



Le Métis

∞ EST. 1871 ∞

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



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As all Canadians know, the changing political winds in the U.S. have been creating concerns for us all, as the new American President has been speaking his opinions and views on Canada and what he envisions for our future, even saying we will become his 51st state of America.

It can be hard to listen to someone who was elected to lead our closest neighbours, longstanding allies, and trade partners speak about our country in the ways Trump has. I know that the messages coming from south of the border have been upsetting for many, and have caused serious concerns about the impacts of his position on our economy and our sovereignty as a country. Among the things he has spoken about is the imposition of tariffs on Canadian goods.

In every situation, no matter how challenging it seems, there are always opportunities and positive side effects. One clear positive that has come out of the recent political turmoil is the unity displayed by Canadians. We have made it clear that we will never allow Trump to overtake us, and we are prepared to do what it takes to withstand any economic action he takes against us, including broad tariffs on Canadian goods. Many individuals are standing strong already, choosing to buy Canadian products, expressing their patriotism and solidarity with their wallets.

This important act sends a clear message to Trump and his administration that we won't be bullied. But it is not just individuals who must take a stand against the trade war that Trump is threatening our country with. Businesses, governments, and even

whole industries must also make it clear that we can and will find alternatives to U.S. products and goods.

Your Red River Métis Government is also doing its part, preparing for the impacts of U.S. tariffs and the trade war in many ways.

One of our first priorities when news broke of Trump's intentions was to reach out directly to Red River Métis businesses and entrepreneurs through our affiliates – the Louis Riel Capital Corporation and Red River Métis Business Development Corporation – to hear their ideas and concerns, and learn what supports they need to succeed in these challenging times.

As additional supports to our business community, Métis Economic and Community Development Officers are available in all Regions and within the Infinity Women Secretariat. They regularly work with nearly 800 Red River Métis businesses, sole proprietors, entrepreneurs, and artists to support their business success. Not only do the Officers provide general support and business navigation services, they are also focusing on additional assistance to our businesses and entrepreneurs to address the potential U.S. tariffs and trade war impacts. This includes preparing for the impact of U.S. tariffs on outgoing Red River Métis business products destined for the U.S., as well as retaliatory Canadian tariffs on incoming U.S. products. We are also speaking with Red River Métis Citizens and others in the U.S. who are looking to move their business activities into Canada.

Another immediate priority that your Red River Métis Government acted upon in the wake of Trump's tariff threats was engaging with other governments to support our Citizens and all Canadians. Along with joining Manitoba's 'Buy Local' campaign, to highlight our Red River Métis businesses and entrepreneurs, we have joined Manitoba's U.S. Trade Council. I want to thank Premier Wab Kinew for his quick reaction, inviting your Red River Métis Government to the meeting. We were ably represented by Minister Mona Buors in the first meeting of this council, and we will continue to play a strong role on the council as the discussions continue.

We are also working directly with Canada and members of the Prime Minister's Council on Canada-U.S. Relations, with MMF staff recently participating in Canada's Indigenous Working Group on International Trade.

We will continue to work with Canada to strengthen and diversify Red River Métis participation in non-U.S. trade agreements. This work includes a recent

meeting attended by MMF Ambassador Clément Chartier with Bob Rae, Ambassador of Canada to the United Nations.

These engagements with Manitoba and Canada will help us stay aware of evolving issues, participate in strategic initiatives, and share distinct Red River Métis considerations, including the benefits of working directly with our Government on procurement from Red River Métis businesses.

We have also started discussions with community and industry partners to co-develop strategies that respond to tariffs. One example is MNP, a Canadian accounting and business advisory firm that has expertise in international matters, who can help promote resources for our Citizens and our businesses on the potential impacts of tariffs and other public policy changes.

Like individual consumers, the fastest and most direct way we, the National Government of the Red River Métis, can tell our neighbours that we don't agree with or support the position of their President is by no longer purchasing products from their country, wherever we can.

That's why we have started a full review of our activities across the MMF, including all departments, affiliates, and Regions, to examine our ongoing and planned procurement activities, so that we can identify and consider options to replace products bought from or made in the U.S.

Further, we have cancelled all non-essential business travel to America, including our decision not to participate in the Reservation Economic Summit in March.

These are not easy decisions, as we know this will affect local U.S. businesses before the impacts of our efforts can reach U.S. political leaders. However, these are necessary steps, as voter voices hold important weight in democratic countries. When voters are angry or financially destabilized, they can make it clear to their government that it must take action. American voters must tell Trump clearly that they cannot sustain the trade war he wants to begin.

I am proud of the immediate efforts of our Government to respond to the threats coming from the U.S., and I am confident that our Citizens will be quick to respond to threats to Canadian sovereignty, just as we have always responded to threats to our Red River Métis sovereignty. Our people are fighters, and we know how to work together to defeat anyone who challenges us. This is part of our inheritance from our Ancestors. I believe we can be an example to all Canadians,

helping them navigate this challenge with resilience, strength, and unity, just as our Nation always has.

Your Red River Métis Government will continue to closely monitor this situation as it develops in the U.S. and here in Canada. I remind all our Citizens who live in the U.S., in Canada or anywhere else in the world, our business community members, our

Youth, or our families trying to make ends meet in the face of economic uncertainty – the MMF has your back.

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. ∞

2 RED RIVER MÉTIS AUTHORS BRINGING CULTURE TO I LOVE TO READ MONTH



Pick out a Red River Métis children's book this month to celebrate I Love to Read Month with the whole family.

Deborah L. Delaronde and Edgar Desjarlais have made sure you can enjoy story time and honour Red River Métis heritage all in one this I Love to Read Month. These two authors help our Youth find identity through their stories featuring Red River Métis culture and language.

Children's author Deborah L. Delaronde has spent 25 years writing 16 books, the majority being children's literature, that explore Red River Métis history, culture, and identity.

Before becoming an author, Delaronde worked as a librarian in Duck Bay. She found herself inspired to write Red River Métis children's books when she noticed there were limited options to fill the school library, leading her to write her first children's book: *A Name for a Métis*.

"When I started working at the school, we used printed publisher catalogues to order books. Browsing through the catalogues, I discovered very few Métis-themed books being written by Métis people," she said.

The Red River Métis storyteller's most recently published book, *I Am Métis*, was a family project involving the author and her granddaughter, Kalysta Falk, who illustrated the book. The cover of the book

showcases an illustration of a young Delaronde, proudly wearing a braid.

"The story is based on my experience searching for my cultural identity when I returned to my home community of Duck Bay. I wore my hair in a single braid for years as I researched my First Nation and (Red River) Métis families," said the author.

Delaronde's braid became a symbol of her search for identity.

"I began to take a portion of my long hair and wear it in a braid as a spiritual connection to my First Nation and Métis ancestors," she said.

The author and retired librarian strongly emphasized the importance of reading for Red River Métis Youth.

"Not only is it important for Red River Métis Youth to discover their identity by reading about Métis history, but it is also about finding solutions to problems. As Métis people, we are living history, and our Red River Métis experiences need to be written and shared," said the Citizen. "I always hope my stories and books will positively impact Red River Métis Youth."

NOT ONLY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR RED RIVER MÉTIS YOUTH TO DISCOVER THEIR IDENTITY BY READING ABOUT MÉTIS HISTORY, BUT IT IS ALSO ABOUT FINDING SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS. AS MÉTIS PEOPLE, WE ARE LIVING HISTORY, AND OUR RED RIVER MÉTIS EXPERIENCES NEED TO BE WRITTEN AND SHARED.

– DEBORAH L. DELARONDE



Written by Deborah L. Delaronde
Illustrated by Kalysta A. Falk

Delaronde now adorns a braid to match the cover of her recent children's book which you can find on her website.



Edgar Desjarlais works to incorporate the Michif language in his writing, stating that while immersion is important, he hopes his books can help the cause of language preservation.

Edgar Desjarlais, a fellow children's book author, shared similar sentiments about the vitality of reading. The Citizen has written two full-length novels but holds a special place for children's books.

"Reading helps us to learn new things, improve our critical thinking skills, and develop our imagination," he said. "I enjoy writing for children. It gives me an opportunity to incorporate my language."

Desjarlais has written two picture books featuring the Michif language, titled *I Don't Like Bugs!* and *We Like the Winter*. The author grew up speaking Michif in his community.

"I am a proud, card-carrying Red River Métis and my home community is St. Laurent, Manitoba. (That's) where I grew up learning the French-Michif language," he said. "I cling to whatever I remember of my language, and I make a point of learning a new word or phrase daily."

The Red River Métis author emphasized the importance of language preservation and is sad to see Youth from his home community losing their language.

"My home community is run by the children of the people from my generation and many of them lack skills in our language," he said. "When I was growing up, we were lucky to have few distractions and using our language in the home really helped reinforce it."

Desjarlais explained the importance of families when it comes to preserving traditional languages.

"As the saying goes, you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink. Families must see an importance in retaining and preserving the languages," said the author.

The author hopes that his children's book can help in language preservation.

"Having our own language identifies us as a Nation. I think it is important as a Nation to retain, preserve, and pass on our language – and my vehicle is children's books. I see my books as a teaching tool," he said. "Without our language, we are not whole."

Delaronde and Desjarlais help bring culture, identity, language, and a love for reading to our Red River Métis Youth.

FIDDLING AROUND: EXPLORING THE HISTORY OF THE RED RIVER MÉTIS FIDDLE



The Red River Métis have always been known for their love of music and dance. The fiddle was the chosen musical instrument of the Métis people, and the sound of the fiddle is the heartbeat of the Red River Métis Nation.

Red River Métis fiddlers would mix rhythms to a unique sound of their own to form their own distinctive style of music. To achieve the unique Red River Métis sound, the bottom string is often tuned up a tone from G to A. The playing style is based on syncopation and extra beats, which gives the music a "bounce" when played and heard.

Frequently, the fiddle was played solo, but would sometimes be accompanied by a guitar or spoons. The music's played up-tempo and routine back beat are features that distinguish the performance from waltzes and reels, and make it suitable for dancing, and particularly, for the Red River Métis Jig.

The MMF is proud of our fiddler Citizens of past, present, and future generations who are keeping this sacred part of our Red River Métis culture alive.

LOUIS RIEL DAY CELEBRATIONS, RED RIVER MÉTIS STYLE!



On February 17, Citizens came together in celebration of the historic leader of the Red River Métis and father of Manitoba, Louis Riel. The festivities showcased lively performances by talented Red River Métis bands, fiddlers, and jiggers across the Homeland. We can't wait to see what excitement will be in store for next year's Louis Riel Day!







**SAVE
THE DATE**

**Red River Métis
Climate Symposium**

Grow Together

**April 25-27, 2025
Victoria Inn Hotel and Convention Centre
Winnipeg, Manitoba**



Call for abstracts and registration coming soon



SUMMER STUDENTS

The MMF's Energy, Infrastructure, and Resource Management Department is looking to hire Red River Métis students studying or **interested in agriculture or horticulture for summer employment opportunities.**

Positions will be available in Winnipeg, Interlake, Southwest, The Pas, and Thompson Regions.

Interested students can contact
agriculture@mmf.mb.ca
for more information.

