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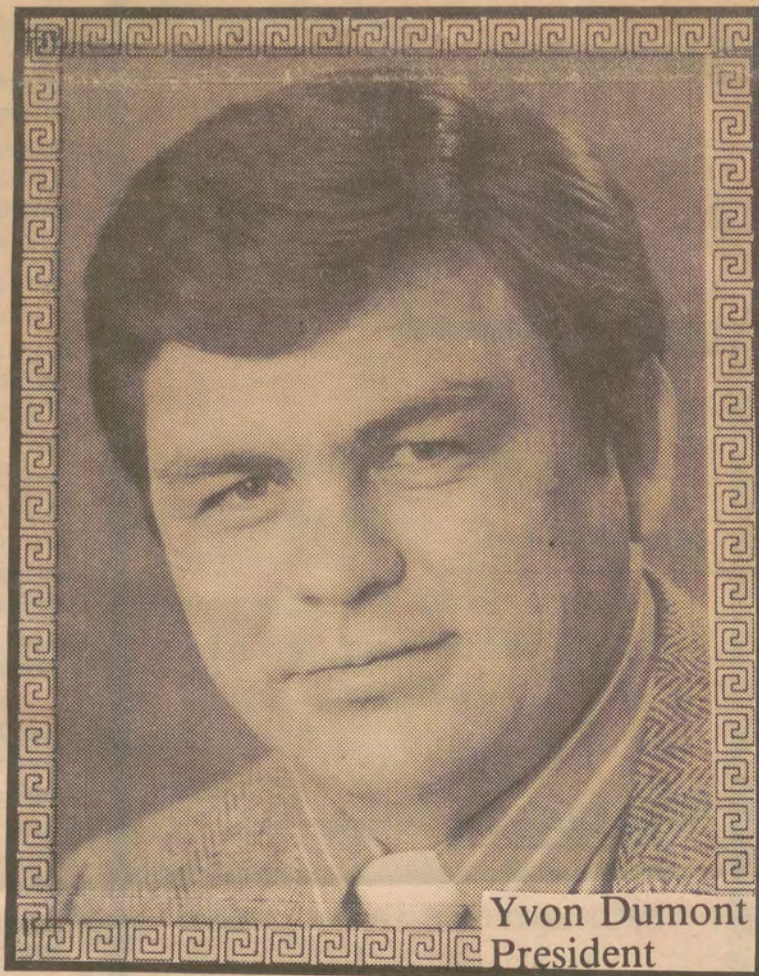
# LE METIS

Volume No. 1 No. 6

June 1986

## Manitoba Metis Federation

### ‘‘DUMONT RIDES AGAIN’’



Yvon Dumont  
President



Yvon Dumont  
re-elected President  
Manitoba Metis Federation Inc.



# Manitoba Metis Federation Inc.

## Election Results:

### Re-elected President

Yvon Dumont

### Newly-elected Vice-Presidents

Claire Riddle - Winnipeg  
Buddy Meade - Thompson

### Re-elected Vice-Presidents

Jack McPherson - The Pas  
Ron Erickson - Southwest

### Winnipeg Board Members:

Don Roulette  
Stirling Ranville

### The Pas Board Member:

Sandy DeLaronde

### Southeast Board Members:

Joyce Gus  
Ed Simard

### Interlake Board Members:

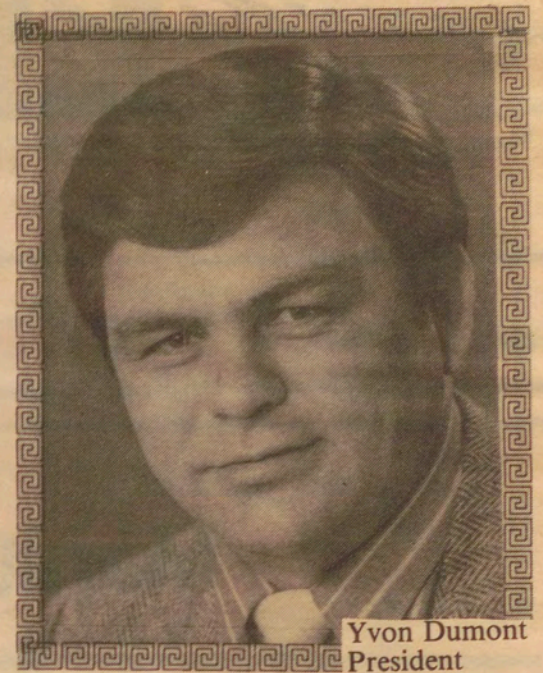
Edgar Bruce Jr.  
Sandy Desjarlais

### Dauphin Board Members:

Elbert Chartrand  
Ron Richards



# WELCOME to LE METIS



Yvon Dumont  
President

Welcome to the first post-election edition of "Le Metis"

Our schedule has been very busy over the past few weeks with the Annual Assembly and the elections.

My congratulations to the new board members and welcome back to those who were re-elected.

I extend my thanks to all those who chose to support me in this election, both those who voted and those who gave so much of their time. I had the opportunity to visit many of you and sincerely hope my schedule will allow for this again over the next two years.

Over the past two months I have held meetings with various Vice-Presidents and individuals. I attended the National Housing Conference in Toronto for four days, Metis National Council and Ministerial meetings in Ottawa for three days and four days in Toronto at the Native Business Summit. I have also attended at meetings with Provincial MLA's the LAPDB Board, along with the Assembly and Board meetings.

Le Metis has been published every month for the past 6 months. To date we have not received one item for publication from any Local. To serve as a meaningful communication mechanism, Le Metis, has to be utilized as a "two way" vehicle by all of us.

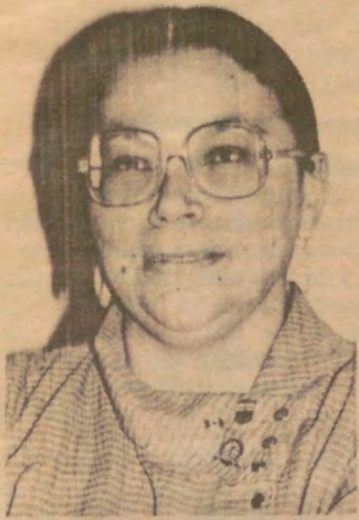
We have received no feedback at all from the recipients of the newspaper as to whether they feel it is worthwhile and should be continued.

We will be evaluating the first year operation shortly and need your participation if Le Metis is to continue.

Have a safe and happy summer.

**Claire T. Riddle**

**Thank You**



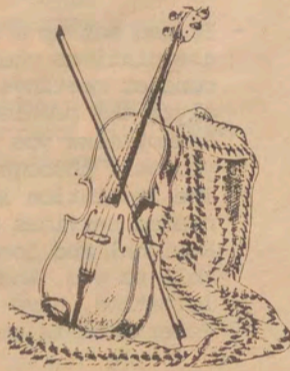
**MMF Vice President  
Winnipeg Region**

I am pleased to have this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone for the effort they made to help me in my recent campaign for election to the Vice-Presidency of the Winnipeg Region of the M.M.F.

Although this is the first full time elected position I have sought, I am aware that it is necessary to have the good will and support of a large number of people to succeed. We share some ideals, some goals and some hopes for our people.

While I have this opportunity to thank you for your help and the confidence you placed in me, I am aware that our work has just begun. I will, therefore, look forward to working with you for a long time and also look forward to accomplishing at least some of the goals we share.

Many thanks  
Megwatch!



**NOTICE**

Effective July 2, 1986 the Manitoba Metis Federation Head Office, Child and Family Support Program and Education Co-ordinator will be located at:

620-504 Main Street  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R3B 1B8

Phone numbers will remain the same.

**Bannock**

**Ingredients:**

- 1 cup sifted flour
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- ⅓ cup water
- ¼ cup cooking oil or shortening

**Method:**

1. Mix dry ingredients.
2. Add water and knead.
3. Heat cooking oil in frying pan.
4. Add dough evenly and cook until galzed and serve hot.

**WALNUT SLICE**

- ½ cup shortening
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 1 cup flour
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1½ cups shredded coconut
- ½ cup chopped walnuts

Melt shortening, add brown sugar, beat well. Add eggs and vanilla, beat well. Add flour, salt, baking powder. Stir and blend well, add walnuts and coconut and stir. Spread in greased 9-inch pan. Bake at 300°F for 40 minutes. Remove, let cool and enjoy!

**Pine Needle  
(Muskeg Tea)**

Use 2 Tbsp. young pine needles and steep them in a pot of hot water for about 10 minutes.

**Mint Tea**

Collect mint leaves and dry them in 175° oven. These can be added to flavour ordinary tea or used alone as mint tea.

**VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED  
WINNIPEG REGIONAL OFFICE**

By: Claire Riddle, V.P.

DEAR FRIENDS:

Plans are underway to have a Metis Pavilion again this year at the Maginot Arena.

We need a lot of help from people who are prepared to share responsibility so that we can have the same success as we had last year. We invite you to be a volunteer.

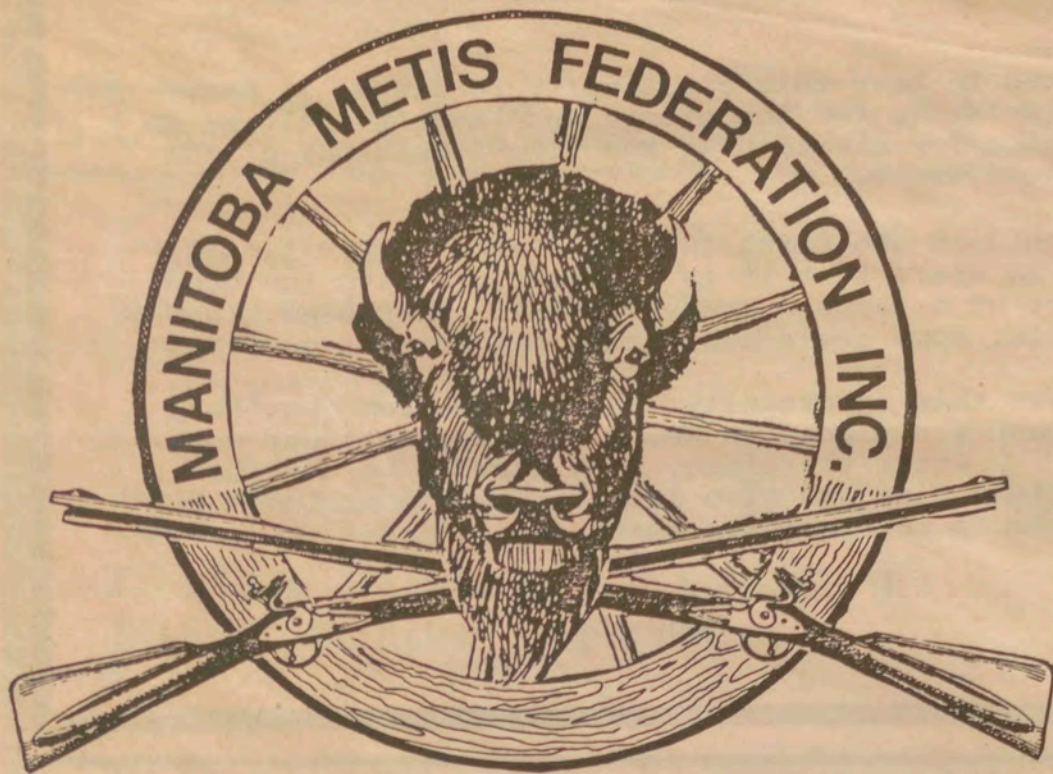
There is an immense amount of work for us to do together. The key is sharing - sharing responsibility - sharing the work - sharing the credit for things that go well and the blame when things don't go well.

The image of the Metis community can be enhanced and we can share our culture with other Canadians and visitors from other countries.

If you can volunteer a few hours for this event, please call me at 943 - 3214.

Thank you.

# The name of the the game is



# you

## WHAT IS THE MANITOBA METIS FEDERATION?

It is you. You are the reason it exists. The Manitoba Metis Federation is there to serve you, your needs and to create a better future for your children.

## HOW IS THE FEDERATION ME?

It is you only if you are:

- Proud of being a Metis.
- Involved in your community local of the Metis Federation.
- Attending meetings and choosing local Leaders.

## WHO RUNS MY FEDERATION?

- The elected leaders of the 127 locals of the Federation have all the power and authority.
- Because it would be impossible for every community to help make every decision, the Local members meet in Regional groups. From among themselves, through the process of one member-one vote, they elect a Vice-President and two Directors. These people are chosen by the Regional members to represent them at the Provincial level because they respect them and believe they will use good sense in making decisions for all the Metis in Manitoba.

## \* HOW IS ALL THIS ORGANIZED?

The MMF is the Metis people in 127 communities

- Local members choose a Vice-President and two Board of Directors in each region
- The President is elected by all the members on a province wide election

The Board of Directors make policy decisions of the Metis people who elected them. They report regularly at Regional meetings.

## \* WHERE DOES THE PRESIDENT FIT IN?

Just to make sure the power and authority remains with the Metis in the communities, the President assures an Annual Conference is held once a year.

At this conference the Local leaders discuss problems, consider possible solutions and set policy.

Every second year, by ballot boxes in each local, a Provincial president is elected. He becomes Chairman of the Board of Directors, who make policy between annual conferences. The President is the only person who speaks on behalf of all Metis people in the Federation. He is chief administrative officer and responsible for the Vice-Presidents in the Regional offices.

## \* YOU CONTROL THE ORGANIZATION IN THREE WAYS

1. By electing your Local leaders.
2. By electing the President and Vice-Presidents.
3. By electing the Board of Directors.

## \* WHERE DOES THE ORGANIZATION GET MONEY TO OPERATE?

- An annual grant from the province for Core operation.
- A larger annual grant from the Federal Government (Grants vary from year to year and are negotiated).
- Grants for specific programs

In addition, the Federation may receive money for short term projects or it may sub-contract to do a particular job.

## \* HOW DOES THE REGION GET MONEY TO OPERATE?

The grant money from governments is divided among the Regions and the Provincial organization. The Provincial Office thus negotiates for money and then distributes it to the Regions. Regions receive the bulk of the money (65%) and determines their priorities on how they wish to spend it.

## \* HOW DO I KNOW THE MONEY ISN'T WASTED OR USED FOR A FEW PERSONS RATHER THAN FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL METIS?

The Federation has a full time accountant working for you. He assures that monies are accounted for and that it is spent as the various project budgets indicate. In addition, an independent audit is conducted at fiscal year end (March 31).

## \* O.K.!!! SO IT'S MY FEDERATION!! WHAT DOES IT DO FOR ME?

Nothing! It only helps you do things for yourself.

- It can set up and co-ordinate programs in a Region but only you can decide whether you want to participate or not.

- It can set up a structure through local associations where people can learn how to conduct meetings, reach decisions and analyze the problems in the Community. It cannot make you join the local and develop yourself through participation.

- The Federation is an organization that allows needed services at Federal, Provincial, Regional and Local levels to be made available to you. Whether you, through participation, have your democratic say in the Federation is up to you - not someone else!!!

## \* IN WHAT GENERAL AREAS DOES THE FEDERATION ASSIST PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES?

### 1. Human development

- Local organizations allow people to develop knowledge of how to conduct meetings, keep records, debate, prepare resolutions and briefs, represent the local Metis at school boards, municipal councils and other such political bodies.

- The local attempts to involve the people in solving the problems Metis face in the community. This process of problem solving is probably the most valuable way of developing people.
- Participation of people in Regional and Annual Conferences broadens their experience and exposes them to new and stimulating ideas which they take back to their communities.

### 2. Community Development

- In this part of Local and Regional activity, people think of ideas as to how they may assist themselves as a community or as a Region. Locals or Regions may wish to form co-ops. They may decide to operate a saw-mill. As a group, they may consider the need for a new school, better housing or a sports program. In all these activities, leadership is found at the local and regional levels.

Sooner or later, such community action programs require contact with government departments. Often such departments do not want to, or cannot, deal with 127 Metis communities. They prefer to deal with only one body and fund one group. At this stage, the Provincial body of the MMF negotiates on behalf of all locals. Examples of such programs are housing; land research; constitutional issues; education and child welfare.

### 3. Economic Development

- Often an individual may have a good idea for expanding an existing business or starting a new one. Loan money is available from various government departments. The MMF assists it's locals and regions in filling out applications and proposals and in negotiating them.

## 4. Cultural

- The Federation assists regions and locals in developing programs which serve all the Metis in Manitoba. Examples are:
  - Manitoba Metis Community Investments, Inc.
  - Metis Day
  - Metis Economic Development Training Program
  - Booths and Displays at Ethnic Celebrations
  - Folklorama Metis Pavillion
  - Metis Arts of Manitoba

## 5. Province Wide Projects

- When needs of the Metis people are province wide, the Federation takes the initiative in creating new programs. Such programs are encouraged to become independent at the earliest possible time. This helps to keep the MMF from becoming a huge bureaucracy. Such a policy helps the MMF concentrate on it's main purpose - to assist Metis people to develop themselves and their communities.

## 6. Representing Metis People

- Many government groups and other institutions wish to have Metis people represented on their Boards. The Federation appoints persons to exercise their good judgement when matters relating to Metis are discussed. A few of the Boards and Commissions on which we have representation are:
  - Native Communications Inc. (North & South)
  - Special Arda
  - Northern Development Act (NDA) programs
  - Human Rights Commission
  - B.U.N.T.E.P.
  - Legal Aid
  - Regional Development Corporations
  - Frontier School Division Advisory Board
  - Native Clan
  - Permican Publications
  - Limestone Aboriginal Partnership Board
  - Communities Economic Development Fund (CEDF)
  - Plus many many less well known ones

\* IT SOUNDS GOOD - BUT - WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ME ?

This is up to you. Get involved and help yourself grow as a person - a Metis Person. You will feel a great deal of satisfaction in helping yourself and other Metis People.

THE NAME OF THE GAME IS YOU ! !

THE IMPORTANT QUESTION IS -

WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR THE MMF??

- Are you trying to help yourself ?
- Are you involved in a Local ?
- Are you trying to help other Metis people ?
- Are you giving of yourself by active participation to support and help the Manitoba Metis Federation, YOUR ORGANIZATION, to grow stronger ?

REGIONAL OFFICES

Winnipeg Region  
215-504 Main Street  
WINNIPEG, Manitoba

Thompson Region  
55 Selkirk Avenue  
THOMPSON, Manitoba

Interlake Region  
Box 292  
FISHER BRANCH, Manitoba

The Pas Region  
Box 2467  
THE PAS, Manitoba

Southwest Region  
656-6th Street  
BRANDON, Manitoba

Southeast Region  
Box 188  
POWERSVIEW, Manitoba

Dauphin Region  
Box 930  
DAUPHIN, Manitoba

HEAD OFFICE: 702-504 Main Street  
WINNIPEG, Manitoba  
R3B 1B8

PLEASE

GET INVOLVED !

HALF BREED

I am not an Indian  
Nor am I white  
No one understands  
My constant fight.

My father is dark  
And is always to blame  
for marrying a white girl  
And bringing us shame.

People are judgemental  
And no one cares  
When I dance is a Pow Wow  
All the world stares.

Elders say "Why does this  
White girl dance?"  
Just let me explain,  
Please give me a chance.

One moment I am proud  
Another I am bold,  
Memories of my father  
And stories I am told.

Bring me to confusion  
About our mighty Creator  
Because they are all  
full-blooded  
does it make them greater?

[Do not look at me with  
prejudged illusions.  
Instead help free me  
from these confusions].

By: Tamarra Dion  
Argyle School Student

EFFECTIVE: JULY 2nd, 1986

Native Clan Organization  
will be relocating to:

202 - 254 Edmonton Street  
WINNIPEG, Manitoba  
R3C 3Y4

Phone numbers will  
remain the same.  
(943-7357)

THE INTERLAKE SPECTATOR Wednesday, May 21, 1988

# Interlaker appointed to national women's group

Hodgson-area resident Doris Perron has been a vocal spokesperson for Metis women in the province for many years. Now she has moved on to become a spokesperson for all Manitoba women.

Perron has been appointed to the National Advisory Council for Status of Women, one of two Manitoba women on the council.

In taking on the new role, officially as representative for Manitoba Anglophone women, Perron decided to resign from her position as provincial director of the Manitoba Metis Women's Alliance. She remains as that organization's director for the Interlake region.

"I just resigned as provincial director because I felt that some of my work might create a conflict of interest," she says.

Perron ran as Conservative candidate in the Logan riding, against NDP minister Maureen Hemphill, in the last provincial election, losing by about 3,000 votes, and says her commitment to the Tory party is one reason for her appointment to the national council.

Issues which she hopes to bring more attention to at the national council are censorship of degrading pornography, the lack of adequate housing for single mothers and the effects of the Young Offenders Act on women, amongst others.

Perron was a driving force in the campaign to have the December issue of Hustler, a porno magazine, removed from the shelves.

That issue depicted an Indian woman in bondage, she says. "It's a disgrace to women in general and more so to native women."

"The woman was tied up and in bondage, speaking very broken English. To me, it depicted an uneducated woman selling her wares for her freedom, and that set us back," she says. "Aboriginal women have been fighting for social status and education."

The censorship issue is only one of many she has involved herself with over the past five years. Before that, "I guess I was what you would call a backbencher. I never really got politically involved in any women's issues until about five years ago."

That was when she became the MMWA Hodgson local director. From there she moved within that organization to the provincial directorship, which she just gave up.

She has worked with the Nor-



Doris Perron of Hodgson represents all English speaking women in the province on the National Advisory Council for Status of Women.

thern Association of Community Councils as an economic development officer in Thompson and Swan River.

"I'm not working at anything right now. I have other things I am considering in the field of politics."

She says she expects her three-year term as National Advisory Council member to be a challenge. "I know there will be a lot expected from me by the women in Manitoba."

She says it should be a plus for Interlakers to have a national council representative living in the region.

"I just hope they use it," she says. "My number is in the book and I'd welcome calls from anybody."



## The Story of The Willow Seed Necklace

To make a willow seed necklace, the women of Sioux Valley are very busy during August and September gathering the berries of the wolf willow. The berries are gathered when they are about the size of a grape and in the "brown stage". After the berries are gathered, they are put in a large pot and boiled for ten minutes or so.

Next they are cooled so that they may be strung while they are still soft.

At least ninety berries strung alternately with brightly colored beads are needed for a single necklace. When the strung berries are completely cooled, they shrink so that the maker has to go back and tighten the necklace.

Variations of colors are chosen by the use of a household bleach for lighter effect or by adding food colouring to the berries during the boiling stage.

We hope that now you know the story of the willow seed necklace, you will enjoy wearing one, and will pass the information on to your friends.

**YOU ARE WELCOME TO VISIT SIOUX VALLEY**

7 miles north of the junction of Highways 1 and 21.

### ROAST VENISON

Season roast with salt, pepper, and (other spices preferred). Wrap completely in a large piece of greased brown paper. Make this seal proof. Then take the following paste made of 1 1/2 cups salt, 1 cup of flour and water to make the consistency of pie-dough. Entirely cover wrapped roast with this dough and seal and cover this dough-wrapped roast again with either greased brown paper or foil and bake in usual manner.

### BREADED MOOSE STEAKS

4 moose steaks  
2 eggs — beaten slightly  
1/2 cup flour  
1/2 cup bread crumbs  
salt and pepper to taste  
Beat eggs slightly, dip steaks into flour first, then dip and coat in egg mixture. Coat with bread crumbs and fry in oil till tender.



## Thank You



I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the Winnipeg Region who supported me in my candidacy for Board of Directors in the recent election.

I extend my congratulations to Don Roulette and Stirling Ranville, along with Claire Riddle, and will support them in their work for the Winnipeg Region.

- Irene Pilon

Patient: "Doctor, if there's anything wrong with me, don't frighten me half to death by giving it a long scientific name. Just tell me in plain English what it is."

Doctor: "Well, sir, to be frank, you're just plain lazy."

Patient: "Thank you. Now will you give me the scientific name for it so I can tell them at home?"

\*

Nervous man (running into police station): "I need help. A man just stole my car!"  
"Did you see him?" asked the desk officer.

"No, but I got the license number as he pulled away."

# NATIVE BROTHERHOOD

It all began when he was maybe two or three, when his momma and papa had a fight and decided to split which, left little Johnny in the care of an aunt or uncle. Little Johnny began to be a burden so they passed him onto Grandma and Grandpa. Granda and Grandpa made sure he went to school to learn his 'readin', ritin' and, 'rithmetic. By the time little Johnny is eight or ten years old, he's getting bored with all this schoolin' and lectures from Grandma and Grandpa. Little Johnny begins to talk back and in a general pain in the you-know-where. So, it's time to bring in a social worker with three degrees in psychology and he promptly recommends that little Johnny be admitted into a group home in the big city.

Little Johnny soon learns all these 'neat' little forms of recreation from his fellow 'members'. By the time he's twelve, he's managed to steal forty one cars, broken into thirty two homes and businesses and is placed on thirteen years of probation with a recommendation that he be placed in the local boy's school. He is now seeing the psychologist, a psychiatrist and, a probation officer.

Little Johnny is now 'cool Johnny' because he only steals the Cadillacs, Jaguars and, other expensive vehicles. He promptly escapes from the "confinement" of the boy's school, only to nabbed while passed-out in the house he's broken into. Cool Johnny has had his first taste of alcohol.

His case-load worker informs his, social worker who in turn informs his probation officer who has a meeting with is, psychological shrink and they decide this boy needs some 'real' closely scrutinized rehabilitation. Cool Johnny is packed and shipped off into a wilderness camp a hundred and thirty miles from any form of civilization.

Cool Johnny strolls into camp and immediately begins planning a party. They make a home brew and the whole camp gets loaded beyond reason. They have a real rumble with the camp supervisors and cool Johnny wakes up on a little wee island out on the lake. He spends ten days on the island with a R.C.M.P. horse blanket, a can of beans a day and one match a day. Cool Johnny is now a bona-fide thorn in the you-know-where.

The system releases cool Johnny a month prior to his sixteenth birthday and he begins celebrating immediately in anticipation of historic event in his life. "I'm now responsible for my own actions cause the law says, I'm an adult now," Johnny thinks. He gets 'nabbed' for being in possession of stolen money, stolen gun, stolen Cadillac and, two marijuana joints which he hustled his buns off all day to get!

Cool Johnny gets eighteen months grand total for his birthday. He's really mad now so, he vents his frustratuion by breaking the beak on a guard and gets another six months. After all, it is his first time incarcerated.

He 'springs' on his eighteenth birthday, (he's lost all his 'good time') and finally gets a chance to perform all those wonderful fings "the boys" have been telling him about.

He gets 'loaded', robs a gas station and, "accidently" shoots a man between the eye balls. Cool Johnny is now strolling into the "Big House". His trusty worker encourages him to apply and apply and re-apply for parole and bingo, Cool Johnny scores a ticket (parole) for his twently eighth birthday.

Cool Johnny is really trying hard to live the "straight life". He writes a legitrmate check but, the check bounces and his Parole officer revokes his ticket and Johnny's once again, 'back-to-the-walls'. He's given one more chance, but this time he's to attend at least fourteen A.A. meetings a week. Cool Johnny lasts two weeks and is once again, back in the slammer.

On his thirtieth birthday he's done all his parole, all his outstanding charges have been dealt with and Cool Johnny gets a suit, a few towels, shampoo and a little brown suitcase. Cool Johnny is now feeling his first real taste of freedom.

He marries up with the girlfriend he is been 'writing' to for the past fifteen odd years and, fathers a baby. His wife can't grasp her "husband's mentality" so, she packs up 'Junior' and goes home to mother. This devastates Johnny so, he begins selling the furniture and everything of value, to support his alcohol habit. Cool Johnny is scooped-up in possession of a bread knife while on his way to the way to the pawn shop and he's sent to jail again,...

For the next thirty years or so ! !

by,

Lorne Bruce

## FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Don't forget

The Rodeo to be held on  
Saturday - August 23rd, 1986

at S. M. I.

On May 26, 1986, the Native Brotherhood of S.M.I. held a VOL-UNTEER APPRECIATION night with a super turnout of about seventy members. Several volunteers from the outside were honored with Certificates of Appreciation presented on behalf of the N.B.O. Members of the Brotherhood (and Audreen) participated in a "musical jambaree" accompanied by the N.B.O. Band. (The Band has a name which slipped easily from the tongue of M.C. Lorne but won't move from this pen!) Bannock and coffee brought the evening to close. (I understand Verlie, at Regina House, deserves a big thank you for the delicious bannock). The Brothers also deserve a vote of thanks for their kind words and appreciative gesture toward the outside volunteers.

M.M.McM.

*A happy life is one which is  
in accordance with its own nature  
Seneca*



#202 - 254 Edmonton Street  
WINNIPEG, Manitoba  
R3C 3Y4

**1. How Was the Court Communicator Program Started?**

Manitoba's Court Communicator Program started in August of 1971 as an agency of the Provincial Government within the Attorney-General's Department under the direction of Chief Provincial Judge Harold Gyles. The program arose out of provincial concerns over the high proportion of Manitoba's Native people involved in the criminal justice system. The Winnipeg Indian and Metis Friendship Centre had previously communicated similar concerns to the province and had encouraged the establishment of a Native Court Worker Program without delay. In 1971-72 the Provincial Government initiated expansion, to where, today there are Court Communicators available throughout Manitoba.

**2. Objectives of the Court Communicator Program:**

The main objective of the Court Communicator Program is to assist Native people of Manitoba to develop a better understanding of their rights, interests, privileges and responsibilities in relation to the criminal justice system. It is the role of the Court Communicator to assist people of Native origin, who are involved in the criminal justice system, to better understand the process and their relationship to it. The Court Communicator attempts to bridge whatever gap exists between the criminal justice system and the Native people.

It is the policy of the Court Communicator to cooperate and work within the criminal justice system in hopes of contributing to the achievement of the various goals of the system as well as contributing to the development of a more complete understanding within the justice system of the needs and concerns of Native people.

**3. Where Is the Court Communicator Located?**

The Head Office of the Chief Court Communicator is located in the City of Winnipeg, Manitoba at Room 620 - 504 Main Street. There are Court Communicators located throughout the Province of Manitoba in Thompson, Fort Alexander, Island Lake, Grand Rapids, The Pas, Portage la Prairie, Dauphin, Brandon, Cross Lake, Oxford House, God's Narrows and Pukatawagan.

**4. Who May Seek Assistance from Court Communicators?**

Although the Court Communicator Program of Manitoba is organized to assist all persons of Native origin involved in the criminal justice system others may seek assistance and advice from Court Communicators.



# Native Court Communicator Program of Manitoba



**5. When Should a Person Seek Assistance?**

The best time for a person to seek assistance from a Court Communicator is immediately after they have been arrested or summoned to appear in Court, or if they feel they have a question about their legal rights or if they want to lay charges or start legal proceedings against an individual or company.

**6. Activities of a Court Communicator:**

**Courts** - Attending Court is the predominant activity of a Court Communicator. Through this presence in the Court, the Court Communicator indicates his/her willingness to be of assistance in whatever way is required by the judicial system and, more important, to the Native people who are involved with the system. By Court attendance, the Court Communicator generates a series of other activities which constitute much of their work.

**Information About the Law** - While a Court Communicator is not permitted to give legal advice, he/she can often provide valuable information about the legal system or obtain a legal opinion from a lawyer. The Court Communicator tries to ensure that the Native person has a general understanding of the situation and the kind of decisions which that person will have to make. Depending on the circumstances, the Court Communicator may advise the person whether or not to discuss the matter with a lawyer. If a lawyer is required, the Court Communicator will assist the accused in filling out applications to the Manitoba Legal Aid Society. This will ensure that the application is properly filled out and forwarded to the proper authorities.

**Appearing for Others** - In some circumstances, the Court Communicator may appear for an accused who has a valid reason for being unable to attend personally, and is not represented by a lawyer. The Court Communicator will explain the reason for the accused's absence, and indicate what instructions, if any, he/she has received. The Court Communicator shall encourage Native people to accept their responsibility of appearing in Court personally.

**Speaking to Sentence** - Many of the Native accused, upon pleading guilty, indicate they have nothing to say on their own behalf. The Court Communicator can play an important role here in providing the Court with information about the accused and circumstances which mitigate his guilt. In general, the Court Communicator tries to ensure that the Court is aware of the circumstances of the accused, either directly to the Court or through the Crown or defence attorneys. The Court Communicator also encourages and provides moral support for Native people to speak up in Court on their own if they have questions to ask or information to give.

**Explaining Orders, Documents, and Procedures** - In many ways, it seems that Native people see the Court Communicator as a person to whom they can turn to for advice on a variety of matters which generally fall within the scope of the justice system. The inquiries are not limited strictly to criminal matters. Court Communicators are consulted in regards to statutes involving child welfare, motor vehicles, highways, liquor, fish and game, city by-laws, as well as a variety of administrative and procedural matters which affect the lives of Native people, but which they often fail to fully understand.

**Workshops** - The Court Communicator should create close working relationships with the Native organizations within his/her area, and should assist and participate in workshops pertaining to the Courts, and where necessary, contact and provide the necessary resource people and more important explain their role and function in the Courts.

**7. How Is the Court Communicator Program Governed?**

The approach to the delivery of the Native courtworker system in Manitoba is unique in Canada. Other provincial courtworker systems utilize a separate carrier agency. In Manitoba, when the program started in 1971, the courtworkers were given Civil Service status without being hired by the Civil Service. Independence from governments was maintained by having the program answerable to the Chief Provincial Judge.

In 1972, in order to qualify for federal funding, one of the terms of the agreement was that the Court Communicator Program had to formalize policy input from Native people within the province. A Native Advisory Committee was created which not only provides input from those members who are Native, but also it is the method by which Manitoba's Native people have a say in the over-all policy and direction to be taken by their Court Worker Program.

The Advisory Committee is comprised of representatives of the Department of Indian Affairs, Native Clan Organization, Manitoba Metis Federation, Greater Winnipeg Indian Council, Winnipeg Friendship Centre, Manitoba Metis Women's Association, Four Nations Confederacy, the Department of the Attorney-General and the Chief Provincial Judge.

The Advisory Council meets regularly for the purpose of providing the administrators of the Court Communicator Program with the concerns of the Native organizations, while at the same time, providing the Native organizations an opportunity to be shown where and how the program is needed and the direction that it should be going.



**NATIVE MANITOBA COURT COMMUNICATOR**  
**Chief Court Communicator**

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