



Métis Nationalist Voice

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Métis Nation Issues and Interests

Métis Christmas and New Years Celebrations

By Lorna Ledoux

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Editorial

While I am “getting up there”, my early Christmas memories are of my family fishing at Primrose Lake, so I had to do some research on the topic of traditional Métis Christmas. Historian Lawrence Barkwell states that “Métis celebrations were designed to bring people back to their home communities and your presence in the community was expected.”

I do remember that Métis people in Cochin talked about firing guns for New Years. According to Barkwell, A feu de joie, literally translating to bonfire, was a salute of guns fired on ceremonial occasions.

Le Revillon is a Métis celebration that derives from our French heritage. On Christmas Eve the older children and parents attended midnight Mass. At the end of Mass, the bells are rung to announce Le Revillon (the awakening). When the families arrive home, they enjoy Christmas Eve dinner and following the meal, presents are opened.

Barkwell states that “Le zhour dee Rway, also known as Three Kings Day, is celebrated on January 6th, the twelfth day of Christmas. This date, Epiphany, is a Christian festival which celebrates the manifestation of Jesus to the Three Magi. Métis children born on this day are

often named ‘King’. In some areas, this is the date for gift giving, rather than Christmas Day. Some people would even exchange horses.” In the past, the Métis would start dancing on New Years and continue until All Kings Day.

On New Years Eve, at midnight, it was a Métis custom for the men to take two rifle shells, open the back door of the house and fire a shot to the west to see



the old year out, then open the front door and fire a shot to the east to welcome the New Year in. Today, the modern urban version is to bang two pots together instead of firing shots.

New Year’s Day was sometimes called “Kissing Day” (Ochetookeskaw), or “Shaking Hands Day” by the Métis. This is because of the custom of visiting everyone in the community and bringing in the New Year with the shaking of hands and kissing. The house-

holds would serve food and baked goods to their guests. New Years celebrations often lasted for several days. The sound of sleigh bells, or the bells on the tapis of the dogs pulling the sleds, signaled the arrival of visitors. For festive occasions the Métis decorated their horse and dog teams with plumes, pom poms, ribbons and bells.

Traditionally, New Years was a time for celebration in Métis communities. Singing, dancing and feasts were the highlights of the celebration. Traditional Métis foods were a must at these events. According to the Michif people at Turtle Mountain as recounted by Barkwell: “The feast included foods such as Le’boulete (ground beef made into meatballs and rolled in flour and boiled), bangs (fried bread dough), flat galette (a flattened bread), potatoes, pork, confitres – berries in sauce, beef, turkey, homemade pies, tourtiere pie (a ground pork meat pie served with cranberries), and pouchin (boiled cake). I have enjoyed many such meals on New Years Day at the homes of Métis friends and can say without reservation that they are some of the best meals I have ever eaten.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Or should I say Happy Revillon and Ochetookeskaw?

Métis Senator Michael Maurice Profile

By Senator Nora Cummings

As a fellow Senator and Elder, I wanted to recognize and honour Métis Senator Elder Michael Maurice for everything he did for our community. Our community will feel the loss of such a strong cultural leader and teacher in Saskatoon especially to our young people. Since the 1960s, Elder Maurice called Saskatoon home and he was very active and involved in the community. He has numerous accomplishments and achievements: He loved his family dearly, his mother and sister, his children, his 6 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren Senator Maurice was involved in many boards and committees supporting local organizations as well as an active community Elder:

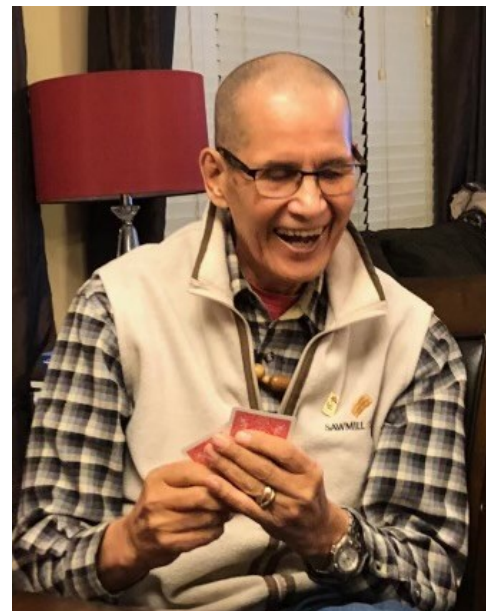


- One of the lead Elders for the Provincial Ministry of Education - Follow Your Voices
 - Senator for Western Region 2A Saskatchewan, Métis Nation
 - Past president of CUMFI Local
 - Member of the Saskatoon Police Service Chief's Advisory Committee
 - Camponi/Sask Native Housing
 - Saskatoon Indian Métis Friendship Centre
 - Mushom at St. Mary's School, Westmount School and St. Michael's School and White Buffalo Youth Lodge
 - University of Saskatchewan's Elder Services
 - Community Legal Assistance Services for Saskatoon's Inner City (CLASSIC)
- Worked at Provincial Plating until he retired then became active as a community Elder
 - Avid pool player which led to a national championship title. Numerous provincial titles and many trips to Las Vegas
 - Owned three race horses and was involved with racing at Marquis Downs, Saskatoon Exhibition

Elder Maurice was always so accepting and kind to everyone; a calming spirit and had a smile that could light up a room. He was a great father, a proud grandpa and a Mushom to his immediate family as well as many extended family members, and others who loved him dearly. Elder Maurice passed away on November 24, 2020.

With respect and friendship,

Senator Elder Nora Cummings



Métis businesswoman captures Saskatchewan tourism awards

Re-printed portions from article By Sam Laskaris, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter, Windspeaker.com

It has certainly been a challenging year for Michela Carriere’s business. But there was some very encouraging news last week for the Métis woman, who launched Aski Holistic Adventures three years ago.

Carriere operates her business out of Big Eddy Lodge, located off grid, with the nearest community about 60 kilometres away at Cumberland House, Sask. Because of the pandemic, Carriere’s business, which includes various Indigenous cultural activities as well as wilderness retreats, has been closed to the public since mid-March.

That’s why it was a huge positive when Carriere discovered Aski Holistic Adventures had won the Indigenous Tourism Experience Award, one of the categories of the Tourism Saskatchewan Awards of Excellence.

“It’s really important to win this award, especially this year,” Carriere said. “My business took a big hit with COVID. This award gives me a lot of hope for the future.”

This marked the 31st year of the provincial tourism awards. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the awards ceremony was held virtually last Tuesday. An in-person awards gala had been scheduled for this past April in Regina but that was postponed

“I was nominated for the same award last year, but didn’t win it,” Carriere said. “This year I was pretty excited to receive the award.” Carriere had attended the 2019 awards ceremony, which was in Regina. “I wish there was a gala this year too,” she said. “It was really nice to go there and make connections and talk to other Saskatchewan tourism operators.”

About 90 nominations were received for the various provincial tourism awards this year. Organizers chose winners in 12 award categories. Three other individuals were also recognized this year as Tourism Builders. Since the awards had originally been scheduled in April, award winners were primarily recognized for their efforts in 2019.

Carriere said she was planning to reopen in October. Technically, she is allowed to be open now. But Carriere said she has remained closed because of surging COVID-19 cases in Saskatchewan and across the country and out of respect for her community of Cumberland House, located in the northeastern part of the province. “That’s our nearest community,” she said. “We go there and get all of our

supplies.”

Carriere said Cumberland House, which has a large Métis and Cree population, did not have any COVID-19 cases in the first wave of the pandemic. But the community has had an outbreak in the second wave with about 30 recent cases, including the death of an Elder.

Carriere, who is 30, is now planning to reopen her business in February. She plans on organizing winter fat tire cycling races on snowy, groomed trails. In the past, Carriere has organized three races per year, each one attracting about 30 entrants.

She said she’ll in all likelihood limit next year’s races to those who live in Saskatchewan. And she believes she might have to stage some smaller events, with a maximum of about 20 participants, in order to comfortably house everybody afterwards at Big Eddy Lodge.



Michela Carriere photo by Tourism Saskatchewan

Her family has operated the lodge for almost 40 years now. And prior to that, Carriere’s grandfather operated an outfitting business on the site, dating back to the 1930s. Because of her family’s business, Carriere learned how to canoe, hunt and trap at a young age. She’s also a certified wilderness first responder, horticulturalist and herbalist.

Since prize money is offered at some competitions, Carriere also calls herself a professional canoe racer. Her father Solomon, who is 64, continues to enter and win his fair share of canoeing races that offer cash prizes.

Through her business, Carriere provides a number of different services. During the spring and summer months, retreats include canoeing, tipi camping,

plant gathering and cultural experiences. And then in September and October retreats not only include canoeing and tipi camping but also wilderness survival, bird watching, berry picking and fall cultural events. When lakes and rivers freeze up in the winter months, Carriere’s business offers winter camping, ice fishing, fire making, winter biking, snowshoeing and winter cultural events.

Métis Family History: Le Roi By Elaine Cross

Henri King would cry out "*pitie mon dieu*", "*pitie mon dieu*" (*mercy my god*) day and night from the excruciating pain of rheumatism. No longer able to walk, he sat in his chair near the window with his leg resting on a pillow on the windowsill...the pain in his voice resonating throughout Northern Pine, a Métis community just north of Pierceland SK. Life and weather on the prairies had taken its toll on this ole man from the wild west and, this is certainly not the way he would want to see himself die. He was laid to rest under a tall pine tree in the Cold Lake Catholic Cemetery in 1936.

The first one of our Roy (King) ancestors to arrive to this continent from France at the young age of 20 was Augustin Le Roi the son of Pierre. He became a successful tailor and married a Spanish woman after arriving. They had many children, but our direct line is through his name sake Augustin Jr born in 1735 in Quebec the first to be born on these lands! Augustin Jr had a son named Alexis and he had 6 children, one of which was named Joseph Le Roi dit Roy born 1817 which was Henri's dad.

Most people never knew that the French name Le Roi translated to English means "the King" and Roi or Roy is just the shortened version of Le Roi ... our family used both King and Roy interchangeably depending if they were with French or English speaking people. I recall my grandmother Mary using both King and Roy as naturally as second nature.

Our King story begins with a long history of French Voyageurs within the family, starting with Henri's dad, Joseph Roy who began work early in life with the Hudson Bay Company (HBC) as a bowsman in the Athabasca area, then Fort Confidence and later in Fort Resolution until his employment by the well-known HBC explorer Dr. John Rae. Fort Rae located in the Slave Lake area was named after him as he was the most able man to take on many expeditions and is known for mapping the Arctic Coast of Rupert's Land...and my great great-grandfather Joseph Roy was a part of this is extraordinary work.

Joseph Roy had married Henriette Cayen a Metisse woman and the daughter of Voyageur Louison Cayen dit Cadien also known as Old Cayen, who was also a well-known HBC employee interpreter, trapper, scout, and boatman and who was responsible for reopening Fort Rae in 1837 and constructing 5 other buildings there as well. Louison was the Métis son of a Parisian and Cree woman. This Old Cayen grandfather is interesting as he travelled great distances to translate... he could not speak English well though but was fluent in French, Cree and Chipewyan.

Joseph and Henriette Roy had their first child named Josephpte Roy in 1852 and were married early that same year in Fort Resolution. Shortly thereafter he was stationed to Fort Rae where they

welcomed their second child Jean Baptiste Roy in 1853. Two more children were born in Lac La Biche: Marie Rose 1858 and Louis 1861. They moved to Fort Pitt for a short time before moving to St. Francois Xavier in Manitoba where the last two were born: Caroline 1863 and my great grandfather Henri Roy in 1866 for a total of 6 children.

My grandmother Mary King dit Roy's dad and aunties & uncles listed above were close and spoken about often where we could attach memories and if we are lucky, faces too. Grandma told me many stories from her day and her relations as they seemed to congregate in all the same areas often... the following is a brief summary of Joseph & Henriette Roy's Legacy:

Josephpte Roy, the eldest daughter married Antoine Xavier La Plante and then Pierre St Denis and had about 13 children with both marriages. Josephpte's husband LaPlante was shot and killed and the children were sent to residential school, so she along with a brother Jean Baptiste Roy rescued them and escaped. Her children all lived between Montana, Willow Bunch and Wood Mountain and then Cochin.

Jean Baptiste Roy, the eldest son, married in 1892 the same year his dad Joseph died. Baptiste worked as a freighter and he along with his mother Henriette and siblings (with their young families) travelled often between Métis communities spread from Manitoba, Montana and to what was known as the Northwest Territories and now is Saskatchewan/Alberta.

The family had already moved to the Vermillion area when their youngest was only 2 months old. His wife was cooking on an open fire when the wind picked up and a lick of flames caught her dress. On fire she ran to the slough, but she had already had bad burns and succumbed to them 2 days later. Baptiste tried to keep his family together, but they all ended up having to go with different families.

Eventually, Baptiste and his son Albert and daughter Marie Rose headed north, and they sought out my great grandfather Henri King's homestead which was located 8 miles north of Meadow Lake. They remained in close proximity to Meadow Lake. Uncle Albert came to visit fairly often with his sons Senator Edward King and Ronald to Pierceland as we were a very close family at one time, but as our grandparents die off we seem to forget from whom we descend and unfortunately family ties dwindle.

Marie Rose Roy married American half-breed Louis Haggerty. They lived at Willow Bunch and had 6 children who survived to adulthood: Caroline, Louis, Suzanne, Jules, Marguerite and Jeanne. Both Jules and Suzanne lived around Meadow Lake and Pierceland before moving to the Calgary area and are household

names for me. Suzanne Haggerty married Heliodore "Harry" Myette an American. Their children are Bill "Jumbo", Eva, Hector, Oscar, Marcel, Paul, and Victor. Most lived in the Meadow Lake and Northern Pine area near Pierceland at one time.

Louis Roy married Marguerite Suave and had 10 children. This family mostly lived in the Willow Bunch area and Louis along with his mother Henriette and young brother, my great grandfather Henri (only 6 at the time) lived with Jean Baptiste after Joseph's passing. Louis was well respected, and believed the entire family had great faith in him and trusted his decisions.

Caroline Roy died at the tender age of 2 years

Henri Roy (my great grandfather) being the youngest, was known by most as Henri King. He married Helene Dumais the daughter of Charles Dumais & Marie St Arnaud from St Albert near Fort Edmonton. They married in Glasgow Montana and shortly thereafter moved back to Willow Bunch and they had 2 children there. A daughter named Maria Rose died as a toddler and a son name Emile died at birth. Both are buried in Willow Bunch.

Henri & Helene moved back to Montana to Lewistown and there they had their 3rd child...my grandmother Mary Bertha King in 1901...her god parents were Louis LaPlante and Rosa Wells. Grandmother told me Henri King was a tall man that wore a huge buffalo coat with matching hat...and gramma King was a petite fiery woman always in a chapeau and carried a pistolet in the folds of her skirt. Neither could speak English...only French Métis .

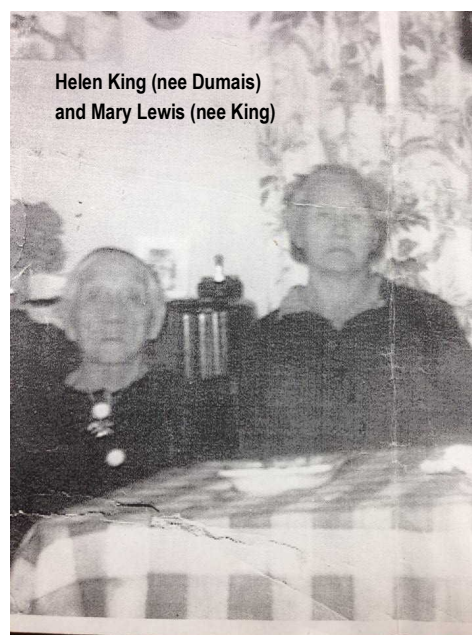
My grandmother tells of stories where they lived in caves in Montana and southern Saskatchewan as Henri rode with the notorious outlaw Frank Jones Gang... they would often come through Manitoba to steal horses amongst other things I imagine. Gramma speaks of other children there as well and the wonderful times they had there as one big family. When it was time to move back to Canada, they came in a red river cart with all their belongings. They made camp along the way and one time in particular when her dad was just off hunting, she and her mom were approached by hobos and they went about to steal all their food and causing granny to shoot one in the leg before they took off. Apparently, this was a common occurrence in the wilds.

They lived with the rest of the Roy/King siblings in Willow Bunch and Wood Mountain area and in the Red River but left the Red River due to a flood where people lost everything. Granny compared it to the end of the world where their houses, wagons and even chicken coops floated down river, animals bellowing and chicken carcasses floating by must have been horrendous! They

barely escaped with their lives. They ended up moving to Meadow Lake, as great grandpa then decided he would now take a homestead and would do some farming. Granny King had put up a 24-hour restaurant. She was a fabulous cook and had a style of cooking that has been carried down to us as we still use her recipes today.



Helen King (nee Dumais) as a young woman.



Helen King (nee Dumais) and Mary Lewis (nee King)

Le Roi Métis Family Continued

My grandmother Mary King married twice: first to Gilson Lindsay and they had 2 daughters Gertrude Desjarlais and Mildred Blyan. Gramma said when Milly was just 2, her husband went to work in the field on their homestead, he had been gone all day and didn't show up to eat lunch and now it was getting late, so she and the kids went to find him, he had died of a heart attack and was lying in the field. She said she struggled to bring him back into the yard and then into the house and onto the table where she could start to prepare him for the undertaker. Word was sent with a neighbor but apparently, they could not come until the next day. With two little ones underfoot, she bathed him, changed his clothes, and put copper on his eyes. That night she said it stormed and it was thundering and lightning flashed out fiercely. They lived in a one room house and every time the thunder clapped with a big bang and the lighting flashed blue, she would jump as she would get a glimpse of her dead husband on the table. This was very upsetting for her and she was spooked but managed to make it through the night without sleep. She headed back to Meadow Lake to be with her parents right after he was buried as she would not stay there alone.

Mary's second marriage was to Bill Lewis from North Dakota, a Welsh Irishman that hopped a boxcar and then walked across the border with a mule in tow. He said he had hurt a man bad in a boxing match and thought he had killed him and just couldn't take that way of life. Together they had 6 children including my mom Mary Blyan. Other children were Agnes (Blyan), Edward, Leonard, Roseanne Ambrose, and Norman. They moved from Meadow Lake to the Lewis homestead in Northern Pine in 1935 for which he paid \$10. Later Henri & Helene King moved there too and soon after the Myettes came to the same area and took up homestead.

Everyone called gramma "Mum Lew'. I still recall her checking out what was happening down the street swinging from the screen door handle. We loved to take turns going to have a sleepover which she called camping. She never used anything but wood heat so we all from a young age learned to use her power saw and axe as this was part of the deal to sleepover. At night we would crawl into her big puffy feather tick bed with her and you could always smell a hint of tea on her breathe and after settling in then she would begin telling stories of her childhood and many adventures that one day I hope to share more with you.

Joseph & Henriette Roy lived through rebellions and uprising and survived the harshest of conditions. Their children and descendants populated these lands crossing invisible borders in all directions and we are here to tell the tale! How lucky are we...

Children's gloves in Roy family pattern from 1890s



Mr. and Mrs. Louis Roy around 1910



Marie Rose Roy Hagey around 1920

Manitoba, Canada, Census indexes, 1832-1856 & 1870 for Henri Roy
 Carl India National Census Bureau, Pt. 2, 1870

-52, St. Francois Xavier
 -white
 -b. Quebec
 -s. Joseph Roy
 -m. Henriette []
 -Catholic
 -Jean Baptiste 17, Marie 13, Louis 11, Henri 5.
 * RRC/1870 1068,p.276

Joseph and Henriette Roy in Red River Census

27th Anniversary of the Adoption of the MNS Constitution

By Clem Chartier

In December 1993 over 900 delegates gathered in Saskatoon at the Annual General Assembly and after debate and amendments adopted, the newly proposed constitution, which went through several months of consultation throughout the province was adopted virtually unanimously.

This was a bold step as it was based on the inherent right of self-government contained in s.35 of the Canadian Constitution. It was also decided that the new Constitution would not be registered under federal or provincial legislation as it was based on our inherent right of self-government and did not need approval of any other government.

The MNS Constitution provides for the Cabinet of the Métis government (Provincial Métis Council - PMC) and a Métis Nation Legislative Assembly (MNLA) which exercises the government's inherent right to govern, and has done so through the adoption of several pieces of legislation over the past 20 years. These include the MNLA Act, the Elections Act and the Citizenship Act amongst others.

Over the years, especially through election challenges, the courts in Saskatchewan have continuously upheld the validity of the MNS Constitution which has thus withstood the test of time.

Curiously, the current leadership of the MNS is prepared to throw away this remarkable accomplishment by entering into an agreement with the federal government in June 2019 whereby they propose to abandon our established and practiced inherent right of self-government for one based on what is known as a contingent right of self-government which requires federal government approval before it can be exercised. This is the very same approach offered by the federal and provincial governments at the 1987 First Ministers Conference which was unanimously rejected by the Aboriginal Leaders, including the Métis National Council!

What the June 2019 agreement actually does is provide the MNS a process which could lead to an internal form of Métis self-government or administration based on a new Constitution, if the federal government agrees or condones it. If it meets the federal government's approval, it could then be recognized through federal legislation.

This June 2019 agreement does not deal with real matters of self-government such as authority over child and family services, education, health, hunting and fishing and other critical areas which our government should be self-governing over.

One is left with the question as to how the June 2019 agreement is going to advance real self-government in Saskatchewan?



Covid-19 Vaccine For Métis Update

On December 3, 2020, Provincial Métis Presidents McCallum, Poitras, Froh, Chartrand, Del Col and Clem Chartier met with Minister Miller and some of his staff in a briefing on the roll out of the Covid-19 vaccination strategy. The federal government position was that they will talk to the provinces to ensure Métis are included in their vaccine roll out, although President Chartrand stated that Métis needed vaccines set aside in the same way that the First Nations Inuit Health Branch was doing for First Nations and Inuit.

Presidents Poitras, Froh and McCallum stated that they had a good working relationship with their respective provincial governments and did not need vaccines set aside from the federal government. They declined being treated in like fashion with the First Nations and Inuit by the federal government, and they did not ask the minister to press the provincial governments of Saskatchewan and Alberta to ensure that Métis were dealt with as a priority.

This vaccination strategy is basically, the federal officials restating their decades old federal policy of excluding the Métis. The Provincial Métis Presidents are dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic differently from one jurisdiction to the next with the fiscal resources accepted from the federal government. A targeted and unified Métis strategy for vaccination would be beneficial as the vaccine is so important to the people in combatting the virus.

Minister Miller, his Deputy Minister, Assistant Deputy Minister and Chief Health Officer were informed that the Métis in Saskatchewan and Alberta (along with Ontario) did not require federal allocations of the vaccine and they will probably act accordingly. The Manitoba Métis Federation and Métis Nation of British Columbia will continue to press the federal government to set aside vaccines for the Métis in their jurisdictions.

Métis Nationalist Voice Editorial

The House of Commons Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs is currently holding hearings on federal elections during a pandemic. The concern is the potential of leaving out potential voters due to the effects of the current Covid-19 virus on various sectors of the Canadian public. In particular they are looking at ways and means to ensure that no Canadian who wishes to vote is left out. They wish to ensure that all Canadians are able to exercise their democratic right to vote for those who form government, which in turn has a direct effect on their lives.

To the contrary, and ironically, the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan which loudly proclaims that it is the government of the Métis living within the boundaries of the province of Saskatchewan last year in the Métis Nation Legislative Assembly, in the absence of consultation of its citizens and without lengthy debate in the Assembly, adopted a resolution which has disenfranchised thousands of Métis from exercising their sacred and democratic right to vote in all future MNS elections unless they have an MNS citizenship/membership card.

This is a marked departure from past practice employed since the re-establishment of the MNS as a Métis-only organization/government which, beginning with the February 1989 election allowed for Métis without cards to vote through use of a declaration. This was basically because of the lack of a citizenship/voters list, which continues to be the case.

While numerous attempts have been made, particularly since the MNC General Assembly adoption of the National Definition in 2002 setting out the criteria of who is eligible to be registered, there have continued to be severe problems with getting the job done. While renewed efforts have been made over the past four years to get the MNS registry more functional, and taking into account the Covid-19 pandemic, to date less than 15,000 Métis have been registered out of an approximate Métis population of 80,000.

The MNS should look to the example of federal and provincial governments which make efforts to ensure that all Canadian citizens have a right to vote, including declarations and other means

to ensure their democratic voting rights are able to be exercised. This is especially so as the MNS claims that their government represents all Métis living in Saskatchewan whether they are enrolled or not, and in fact get their share of the millions of dollars in federal programs and services which the Métis National Council has negotiated on their behalf. To now cut those non-enrolled Métis from the right to vote for their government, or to receive fiscal services if not enrolled is not in keeping with what governments of peoples are meant to do.

With the multiple problems which have confronted the MNS over the past fifteen or so years, while the 2019 MNLA resolution must be taken into account, the MNLA in its next sitting must revisit this matter and seek a solution which will enable all Métis Nation citizens living in Saskatchewan to exercise their democratic right to vote in the 2021 MNS election. One way is to supplement any potential citizenship/voters list with the traditional use of declarations, at least until such time where the vast majority of Métis citizens living in Saskatchewan have been registered.

We are on the web at:

www.MetisNationalists.ca

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Reminder

You will need a Métis card to vote in the next Métis Nation -Saskatchewan election. Declarations will not be used.

If you plan to participate in choosing who will represent you as a Métis, you need to get a card. To apply, go online to:

<https://metisnation.sk.com/citizenship/>

