

# Ottawa putting \$2.5M into Indigenous tourism

Cross-country food tour, marketing campaign and training in the works

DYLAN ROBERTSON

OTTAWA — Indigenous Manitobans want the world to experience their foods and cultures, according to a national advocacy group. This afternoon in Winnipeg, the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada is set to receive \$2.5 million in federal funds, as part of the Liberals' tourism strategy. "Visitors want to understand what makes Canada different, and part of that is Indigenous destinations," said Keith Henry, head of the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada. The funding aims to co-ordinate a cross-country food tour called Taste of the Nations, as well as a marketing campaign and training so businesses know how to connect with tourism boards and market themselves abroad.

Tourism Minister Mélanie Joly will announce the funding this afternoon at the Manitoba Museum's Grasslands Gallery. It's part of a plan aimed at making the Canadian economy take tourism more seriously. The Liberals have listed tourism as one of seven target industries to drive job growth, along with clean technology and food products. Of 1,800 Indigenous businesses in Canada, Henry said, just 130 are ready to welcome foreigners. "We're doing a significant push to help more Indigenous tourism businesses become more market- and export-ready. That's a big challenge for us," he said. Henry said the Prairies in particular are lagging behind other regions in developing Indigenous hotels, restaurants and attractions for international guests. Tourists to Churchill take in Inuit art and Cree dog-sledding. But Winnipeg isn't as well-known for Métis jigging at festivals, stores that sell beaded goods and First Nations restaurants such as

Feast Café Bistro. "Largely, (when) people think of Churchill, they think of fishing. They don't think of Manitoba as an Indigenous destination," he said. He added that businesses in British Columbia, Ontario, the Yukon and Quebec do a much better job at marketing such experiences. He's hopeful the funding will help Métis people show visitors part of their history as part of next year's Manitoba 150th birthday celebration. Canadians make up half of the customer base for those businesses, followed by Americans and Chinese tourists, who tend to spend more. Western Europeans are also make up a large chunk of visitors. Henry feels his industry empowers Indigenous people, through economic opportunity and a chance to tell their own stories. "Indigenous cultural tourism is one of the most powerful ways to actually achieve reconciliation, because it gives people a non-politicized way to come and experience," he said, such as touring the land with an elder or trying



Promoting Indigenous businesses, such as Christa Bruneau-Guenther's Feast Café Bistro, and helping them become more tourism-friendly are among the goals of funds announced today.

traditional foods. Of the funds, a half-million is set to flow in the current fiscal year, with the other \$2 million set to come in the year after. Henry said the schedule was at his group's request, so they have enough time to get projects off the ground.

dylan.robertson@freepress.mb.ca



PHOTOS BY SASHA SEFTER / WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

## WALKING TOGETHER

Leah Gazan (left), federal NDP candidate for Winnipeg Centre, and provincial NDP Leader Wab Kinew speak about the importance of Bill C-262 during a public rally titled Wiji Bimosendiwin, 'Walking Together,' hosted by the Encounter Life Fellowship in Central River Heights on Tuesday.

Winnipeg Free Press

### IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR HOME DELIVERY CUSTOMERS

GOING ON VACATION?  
WEEKEND GETAWAY?



If you require a temporary stop on your newspaper delivery this weekend please ensure you call our customer service department by Thursday at 10 am. Alternatively, you can email your stop request to [fpcirc@freepress.mb.ca](mailto:fpcirc@freepress.mb.ca) by the same deadline.

**Don't forget you could brighten a patient's day by donating your newspaper to our hospital program instead of stopping it!**

For more informaton or to notify us of your vacation stop and restart date call:  
**204-697-7001 or 1-800-542-8900**

Winnipeg Free Press

### SCABIES • FROM B1

The latest scabies outbreak at Deer Lodge — there have been at least two previous outbreaks there in recent memory — is just one of the problems they've been trying to bring to the attention of Manitoba's health minister following funding cuts that are affecting how veterans are being treated, the national president of the Union of Veterans Affairs Employees in Ottawa said Tuesday. "Staff are already overworked because of cutbacks and funding losses," Virginia Vaillancourt said in Ottawa. "How are they expected to bring the scabies to an end without impacting other portions of care for the clientele?" Deer Lodge Centre transferred from a Veterans Affairs Canada hospital to a provincial facility in 1983. Since changing from an acute general hospital to a facility caring for adult patients with complex needs, it became the largest rehabilitation and long-term care facility in Manitoba, with a bed capacity of 429. There are now 60 veterans staying at Deer

*'We've seen this facility go down at an alarming rate'*

— Virginia Vaillancourt, Union of Veterans Affairs Employees national president

Lodge Centre and one veteran is on the wait-list to get in, Vaillancourt said. Since January, the centre has lost four dietary aide positions, nine messengers, two ward clerks and a volunteer co-ordinator, and has seen a reduction in health-care aides and rehab workers, said Vaillancourt, who has also been trying to get a meeting with the federal veterans affairs minister to raise concerns about their care at Deer Lodge Centre. "We've seen this facility go down at an alarming rate," Vaillancourt said.

[carol.sanders@freepress.mb.ca](mailto:carol.sanders@freepress.mb.ca)

#GIVELIFE

**Mondays and Fridays Need You Most!**  
**For the week of May 16<sup>th</sup> - May 25<sup>th</sup>**

Every Wednesday the Winnipeg Free Press, in co-operation with Canadian Blood Services, publishes the current appointment progress and blood donor clinic information.

**Winnipeg Blood Donor Clinic – 777 William Ave**  
Appointments Needed – **379**

**Winnipeg Blood Donor Clinic – 777 William Ave – May 31st**  
Appointments Needed – **52**

**Winnipeg Blood Donor Clinic – 777 William Ave – Jun 1st**  
Appointments Needed – **67**

**Carman Community Centre – May 24th**  
Appointments Needed – **34**

**Stride Place – May 27th**  
Appointments Needed – **31**

**WE ASK THAT YOU HONOUR YOUR APPOINTMENTS. THANK YOU!**

Winnipeg Free Press

Canadian Blood Services  
777 William Avenue

Canadian Blood Services  
it's in you to give

**Please book your appointment  
online @ [www.blood.ca](http://www.blood.ca)**