



Manie Daniels will be remembered on Sunday, July 21 during a fundraising event for the Manie Daniels Centre at the Maberly Town Hall from 1 to 4 p.m. Photo credit: Submitted.

COMMUNITY | PERTH

Fundraiser for Manie Daniels Centre in Maberly taking place July 21

By **Hometown News**

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LAURIE WEIR

July 21 will be a bittersweet day at the Manie Daniels Centre (MDC) in Maberly.

It was six years ago on this date that Daniels died after being released from prison.

“Everyone is welcome,” said Spencer Kell, founder of Love Soluble, and the MDC, as they’re encouraging people to drop by and enjoy the afternoon of music, food and camaraderie.

The event won't be held at the centre but at the Maberly Hall instead, but guests can still learn all about the eight-man home that Kell purchased about a year ago and has named the MDC in honour of his friend, Daniels.



Kell and Daniels met at the Maplehurst Correctional Complex in Milton several years ago. They bonded over card games, artwork and shared experiences. Kell was released from prison in March of 2018 and made it to Ottawa, where he lived and worked, attending the Salvation Army Church, diligently adhering to sobriety. It was July 19 that same year when Daniels was released with a plan of joining Kell in Ottawa. Instead, Daniels went to a bar and then to a house party. He died on July 21.

When Kell got the news of his friend's death, he rode his motorcycle to Guelph and brought a leather jacket and Metallica T-shirt for Manie to be buried in.

It's been Kell's journey to create a safe space for men going through the same types of life experiences.

The MDC is a recovery space filled with love and gratitude.



Love Soluble

The Manie Daniels Centre is located in Maberly. The eight-room facility is home to adult males who are at risk of incarceration because of actions influenced by substance use disorder. Photo credit: Submitted.

Sunday, the community is invited to celebrate and remember Daniels from 1 to 4 p.m. There will be live music, a silent auction, door prizes and a barbecue to enjoy.

There are two parts to the event, Kell explains. The fundraiser for non-riders starts at 1 p.m. and goes until 4 p.m. at the Maberly Hall, 180 Maberly-Elphin Rd. Motorcycle riders are encouraged to meet at noon in Smith Falls at 251 Brockville St. with kick stands up at 1 p.m. "and then we ride to the Maberly Hall to join the event," Kell explains.

The Boutiliers and Jack Steele will provide the music at the hall, and the barbecue lunch will be provided by Kellsons Craft Condiments.



Meagan M. (who wished only to use her first name) volunteers with the MDC. “She’s been extremely helpful, doing all sorts of stuff,” says Kell. “She has leadership qualities and I’ve given her the reins on several projects, and that’s been such a blessing because it’s freeing me up to do other things – like putting a roof on the building.”

Meagan says she enjoys volunteering at the MDC. “I’m excited to go to the centre to see where I can help out and what I can learn. It’s been a great experience.”

She’s spearheading the fundraiser. “We’re all working together, but separately to get our silent auction prizes and door prizes organized ... the community has been great.”

Awards will be presented during the event, including one in Daniels’ honour. Other awards will recognize those who have been regular donors and contributors to the MDC’s success.

THE MDC

Kell has been working on restoring the MDC after a zoning hiccup was addressed by Tay Valley Township earlier this year. The facility is home to adult males who are at risk of incarceration because of actions influenced by substance use disorder.

Reeve Rob Rainer said a minor variance application approval was given by the township’s Committee of Adjustment. The minor variance pertained to a minimum distance separation between the centre property and a nearby residence.

Last year, Kell purchased the run-down, four-bedroom house to turn into a treatment facility – pending government funding. After all, he says, this will keep men off the streets and out of jail if there are safe house options like this.

There have been a lot of renovations at the MDC going on over the past several months to get the centre ready for habitation. Currently, three men are living at the home, plus Kell himself.

“I give them peer mentorship and counselling, and we run through a daily structure,” Kell explains. “There are expectations and total abstinence has to be the goal for the person to be eligible (to stay at the home).”

Rents are geared to payments from Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program.

Kell says residents have to go to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings nightly and attend 90 meetings in 90 days.

“It’s a shell of a program,” he says.

But the facility needs financial support as well as staff to help run it, Kell says, who is qualified to counsel his peers after graduating from a diploma program at Willis College.



It's through compassionate care and ongoing support he is dedicated to providing residents with the tools and skills needed to become successful and not get caught up in the cycle of recidivism.

LOVE SOLUBLE

Kell is the founder of Love Soluble. He has transformed his life from a cycle of addiction and incarceration to one of recovery and community service. A survivor of Ontario's provincial correctional system, his battle with substance use disorder began at age 16, leading to his first incarceration at 23. Over the next 20 years, Kell cycled through various correctional institutions and treatment centers, serving more than two years behind bars and attending six treatment programs.

In 2013, while incarcerated, Kell attended his first drug treatment program, funded by his parents. Despite a brief period of sobriety, he relapsed due to a lack of life skills. In 2017, facing new charges and held without bail, Kell devised a plan to get clean after talking with God, he says.

Kell secured admission to a rehab program in Ottawa, using this to gain release from jail.

His determination led him to enroll in a diploma program in addiction at a local college. Balancing treatment, education, and full-time employment, he turned his life around. Upon returning to court, his progress earned him suspended sentences and probation.

In 2018, Kell founded Love Soluble, a non-profit aimed at helping those in similar cycles of addiction and incarceration. He completed his diploma with high honours, became an associate addictions counsellor, and remains active in his local Salvation Army church and the 12-step fellowship.

Kell's journey from addiction to recovery exemplifies resilience and dedication. His work with Love Soluble provides hope and support to others facing similar challenges.

MANIE DANIELS

While incarcerated, Kell befriended Daniels. Kell was about 10 years younger.

Albert Joseph Daniels was known as Little Buffalo that Runs Against the Herd, or Manie (Little Man) as he was the only boy. He was born in Peepeekisis First Nation in Saskatchewan. He was removed from his home and placed in a church-run residential school, where he experienced significant trauma and abuse.

Daniels loved the outdoors; he enjoyed fishing and hunting, especially for deer, beaver, bear and moose. But he started drinking, taking drugs and fighting – and ended up spending most of his life behind bars.

Sunday's event in Maberly will allow the community to learn more about the MDC and how it came to be in Tay Valley Township. Everyone is encouraged to attend. A show of support through donations would be greatly appreciated.



For more information on Love Soluble, the Manie Daniels Centre, or to become a regular donor, please visit the website: <https://lovesoluble.ca> and watch for a grand opening at the MDC in the months ahead. Kell says he welcomes donations of all kinds – including food to feed the hungry group. Email him for more information: info@lovesoluble.ca
