connect with others who have similar experiences.

"Just the camaraderie with teammates, trips, hanging out with everybody. Everybody is in a similar situation here, so it's nice and when you need to talk about stuff or you're having a bad day then there's other people to lean on here," said Maydanuk.

In addition to sharing a love for the sport, the athletes share a love for their Red River Métis heritage, and have felt supported by the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) in and out of the rink.

"It's nice, I really love the community. It gives you a chance to meet new people," said Roy. "Right now I'm in university... so, the Manitoba Métis Federation grants for university (have) helped a lot to pay for school."

Sharing his great pride in representing the National Government of the Red River Métis, Delaurier underlined it's more than just playing a sport.

"I think it's good representing the Manitoba Métis Federation in sledge (hockey) and just showing that us athletes can do whatever and show that we're strong and we can do anything," said the athlete.

McKenna Wild, a Red River Métis Citizen and head coach of the Sledge Hockey Manitoba team, is in



**MMF Spotlight sat down with provincial head coach McKenna Wild (centre) and Red River Métis athletes (left to right) Cole Maydanuk, Teo Roy, Rainey Delaurier, and Isaac Vint to discuss what para hockey means to them.**

her second year of coaching. Wild was given the opportunity to coach the team after athletes from the Manitoba Possible's sledge hockey program – the largest para hockey program in the province – asked if she would be interested in coaching the provincial para hockey team.

"I was really excited and it kind of happened out of nowhere," said the coach.

Wild noticed there were major differences between the stand-up provincial hockey team and the para hockey team.

"I didn't know why there was such a discrepancy in the programs, such as limited ice time opportunities, funding, apparel, name bars, you name it. There was just not that same dedication to para sport," she said. "So, coming in, I thought this was the chance to advocate for this sport. This is a chance to really change this sport and get these amazing athletes the chance to develop and have a space to play. Long story short, I really felt

like a light, a fire, to provide for these athletes in a way and to give them an opportunity to play and make connections and feel like they're supported and have a community to play in."

Another thing that came as a surprise to the coach was the lack of awareness regarding the sport.

"It is really shocking that in Canada there's still a lot of people who have never heard of paralympic hockey," she said. "In a country where hockey is talked about all the time, para hockey is not advocated for the same. So, I hope to continue to advocate for (the sport) and get people noticing how amazing this sport is."

The Red River Métis coach hopes to see immense growth for the sport and her team in the near future.

"My long-term goals for the team are just to continue developing this program and giving a chance and opportunity for these players to grow and succeed. So that would mean getting more funding for tournaments, providing more opportunities to be on ice, doing more video sessions, (and) just trying to advocate for the sport in general," she said.

Similar to the athletes on her team, Wild has also been supported by the MMF through a variety of funding opportunities and available programs.

"The MMF has supported me financially through my sign language degree, and then beyond that, they provided mentorship and career building and resume building, which was super beneficial," she said. "I know that they always have my back, which has been really nice to have on my shoulders, just knowing that there is a community behind me providing support."

To learn more about Sledge Hockey Manitoba, visit [sledgehockeymanitoba.com](http://sledgehockeymanitoba.com) and if you or a family member are interested in athletic funding, check out [mmfyouth.ca](http://mmfyouth.ca) to learn more about the MMF's Believe Elite Athletic & Artistic Support Program.

# JOIN KYLE WACZKO IN CYCLING THE DAWSON TRAIL TO FUNDRAISE FOR ITS CONSERVATION

He's a plumber by trade, but Kyle Waczko's heart beats for community work. The MMF Citizen spends his free time giving back to his community in new and creative ways. Recently, he's been caring for his community on two wheels.

After triumphing cycling milestones, Waczko is now organizing a fundraising ride, the inaugural Dawson Trek, in partnership with the Dawson Trail Museum in Richer, Manitoba. The Dawson Trek is raising money for the maintenance of the Dawson Trail, Canada's first all-Canadian route to the prairies (The Dawson Trail Commemorative Project).

"We're getting a lot of interest, and I've got a few people now signed up, so it's official. And it's going

to be a fully supported trip along the way," he said. The Dawson Trek, which stretches from Winnipeg to Richer, features a mix of pavement and gravel terrain. With this in mind, Waczko's top priority is ensuring the safety of the cyclists.

"It's a great intro. It's an 85-90-km ride, at most maybe an hour to an hour and a half at a time. But there's stops, there's refreshment stops, and we have volunteers right behind us. If we need a break, we're not going to leave you behind, we're going in together," he said. "I'm really hoping to take care of the cyclists and everyone's going to have a great time."

In 2024, the Dawson Trail Commemorative Project erected 15 wayfinding markers along the trail.

"A lot of volunteer groups need important funds to do what they do. The Dawson Trail Museum out of Richer are going to be looking after the markers and the art that's been put up... If there's vandalism over the years they're going to have to refurbish them. I'm hoping that the money raised will do it justice and they'll be able to complete the tasks that they have against them."

It was the hard work that community put into the Dawson Trail markers that inspired Waczko to create the Dawson Trek.



"I always thought, 'we've got to make this into something bigger...' We should be trying to attract people there. There's a lot of stories and culture and history that people can learn about," he said. "We're going to be reading (the markers) along the way."

The Citizen connected with Red River Métis Community through the MMF Richer Métis Local, who welcomed him and his family with open arms.

"The Richer Métis Local really embraces everyone, and invites anyone to learn the Métis culture (and) traditions," he said. "When you get that kind of community behind you, it really motivates you to keep going and achieving your goals. I'm very proud to have that support around me. I really hope to bring a spotlight to the stories of our Métis heritage, especially those around the Dawson Trail."

Waczko embraced cycling for a cause when he volunteered for Ducks Unlimited Ride to the Lake event.

"(They needed) people to drive behind (the riders), volunteers just to keep traffic off them.... It was a hot day and we're coming up to one of the stops and one of the older guys was almost falling off their bike. Getting cramps, sweaty, hot, (he) went down in pain on his side and his wife comes over (and) kind of massages him. I'm thinking 'this guy's not going anymore, he's done.' He got on that bike after a 15-minute stop and kept going," he said. "I'm driving behind this and I'm like 'these guys are tough... I want to do this.'"

The following January, Waczko began a 15-week cycling program and participated in his first ride, the Great Cycle Challenge, raising money for the SickKids Foundation, previously covered by MMF Spotlight.

"It becomes addicting. you're on the road; you hear the spin of the tires on the pavement and think 'how fast can I get?'" said the cyclist.

Although Waczko grew up in the small town of Alonzo, Manitoba, it was when he returned to another small town, Giroux, Manitoba, that he became the community-oriented person he is today.

"I tried to make some time just to meet people and raise money for conservation. Having a young daughter at the time, I just realized that conservation is important. We want to leave this place better than we found it."

Waczko encourages Red River Métis Citizens to cycle alongside him on the beginner-friendly, inspiring, and historical ride: The Dawson Trek. If you'd like to join in or sponsor the ride, reach out to Kyle Waczko at [kwaczko@gmail.com](mailto:kwaczko@gmail.com).

*Works Cited*  
The Dawson Trail Commemorative Project. "The Dawson Trail Commemorative Project" *Treasures of the Dawson Trail*. <https://dawsontrailtreasures.ca/>

**BELIEVE IN YOUR POTENTIAL: UPLIFTING RED RIVER MÉTIS YOUTH IN SPORTS AND RECREATION**



*The Believe Elite Athletic and Artistic Support Program is designed for Red River Métis Youth aged 15-29 who are passionate about sports and athletic excellence. Whether you're competing locally, provincially, or beyond, this program offers financial support to help cover training, travel, equipment, and competition fees.*

*If you are committed to your sport and ready to take it to the next level, the Believe Program can help you get there. With a simple application process and funding provided directly to service providers, it is a great way to turn your athletic goals into real opportunities while proudly representing your Red River Métis Community.*

*Find everything you need to know on our website and apply today!*

# FEDERAL ELECTION

# VOTE

## ADVANCED POLLS:

## APRIL 18-21

## ELECTION DAY:

## APRIL 28