

September 19, 2022

Showcasing Municipal Initiatives for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Initiatives demonstrate a commitment to pursuing truth and reconciliation

September 30 is a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to honour Survivors, their families, and communities, and ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process.

In a [bulletin](#) advising members of ways to mark the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, the RMA requested members share how they will be acknowledging the day. The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo provided the following:

On behalf of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, the Indigenous and Rural Relations Department was pleased to invite residents of Wood Buffalo to sign up and participate in the 2022 Truth and Reconciliation Challenge. The challenge launched on Monday August 15 and continues to unfold over seven weeks, leading up to the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30. The challenge provides people with an opportunity to personalize their reconciliation journey with thought-provoking content and create a deeper interest and understanding by breaking down barriers and creating community inclusivity. Participants have access to resources, activities and exclusive events that are only available to those that register. Additional information can also be found at: <https://www.rmwb.ca/en/truth-and-reconciliation/truth-and-reconciliation-challenge.aspx>

The Indigenous and Rural Relations Department (IRR) distributed over 700 orange shirts to employees and encouraged all staff to wear their shirts every Friday up to and including September 30 in recognition of Orange Shirt Day. The postcard provided employees with a brief history of Canada's residential schools, as well as the story behind the orange shirt initiative.

To collaborate on ways to meaningfully commemorate the day and honour Survivors, Indigenous and Rural Relations (IRR) created a working group and invited representatives of the six First Nations, the six Métis communities, and a broad range of community partners to participate. Based on discussions with the working group, three events have been planned for September 30:

1. Community Gathering on the stairs of the Jubilee Building (City Hall) that will include drumming and a prayer. The Gathering will commence at 9:30 am and will be a way to set intentions for the day and bring awareness to its meaning.
2. Community Walk from the Jubilee to MacDonald Island with light refreshments upon arrival. The walk will commence at approximately 10:00 am and will be open to the entire community.
3. Honouring Survivors Luncheons will commence at noon. Each luncheon will be open to Survivors and their families, and will take place in the following communities:
 - a. Fort Chipewyan

- b. Fort McKay
- c. Fort McMurray
- d. Anzac

This year, the RMWB also commissioned the creation of a tipi to symbolize the municipality's commitment to reconciliation. The tipi was manufactured locally by a member of McMurray Métis, and was painted by local Indigenous artist, Amy Keller-Rempp. RMWB proudly unveiled the RMWB tipi at MacDonald Island during celebrations for National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21, 2022, and it has been the focal point at several events since that time. The municipality is committed to advancing reconciliation in the region and continues to build annually on its efforts to create awareness and offer learning opportunities that lead to a greater understanding of the true history and Indigenous culture that makes Wood Buffalo a great place to live, learn, work, and play.

Please share how your municipality marked September 30 with warren@RMAAlberta.com.

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