



Le Métis
EST. 1871

President's Message



On behalf of the Cabinet and staff of your Red River Métis Government, I extend my best wishes to all Citizens for a bright and prosperous 2023.

This is a time of year to reflect on our progress in the last year, and how our plans for 2023 will build on past successes. You'll be able to read more about the events and activities of 2022 undertaken by your government in this edition of *Le Métis* and see how hard we worked on your behalf.

As for the future, I can tell you that I am excited for 2023, and ready to tackle the work ahead of us. There are many plans already taking shape for this new year, more than I could share in one message. However, I wanted to share some of the things that have been on my mind for the coming year.

Work will continue on our digitally innovative heritage centre this year, bringing us one step closer to sharing our Nation's history with all visitors. The location of our heritage centre at the crossroads of commerce in the heart of our Homeland is a powerful symbol of our Nation finding our rightful place in Canada's confederation. I know Citizens will

join me in feeling a deep sense of pride when the heritage centre is opened for the public.

I also look forward to seeing our work with Red River Métis artists and artisans continue to evolve, as we build an online store to complement our in-person Ed Simard General Store. Through these stores, we will continue to promote the beautiful work of artists and artisans, and provide a venue for our community and friends to purchase wonderful pieces made by our Citizens. I'm so proud of the revival we're seeing in beadwork. Your government will continue to find ways to secure the long-term health and prosperity of the market for our artists and artisans. You've already seen us take some steps that include the creation of our Red River Métis Fur Company, which is already up and running, purchasing furs from our trappers at an above-market rate.

Politically, know that your Cabinet is always engaged in the business of government-to-government relationship building. This helps our Nation by ensuring that our voices are heard directly by our counterparts in the federal and provincial government, and our needs and vision for programs and services are the driving force for our future. This is a critical part of reconciliation – the self-determination recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is not subject to the lens and perspective of other governments. We decide who we are and where our Homeland is, and I know our Citizens stand alongside me in defence of this right – it's the fight our ancestors gave their lives for, and it's not a fight we'll ever lose again. We will build on our strengths, advance ourselves where there is opportunity, and advocate for our land claim settlement, modern-day treaty, and Métis-specific healthcare.

The opening of the Lake Manitoba Resort will be another highlight of the year, as well as the advancement of our Youth Camps and the completion of the retrofit at our Home Office. These are just some of the initiatives that are underway for

2023, and I look forward to sharing our progress with you as we continue to advance our Nation this year.

We know that with the cold, dark days of January, people can begin to feel sad and struggle with their mental health. Remember that our Nation is not only a political force and an economic engine; we're also a community. Never be afraid to reach out if you're feeling challenged or struggling with your mental health. We have always been a people who support one another when times are hard, and I hope we never lose this important value. When you reach out to your community and even your Local members to have a cup of coffee and talk about what's on your mind, you are helping secure the future of our cherished tradition, as well as helping yourself get through a difficult time.

Your Red River Métis Government is always hard at work trying to improve the lives of Citizens, and your mental health matters to us just as much as your economic and political well-being, from the grassroots level of our government up to your Cabinet and your President.

I continue to send my well wishes to Citizens who are honouring our traditions by harvesting from our Homeland to feed family and community. Stay safe and remember – your Red River Métis Government has your back.

Until we meet again, I offer my prayers to all our Citizens, friends, and neighbours, and my deepest condolences to those who have been caused to grieve.

President David Chartrand, LL.D. hon. O.M. ∞



Manitoba Métis Federation 2022 Year in Review

The MMF, the National Government of the Red River Métis, has worked for over half a century to strengthen the true and historic Nation. On the heels of successful years of self-government and economic prosperity, 2022 saw the continuation of the cultural revival in our Nation. Our voices are gaining strength, our Citizenship is growing by leaps and bounds, and we are slowly turning the tide that saw us called “Canada’s forgotten people”.

This year, we took new strides to reduce the impacts of colonization, through historic efforts to meet with Red River Métis Citizens beyond colonial borders, reaffirming our role as the economic engine of the west, and uniting with Indigenous Nations internationally through trade and friendship. The Red River Métis also took new steps toward reconciliation and the renewal of our historic relationship with the Catholic Church, through a history-making meeting with Pope Francis and our delegation, which included residential and day school survivors and their families.

Our Elders always tell us that you have to know where you came from in order to know where you’re going. That’s why it’s important to reflect on our significant moments from 2022:

Beyond Borders Task Force

In a massive shift towards reclaiming our Red River Métis identity, the MMF went out to meet with Citizens outside of the colonial provincial and even international boundaries. This was an important step in shifting of our thinking away from the borders that were imposed on our people by Canada and is a return to the way our Nation was when it was born – borderless but united by our shared history, culture, and identity.

Earlier this year, the MMF formed a Beyond Borders Task Force made up of the MMF’s Ambassador, an elected official, a Youth, a representative of Infinity Women, and MMF Legal Counsel. Their mandate was to engage with our Citizens and fellow patriots who understand that the MMF is the National Government of the Red River Métis and the protector and defender of our Nation’s distinct identity.

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be represented, in addition to learning what their priorities are. The sessions took place within the Red River Métis Homeland and in cities with large concentrations of Red River Métis Citizens between June and September of 2022. The Task Force was greeted with a positive reception, with a standing ovation for President David Chartrand at the kickoff meeting in Calgary. The MMF plans to hold further Beyond Borders sessions in 2023 and will continue working with MMF departments and affiliates to roll out more programs and services to our Citizens Beyond Borders.

The Central Registry Office launched a new online Citizenship/Harvester application at the beginning of this year, allowing applicants in Manitoba, across Canada, and even internationally, to apply for Citizenship cards online. Since then, the MMF has received thousands of additional Citizenship

applications from Red River Métis living outside of the provincial boundaries of Manitoba, wanting to come home and be represented by their Red River Métis Government.

At the most recent Annual General Assembly (AGA), President Chartrand announced that, over the last few months, we have seen a 30 per cent increase in people from outside Manitoba wanting their Citizenship cards.

Interested in engaging with their Red River Métis Government and practicing a fundamental tradition of our rich democratic history, Citizens across the Homeland joined the AGA via Zoom, with some making the trip to Winnipeg from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and the United States.

Inter-Nation and International Relations

Developing inter-Indigenous trade across the Red River Métis Homeland, as well as internationally with Indigenous peoples in Colombia and Peru, is one of the ways we are making investments in the long-term economic well-being of the Nation. The right to govern ourselves, create economic opportunity for our Nation and determine our own partners in trade are all key parts of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Leading this charge, Clément Chartier, Ambassador of Inter-Nation and International Relations, represented the Red River Métis globally at meetings this year, including the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Second Indigenous Leaders of the Americas Meeting, and the General Assembly of the Organization of American States. The MMF also hosted a virtual Indigenous Peoples Summit of the Americas to address the exclusion of Indigenous Peoples from the Ninth Summit of the Americas. As part of his advocacy, Ambassador Chartier appeared before the House of Commons’ Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs to speak on Bill C-29, *An Act to provide for the establishment of a national council for reconciliation*.

In September, a delegation from the MMF met with governments, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, in California. During the trade mission, the Red River Métis were invited to City Hall by the City of Los Angeles and became the first Indigenous Nation from Canada to be officially recognized by the City. The trip



focused on discussing Indigenous Nation-to-Nation trade, as well as exploring future partnerships and economic opportunities within California.

The MMF has also been working with Indigenous Nations in Colombia on economic partnerships that will lead to prosperity in education, cultural preservation, and long-term sustainability. President Chartrand delivered a keynote speech in October at the World Indigenous Business Forum in Villavicencio, the Republic of Colombia, that was warmly received by representatives from Indigenous Nations across the globe.

Further, the people of the Arhuaco community of Colombia honoured President Chartrand with the opening of the David Chartrand Business Centre, as an expression of recognition for his efforts in supporting Indigenous businesses, humanitarian efforts, and promoting fair Nation-to-Nation trade in Colombia. The Centre includes an outdoor meeting space, a building for lodging, and a production facility for traditional goods such as cocoa, panela, and coffee. Both the MMF flag and Red River Métis national flag will fly at the Centre as symbols of the relationship between the Arhuaco community and the Red River Métis.

President Chartrand also became the first non-Colombian to receive the Lanza Llandera Order of Democracy from the Assembly of Meta of Colombia. He was nominated for his leadership by the Colombian corporation Ancestry and Development, through which he has managed to improve the living conditions of the Indigenous communities of Colombia.

There are common values that are shared among all Indigenous Nations: a strong dedication to the land our Ancestors lived on, and to the stewardship and conservation of that land for generations to come. Indigenous peoples are all suffering from the effects of colonization, and your Red River Métis Government will continue to work to provide Citizens and Indigenous partners with support to achieve lasting security.



In April, the MMF sent a delegation of Elders and Knowledge Keepers, residential school survivors, and Youth from the Red River Métis Homeland, accompanied by a small group of bishops, to an unforgettable pilgrimage to meet His Holiness, Pope Francis, in Rome.

Renewed relationship with the Catholic Church

This past year, the Red River Métis found the path forward to a renewed relationship with the Catholic Church.

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The historic meeting was the first with an Indigenous people of Canada since His Holiness issued an apology for the harms done by the residential and day school systems in our country. With a theme of Journey Forward: Reconciliation to Renewal, the meeting featured discussions of hope, healing, and revitalization. Delegates spoke about their own experiences, while also sharing the Nation's collective message of a desire to renew the longstanding relationship. His Holiness, Pope Francis shook all 55 delegates' hands, asked for forgiveness, and

expressed shame for the residential and day school abuse. He also presented the delegation with a brass olive branch, signifying a hand of friendship extended to the Red River Métis as we walk together to reconciliation, revitalization, and building hope again. This olive branch will be displayed at our Heritage Centre, scheduled to open to the public in 2025.

A few months later, in July, over 100 Elders, survivors, Knowledge Keepers, and Youth formed a Red River Métis delegation that took a cross-prairie bus trip to Maskwacis, Alberta, to hear the Pope's historic apology on Canadian soil. This trip helped the Red River Métis attendees move forward on their healing journeys and strengthened our Nation's relationship with the church.

President Chartrand, along with Andrew Carrier, a day school survivor and the MMF's Minister for Residential and Day School survivors, also attended an event with His Holiness in Quebec City, at the Governor General's residence at the Citadelle of Quebec.



In August, the MMF participated in the historic annual Pilgrimage to the St. Malo Shrine and Grotto, in honour of the Assumption of Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ. It was the first time in two years the yearly Pilgrimage had occurred. Archbishops, Priests, MMF Cabinet Members, and parishioners came to the grotto for mass hosted by the Blessed Margaret Catholic Parish. President Chartrand presented a new cross constructed out of precious rosewood from the Holy Land of Jordan, as well as a statue of Jesus.



In June, the MMF joined other Indigenous governments and the province to honour residential school survivors at Long Plain First Nation.

Residential and day schools

In addition to the historic meeting with the Pope, concrete strides were taken to invest in the healing of our families who have lost loved ones and experienced harm due to the residential and day school systems.

In June, the MMF joined other Indigenous governments and the province at Long Plain First Nation to honour residential school survivors. During the Honouring Our Children event, the First Nations, Inuit and Red River Métis Council, alongside

the Government of Manitoba, announced the allocation of \$2.5 million to Indigenous governments and organizations to help co-develop Indigenous-led approaches to find and memorialize missing children and promote collective healing and reconciliatory action. The funding allocated to the Red River Métis Government will be directed to our *Pekeywaytahihnan nutr zanfaan leur zisprii* (We are bringing our children's spirit home) program, which will assist us in our work to search for our missing children.

In September, President Chartrand and the Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, announced over \$1.4 million in funding for the fiscal years 2022-2024 to support the program. The MMF is working on creating a Survivors Committee to guide future initiatives, knowledge gathering, research of archival records, community engagement, and commemoration plans. This community-led process will ensure the MMF can undertake this work in our own way, with our own culture and community needs in mind, and is part of the government-to-government framework between the MMF and the Government of Canada.

In August, Canada made history when it raised the Survivors' Flag at Parliament Hill, as an expression of remembrance to honour residential school survivors. Jimmy Durocher, a Red River Métis survivor who attended Île-à-la-Crosse Boarding School in northern Saskatchewan, spoke about the significance of the flag during the ceremony. The Residential and Day Schools portfolio is also working on advocacy for a national monument in Ottawa to honour residential and day school survivors.

Sixties Scoop

In another step towards healing, the MMF's Sixties Scoop Department, established in 2021, has grown in the last year to create programs and services through the Sixties Scoop Wellness Centre. The department is currently designing repatriation and mental/emotional supports along with cultural programming. We are also building our legal strategy to bring us closer to a settlement and reconciliation for Red River Métis survivors. In May of 2022, the Department launched Kitchen Table Talk sessions, where survivors came together to reconnect with their community and discuss important topics relevant to their healing journey.

Support for entrepreneurs and microbusinesses

The Red River Métis have been known as the economic engine of the North-West, largely due to our entrepreneurial strength as fur trappers and traders.

Through business grants, loans, business plan supports, networking opportunities, and more, the MMF has also supported Red River Métis entrepreneurs, business owners, artisans, fishers, farmers, and ranchers.

In another step towards economic reconciliation, the MMF invested in the revival of traditional economies, supporting the development of Citizen-created microbusinesses. In February, the MMF announced a \$1-million investment into the fur trade through the establishment of a new fur company. Through the company, furs and hides will be purchased from Red River Métis trappers and Harvesters at an above-market price and sold to entrepreneurial Citizen artists and artisans who are practicing traditional crafts like moccasin making and floral beadwork. By establishing the Red River Métis Fur Company and buying furs and hides at a good price, we can support a responsible and conservation-minded approach to trapping that helps Citizen Harvesters make a sustainable income for their harvesting efforts, while keeping our wildlife population in balance.

As part of the MMF's support of Red River Métis artisans, MMF Cabinet members were on hand in August to celebrate the unveiling of a new Royal Canadian Mint coin honouring the Red River Métis. The coin, in the Mint's "Generations" series, tells the story of the Red River Métis through the intricate beadwork patterns of Red River Métis artist Jennine Krauchi. The design features an engraving of an original floral beadwork pattern as well as elements of the Michif language.

In May, the Louis Riel Capital Corporation (LRCC), an MMF affiliate dedicated to helping Red River Métis businesses succeed, launched the Métis Women Entrepreneurship Program. Through the Red River Métis-owned lending institution, the program provides commercial financing to help Métis women start or expand their businesses. Through a collaboration with Infinity Women Secretariat, the Métis Women Entrepreneurship Program offers ongoing workshops and networking opportunities for Red River Métis women in business of all ages and levels of development.



In March, the LRCC ended its longest-running pandemic program, the MMF COVID-19 Business Support Program. The program provided nearly \$8 million in grants to over 600 businesses, including artisans/crafters, musicians, fishers, ranchers, and farmers to help them continue their businesses during the pandemic.

Economic development

This year has seen continued growth in the MMF's lands and properties holdings, which now exceed over 150 property titles, 800 acres of land, with an assessed value of over \$65 million. Property acquisitions this year include land in and around the Duck Mountains and northern Interlake for Red River Métis Youth Camps and Harvesting. As well, property in Winnipeg has been bought to support unique housing initiatives and commercial developments. In addition, Lake Manitoba Resort in St. Laurent – which includes a nine-hole golf course, a clubhouse restaurant, and 79 seasonal campground sites for lease – will open in 2023.

Over the next three years, the MMF will invest over \$178 million into continued growth through housing, healthcare, a hotel and resort, pharmacy expansions, and more.

With a mandate to ensure easier access to programs and services for Citizens closer to where they live, the MMF held a grand opening in May for a new Regional Satellite Office for The Pas Region in Flin Flon.

In September, the MMF also opened the Centre Jean Desrosiers in St. Malo. Named after the late Cabinet Member, the centre will be used for MMF meetings, events, and programming.

In December, the MMF celebrated the opening of the Northwest Regional Office, a state-of-the-art facility which will house more than 100 staff to assist Citizens with programs and services. The building will also house our second MEDOCare Pharmacy, which will be open to the public in the new year.

Housing and Property Management

The MMF moved forward on many housing projects this year, resulting in more jobs for Red River Métis contractors and additional economic spinoffs. This activity demonstrates that we are quickly growing our ability to provide economic solutions to modern-day infrastructure and housing challenges.

Early in the year, the MMF received over \$3.4 million through the federal government's Rapid Housing Initiative to convert the building at 670 Main Street into 20 housing units. The building will provide direct services and wraparound supports to Citizens experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness by early 2023. In March, the MMF opened the new Rapid Services Hub at 550 Selkirk Avenue, which will serve as an intake office before Citizens are placed at 670 Main Street. During the summer, over 100 people were assisted through our Rapid Services, with 29 securing housing and four evictions prevented. More Citizens received advocacy support in the form of food and income benefits, while others received start-up kits including furniture and basic household necessities.

In May, the MMF broke ground on a state-of-the-art, 49-unit seniors housing complex in Selkirk. The complex will provide affordable housing for Elders and seniors, alongside 8,250 sq. ft. of commercial space for offices, retail usage, and a pharmacy. The \$14.8-million complex will serve as a blueprint for an upcoming building on Henderson Highway in Winnipeg, which the MMF acquired this year.



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In August, the MMF and the federal government came together to reiterate a promise to fund housing projects in the Red River Métis Homeland. The Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, announced an investment of \$31.5 million from Budget 2022 over the next seven years for the housing priorities of the Red River Métis. This funding is in addition to the Budget 2018 allocation of \$125 million over 10 years. The MMF is pleased the federal government recognizes that access to safe and affordable housing is critical to improving the health and social outcomes of Indigenous Peoples and ensuring a strong future for their communities and children.

The MMF has also opened seniors housing in Binscarth and St. Ambroise, and is currently working on lodging for families who travel to the city for medical services, as well as for Youth aging out of care. Additional current projects include an intergenerational housing community in The Pas, a six-plex in St. Boniface, and plans for a development in the community of St-Georges dedicated to housing for seniors and families.

The MMF also offers Citizens housing support through the Home Enhancement Loan Program, which provides \$18,000-\$25,000 for emergency repairs and renovations to improve existing homes. Currently, more than 690 homes are under construction, \$10.6 million has been allotted, and the MMF has received over 1,500 applications for the program.

One of the fastest growing programs for Citizens is our First Time Home Purchase Program, which has helped over 750 Red River Métis families purchase a new home. To date, there have been over 1,200 applications, and over \$10.2 million has been disbursed. As a result of these purchases, over 350 jobs have been created, more than \$163 million worth of mortgages have been leveraged, and the total economic impact is in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

Early Learning and Child Care

To support our Red River Métis children and instill pride in their heritage, the Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) department continues to grow our capacity to provide cultural programming through a number of initiatives, including childcare centres. We have allocated \$30 million in capital funding to create 700 new childcare spaces across the Red River Métis Homeland by 2025. Each childcare centre provides



services to families within our communities and the surrounding areas and will build on our economic growth through 250 job opportunities.

Some of these include: the grand opening of Li Pchi Pwayson School Age Centre, a 30-space centre designed to serve our children from Kindergarten to Grade 6; and the sod-turning for Li Pchi Pwayson, a 40-space childcare centre to serve infants and preschool-aged children – both in St. Laurent. The two centres will employ up to 17 childcare professionals, and will offer programming that celebrates Red River Métis culture, language, and heritage. The MMF also celebrated the grand opening of the Elbert Chartrand Childcare Centre, a 40-space centre designed to serve infant and preschool-aged children, which will provide quality, culturally focused programming for Red River Métis children in Swan River. This was the eighth new centre announced so far, with more to come.

Priority of sustainability

Sustainability remains a top priority for the MMF. We have undertaken initiatives that include the installation of electric vehicle outlets at each of the Red River Métis Government's childcare centre builds across the province, a commitment to plant two million trees across the Red River Métis Homeland, representing our Nation at international conferences on climate change – such as the UN OEWG Biodiversity Meeting in Kenya and the COP27 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Egypt – as well as the Métis Environmental Leaders of Tomorrow program, which provides opportunities for Youth to learn about climate change.

The MMF also partnered with Efficiency Manitoba to bring energy-saving measures to Red River Métis Citizens' homes. The Métis Energy Efficiency Offers program provides Citizens with low-cost, energy-efficient upgrades to their homes and businesses.

In December, Dan Vandal, Minister of Northern Affairs, announced a commitment of over \$1.4 million to the MMF for the training of energy advisors from underrepresented groups like the Red River Métis. The funding will support training, mentorship, and upskilling activities that aim to increase the number of energy advisors.

Considerable energy savings will also be seen through the current energy retrofit project at the MMF Home Office. The \$8.2-million project at 150 Henry Avenue

will bring about building upgrades and mechanical and electrical system modifications to decrease greenhouse gas emissions. The project also includes solar panel installation, window replacement, as well as upgrades to the building envelope and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems.

Annual General Assemblies

The MMF caught up on a fundamental part of our governance structure by holding two Annual General Assemblies this past year, both at the Assiniboia Downs as well as online.

The first AGA, which took place in March, was the first in-person AGA since the onset of the pandemic. Approximately 2,000 Red River Métis Citizens and delegates attended, while 1,230 delegates from across Manitoba participated virtually, and over 1,400 viewers tuned in on the MMF's YouTube page.



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Along with advancing our constitution and sharing our progress toward becoming the economic engine of the West as we once were, the MMF made a key announcement at this event on developments on our Métis-specific healthcare agenda, through the creation of mobile nursing units. These vans can travel to our smaller and more remote villages, where access to healthcare supports can be challenging. They will provide vaccinations, diabetes testing, foot care, and other vital services.

President Chartrand provided updates on the Nation-to-Nation relationship with the federal government, including negotiations on land claims. He also announced the commencement of negotiations with Canada for Métis-specific health legislation, a critical breakthrough for the Red River Métis, who have the highest rate of chronic illness in Manitoba.

Richard Genaille, MMF Minister of Sports & Youth, also announced a partnership with the Manitoba Aboriginal Sports & Recreation Council (MASRC) for a National Aboriginal Hockey Championship (NAHC) in Winnipeg in May 2023. He presented a \$50,000 cheque to MASRC Executive Director Mel Whitesell that will go towards the championship. The donation is part of the MMF's investment in professional and structured sports development for Métis Youth. In May of this year, with Red River Métis players supported by the Métis Employment & Training Department's Believe Athletic and Artistic Support Program, the female Team Manitoba captured the gold medal at the NAHC in Membertou, Nova Scotia.

At the second AGA, which took place in October, well over 3,000 Citizens gathered in the main hall to hear Minister of Northern Affairs Dan Vandal announce Canada's contribution of \$23.1 million to the future Red River Métis Heritage Centre located at 335 Main Street, while Manitoba Premier Heather Stefanson earmarked a \$10-million investment from the province to help bring the heritage centre to life. Through the Heritage Centre, visitors will learn how the Red River Métis were instrumental in bringing the West into Canada just 153 years ago, reinforcing the Red River Métis as the origin and core of the Métis Nation.

Supporting our Citizens

The MMF supported Red River Métis Citizens throughout the COVID-19 pandemic through hamper delivery, emergency funding, testing, vaccinations, and more.



Now, with rising food and fuel costs due to global events, including the war in Ukraine, President Chartrand and Cabinet recognized that Citizens have been impacted by these costs, along with the continued harm the pandemic has created in our communities. The MMF is investing \$5 million in targeted cost of living supplements for Citizens who are trying to make ends meet in these challenging times. Through this six-month initiative that began in October, thousands of Citizens and their families will benefit from the Métis Cost of Living Supplement.

The MMF also announced an investment in seven new food security greenhouses across Manitoba, which will yield an estimated 100,000 pounds of vegetables per year for our Citizens. Through the Food Security Initiative, this network of year-round food production greenhouses, community gardens, edible forests, and pollinator gardens will produce a variety of traditional fruit, vegetables, and herbs offering fresh and healthy produce to Citizens. It will also reintroduce traditional gardening and preserving practices, knowledge, and education to Red River Métis Citizens of all ages, with a strong focus on Youth.

Charitable gifts

Every year, as part of our tradition of sharing and helping others, the MMF extends the hand of friendship to other communities through charitable donations.

As an act of solidarity with our Ukrainian neighbours, friends, and family, the MMF donated \$100,000 to Ukraine in March for humanitarian aid in the face of Putin's aggression. The MMF also raised the Ukrainian flag at 335 Main Street and 150 Henry Avenue and our other buildings as part of the Red River Métis Government's expression of caring for our Ukrainian neighbours.

In September, in response to the mass stabbing tragedy at James Smith Cree Nation, the MMF provided support to the Nation in the form of \$50,000 for funeral costs, as well as food and supplies.

In the spirit of ensuring every family has a chance to celebrate Christmas, for over 20 years, the MMF has provided support to the Christmas Cheer Board, which has offered hampers and toys to families in need for over 100 years. In December, at the MMF's

second annual tree lighting ceremony at 335 Main Street, the MMF kicked off the holiday season and honoured a good cause by presenting \$50,000 to the Christmas Cheer Board, which is the largest public donation received by the charity.

The MMF also donated \$21,500 to the St. Malo arena for a new ice plant, and \$5,000 to Winnipeg's St. Boniface Hospital Foundation.



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Historic acclamation

In May, the MMF called an election for the positions of MMF President, as well as Vice-President and Regional Executive Officers in each region. The election process ended with unprecedented and historic results. For the third election in a row, President David Chartrand was acclaimed and entered his eighth term as President and leader of the Red River Métis. In a historic first, all incumbent members of Cabinet also returned, having been acclaimed in all seven regions. John Parenteau of the Northwest Region opted not to run, paving the way

for Peter Fleming to replace him by acclamation. This election was also historic as it was the first time that Citizens were going to be allowed to vote, regardless of where they reside today.

In June, the MMF held our inauguration ceremony at the Fort Garry Hotel, presided over by the Honourable Janice C. Filmon, then-Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba. The next day, the MMF held a Cabinet meeting where appointments to the portfolios were made and ratified. New portfolios included Red River Métis Veterans, Traditional Economies, and Environment and Climate Change.

All ministerial mandate letters are on the MMF website, so any interested Citizens can learn more about what's happening in our portfolios by going to mmf.mb.ca/mmf-caucus-cabinet.

Red River Métis Cultural Activities, Events, and Celebrations

This year saw our Citizens returning to the events and cultural celebrations that our community cherished prior to the pandemic lockdown. With the resurgence of in-person gatherings this year, we still preserved the virtual option for those who could not attend in person, but wanted to participate. Some of our biggest events of 2022 included:

- Louis Riel Day Scavenger Hunt
- Victory at Frog Plain Commemoration
- Indigenous Day in Selkirk
- Métis Night with the Goldeyes
- Ste. Madeleine Métis Days
- Youth and Elders Conference
- Red River Métis Veterans Department Presents Indigenous Veterans Day
- Louis Riel Commemoration Ceremony
- Lighting up the Heart of the Homeland
- Christmas at Portage and Main on CTV

Education

The MMF has been working for years to address the gap in education for the Red River Métis, and 2022 built on progress toward advancing education outcomes for Red River Métis students. In the 2021-2022 fiscal year, the MMF awarded 881 Red River Métis students up to \$5,000 each to put towards post-secondary education costs. Post-secondary education students funded through Métis Employment & Training and the Post-Secondary



Education Support Program are also eligible to receive \$75 per month from October 2022 to March 2023 through our recently announced Métis Cost of Living Supplement.

To ensure Citizens have access to Red River Métis-specific supports in their studies, we have also begun implementing Métis Inclusion Coordinators in post-secondary institutions across Manitoba. Métis Inclusion Coordinators offer guidance to Red River Métis students, plan cultural and community building events, help our students apply for Citizenship, assist them with accessing our tuition support programs, and direct them to any other MMF and/or post-secondary institution supports and resources they may need.



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We have also started to create a pilot project to support K-12 students in The Pas Region with the aim to improve educational outcomes and prepare them for post-secondary opportunities. We are looking forward to expanding this project to other Regions to offer our K-12 students a strong foundation on which to continue their lifelong learning journey.

Métis Child and Family Services

Métis Child and Family Services (MCFS) has been working diligently to support kids as they age out of the system, and to get justice for our kids in care. Last year, a multi-million-dollar lawsuit was brought against the province by 15 Indigenous Child and Family Services Agencies for misuse of the Children's Special Allowance.

In May, the Manitoba judicial system decided that the misappropriation of benefits for children in care was unconstitutional and discriminatory against Indigenous foster children. In August, the provincial government made the decision to abide by the court ruling to return Children's Special Allowance resources to the children.

This was a long and hard-fought battle for MCFS, along with other Indigenous child welfare organizations. The funds received by MCFS as a result of this case will be held in trust for our kids until they age out of the system. The MMF will continue to take a strong stand against any actions that result in financial harm to our kids in care, by whatever means necessary.

In addition, we are pleased to announce that all children in ongoing care have had Registered Education Savings Plans created for their future use. The importance of education in breaking the cycle of poverty, which affects so many families we are involved with, cannot be understated.

Harvesting rights

The MMF stands ready to protect our Citizens' inherent right to harvest. The MMF has continued to work diligently so that our Harvesters can participate in our traditional practices without fear of harassment and unjust prosecution.

In August 2022, the Provincial Court of Manitoba granted an Order, on consent of defence counsel and Manitoba Prosecutions, to release the firearms that were seized from three Red River Métis Harvesters. The Red River Métis Citizens were harvesting with MMF Conservation Moose Tags under the MMF's 2021-2022 Moose Conservation Harvesting Initiative, which aims to protect the Métis collective rights in the Duck and Porcupine Mountains. On December 13, 2021, the MMF filed a Statement of Claim in

the Manitoba Court of King's Bench. The Statement of Claim asked, among other things, the Court to declare that the Red River Métis have collective rights in the Duck and Porcupine Mountains to hunt for food and domestic use, including social and ceremonial purposes; and, that sections of the Province's Moose Conservation Closure Regulation constitute an unjustifiable infringement of the section 35 Aboriginal Rights of the Red River Métis and therefore have no force or effect – meaning the regulations do not apply.

In October 2022, the MMF announced the reopening of the Duck and Porcupine Mountains for the limited harvest of bull moose through the third annual Moose Conservation Harvesting Initiative. This initiative was the first of its kind in Manitoba, and has resulted in safe and successful moose harvests over the past two years.

Looking ahead

As the National Government of the Red River Métis, we will continue to advance the rights of all Red River Métis Citizens regardless of where you reside. As successors to Louis Riel's legacy, your Red River Métis Government will continue to fight against identity theft to protect the true and historic Red River Métis.

As always, the MMF has your back. We continue to work collaboratively with the federal government in a nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationship. We have been negotiating on a modern-day treaty, which will soon go to Parliament. Your Red River Métis Government is also working to settle our land claim, which we expect to have completed by the end of this fiscal year. We will continue to ensure our voices are heard at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels.

As we enter a new year, your Red River Métis Government is steadfast in our support for our Citizens as we continue to gain traction as economic leaders and move towards meaningful healing and reconciliation. Most of all, we will continue to remain accountable to you, our Citizens. Stay tuned in the new year for even more exciting announcements to come.

