



## PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

This week saw King Charles III and Queen Camilla visit Canada at a time of turmoil in world politics, which has seen one of our closest allies – the United States – become an aggressor who has threatened our sovereignty. This has made clear to all Canadians that this historic relationship has been permanently altered, and that our alliances and relationships with other countries and collectives hold renewed significance on the global stage.

This visit from King Charles III was well organized by our new Prime Minister, Mark Carney. To us, there are two important messages being sent. One to President Donald Trump that Canada is sovereign and will never be the 51st state, and a second message – to all Canadians – that we need to be coming together during these trying times to take pride in what makes us uniquely Canadian.

Having the King in Canada to deliver the speech from the throne emphasizes our relationship to the Crown and therefore, the Commonwealth of countries that share this history and this relationship. Not since 1977 has a monarch come to Canada to deliver the speech from the throne, and the timeliness of this engagement cannot be lost on the world, including Trump and his America.

Queen Elizabeth II’s reign and now the reign of King Charles III have taken place during a momentous time in Canadian history, as Canada grew and became more independent from the Crown. For that, we think it is always important to impress

upon people the role of Queen Elizabeth and her family in Canada.

Now more than ever, it is important that we show that we are proud of our country and where we have come from. Although we were not invited to attend the events during the visit of the King and Queen, on behalf of the National Government of the Red River Métis and our Citizens, we send our strong support to Ottawa during this historic event. I wish to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Morgan Grace, a Red River Métis fiddler and musician, who was invited to perform for the King and Queen. This is a remarkable milestone for the young performer, and I know our Citizens, like me, must be beaming pride from their hearts to know that our Nation’s music – our heartbeat – is on display for Canada and the world to witness.

Of course, as the Red River Métis, our relationship with the Crown is a long one, and includes one of King Charles’ ancestors, Queen Victoria, who was the monarch during the time of Manitoba entering Canada’s confederation. She herself was the subject of much discussion during the 1870 Convention of Forty, where our Ancestors, along with French and English-speaking settlers, contemplated our entrance into Canada, knowing that we had the monarch’s support to do so. The Queen herself dictated to John. A. Macdonald and his government that they were not to override our right to live and work in the birthplace of our Nation, but to work with us to come to an agreement. This knowledge was on the mind of the fathers of Manitoba who attended the convention, as referenced by Judge John Black, who was the appointed Chair of the proceedings:

*“... look at Her Majesty’s message, in which you are told, not merely that the Queen’s Government itself will not interfere with or set aside your rights, but also that with all Her Majesty’s power they will prevent others from interfering with or setting them aside.”*

Given what history tells us about John A. Macdonald’s view of our people and his clear willingness to exterminate us, the Queen’s support and recognition of our people as we worked toward a fair entrance into Canada was an important aspect of our negotiations. It is entirely possible that, without the Crown’s support of our rights, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and provinces further west would not have become provinces with provincial rights and responsibilities. Rather, we could have been absorbed into Canada as one large area called “Rupert’sland,” a territory with no rights and no representation in Parliament. This is an important aspect of our history as Red River

Métis, as it clearly demonstrates how we came by our rights as an Indigenous Nation and underlines our Nation’s strong reason to respect the role of the Crown in history and in the present.

This relationship is an important thread in who we are as a people, and it is a part of Canadian history that no one who calls this country home should never forget. Not only is there significance to this recent affirmation of Canada’s relationship with the King and Queen of England in modern times with modern political foes, there is a deeper significance for us as the Red River Métis, that our historic faith and belief in that relationship has been validated once again. We, the Red River Métis, earned our place in Canada and the Commonwealth, and won our rights in this country through our strength and our determination, supported by the Crown. The results were demonstrated in the creation of the *Manitoba Act, 1870*, our version of a treaty, coming before the numbered treaties that were put in place from 1871-1921.

Our history is interwoven into the history of Canada, which is something that cannot be claimed by those who seek to steal our identity. The consistent mistake made by these fakes and thieves is to assume that because there were individual people of mixed ancestry existing in Ontario and other parts east, that they have the same rights as us. They even go so far as to claim that they were our allies during this time and during our battles with Canada at Batoche in 1875, though we know that those who came east to our territories were there to fight against us, not with us. Their narrative runs counter not only to our very well-documented history, but the history of Canada, in which we had direct support of the monarchy for our negotiations to create Manitoba.

This is why we continue to stand firm against identity thieves, along with the Chiefs of Ontario and all other legitimate rights holders. We will always stand against individuals who try to claim our history and use the Ancestors of the First Nations in Ontario to support their false narratives. While the first summit on Identity Theft last year, co-hosted by the Chiefs of Ontario, has had the positive effect of getting our message into the collective Canadian consciousness, we know we can’t stop now. That’s why we are working toward a second Summit on identity theft with the Chiefs of Ontario, where we will continue to work together to speak our truths using facts, not manufactured histories.

Of course, I will continue to share our plans for a second identity summit with Citizens as the work continues. But for this week, it is good to see the



Crown remembering its relationship with Canada, and it is a good time for the Red River Métis to recall our place in Canada, and our relationship with the Crown. This is the essence of knowing where you come from in order to know where you're going. I am so proud of our people for holding onto our truths and remembering our history as we continue to

make important advancements for the wellbeing of our Nation.

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. ∞*

## ST. LAURENT MÉTIS LEGION: PRESERVING A LEGACY OF SACRIFICE

The Red River Métis village of St. Laurent may have a population of approximately 1,500, but this small historic community is considered a hotbed for military enlistment. Throughout the 20th century, it is estimated that over 200 residents, many of whom were Red River Métis, signed up to make the ultimate sacrifice for our country by joining the Canadian Armed Forces.

Within the town, the St. Laurent Métis Legion Branch #250 is doing all it can to preserve the legacies of Red River Métis Veterans. The legion in St. Laurent holds special significance as it is the only branch given the distinction of a Métis Legion Branch throughout the country. Branch President Marion Furey said the St. Laurent Legion was founded in 1984.

"There was a group of gentlemen who got together after the war and were trying to put a legion together, and it took them some time, but finally, there was a meeting held with three Veterans," she said. "In 1986, the St. Laurent Legion received their charter and #250 was formed, and then in 1994, they purchased the Saint Laurent Hotel and had their clubhouse."

Before that, the group met in various places while trying to get the legion off the ground and running. The St. Laurent Legion submitted a request to have the branch designated as a Métis Legion, to reflect the distinct culture and experiences of the local Veteran population.

"It was approved on April 23, 1999," said Furey. "There is a great sense of pride and recognition for our Métis Veterans and their families. Many came home from the war and were left feeling unappreciated. So, to hold that distinction is a great sense of recognition."

The St. Laurent Métis Legion Branch #250 prioritizes protecting and preserving the legacies of Red River Métis service members. They took initiative by upgrading their wall of honour, which displays a headshot and writeup about the Veterans who hailed from St. Laurent.

"We went to Paul Belair, a very talented artist and resident of St. Laurent, and designed a new wall of honour," said Colleen Sanderson, a volunteer at the branch. "That whole wall of honour is filled with nearly 100 Veterans, so we have to start another wall. And again, we went to Paul Belair, and he designed another wall of honour for us."

The legion wanted to find another way to remember Red River Métis Veterans and started a pilot project to hang banners of past and current Veterans around the community. In the beginning, 12 families participated, but that number quickly grew.

"We have a road called Veterans Memorial Road (in St. Laurent), and we hung those banners

there," said Sanderson. "From there, we put out an advertisement asking which families wanted to participate. We got a good response, then we received funding, and we made up 93 banners in the second year. Now, we have 115 (banners). To our knowledge, there are approximately 200 St. Laurent Veterans."

Among the Veterans displayed on the banners and wall of honour is Armand Buors, a 93-year-old Red River Métis Veteran who served in the Korean War from 1951-1953.

"I thought that was very nice of them, giving me that. It was a nice thing for them to do," he said about the banner.

Buors was born and raised in St. Laurent, but at 14, he left to work on a farm in Lake St. Francis and then moved around the province. He enlisted in the military on April 6, 1951.

"I was mining in Snow Lake. I finished over there and happened to come to Winnipeg," said the Veteran. "I met a friend at the bus depot, and he said, 'I'm thinking of going and joining the army. Would you like to come?' Right away, I said, 'We'll put another spoke in the wheel and go'. So that's what we did, and then we went for the training."

Upon his return from active duty, Veteran Buors received four medals for his service with the Canadian Army:

**After returning home from Korea, Buors received four medals for his service with the Canadian Army: The Canadian Korea Medal, The Canadian Volunteer Service Medal for Korea, The United Nations Service Medal, and The Korean Ambassador for Peace Medal.**

∞ The Canadian Korea Medal was awarded to Canadian military personnel for one day on the strength of an army unit in Korea, 28 days afloat, or one sortie over Korea by a member of the RCAF, July 2, 1950, to July 27, 1953. (Government of Canada, 2025)

∞ The Canadian Volunteer Service Medal for Korea was awarded to members of the Canadian Armed Forces during all or part of the period from June 27, 1950, to July 27, 1954. (Governor General of Canada, n.d.)

∞ The United Nations Service Medal was given to service members from June 27, 1950 – July 27, 1954. The medal was earned for serving one day under United Nations command in Korea or adjacent areas, including Japan and Okinawa. (Government of Canada, 2025)

∞ The Korean Ambassador for Peace Medal was handed out by the Embassy of the Republic of Korea to Korean War Veterans in 2014 to service members who served during the Korean War from June 25, 1950 – July 27, 1953. (Korean War Veterans Association, 2019)

Veteran Buors, who would typically avoid any attention or recognition, attended Remembrance Day Ceremonies at the St. Laurent Legion, which included the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF)-hosted Indigenous Veterans Day Ceremony on November 8, 2023.







"At one time, I didn't bother with it, but... I thought, well, we'll go along with it," he said about the ceremony. "They had a nice program there, all of those banners hanging... and it's very nice. They are doing good work over there."

Today, many legions across Canada, including the St. Laurent Métis Legion One issue facing Legions across the country is a lack of financial resources and volunteers to support Veterans and the operation of these important community gathering spaces.

"(We want) to keep the Legion moving forward, and without the help of our Métis government, and of course, our hard-working volunteers, we wouldn't be here today," said Furey. "We still struggle to keep the doors open, but we continue working

on keeping remembrance alive. It's hard living in a small community with limited resources. It's an ongoing battle."

The MMF's Red River Métis Veterans Department (RRMVD) recognizes the immense contributions made by Red River Métis Veterans, active service members, and their loved ones, and continues to support these individuals by connecting them with culturally appropriate support to meet their needs and advocate on their behalf to improve their quality of life.

Visit the RRMVD page to learn more about how the MMF is supporting our Veterans.

Sources

- **Government of Canada** (2025). *Canadian Korea Medal*. <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/en/remembrance/medals-and-decorations/medals/canadian-korea-medal>

- **Governor General of Canada** (n.d.) *Canadian Volunteer Service Medal for Korea*. <https://www.gg.ca/en/honours/canadian-honours/directory-honours/canadian-volunteer-service-medal-korea#:~:text=The%20Medal%20is%20awarded%20to,%2C%20to%20July%2027%2C%201954.>

- **Government of Canada** (2025). *United Nations Service Medal (Korea)*. <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/en/remembrance/medals-and-decorations/medals/united-nations-service-medal-korea>

- **Korean War Veterans Association** (2019). *Republic of Korea - Ambassador for Peace Medal*. [https://kwva.us/?page=info\\_peace\\_medal](https://kwva.us/?page=info_peace_medal)

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY: RED RIVER MÉTIS STUDENT SELECTED FOR LORAN SCHOLARSHIP



Olivia Harapiak wasn't the only one tossing her cap in celebration of her achieving the prestigious Loran Scholarship. The Red River Métis high school student, graduating in June, is one of 36 young Canadians – out of over 5,000 applicants – to be selected as a 2025 Loran Scholar.

The Loran Scholarship is a unique program offering more than just financial resources to students. While the scholarship is valued at more than \$100,000 over the course of a four-year undergraduate degree, it's the experiences and connections you make that are one of a kind.

"The Loran Award is not just a scholarship that they give you money and then that's it. It's more of a leadership opportunity and a program that kind of gets you ready for the next chapter of your life," said Harapiak.

Loran scholars are set up with a four-year leadership enrichment program, offering support, guidance, learning opportunities, and mentorship.

"This award has helped me already so much (by) being able to connect with like-minded individuals who want to succeed in their home communities. It has brought me so much more passion and so much more excitement to be able to keep doing good in my community and in school," she said. "Loran also has mentorship, and I think that that is going to be something that I'm really going to lean on in university."

Rather than focusing solely on academics, Loran looks at the community involvement of its applicants. Harapiak, for instance, is highly involved in her school, where she is president of both the Key Club and her student council.

"I've tried to look at different ways to lead without hierarchy... everyone who is in the club is on the same level as me. Although I get to make the big decisions, I still want everyone's voices to be heard because I think that's the way that leadership should work," said Harapiak.

The Red River Métis Citizen's spirited leadership and dedication to her community extends beyond the school's walls. She has taken part in organizing a conference for the *Save the Lake* fundraiser for Lake Winnipeg, a cause near and dear to her heart.

"It's definitely not a secret that a lot of reservations and places where Métis people live lack clean water sources... Seeing that people who are connected by blood to me are having to go through that is really disheartening and I really want to make a difference and change the way that they are able to access that because water is a human right," said Harapiak.



The Red River Métis student doesn't waste a moment. In addition to participating in school activities like jazz orchestra and student voices, Harapiak volunteers at Hidden Treasures Studio in Gimli and at Sigurbjorg Stefansson Early Years School, where she assists a grade one class every day.

Another display of the Red River Métis student's initiative is her work in raising awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

(MMIWG); she planted a Maple tree in the school yard – with the help of the environmental club – as an act of visibility.

"Things like that are always going on, even if it's under our noses, and we can't just kind of brush it away. You can't just not look at a tree, because it's there," she said. "That's the same way that I view the MMIWG; you can't just hide away from that and think that it's not happening... we need to face that head on."

Harapiak feels especially proud of winning this award being a young Red River Métis woman coming from the rural municipality of Gimli, Manitoba.

"Coming from a small school such as Gimli, there's only like 300 kids... Loran gives a really good opportunity to set (us scholars) up for success," she said. "I (feel) really honoured and honestly it was a breath of relief; with that breath came a breeze of excitement because it's really awesome to see people like myself – who haven't always been in the spotlight – (to get something) as big as that. I'm very proud that I was able to not only show young girls, but young Métis women that they are able to succeed."

The Red River Métis Citizen is grateful for the support she's received from the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF).

"Being a part of the Red River Métis, but also having support from the MMF, (has) helped me and turned me into the person that I am... I'm able to have these opportunities that I'm able to branch off and get awards like Loran. I also just really want to say thank you to (the MMF)," she expressed with gratitude.

The MMF celebrates the successes of all of Red River Métis academics and shows their continued support to our Citizens through our Post-Secondary Education Financial Support Program (PSESP). If you are looking for support from the MMF for you or your children's post-secondary education, visit [mmfeducation.ca](http://mmfeducation.ca) to find more information.



Canadian Forces Base Winnipeg

# Indigenous Reconciliation Gathering



680 Wihuri Rd, CFB Winnipeg



June 7, 2025

From 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

**A community event in collaboration with**



- Music
- Food Trucks
- Cultural activities
- Tent with Live Performances
- End of Day Feast
- Vendors and more



Shuttle encouraged  
at Polo Park,  
Level 2 Parking

**More  
info:**



**Contact**

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