



## Elevating summer recreational programming in a “booming” rural community

### THE LAC DU BONNET REGION IN

Manitoba has long attracted cottage-goers, campers and tourists seeking outdoor adventures.

In recent months, the coronavirus pandemic has brought more people to the area for longer periods of time — part of the trend away from city living and towards locations offering more opportunities to spend time outdoors.

“We’ve seen tremendous growth in the numbers of people staying here, and there’s been even more interest in our recreational services, our parks, trails, rivers and lakes since the pandemic began,” says Courtney Bangert-Murray, Recreation Director for the Regional Municipality of Lac du Bonnet.



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF  
LAC DU BONNET, MANITOBA

**Canada**

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Paisley Poirier, Recreation Program Leader



Paisley instructing and assisting at a Badminton Clinic in Lac du Bonnet.

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The recreational programming offered by the municipality is built around Lac du Bonnet’s natural assets, and with rising demand, it wanted to expand and elevate its summer programs.

Funding from the Government of Canada, via the CPRA Youth Employment Experience program, gave the municipality the opportunity to accomplish that goal — through the hiring of 18-year-old Lac du Bonnet resident Paisley Poirier as Recreation Program Leader.

Paisley took on the job during the summer of 2021 before she was to head to the University of Winnipeg to study theatre and film.

CPRA’s Youth Employment Experience program is designed to help young people gain experience and skills in the parks and recreation sector, while providing organizations with additional resources to augment programs and services. Courtney and Paisley both say these objectives were realized.

“Paisley brought a special brand of creativity and unique skills and insights to the position,” says Courtney, who took on role of mentor to Paisley. “She’s from Lac du Bonnet, and I was very impressed by her understanding of the different dynamics of the community, which was a big asset to us in planning programming.”

Paisley previously worked in programming and instruction for summer camps with Badminton Manitoba in Winnipeg,

and she ran Lac du Bonnet’s first-ever badminton-skills clinic as part of the summer recreation program.

Paisley helped design and deliver other programs geared for children, including a toddlers’ program of games and activities that emphasized development of physical literacy skills. Older children benefited from her outdoor art program and her enhancements to Water Blast, which engaged youngsters in water-based games, races and drills and beach activities at the Lac du Bonnet Town Dock and Beach.

“Although I am confident performing on the stage, having this experience certainly boosted my confidence in other areas,” says Paisley. “Taking on responsibility for planning and organizing multiple activities also increased my skills. In addition to the joys of working with the staff and kids, I know this has been great professional development for me.”

Paisley played a significant role in facilitating the summer’s most complex and high-profile recreational event — the Lac du Bonnet Amazing Race. Courtney says Paisley’s organizational and creative skills helped make it a true success for the community.

“We truly appreciate this program funding from CPRA,” says Courtney. “We gained so much from having Paisley join our team, and as her mentor, I was thrilled to see her confidence and skills develop throughout the summer.” 🍁