

AADIZOOKAAN

WINTER STORYTELLING GATHERING

Tuesday, January 13, 2026 | 9:45 am to 2:00 pm
Manitoba Theatre for Young People

In many First Nations cultures across Turtle Island, winter is the season when stories are meant to be shared. Like water, these stories carry memories. As the rivers freeze and animals retreat into quiet, the people gather around fires to pass on teachings, songs, and oral histories. It is in the stillness that stories come alive – guiding the next generation, honouring the spirits, and weaving kinship between past, present and future.

First Nations cultures have long passed on knowledge from generation to generation through oral traditions, which includes storytelling.

Storytelling is a traditional method used to teach about cultural beliefs, values, customs, rituals, history, practices, relationships and ways of life. First Nations storytelling is a foundation for holistic learning, relationship building and experiential learning.

It involves expert use of the voice, vocal and body expression, intonation, the use of verbal imagery, facial animation, context, plot and character development, natural pacing of the telling, and careful authentic recall of the story. We are grateful to the storytellers for sharing their knowledge and expertise with us.

OUR STORYTELLERS

Jason Bone



Dennis Chartrand



Elder Margaret Lavallee



Jason Parenteau



Rylee Nepinak



MEET OUR STORYTELLERS



Jason Bone is a Cultural Facilitator at Manitoba First Nation Education Resource Centre. He graduated from the University of Manitoba with a Masters of Arts, and a BA with a major in Indigenous Governance from the University of Winnipeg. Jason is from Keesekooowenin First Nation, near riding mountain national park. His cultural knowledge comes from the midewin teaching lodge, and from being an oshkaabewis (helper/writer) to the late Midewid(one who works with the sound of the drum) Ron Indian Mandamin (lban).

Dennis Chartrand is a member of Minegoziibe Anishinabe (formerly known as Pine Creek). He currently works at NCI FM and hosts Da Minos Music Lodge Monday to Thursday evenings from 8 pm to 9 pm. He has also worked with the University of Winnipeg's WiiChiiwakanak Learning Centre, Indigenous Engagement, and the Oral History Centre, University of Manitoba, Indigenous Languages of Manitoba, NCI FM, and Mazinaate Publishing on an Indigenous Language radio show entitled 'Aakoziwigamig: An Ojibwe Radio Drama'. Chartrand is as known as voicing Darth Vader in the Ojibwe-dubbed Star Wars film, "Anangong Miigaading: A New Hope".



Elder Margaret Lavallee is an Anishinaabe Ikwe from Sagkeeng First Nation and an Elder in Residence at Ongomiizwin Education from the Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing at Rady Faculty of Health Sciences. Margaret's experience comes from over 40 years in varied Human Relations responsibilities within the health care field. Margaret holds a degree in Bachelor of General Studies from Brandon University. She was also honoured by the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences with an honorary doctorate degree for her lifelong work for the Indigenous community in the health care field. Margaret's role as Elder in Residence for the last 17 years ensures Indigenous knowledge and world views are incorporated into all levels of student support at the University of Manitoba.

MEET OUR STORYTELLERS



Jason Parenteau is a Lenape man born in Vancouver and he is a member of the Moravian of the Thames Delaware Nation. Jason is a respected and recognized member of the Indigenous community in Winnipeg and in Manitoba. He has worked with Manitoba Justice and Dakota Ojibwe Child and Family Services providing culturally appropriate services. He founded the Roseau River Jiu Jitsu Club and he operates Miikwan Consulting & Indigenous Education (miikwan.ca)

Rylee Nepinak is a proud Anishinaabe who grew up off-reserve in Winnipeg's North End and is a member of Sagkeeng First Nation in Treaty 1 Territory. Rylee is one of the Co-Founders of Anishiative, a grassroots community organization that connects Indigenous youth to land-based education, Inner-city cultural and mental wellness opportunities. Motivated by a state of emergency in Tataskewayak Cree Nation, Nepinak cycled across Canada raising money and promoting awareness about Indigenous youth suicide. Nepinak finished his journey in 40 days. Rylee has also been involved in supporting relatives experiencing houselessness by means of coordinating the community warming tipis at the Thunderbird House every winter. The efforts of which helped lead to the beginning stages of an Indigenous-led warming space for houseless relatives called N'dinawemak.



[chrr.info/
just-waters](http://chrr.info/just-waters)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We extend our gratitude to Elder Margaret Lavallee, Jason Bone, Jason Parenteau, Dennis Chartrand, MICEC and our EMCEE, Rylee Nepinak for their guidance. Thank you to Isaac Murdoch for lending us the beautiful art featured on the event poster and program, to Angela Ciceron for the poster design and promotions, and to the CHRR and Just Waters teams for all of their support. We acknowledge the University of Manitoba Faculty of Arts and Ignite programs for funding, and support from the Mauro Institute for Peace & Justice and the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre. Finally, thank you to Ramona Milliea for her vision, knowledge, guidance and a huge thanks to Manitoba Theatre for Young People for being such a great host!

