



Le Métis

∞ EST. 1871 ∞

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



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On June 25 we mourned the passing of Red River Métis icon and Citizen, Ray St. Germain. Ray was a loving and devoted husband to Glory, father to his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. He was an inspirational hero and leader, through his music, to our Red River Métis community, and to people across Canada and beyond. His work on television with *Big Sky Country* and on radio with the NCI *Métis Hour* x2 earned him awards and a global following. To me, Ray was a cherished friend, and I will dearly miss his presence in my life.

When we lose a loved one, it takes time to fully absorb the impact of their loss. As we move forward, we keep their memory alive and take comfort in sharing stories, laughter, and tears with each other – all part of celebrating a life well lived. On July 6, Ray's life was celebrated by hundreds of people who gathered to honour him and to support Glory and her family. We reflected on Ray's incredible impact on bringing Métis culture to the world through his music. Ray's famous vocals are as familiar and comforting as a hug from an old friend to people around the world. His legacy will live on through his music and his beautiful family. Thank you, Glory, and family, for sharing him with us for all these years.

Keeping the memories of our heroes and the experiences of our people alive is vital to the Red River Métis. From July 19 to 21, we celebrate

and commemorate the Métis community of Ste. Madeleine. On Friday, July 19 at 5 p.m., Premier Wab Kinew will be joining me for an incredibly special and historic moment. He and I will sign a Memorandum of Understanding that outlines the process for transferring the land of historic Ste. Madeleine back to the Red River Métis.

At our 2023 Annual General Assembly, the Premier made a us promise: if he succeeded in forming the next government, he would begin the process to return Ste. Madeleine back to Red River Métis Citizens. The Premier is a man of his word; he made this clear when he kept another promise made that day – recognizing Louis David Riel as the first Premier of Manitoba.

The tragic story of Ste. Madeleine, a community without a town, is familiar to all Citizens. In 1938, the federal government passed the *Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act* and Ste. Madeleine was selected as a parcel of land to become a cattle pasture.

At its height, Ste. Madeleine was a community of hundreds of Métis where parents raised their children, a school provided education, and a church offered spiritual guidance and comfort. While the community of Ste. Madeleine was poor in material ways, they had a rich family and community experience around them.

The security of this community was torn away in 1939 when the people returned to their land after hunting and working to find their homes burned to the ground, and their animals shot. They had nothing left. No one spoke up to say, "stop, this is wrong, this is cruel" – Métis did not matter to Canada. A cow was worth more than the life and well-being of a Métis person.

Never forget that this was not an isolated act of violence during the Reign of Terror in the 1870s – it was a cold and brutal act of 20th-century federal government policy.

More than 80 years after Ste. Madeleine was destroyed, the story remains in living memory and the annual Ste. Madeleine Métis Days festival ensures the tragedy is never ever forgotten. In true Red River Métis style, we have used this tragedy to find purpose and to create a mission – we celebrate. The resilience of Red River Métis is on full display when we gather at Ste. Madeleine to keep its memory alive and to keep our culture and our history alive.

The incredible efforts of the Historic Ste. Madeleine Local, the Southwest Region, and other Locals, and

many staff and volunteers, means you can expect family-friendly fun including jigging contests, cribbage tournaments, and Bannock making. As always, fantastic food will play a big part of our celebrations, our Red River Métis artisans will have their incredible products available for purchase, and of course – feet stomping LIVE music every day and well into the evenings. While you are there, please give a big thank-you to the grassroots organizers from the Historic Ste. Madeleine Local and everyone involved in making this annual celebration an enormous success.

Just like at Ste. Madeleine, our grassroots Locals and our Citizens hold events throughout the year that contribute to the preservation of our culture and keeping Red River Métis spirit alive and strong across the Homeland. Every community plays a key role in this and in keeping the memories alive of those who have passed. Thank you – it is your dedication to Red River Métis culture and identity that makes our collective thrive and keeps us strong and united.

Meeqwetch,

President David Chartrand, LL.D. hon. O.M. ∞



RED RIVER MÉTIS ENTREPRENEUR TAKES AN ECOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE FUNERAL INDUSTRY



Red River Métis entrepreneur Dwayne Till recently opened his aquamation business.

Dwayne Till never thought he would be working in the funeral industry. Looking back on his life, the search for meaning in death took him down a variety of paths, with none ever fully satisfying his curiosity.

"I've had a lifelong curiosity about the (funeral) industry. I've always been drawn to it, and many of its elements. I like people. I like families. I like sort of the realm of empathy, whether it's positive or negative empathy, just feeling for other people. I've always gravitated towards social events that are heavy on the feeling," he said.

The Red River Métis entrepreneur always had an interest in environmental and socially beneficial practices. He first learned about alkaline hydrolysis, or "aquamation," from reading a *National Geographic* article, leading him to a deep dive into the green movement in funeral care.

"I did all my research and I realized this is a viable business. This I can do. It checks a lot of my boxes. I think I can make this happen. And that was kind of how it all started," said Till.

Located in Headingley, his business, TillWell, offers an eco-friendly alternative to flame-based

cremation and burial. The process uses 95 per cent water and five per cent salt, activating a dissolution process, returning human remains to their elemental form. Aquamation requires no fossil fuels and produces virtually no emissions, making it a much gentler service to the environment.

Once the process is complete, what is left of the remains are rinsed, dried, and can be reduced to powder form for return to the family. The sterile liquid, which is rich in nutrients, is safely returned to the earth, nourishing our environment and continuing the natural cycle of life.

"I'm the first person in Manitoba to receive both municipal and provincial permission to use this technology. We've done all the engineering reports where we've written policy around it," said Till.

The Red River Métis Citizen has spent most of his adult life working in the field of social work, which allowed him to witness Indigenous approaches to life and death, including funerals and natural burials.

"It transformed my worldview in important ways that have never really changed back. It grounded me," he said. "It was just a beautiful place to work and learn,

and it gave me an additional perspective, which only reinforced my interest in the sort of the ceremonial or the sacred components of everyday living or life."

During this time of exploration, Till experienced the loss of his grandfather, which challenged his relationship with life, death, and the importance of his Red River Métis identity.

"My grandfather is my connection to the Métis community," he said. "He never spoke about being Métis until about the last two years of his life."

Till's grandfather saw the efforts the entrepreneur was putting into his work within many Indigenous communities, and the value that had brought to his grandson's life, leading to him applying for his own Citizenship card. Till followed suit shortly after.

Since obtaining his Red River Métis Citizenship, Till has worked with the Louis Riel Capital Corporation (LRCC), the Manitoba Métis Federation's (MMF) affiliate lending institution, to receive funding for his entrepreneurial endeavours.

"I received the full startup grant from (LRCC). The MMF is my biggest contributor financially. I also received an operating loan from them as well," he said. "The MMF has been insanely generous and helpful."



"I RECEIVED THE FULL STARTUP GRANT FROM (LRCC). THE MMF IS MY BIGGEST CONTRIBUTOR FINANCIALLY. I ALSO RECEIVED AN OPERATING LOAN FROM THEM AS WELL. THE MMF HAS BEEN INSANELY GENEROUS AND HELPFUL."

- DWAYNE TILL



DISCOUNT SEA BEARS TICKETS FOR MMF CITIZENS!



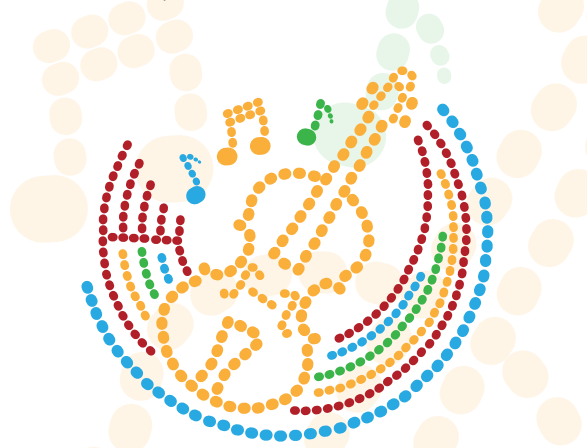
TillWell officially opened its doors to the public for pet aquamation services in May.

glad that I went to that," said the entrepreneur, who expressed excitement towards the MMF's developing tree nurseries, which he hopes to partner on. "My hope in the future would be that we could buy the vast majority of the trees (that) they plant every year from them, so that would be great if they could be a major resource for us."

TillWell officially opened its doors to the public for pet aquamation services in May.

"This milestone is a testament to our hard work and the unwavering support we have received from the MMF and LRCC," said the entrepreneur.

To learn more about aquamation and the work that Till has accomplished so far, visit tillwell.ca.



Till's interest in environmental and socially beneficial practices led to his participation in the MMF's various environmental workshops.

"I attended an excellent seed harvesting workshop; it was so cool, and I learned so much. I was so

CAPS OFF TO MMF GRADUATES



Congratulations to our Red River Métis graduates for all their hard work and dedication as this school year wraps up. Whether you're graduating from high school, college, or university, the MMF is proud of your accomplishments. In the 2023-24 school year, your National Government of the Red River Métis funded 1,646 students for their schooling, which is a 37 per cent increase from the year before, an investment that totals over \$6.5 million.

YOU ARE INVITED!

The MMF welcomes Red River Métis Citizens to attend

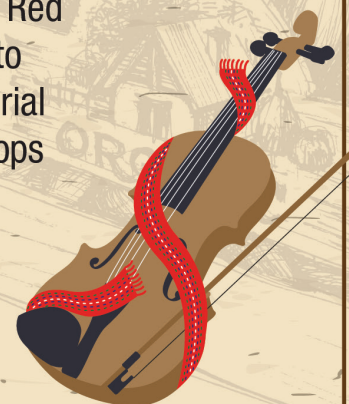
MÉTIS MARKET DAY at St. Norbert Farmers' Market



In collaboration with Le Marché St. Norbert Farmers' Market, the MMF is inviting Red River Métis Citizens to join us on **Saturday July 27 between 8AM and 2PM** to celebrate Métis Market Day. Join us in highlighting our culture and entrepreneurial spirit with Red River Métis vendors and musicians featuring interactive workshops hosted by Red River Métis businesses and the MMF.

Date: July 27th, 2024
Time: 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Location: 3514 Pembina Highway
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3V 1L5





STE. MADELEINE HERITAGE LOCAL MÉTIS DAYS

JULY 19 - 21, 2024

FRIDAY, JULY 19 – EMCEE: ROGER SMITH

4:00 – 7:00

Open Mic Contest with
The Métis Man in Black
and the Breeze Band

4:30

Premier Wab Kinew

7:00 – 7:45

Gary Lepine Band

7:45 – 8:30

Kickin' Up Dust
(Johnny Dietrich)

8:30 – 9:15

Art Gladu & Deputy

9:15 – 10:15

In Too Deep

5:00 – 6:00

5:00 – 6:00

5:00 – 6:00

5:00 – 7:00

6:00 – 7:00

7:00 – 8:00

8:00 – 9:00

9:00 – 10:00

The Dutiaume Band
Special Guest Kenny Muzia
Tribute to Ray St. Germain

Bannock Contest

Cribbage Tournament

DJ St. Germain Band

Dean Malcolm Band

Hearts on Fire

Shandra Levreault and
the Happy Endings Band

SATURDAY, JULY 20 – EMCEES: WILL GOODON & OLIVER BOULETTE

11:00

Opening Ceremonies
Opening Elder Prayer
First Speaker - Minister Leah LaPlante
Local Chair - Chris Smith
Minister John Fleury
Minister Will Goodon
President David Chartrand

11:30 – 1:00

Red River Cart entrance
(Jerome Cartworks)

Opening w/Métis National
Anthem – Krista Rey

1:00 – 1:30

Gary Lepine Band

1:00 – 2:00

Horseshoe Tournament

1:00 – 5:00

Bannock Making Workshop

1:30 – 5:00

Eldon Campbell Band

With Special guests:

Melissa St. Goddard/Métis Prairie Steppers

Kinew Youth Dancers / Kinew Youth Fiddlers

Jigging Contest

SUNDAY, JULY 21 – EMCEE: OLIVER BOULETTE

9:00 – 10:00

Cross Ceremony

10:00 – 11:00

MASS

Gospel Singer Gloria Desjarlais
(vocals & acoustic)

Accompanied by: Glenn Neale

Keyboards

11:30 – 1:30

Slingshot Competition

1:00

BINGO

1:30 – 2:15

A R CASH

2:00 – 3:00

Closest to the Pin Competition

2:15 – 2:35

Morgan Grace & Keith Ginther

2:40 – 4:00

Michael Audette Band

Special Guests:

Desiree Orvis

Taylor Fleming

Closing Act: Ivan Flett Memorial dancers

Backed by: Michael Audette Band

4:00

**CLOSING CEREMONIES &
CLOSING ELDER PRAYER**

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE STE. MADELEINE HERITAGE LOCAL,
SOUTHWEST REGION, AND THE MANITOBA MÉTIS FEDERATION.

FOR LOCATION INFORMATION, VISIT MMF.MB.CA.