



Le Métis

∞ EST. 1871 ∞

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



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As our Citizen Harvesters know, our big game harvesting season came to a close on January 15. For those of you who went out to harvest for your table and your community, I hope you had a safe and successful season.

There can be no doubt that harvesting is an important part of our traditions and our history as a people. Many of our older Citizens still remember what it was like before our rights were recognized and upheld. I have heard many stories about people being forced to exercise the right to harvest in the dead of night, always hoping not to be caught and charged for doing what their Ancestors had always done. People have even died coming home late at night, hitting storms or getting into accidents, just trying to continue to practice our culture and traditional ways. People who are adults today still remember the fear and worry they felt for their parents when they went out to harvest, and the incredible relief they felt when mom and dad made it home safe. These were difficult times, when practicing our traditional ways came with fear of being prosecuted, which hung over our Harvesters like a shadow.

It may seem hard to imagine now, but this was our reality for several generations. There was fear and panic that came along with practicing our traditions and exercising our rights. It took tremendous courage and determination to carry on these practices in the face of so much risk and intolerance. I have deep respect for those who continued to harvest and honour our tradition of sharing the bounty with vulnerable community members, including Elders and single mothers

who could benefit from having meat to feed their children, firewood to keep warm, traditional medicines, berries, fish, and other resources our people have traditionally used and shared.

Thanks to the integrity and courage of our Harvesters, who followed our laws carefully, the Government of Manitoba has stayed all MMF-supported Harvesting charges laid against Red River Métis Harvesters. The decision to stay these charges is a significant recognition and affirmation of Red River Métis rights.

I'm so proud of how far we've come, and the ability for our Citizens to harvest wild meat, secure in the knowledge that their rights will be defended by the MMF. Our Citizen Harvesters understand that they are bound by our laws and practices, but are safe within that framework, as long as they have their Conservation Trust Fund sticker for the year.

Don't forget to send your unused harvesting tags back to us, as this is one of the ways we are able to track the number of animals harvested, so we can ensure we remain conservation-minded in our traditional practices. We are committed to the preservation of balance in our environment, something we share with our First Nations relatives. Trapping and harvesting play an important role in helping keep the natural world in balance, but they must be carefully managed to ensure the long-term survival of all the species who share our Homeland.

Children's Special Allowance

We continue to roll out the return of Children's Special Allowance (CSA) money to the young people it was taken from while they were in the care of our Métis CFS and Michif CFS agencies.

The CSA provides payments to federal and provincial agencies and institutions that care for children and are the equivalent to Canada Child Benefit given to parents who are raising their children - the payments range from \$530-\$800 per child monthly.

On December 6, 2024, the funds started to flow back to the kids as it was always intended. I was proud to give the first three cheques to the young people the money belonged to, and was even more proud of their plans to use their funds to build brighter futures. As part of the settlement, we are ensuring that each recipient has access to the services of financial advisors, so they understand the steps they can take to pursue and achieve their dreams.

To date, we have given 192 cheques to 192 recipients, with a total of \$5,873,590.60 dollars

returned to our Youth. I will continue to update you as we work toward our commitment to returning every dollar back to the kids who were or are in our care, as we promised.

Sixties Scoop Bridge to Justice Fund

Hearing the stories of our Sixties Scoop survivors and the pain they've had to deal with their entire lives has always touched my heart. That's why we have advocated tirelessly for justice for our survivors, because we cannot ignore their suffering and the lack of recognition they have experienced for what was done to them.

This is why your Red River Métis Government issued a claim against the federal government in June of last year for the collective harms resulting from the forcible taking of Red River Métis children from their homes during the Sixties Scoop. These harms, which are claimed at a community level, outline the impacts on our survivors' connection with our culture and language, along with their sense of identity as Red River Métis. We expect that this case will break new legal ground in defining the Crown's duties to our continued existence as a self-governing Nation. The federal government will be delivering its defence in January 2025, and we expect the case will be heard at some point in 2026.

In December 2024, we also requested status as intervenors (a legal word meaning that we have asked the court to consider us an interested party) in the Varley class action, which seeks damages on behalf of individual survivors of the Sixties Scoop. We explained to the Court that our belief that the Crown owed a duty to the Red River Métis people to make sure we don't lose our community connection and identity aren't harmed by colonial systems like the Sixties Scoop. The Court will decide whether or not we can be intervenors in this case later this year. I will update our survivors and Citizens when I hear more on these legal actions.

The Red River Métis are not quitters. We will keep fighting for what's right no matter what. But we also know that justice can be very slow to come. That's why we've used our own resources to develop our \$2 million dollar Bridge to Justice fund, to address the survivors who were abandoned and left out by both the federal and provincial governments. Both these governments played a role in the circumstances our survivors were left with.

It's sad to know that some of our survivors already left this world, and others may soon leave, and I know in my heart they deserve some measure of justice while they are still in this world. I am proud of our government and Cabinet for their compassion and foresight in setting aside the money for this fund, to give our living survivors



some measure of peace. Nothing will ever truly compensate them for being stolen away from their families and their Nation, but I hope these dollars help them understand that the Red River Métis have never forgotten them, and will never forget them.

Unfortunately, it's not possible for our Bridge to Justice fund to cover our survivors who have already left this world. But the loved ones of the survivors who have passed can be confident that it is for them and all our survivors that we continue to pursue the province and the federal government for recognition and compensation.

We are now very close to rolling out the first cheques to our Red River Métis Sixties Scoop Bridge to Justice Fund. I expect the first cheque distribution to take place before the end of this month, and I will be sharing the details of the application and distribution process with all Citizens.

These are just some of the important matters we are pursuing on behalf of our Citizens, and as always, it is one of my top priorities to keep you informed of our activities. It is your guidance and your strength that continue to fuel my efforts on

your behalf, and I thank you for your support of your Red River Métis Government.

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. ∞

RED RIVER MÉTIS MAGICIAN ENRICHES COMMUNITIES ACROSS CANADA



This Red River Métis magician has worked nationally to bring enriching cultural entertainment and education to the forefront of Indigenous communities.

Do you believe in magic? Well, Chanelle Munroe does. This Red River Métis magician has broken ground on workshops, agencies, and a magic camp, all while performing her magic act for communities across the Homeland, making their lives a bit more magical.

Heritage is important to Munroe. The magician was raised multiculturally, and honours both her Jewish, Cree, and Red River Métis identity.

"My Métis side is something that my mom always educated me about. She always raised me in the tradition, taught me things," she said. "I remember for Christmases my uncle would show up and play the fiddle and we'd all be doing the Red River Métis jig together. Or my grandpa would always tell stories about the old times. Upholding those traditions and keeping on with those family values."

Munroe likes to blend her passion for her heritage and magic. The Red River Métis magician enjoys

incorporating her Indigenous roots into her linking hula hoop routine.

"It's two hoops that I hold up and they're disconnected and one of the circles is representative of the Indigenous world and the other hoop or circle is the non-Indigenous world," she said. "And so, I'll hold them up in a sideways figure 8, which is the same thing as the Métis flag, and then after a little bit of dance and a little bit of magic, the two hoops suddenly become interconnected. (From there) I take a minute, to talk about reconciliation and how these two worlds can coexist with each other in harmony."

The Red River Métis performer reflected on how traveling for her magic show has helped her feel connected to her ancestry.

"I'd always heard these stories growing up about our family lineage from Churchill, and I was blessed enough to be invited to Churchill this year, twice now, to do my magic show. It felt like a coming home just being on that land, being at the Hudson Bay. There is a deep remembering in my bones," she said.

Munroe takes performance inspiration from theatre figure Floyd Favel Starr who opened her perspective on performing to an Indigenous way of thought.

"I think of a circle when I'm on the stage. Instead of a linear barrier between me and my audience, we're all in one circle together and it's a circle of reciprocity. The equal exchange of energy when I perform, just thinking of that, changes who I am as a performer and how my performance comes out," she said.

Munroe runs four different workshops: magic camp - run in collaboration with her partner Sean Watson, a singing workshop, basketball camp, and an Indigenous art therapy workshop inherited from her mother.

"Students are invited to observe pieces of Indigenous fine art from across Turtle Island," she said. "Whatever community I'm in, I'll do a focus on what their particular art form is and then allow kids to paint or draw their own art form from their own

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nation. So, it's a strengthening exercise in identity and gives kids language and appreciation of how to view and make fine art."

In addition to workshops, Munroe operates the talent agency: Thrill Star Entertainment. The agency provides performers, musicians, actors, comedians, and other magicians opportunities to perform in different Indigenous communities.

"We just brought Marianas Trench and Johnny Reed up to Saint Theresa Point First Nation," she said.

The magician has also started a new agency called Thunderbird Talent that will feature exclusively Red



Chanelle Munroe was featured in the Indigenous contemporary life magazine SAY for her innovative use of magic as a tool for education and empowerment.

River Métis, Inuit, and First Nations artists for youth conferences.

"It's also going to be a consulting agency. So, if you are an upcoming Indigenous artist and you're not too sure how to get started or how to navigate yourself in the show business industry, I'm also going to have a consultation service where we can get you on your feet, build a portfolio, and help you get going with your career," she said.

Munroe's prestige has recently been featured in prominent magazines such as international magic magazine, Vanish, and SAY (Spirit of Aboriginal Youth), an Indigenous lifestyle magazine.

"It's really cool after just a short career of four years in magic to be featured in the largest magic magazine publication in the world. This is the same magazine that Chris Angel was featured on the cover of," she said. "That caught the attention of SAY magazine, (which was) started by a Métis woman who wanted to amplify Indigenous voices in the education sector. To be featured in her magazine and to continue her legacy is an absolute honour."

Munroe acknowledges that female magicians are underrepresented. Historically, she explains, women in magic take on the role of a magician's assistant. Adding her Red River Métis heritage, Munroe's presence on the scene gives light to the representational gap.

"I don't believe there's any professional Indigenous magicians in Canada or the USA, but hopefully there will be more up and coming because Sean and I do our magic show and teach magic camp in different Indigenous communities. We're teaching kids how to do magic on their own. So, you might see a lot more Indigenous magicians in the future," said the Red River Métis Citizen.

If you want to get involved in the magic of it all, Munroe says Winnipeg is a great place to do it, citing Winnipeg as the birthplace of the International Brotherhood of Magicians.

"If you live in Winnipeg, you're actually living in the hot spot of magic. You can join the Society of Young Magicians," she said. "You'll have a whole draw of

Preserving Red River Métis Culture through

~ Pemmican ~



Pemmican, or "pimikan," a Cree word meaning "manufactured grease," is a preserved meat first created in the late 1770s and has an important connection to the Red River Métis.

Pemmican is traditionally made from bison meat and is crushed into a coarse powder and mixed with equal parts melted fat and a variety of berries.

The fur trade expanded with great success thanks to pemmican production. Because it was dense, high in protein, and could easily be stored and shipped, it became an important provision for the voyagers in the fur trade, especially in the winter when food could be scarce.

- 2 lbs. of bison
- 1/4 cup dried berries (blueberries or saskatoon berries)
- 5 tablespoons of animal fat (melted)

Cut the meat into long strips and hang in the sun to dry for several days.

When completely dry, pound each strip until broken into flakes, then mix the flakes and dried berries. The meat, berries and warm melted fat can be mixed into a bowl.

When the fat has cooled, the ingredients can be rolled into large balls and stored into plastic bags.

Pemmican can be eaten as-is, cooked like hamburger, or boiled with flour and water to make soup.

magicians in Winnipeg helping you with your tricks. You can also visit Toad Hall toys, the good people working there will teach you how to do any magic trick that you choose from that store. So that's a good way to get up and get started."

If you want to feel the magic, visit Chanelle Munroe's website here and find more information on Munroe and her workshops.

The MMF is grateful for Citizens like Chanelle Munroe who provide these services to our communities and make our lives a bit more magical.



Red River Métis
Youth ages 8-14

2025 Red River Métis Mini Climate Symposium

Biodiversity in the Homeland

During this 1-day event, **Red River Métis Youth** will participate in activities that will provide them with a greater understanding of all aspects that keep our ecosystems thriving, as well as how climate change and human interaction alter those ecosystems.

Date: February 1, 2025

Location: Assiniboine Park Zoo,
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Time: 8:30AM-3:30PM

Spaces are limited so please ensure you register early. Travel and accommodation will be provided as required.

Please contact melt@mmf.mb.ca to register.



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