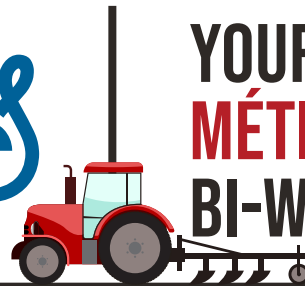




Le Métis

∞ EST. 1871 ∞



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



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Building a prosperous and sustainable legacy for our Youth is a consistent theme in the conversations I have had with our Elders over many years. When you see your Red River Métis Government developing initiatives and programs to support Youth across our Homeland and Beyond Borders, it is with these conversations in mind. Your Red River Métis Government is here to support our Youth in whatever their dreams are. Whether academic, a skilled trade, athletics, or any combination of skills and pursuits – we want to see you live YOUR vision of a strong and bright future.

Nurturing a legacy for Red River Métis children has been a part of who we are since the birth of our political consciousness. When Louis Riel's provisional government developed the list of rights that would form the basis of the *Manitoba Act, 1870*, negotiating title to our lands on the Assiniboine and Red Rivers was a priority.

We fought to secure the 1.4 million acres of land promised to Métis children that ought to have been honoured. We have never stopped putting Red River Métis Youth at the heart of everything we fight for.

Today, there is limited physical land to be returned, negotiated, or settled with Canada, but there is

the promise of financial restitution. The MMF is already investing in our Youth through funding for education, the first-time homebuyer's program, and individual sponsorship programs for sports. These legacy supports will only continue to grow and improve following successful financial land settlement negotiations with Canada.

We have also made excellent progress toward the development of camps to support our Youth as they grow into their culture and community, and as they pursue their athletic goals.

Camp for athletes

At the recent North American Indigenous Games, our Youth represented the Red River Métis Homeland and competed with the fighting spirit of our Ancestors. They brought home plenty of medals and as always, made us enormously proud.

Therefore, when our Youth ask us for more opportunities to train in the sports they love, we listen, and we act. The MMF is developing a sports and culture camp in the RM of Woodlands, in the Interlake Region, about 20 minutes southeast of St. Laurent near our newly opened Lake Manitoba Resort.

When it opens in 2025, we will bring more than 100 Red River Métis athletes together year-round for training in sports like swimming, climbing, mountain biking, hiking, cross-country skiing, and others. The camp will also offer land-based education, including harvesting practices, trapping, fishing, and traditional cultural activities like learning Michif, understanding traditional medicine, sash making, fiddling, and jigging. Participants will also join sessions guided by Elders who will pass on traditional knowledge.

Currently, the camp holds nearly 30 buildings, including 12 cabins, and boasts a rope/climbing course, a gym, heated swimming pool with waterslides, and a basketball court. We will invest in and improve on this to make the camp a premier place for our Youth to hone their skills and work toward achieving their athletic goals.

Cultural camps

Another camp focusing on cultural education will be opening in the Northwest Region in 2024. Located in the Duck Mountain range, close to a 160-acre

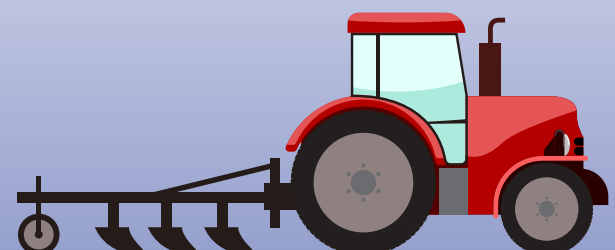
Red River Métis-owned harvesting property, the camp will offer land-based education and cultural knowledge building sessions in a beautiful and peaceful setting.

While these camps are in development, we have many that are already underway and phenomenally successful. For example, Infinity Women Secretariat has been holding a day camp, teaching leadership skills to Red River Métis girls. There are Youth camps teaching land-based knowledge, Red River Métis culture, and camps to support education around sound environmental principles.

We also have a camp happening in the Northwest Region nurturing a cultural knowledge exchange between three Indigenous Nations. Vice-President Frances Chartrand and her team have arranged an amazing opportunity for our Youth, Dene Youth from Yellowknife, and Nunatsiavut Youth, whose territory spans parts of Newfoundland and Labrador, and part of northern Quebec.

Knowledge Keepers from each community teach the Youth about the value of working together and sharing their cultures. I am pleased there are plans in place to continue this cultural exchange and build on the relationships growing between our communities. These camps create an opportunity for Youth to learn about themselves, discover new friendships, and form bonds with young people from other communities.

As our Youth grow from adolescence to adulthood and learn about themselves and their culture, and claim their place in the world, I hope they dream big and strive for success with everything they have. The job of your Red River Métis Government is to clear the path for them, step by step, as they build their lives. This is my vision – one that is shared by our Cabinet, our Local leadership, Elders, and families from across the Red River Métis Homeland and Beyond Borders. This is how we honour our Ancestors and bring them peace, secure in knowing the future they wanted for their children is being restored to their descendants.



We want our Youth to be proud of who they are. As they move through this life and go from strength to strength, we know they will never forget where they come from and who they have inherited their strength and resilience from.

Never stop believing in yourselves and believing in Red River Métis.

RED RIVER MÉTIS ENTREPRENEUR CONNECTS WITH HIS COMMUNITY THROUGH LANDSCAPING

With the help of the Manitoba Métis Federation, Red River Métis landscaper Evan Kastes has been able to make his dream of being a full-time entrepreneur a reality.

Driven by his and his brother's dreams of owning a landscaping company, Kastes' brother Paul came up with a business plan to present to the Louis Riel Capital Corporation (LRCC), an affiliate lending institution of the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) committed to supporting Red River Métis business owners.

"Paul came up with a business plan for us and we presented it to the LRCC in order to get our initial startup loan about four years ago now, which allowed us to purchase everything we needed to get started," he said. "The LRCC has helped me tremendously to get my business started and we wouldn't be where we are today without their great help and guidance."

The 30-year-old has been able to put his landscaping skills to work on MMF property.

"Our first year we did the patio and walkway at the MMF building on Henry Avenue. Since then, we have gotten many customers through the MMF community," said Kastes. "The MMF has offered me many resources personally and from a business standpoint has helped me be a successful person and entrepreneur."

Being Kastes' very first job, landscaping has always been a passion of his.

"I started landscaping as my first-ever job at the age of 16 with a few friends. With being outdoors and working with great people, I really enjoyed it as my summer job," he said. "Eventually I went to university and was in the physical education program, but during the summers I continued landscaping. I really learned how to do everything."

Kastes had gotten to a point where he had to decide how he saw his life going career-wise.

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

Meeqwetch,

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

"It was always hard going back to school because I enjoyed being hands-on and upgrading customers' yards. I had to step aside from university to dedicate everything to landscaping," he said.



As an entrepreneur, Evan Kastes has been able to build connections within the Red River Métis community through his landscaping business.

Surprisingly, the COVID-19 pandemic created opportunities for the landscaper he did not expect.

"During COVID I decided we needed to branch out and work for ourselves as we were comfortable transforming customers' yards from start to finish. There has been lots of learning and still is to this day, but we are very happy of our success so far," he said.

Being an entrepreneur has provided the Winnipeg landscaper a rewarding feeling and has helped him build great relationships with clients within the Red River Métis community. He credits a lot of his success to the efforts of LRCC.

"I am proud to be a Métis business owner and am grateful for all the programs that are offered to help business owners like myself – programs they offer like start-up loans, grants, and summer student employment opportunities," he said.



Giving back to his community, Kastes is passing on the opportunity for Red River Métis Youth to enjoy landscaping the way he did as a teenager.

"We now employee Métis students and couldn't be happier to provide them with their summer jobs," he said.

He encourages all those working for him to trust their intuition and believe in their abilities, but also know it's okay to ask for help.

"Be confident in your skill set and work ethic and reach out to the MMF and LRCC for any guidance you may need along the way," said Kastes.

The Red River Métis entrepreneur looks forward to what the future has in store for his growing business.

"We hope to be a business that will eventually work year-round and further our talents in the construction scope of work so we can give employees a full-time job year-round," he said.



DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know the LRCC has a variety of programs that were created to meet the needs of all Citizens at any entrepreneurial level? Whether you are just starting out or an already established business looking to expand, LRCC has a place for you!

Programs include:
∞ Business Grant & Loan Program
∞ MMF Entrepreneurship Initiative
∞ Métis Women Entrepreneurship Program
∞ And more!

Visit lrcc.mb.ca for more information today!



DASHING DACHSHUND INSPIRATION FOR ARTISAN



Meet Rusty! He's a sweet dachshund who belongs to Cathy Knowles, the Administrative Coordinator of MEDO.

If you have ever had the chance to visit the Ed Simard General Store at the MMF Home Office, chances are you've probably noticed a cute photo on the wall of a dog wearing a costume.

Meet Rusty! He's a sweet dachshund who belongs to Cathy Knowles, the Administrative Coordinator of the Métis Economic Development Organization (MEDO), which runs the store.

The Red River Métis Citizen loves staging photo sessions with her canine companion and delights in the sale of handcrafted dog bow ties.

"I've always loved dressing up my animals. I also had two dogs before (Rusty). I always dressed them up and I loved taking their pictures. So (I thought), why don't I try making a bow tie?" she said.

After learning that Rusty was kept in a crate for the majority of the day by one of her friend's neighbours, Knowles stepped in to rescue the puppy.

"I took him home to babysit, and he got attached to me in three days because he was just a puppy," she said. "So, I ended up keeping him, and I've had him ever since."

From that day on, Knowles has provided Rusty with a warm and loving home for the last 14 years.

With her love of animals and crafting under her belt, the Red River Métis Citizen decided to take her hobby to the next level by selling her personalized dog bow ties.



"I was Googling how to make them, so I tried making them and liked them. I asked Tammy (Barton, Manager of MEDO) if I could sell them in the store, and so far, it's been a hit," she said. "I'm going to continue creating bow ties, and I like making them in different colours and designs."

Knowles has been showcasing her bow ties at the Ed Simard General Store for the last six months. She even had the opportunity to sell her products at the MMF's Extraordinary General Assembly, where she was met with a lot of support and encouragement from her fellow Citizens.

"My family is involved with the different (MMF) events. They're always at the Annual General Assemblies," she said. "I stay connected with the Métis community by meeting with other artisans in the store, getting to see what they do, what they make, and why they started. It is inspiring, especially the Elders."

The artisan is striving to perfect her skills so she can produce more bow ties.

"I like variety. I make kids' bow ties, Métis Flag bow ties, ones with the fiddle, silk (bow ties), and I recently tried making a leather bow tie," she said. "Everyone has different tastes, and some have been asking for specific bow ties."

Knowles is grateful for her colleagues' contributions towards her creative process.

"They've all been very supportive of me. They'll help me with whatever I want. If I need anything, they're there for me," she said. "I have a fantastic team that I work with, and I'm very grateful for that."

The Red River Métis artisan is amazed to witness how her initial concept has transformed into a sustainable venture selling dog bow ties.

"I never thought I would be doing something like this, but I feel proud. I'm smiling just looking at Rusty," she said.

As her business thrives, so does her inspiration. Every time Rusty steps in front of the camera, we can look forward to seeing a wide range of costumes and scenes.

"I'll take pictures of anything, anywhere in the yard, in the fountain. I even bought him a little boat and put him in my pond with a sailor outfit," she said. "It makes me smile, giggle, and I love showing people."

At the moment, Knowles is busy putting together a Rusty-themed calendar, with hopes that it will be available to purchase next year, with funds staying within the MMF.

"I'm having a hard time deciding which pictures to use because there are so many. I think I have thousands of photos of Rusty."



ED SIMARD GENERAL STORE:

- ∞ Located in the MMF Home Office at 150 Henry Ave.
- ∞ Has been operating for 23 years
- ∞ Named after Ed Simard, who was one of the founders of the MMF
- ∞ Sells authentic handcrafted items from Red River Métis artisans
- ∞ Launching an online shop soon
- ∞ Always looking for Red River Métis artisans to sell their work
- ∞ Phone: 204-942-7535
- ∞ Email: info@edsimardgeneralstore.ca

COMMUNITY PHOTO

On August 12, Northwest Region Citizens came together to participate in our Regional meeting in Dauphin, Manitoba! Regional meetings are the perfect opportunity for Citizens to connect with your Red River Métis Government and your community, stay informed, ask questions, and raise concerns. Visit mmf.mb.ca/events or contact your Regional office for information on upcoming events in your Region.



Le Métis' Community Photo section invites Red River Métis Citizens to send in photos to be featured in our newsletter. If you have a photo that celebrates the Red River Métis, send it to communications@mmf.mb.ca and you may see it in print!





Le Métis
∞ EST. 1871 ∞

CALLING ALL RED RIVER MÉTIS CITIZENS!

ARE YOU AN ARTIST?

∞

DO YOU WANT TO SUBMIT A COMIC FOR OUR *LE MÉTIS* NEWSLETTER?

∞

DO YOU HAVE A RED RIVER MÉTIS WORD SEARCH IN MIND?

Le Métis is accepting submissions for work such as:

∞ Word search ∞ Crossword ∞ Seek and find ∞ Comics ∞ Spot the difference

Submissions will be entered into a
draw for a \$100 ESGS gift card
communications@mmf.mb.ca

EXPLORE RED RIVER MÉTIS TOURISM & HOSPITALITY

MMF.MB.CA

