

## Region 4 Regional Director Report

### Respectfully Submitted:

#### Debra Fisher

Wow where do I start? I'm glad that this year is over!

I was praying it would be COVID-19 free, however, not meant to be and together we will get through this, that I am sure of. Métis people don't give up... we press forward... we do what is needed to survive and we stand together when push comes to shove. I am proud of how our Board has remained strong, connected, passionate, and dedicated to our Citizen's needs, bringing recommendations to the table and supporting our incredible staff to bring it to fruition. We stand as **one** when it comes to supporting our Métis Nation British Columbia and our Chartered Communities.

We must celebrate the successes that were accomplished during a historical time of political strife, devastation with COVID-19, heat waves, forest fires, floods, and the continued fallout from so much fear and loss over these two years. With limited funds in so many underfunded ministries... with needs growing frantic at times, using information that was changing on a moments and daily notice; we supported what we could. We continue to gather information from our Citizens and our Chartered Communities to add to an ever-growing needs assessment and wish list. We must learn from this experience to be better prepared in the future; however, I can assure you there was no stone left unturned trying to improve as we went along from one crisis to another. The world and all the experts were not prepared for this... remember that. We tried hard to do with what little we had... to stretch it as far as we could... under the rules that were attached to funding streams.

There are heroes that stand out for me over the course of this past year, our Citizens, Presidents, and Boards. All of whom who over the last year worked countless hours reaching out to help one another across this province. Our staff did an incredible job of trying to do the "right thing at the right time" so programs could support as many Citizens as possible. With that said, I hold my hands up in gratitude to you all and may the good Karma gods bestow to you "good health, love and laughter."

Citizens, Board members, and staff have endured a lot this last year, physically, mentally, emotionally, and culturally. Our families' names and precious lineage, safety and nation were attacked on many levels via a death threat and keyboard warriors who were undermining our Nation by being two faced. Some of this was done by some we considered friends and even family. This is not the Métis way. We spent a year protecting what we hold sacred the most... our family, our communities, our Métis Nation provincially and nationally. Truth always finds its way to the surface... and it is only a matter of time before the next chapter is revealed. Look at your citizenship card often... hold it close to your heart... many battles have been fought for us to have this right." **The bearer of this card shall uphold the Constitution of Métis Nation British Columbia**". I swore an oath to my Mation, my community, and my Citizens and I am faithful.

Thank you to the ones who trusted we were giving our heart and soul to protecting our nation at two major fronts. The highest of courts stood behind our first effort to bring honest, transparent governance to our Board, now we must keep it. We were transparent and shared all the documents on our website so you as Citizens could read the truth, the whole truth and be informed of facts not rumor. We now must

put our trust in our judicial system to show the true inner workings of our previous Métis Nation Council. **Corruption in government only happens because we as Citizens allow it.** We have a choice to be part of the problem or part of the solution. Ignoring and not being informed is part of the problem.

It has been my experience that it is better to be open, honest, and transparent even if it is hard to hear information. We must accept where we have gone off the path, right the wagon and team and move forward together. I believe in Métis Nation BC, our Métis Nation Council and I believe this next year will be a year we can focus on what was stalled last year, but not from lack of trying. Our Nation cannot be built too quickly. We must ensure a strong foundation is formed that can withstand attacks, stand in truth, protect our most vulnerable, embrace our children and families by providing supports before they get into trouble, support, and respect our elders. Our foundation as an Indigenous government is the most important part of our culture and must revolve around our families, language, art, music, and Chartered Communities.

Please, please read the reports of my Ministries: Children and Families and Education (K-12 and Early Years). We have initiated many support programs and services for our Métis families. Our teams are strong, we plan together as cross ministries and work in an Indigenous way to be proactive vs reactive in keeping our children home. We are firm in putting a Métis child and their families in the center of all our decisions. I am humbled to be part of the building of this foundation that in essence is our nation. Our children, families and elders must be the reason and deciding factor in every decision we do. I could not be prouder of my Senior Directors and their amazing, dedicated teams. Métis and Allied staff are working for us... all of us and they deserve to be respected for their efforts and all they do for us as nation.