



National Day for Truth and Reconciliation / Orange Shirt Day at Assiniboine Park and Zoo

For immediate release: Winnipeg, September 23, 2026 – In observance of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day (Wednesday, September 30), the Assiniboine Park Conservancy will host a Sacred Fire in the Indigenous Peoples Garden at The Leaf to honour the resilience, strength, and courage of Survivors of the Indian Residential School System.

"The Indigenous Peoples Garden was created to honour the enduring cultures, traditions, and wisdom of Indigenous Peoples while fostering opportunities for dialogue and learning," said Ray Karasevich, President & CEO of Assiniboine Park Conservancy. "As we come together in recognition of this important day, we encourage visitors to spend time in the Garden, reflect on the impacts of the past, and deepen their commitment to reconciliation through meaningful understanding, connection, and action."

The Sacred Fire will begin at 9:00 a.m. on September 30 and be maintained until 4:00 p.m. The Fire Node in the Indigenous Peoples Garden at The Leaf is a welcoming and contemplative space open to all. Park visitors are invited to join us here for a quiet moment of personal reflection or engage with Indigenous educator Wayne Lalman who will be interacting with visitors and sharing tobacco teachings.

Community Donations

In recognition of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day, we will also engage with visitors to support the important work of three Indigenous-led organizations through a minimum donation of \$10,000 to be divided between the [Orange Shirt Society](#), [Ndinawemaaganag Endaawaad Inc.](#), and [Indigenous Tourism Manitoba](#).

The donation will consist of the following:

- **15% of sales earned from admissions at The Leaf and Assiniboine Park Zoo** on Wednesday, September 30.
- **100% of orange lapel ribbon and pin donations** – On Wednesday, September 30, orange lapel ribbons and pins will be offered to visitors with a suggested donation of \$4. They will be available at The Leaf, the Fire Node in the Indigenous Peoples Garden, and multiple locations within the Zoo.
- **100% of orange t-shirt sales** – Orange t-shirts will be available for purchase at Wild Things Unique Gifts at the Zoo and The Leaf gift shop. Designs include a custom design created by Zara Flett, an Indigenous employee of Assiniboine Park Conservancy (adult sizes \$20), a custom design by Paige Spence, a former Indigenous Assiniboine Park Conservancy intern (adult sizes \$20), and a selection of additional designs by Dreamcatcher Promotions (youth sizes \$15, adult sizes \$20). All orange shirts have been sourced through Dreamcatcher Promotions, a Winnipeg-based, 100% Indigenous-owned and operated promotional products company. Both shops are accessible with or without admission. While quantities last.

As a demonstration of respect and support for the significance of this day, all Assiniboine Park Conservancy employees will be invited to wear orange shirts or lapel ribbons on Tuesday, September 29 and Wednesday, September 30.

For more information, please visit the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation [web page](#) on the Park website. All attractions will be open regular [hours of operation](#) on September 30.

Thank you to the Assiniboine Park Conservancy's National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Committee for their leadership and contributions to the ongoing process of reconciliation. The committee includes employees from across the organization who work together to coordinate meaningful, inclusive, and informative events in support of this important day of awareness.

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