

## Hello Wood Mountain Band Members

We have arrived at another Election on our beautiful Reserve, I would like to announce my intent to run as Chief for our Reserve. I am Lita Ferguson, I was born and raised on Wood Mountain Reserve and graduated from Wood Mountain high school in 1986. I moved away to work in Regina and started a great journey through life, various jobs from Industrial cleaner to a junior supervisor position, window washer and working at the International Youth Hostel and meeting tons of people from all over the world. Teaching my culture and performing Fancy Shawl dancing alongside my then partner. My life started into the entertainment field of acting and modelling, taking me to Vancouver, Minneapolis, New York and other cities in the United States. Eventually settling in Winnipeg Manitoba to pursue my secondary schooling of Social Work and working with homeless street kids whilst continuing to educate and share my Lakota culture all the while upgrading myself through various courses. A brief stint at running a Indigenous Import/export business taught me to manage and help other artists gain interest and exposure in Canada and Europe. I also entered the Political minefield during a pilot project course at Business/Banking and being mentored by such leaders as Eric Stevenson and Elijah Harper (a personal favourite time in my life). I returned home during my wait to begin my Masters in Psychology at the U of M. While caring for my parents, I met and remarried and now run a Bin Floor & Hopper business with my husband just outside the town of Wood Mountain, going on to 13 yrs and are one of the only businesses to retro-fit older bins. Our customers span from Alberta, Saskatchewan and into Manitoba and the United States. That's my life in a nutshell.

Why did I decide to run for Chief? Because I believe in our young people! Plain and simple. I have hired and helped many high school kids achieve skills and develop a work ethic that will serve them well going into their lives after school. Employing them alongside other workers taught them to work as a team and ask for help when they needed to; as well to learn independence from their parents and trust themselves to make decisions for their future. Some went onto other jobs, careers or schooling, earning money to get new vehicles, pay their tuition; watching them grow into responsible men and women when they were ready to move on. So I believe our young people from the Reserve to do likewise, to build a life for themselves, a career either on reserve or off it. We are at a cusp to develop a new way to reach out to the world and share who we are, as a Nation, carrying a bountiful history to build on and see where it can take them. To grow our economy beyond farming and ranching. I sat and heard so many hopes and dreams from these young people and other younger ones yet to graduate. As the youngest of my family, I dreamt that way too. I'm lucky growing up in a Traditional home, my family history and blood tie to our greatest leader and Holyman, who founded our Reserve... Sitting Bull carried me through many tough times in my life, grounding me and guiding me through prayer and Vision all my life. I am grateful for all of it and humbly ask you to put your trust in me with your vote, this election day, Thank you!