

# Empire-Advance

serving virden & area since 1885

MARCH 14, 2025 | EMPIRE: VOL 120 NO 30 / ADVANCE: VOL 139 NO 32 | PUBLISHING FRIDAYS

READY IN 20 MINUTES OR LESS

## LUNCH

MAIN + SIDE + DRINK

**FOR ONLY \$15**



**Boston Pizza**  
VIRDEN, MB

\*CONDITIONS APPLY. ASK YOUR SERVER FOR DETAILS.

SUNRISE CREDIT UNION

f x @ You Tube

## THIRTY GRAND

IN YOUR HAND

Purchase a home with our LOW **3.89%** residential mortgage rate and get a chance to **WIN \$30,000.**

\*Some conditions apply, visit [sunrise.mb.ca](http://sunrise.mb.ca) for details.

## AUD audience cheers Choral Connections



Konektis Choir with Clint McLachlan directing.

PHOTOS BY ANNE DAVISON



'Steppin Out Medly' dancers include Jayenna Draper & Blake Majcher; Nadine McLachlan & Clint McLachlan (a choir director); Meagan Lawson & Jon Fetsch; Kristen Nerbas & Jackson Hacault; Shelby Nohr & Aron Cox; Daelyn Fefchak & Dylan Southam; Elora Wiesener & Nazar Galinski. They're accompanied by an eight-piece swing/jazz band in the orchestra pit.

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE ADVANCE

Konektis Choir's 60+ voices brought 'Choral Connections' concert to Virden AUD Theatre last Saturday afternoon where their music was met with cheers and applause.

One of the directors, Marla Fontaine, had described the show as a spectacle and she was right with some selections including choreographed movement and dance.

In choir work, we expect wonderful harmonies, but this went beyond expectations.

The opening number, 'World O World,' featured beautiful, off-the-staff sustained soprano tones.

The traditional spiritual (Shall we gather) 'At the River', was a favourite but ... the favourites just kept coming.

Throughout this dynamic show, choir groupings repositioned themselves on stage and sometimes off stage. During 'Amihan' (conversation with the wind) by a Filipino composer, female voices in the four loges twittered with magical bird-like chirps.

Including director Michelle Chzyk, this



One of the three Konektis Choir directors Virden's Michelle Chzyk at the mic.

choir has a large contingent of current and former Virden area talent: accompanist Justine Burke, Darrell Corbel, Jayenna Draper, Daelyn Fefchak, Shane Groom, Rachel (Russell) Lesy, Susan Martens, Dean Munchinsky, Marlin Peters, Todd Plaisier, Alix Potrebka, Dylan Southam, Evan Terin, Cody Thiessen, Monique Waller, and Tyra Zander.

If you missed it, or if you attended and want more, Konektis' next and final concert performances this spring are in Brandon on Saturday, April 19, at 2:30pm and 7:30pm in Knox United Church.

## Inside...



## CURLING CLUB'S 125TH BONSPIEL UNDERWAY

P9



## HIDDEN TREASURES COMMUNITY THRIFT STORE

P3



## SpongeBob saves Bikini Bottom



On Thursday, Plankton (Abby Green) tries to convince Bikini Bottom-ers of a nefarious scheme.



PHOTOS BY ANNE DAVISON

Thursday evening Callie Gray in a brilliant performance as SpongeBob is about to drop the bubble ball into the volcano's mouth ("it's hot up here!") to relieve the pent-up pressure.

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Virден & District Youth Choir acted, sang and danced, in *SpongeBob Musical* on Virден AUD Theatre stage, March 5 and 6 before large audiences with two different casts featured in lead roles over both showings.

You knew *SpongeBob SquarePants* would save the day in this happily ever after fantasy musical, but how could a sea sponge wrestle a rumbling volcano? Well, it turned out the lowly sponge wasn't a loser and through a little teamwork and of course science, Bob found a way to diffuse that volcano which was about to blow near their undersea town of Bikini Bottom.

Many strange creatures lived at Bikini Bottom, such as 'Plankton', 'Pearl', 'Gary the Snail', 'Squidward' and a host of others, making for entertaining plays on words.

Directors Susan Martens, Kelsey Brown, Luke Munchinsky and Monique Walker had help from Evan Terin as assistant director / projector operator; Dianne Liefso on lights; Leon Friesen on technology; Andrea Gray choreography; and a host of parent volunteers.

Over 50 students from grades 4-9 represented Virден, Oak Lake, Elkhorn, Kola, Reston, Birtle and Maryfield with many solo/group parts and a full cast choir that sounded spectacular.

Script purchase, costuming, technology, theatre time and instruction/practices makes for a large budget and there's a fee to belong to the youth choir.

"The students pay \$190 for a full year of instruction and get all the bells and whistles in an exciting production each year. Our community is so very proud of this program," says Michelle Chzyk, director with Virден Theatre Productions, the organization that produces Virден's adult-based musical productions each year.

She says that Virден & District Youth Choir's fees are very reasonable. "In other communities students pay over three times that amount."

Working as a music teacher within Virден schools for decades Chzyk's penchant for developing talent has left a legacy. She now points to the strength of the entire arts community in Westman including dance instruction and the school band program.

"There are music teachers in our town, both at the elementary schools and the junior high. We have wonderful piano teachers, voice teachers, people that coach students for the speech arts festival."

The *Sponge Bob* production included junior assistant directors: Arianna Kerr, Sarah Lindsay, Kaitlyn Cox, Nevah Cowan, Jasmyne Andries and Owen Gray.

## Canadian flag proudly displayed



PHOTO BY CHRISTINE WADDELL

This proud display of a Canadian flag at Hi-Way Grocery in Virден proudly speaks to Canada's unified opposition to US imposed tariffs. The recent tariff war has galvanized the Canadian will to source as much food and other goods as possible from within Canada's borders.

## Verner and her one-time jazz jam band entertains

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

ArtsMosaic's Station gallery was crowded on March 7 for Teagan Verner's art show – *Vivid Reflections* - where her portraits were on display. Her musical side was featured in a one-time jazz jam band, a five-piece ensemble.

Formerly from Brandon but now living and working in Virден at one of the car dealerships, this brilliant artist was a hit on the baritone saxophone.

Verner plays weekly with a Brandon community concert band where tenor saxophonist Scott Greenlay also plays. His jazz side showed up making a great sax duo.

The five had never jammed together before, but they brought a lot of fun to the gallery reception.

Bass guitarist Will Moszynski played with Verner years ago in high school.

Drummer, Isabelle Snow's groove, was the heartbeat.



PHOTO BY DALE DAVISON

At *Vivid Reflections* art show Teagan Verner is reflected in her mirror of her own work.

Improvising on keyboard, Liam McAuley said, "That's the great thing about jazz, a bunch of people can come together and connect on one thing (theme)."

Verner's excitement was evident as she thanked people for coming to her

reception. "It's my very first solo exhibition," she said, "It's the last 11 years of my life, all here in this room, with all the artwork and all the music."

Next month's show in the Station gallery will be Festival art.

## We're Hiring

Role: Seasonal Chemical Delivery Driver  
Location: Hamiota, MB

### Job Requirements:

- Minimum Class 1 or 3 Driver's License with Air Brake endorsement
- Previous equipment operation (e.g., Forklift) and maintenance experience, an asset
- Previous Anhydrous Ammonia experience, preferred

To learn more, scan below or reach out to connect:



jobs.nutrien.com



Nutrien  
Ag Solutions



# Hidden Treasures Community Thrift Store celebrates 1st year



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Customers browse in Hidden Treasures in Reston.

**Submitted**  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

When the existence of Reston's thrift store was in question last year, community members made a decision to do something about it. Where there's a will, there's a way and one year later, it's going strong thanks to volunteers.

After operating Hidden Treasures for seven years, the Reston Anglican Church announced their retirement effective Dec. 31, 2023. The Reston community recognized the importance of this business and a meeting was held to gauge interest in continuing this venture. The meeting was well attended and resulted in a new 10-member board being formed.

The board consists of Kodi Whitehurst (chair), Eleanor Tamilowicz (secretary), Parker Janz (treasurer), Candy Wanless, Debbie Wiebe, Terri Vandenberghe, Carmelle Williams, Judy Lochhead, Dyane Williamson and Marilee Smeltz.

The RM of Pipestone provided a grant to cover the first three month's rent on the building and PAREC Pancake breakfast donated \$500 to get us started. The Anglican ladies generously turned over their inventory and most of the store's fixtures. The Reston and Area Foundation supplied a grant which enabled us to purchase a few more essentials.

The "new" Hidden Treasures Community Thrift Store opened on Feb. 1, 2024 with a grand opening on March 2. Store hours are 1 - 5 pm Thursdays and Fridays and 10 am - 2 pm on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month (except July, August and September).

"We are so thankful for the enthusiastic

group of volunteers who sort, clean, and price items, work during store hours, clean the store, take care of administrative tasks and the multitude of other things necessary to keep the business running smoothly," says the board.

Serving charities

"Our first year has been successful financially and proceeds have supported local trust funds and the Christmas Cheer program in 2024 and the intention is to return future profits to the community, likely through a grant application process. We have also responded to appeals from organizations in Brandon for dishes, housewares and bedding. Items we cannot sell are passed on to others who might use them or, as a last resort, taken to textile recycling bins in Brandon. We send as little as possible to the landfill in keeping with our Mission Statement.

"Of course, none of this would be possible without the generous support of our community. We continue to be overwhelmed by the quantity and quality of donations we receive. Thank you! Another huge thank you to everyone who shops at the store. Whether you are a regular, an occasional drop-in or an out-of-town shopper who makes a trip to HTCTS a "special outing", we appreciate you and thank you for your support."

Everyone is welcome to attend the first annual meeting at the RES Centre, March 19, at 7pm. The board will review the past year, pay tribute to volunteers and consider suggestions for changes or new ideas.

Hidden Treasures Community Thrift Store located on Main Street in Reston is a place with something for everyone. Pay a visit and see for yourself.

# Habitat for Humanity to present medal to Karen McKinnon

**By Anne Davison**  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

For 14 years Habitat for Humanity volunteer, Karen McKinnon, has taken the reins, inspired a crew of volunteers, assembled trades persons and swung a hammer herself to provide low-cost homes for Virden families. For this McKinnon is being recognized with a King Charles III Coronation medal.

"Under Karen's leadership, the Virden chapter has built five homes in Virden – the most recent one being completed in October of 2024. Five families have moved into these homes, including eight children (overall). This is a remarkable achievement for a town with a population the size of Virden," says HFH Chapter support, Christina Falk.

It takes a committee to make this happen and McKinnon not only chairs the Virden chapter, but also wears other hats on the committee.

She writes letters for fundraising, walks families through the application process, gets quotes from contractors to work on builds, and makes sure supply delivery and contractors are organized for each build, etc.

By bringing skilled volunteers to the work, McKinnon ensures things are done correctly.

For this year's Habitat home she was on site every day, Monday to Friday (and sometimes Saturdays) for eight hours a day – for five months,



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Christina Falk visits with Karen McKinnon on the job in her pink safety hat at the 2024 Habitat for Humanity build in Virden.

working on the building. Without her, the families in Virden would not have received their homes.

"Karen's determination and drive is an inspiration to those who work along side of her," notes Falk.

Habitat Canada received 57 King Charles III Coronation medals to hand out to their volun-

teers across Canada – two of them were awarded to Habitat volunteers in Manitoba and McKinnon is one of those.

The public is invited to this medal presentation on Wednesday, March 19 at 7 pm at St. Paul's United Church. Four other area citizens received medals last week. See coverage next week.

**Greg NESBITT**  
MLA for Riding Mountain



204.759.3313  
Toll Free 844.877.7767  
gregnesbittmla@mymts.net  
#7 - 515 4th Avenue  
Burlington Place, Shoal Lake, MB

## Letter to the Editor

### RE: The clock controls man

The province of Saskatchewan survives quite nicely without this bi-annual time change and there are several smaller communities scattered throughout Canada who also manage to exist very comfortably without having to change their clocks and time pieces twice a year.

When told the reason for the time changes, a wise elder, of The First Nations, explained it this way.

"Only a white man would believe that you could cut a foot (1/3 of a meter) off the top of a blanket and sew it to the bottom of the same blanket and have a longer blanket!"

Perhaps man controls his own destiny, but there is no doubt that 'the clock' controls man.

John Fefchak, Virden



Through shelter,  
we empower.

Habitat for Humanity has been selected as a partner by the Government of Canada to receive 57 Coronation Medals to commemorate the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III. These medals are to be awarded to Habitat volunteers who have made a significant impact to their local affiliate and community.

Please join us as we present **Karen McKinnon**, Chair, Habitat Manitoba Virden Chapter with this prestigious award.

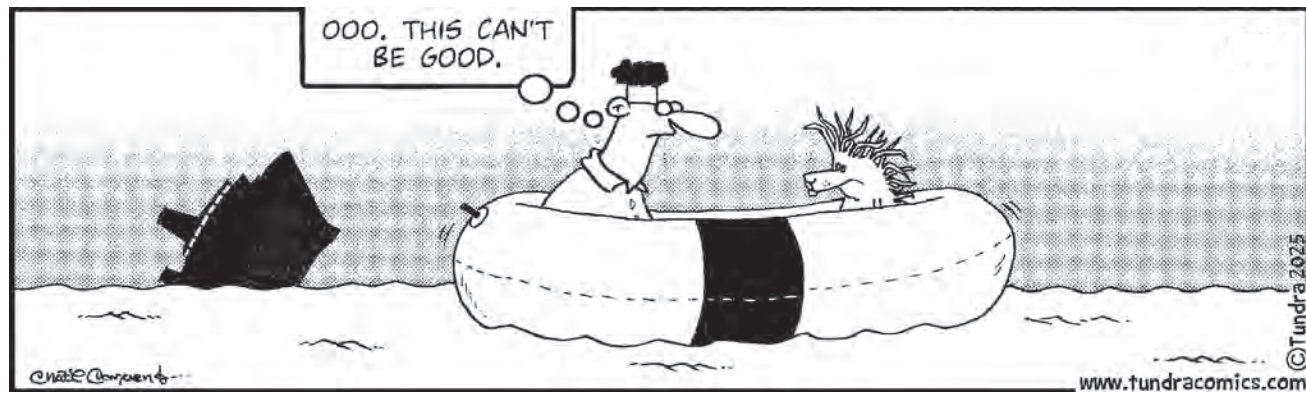
**Date:** Wednesday, March 19, 2025  
**Time:** 7:00 pm  
**Location:** St. Paul's United Church, Virden, Manitoba

••• Refreshments to follow medal presentation •••



# Tundra

By Chad Carpenter



## When I am old...

Strange, isn't it, that when we were young someone who was forty was old. Our grandparents were really old. And they may have been 65! I look through the old photo albums and note pictures of my ancestors — grandparents, parents, aunts and uncles- and they appear more aged when they were in their mid life than when they were 10 years older. Part of that will be the change in clothing and hair styles. Part of that will be in the very formal way they presented for family pictures, and part of it will be that life in general had become easier. Career pressures under control, family grown and provided for, and retirement in sight. Much easier to smile.

Reflecting on family genes and attributes, I am thankful for both. Uncle Henry, an uncle by marriage so no genetic line, loved sports- skiing, baseball, golfing- and fully engaged in competitions. There was a Toews family reunion at the Kane schoolyard. The afternoon activities included a baseball game. I so clearly recall Uncle Henry, no longer young, probably the age I now am, leaving third, rushing for home plate, his toupee seriously awry! Safely scoring, he adjusted his hair piece and continued on. I want that! (Well, maybe not the hair piece! But the attitude!)

One of my aunts, my father's sister, so this is a genetic connection, is 94. Aunt Marilyn continues to be engaged with living, using her musical ability, piano and voice, to encourage others and support her younger than me daughter in her musical endeavours. Up until a few years ago my aunt shared her gifts with 'seniors', some younger than she! Aunt Marilyn pursued her love for music and education as an adult, raising a family of five, the wife of a teacher/preacher and faithful family member to her extended family. Her knowledge of scripture, her depth of faith, her love for God and family inspire me.

Then there was Mr. Bergen: a refugee from Russia, a farmer, a patriarch, an advocate for higher education, and a life long learner. No genetics but what a character. He spoke Low German, I spoke English and he felt if that worked for the world powers of the time, it worked for us. The parents provided the finances for the oldest child to attend university, and then that child helped the next one, and so on down the line. Now, I know that the children were not four years apart in age so there must have been some overlap of support, in the family there were teachers, nurses, and a missionary. The youngest son chose to maintain the farm. I recall watching Mr. Bergen planting an apple tree in a decaying stump in the yard knowing that he would not eat of the fruit, but his children and grandchildren would. Foresight and wisdom.

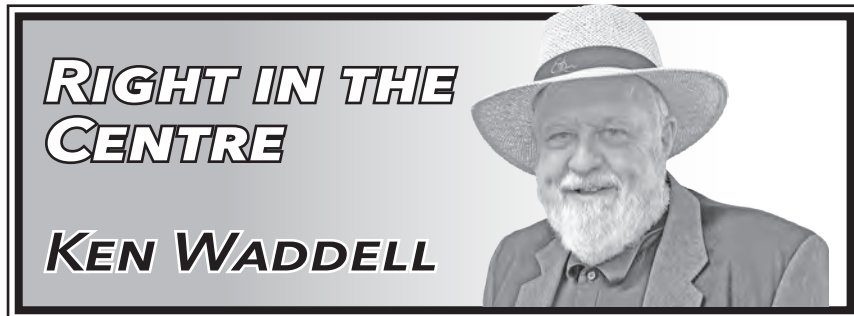
I do wonder what others will remember of me. Keeping in mind that I am not yet old and have years left to make a difference! It is my heart's desire that I will be remembered with affection, and respect. I'm still working on making memories!

# Tariffs a bad choice on both sides of the border

The Federal Liberal Party of Canada leadership race ended in the afternoon on Sunday, March 9. By the look of the results, the race actually ended before it started. The predicted winner, Mark Carney, received over 85 per cent of the vote. Over 400,000 people signed up to vote but just over 150,000 people actually voted. It is my understanding that a person doesn't have to pay a membership fee, they only need to register to be a member and to vote in the leadership race.

Mark Carney promised throughout the short campaign and in his speech on Sunday that he would stand up to Trump, repeal the carbon tax and unite the country. It sounds good except for the fact that Carney has been Justin Trudeau's financial advisor for years and until recently has been a big promoter of the carbon tax. Carney's approach has been that the government has to punish purchasers of gas by taxing it heavily in an effort to get car and truck drivers to use less, to save the planet from burning up.

It's very flawed logic because Canada produces a very small percentage of the world's greenhouse gases, especially compared to China for example. In addition China uses every fuel available to them to burn to create energy heat buildings and power plants. We, in Canada, have been taxing our people to solve a problem that may not exist and even if it does, we aren't doing much to make it worse.



The Liberal policies that have limited our economy will continue under Carney who may well be named prime minister by the time you read this column.

One of the absolutely worst Liberal policies has been to commit \$50 billion to three EV car battery plants when we don't even produce an electric car in Canada. Canada has also placed a tariff on Chinese electric vehicles, I believe it's 100 percent and that does two things. It makes them just as expensive as US built EVs and it angered the Chinese government to the point that China will apply a 100 per cent tariff to just over \$1 billion of Canadian canola/rapeseed oil, oil cakes and pea imports, and a 25 per cent duty on \$1.6 billion worth of Canadian aquatic products and pork. The tariffs on canola and pork could have a devastating effect on Manitoba farmers and the economy.

Hopefully, Carney will seek to mend the errors of his and the Liberals ways. Nobody wins in a tariff war. Recently, Dauphin-Swan River-Neepawa Member of Parlia-

ment, Dan Mazier said, "Canada putting tariffs on products coming into Canada is like a person punching themselves in the face." The federal Liberals are just as dumb as Trump because he said US citizens won't bear the expense of the tariffs, the countries will. That's not true, tariffs raises the price of products the consumer.

We also need to get rid of all the trade barriers between provinces. I think there are still restrictions on sending meat from one province to the other if it is processed in a provincially inspected plant. Small scale breweries have an awful time getting their products into liquor stores in another province.

Trump shouldn't put tariffs on goods from other countries and neither should Canada.

Neither should we play silly protectionist games between provinces.

*Disclaimer: The views expressed in this column are the writer's personal views and are not to be taken as being the view of the newspaper staff.*

**Empire Advance**  
Serving Virden and area since 1885

204- 748-3931 | virdenempireadvance@outlook.com  
www.empireadvance.ca | Drop box @ 305 Nelson St W Virden, MB  
Yearly Subscription Rates (excluding taxes): \$52.03 in Manitoba, \$59.08 elsewhere in Canada  
Canadian Publications Mail Sales Product Agreement #40069240

Funded by the Government of Canada  
Financé par le gouvernement du Canada



PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY  
AD DEADLINE: TUESDAY 12  
PM PRIOR TO ISSUE DATE

Empire Advance does not guarantee publication of any submitted articles or pictures. Such submissions, if printed, will appear at the discretion of the managing editor or publisher and only when time and space permit. We are not responsible for fax and e-mail transmissions which are not confirmed either in person or by phone.

### STAFF

Sales/Media/Design: Jessica Coulter | Reporter: Anne Davison | Office Manager: Oliver Nolan | Reporter: Dale Davison | Sports Reporter: Robin Wark | Reporter: Gerry Nolan | Sales: Dianne Hanson | Owner/Publisher/Editor: Ken & Christine Waddell



# Police assist Child and Family Services

## Westman RCMP Service Report, March 2 to March 8

**Submitted**  
By WESTMAN RCMP

Westman RCMP received a total of 59 calls for service which included 8 traffic, 1 (drug) impaired operation, 1 (alcohol) impaired, 2 roadside suspensions (1 drug related, 1 alcohol related), 6 mischief, 5 wellbeing checks, 1 resist/obstruct peace officer, 4 mental health act, 2 sexual assaults, 2 assaults, 2 uttering threats, 1 harassment, 1 theft under \$5,000, 1 theft over \$5,000, 1 theft of cattle under \$5,000 and 3 failure to comply with orders.

March 2 - third party caller reported a friend was being held hostage in Sioux Valley Dakota Nation (SVDN). RCMP attended and located both the possible victim and suspect. Both were intoxicated but nothing suspicious or criminal had occurred. The hostage report was deemed unfounded. Police transported both parties to a sober family member.

March 2 - dispatched to a home in SVDN for a wellbeing check. RCMP attended and observed all occupants to be heavily intoxicated with children present. CFS was notified and attended the residence. At this time the father of the children became agitated and attempted to interfere with CFS. The father was arrested for obstruction and transported to Virden RCMP Detachment where he was released once sober with a future court date.

March 4 - RCMP were conducting patrols on Hwy 83 in the RM of Pipestone and observed a vehicle traveling 150 km/hr in the 100 km/hr zone, the vehicle was observed to have dark tint (windows) as well. Officers tested the tint which tested at 15%. The driver, from Kansas, stated he believed Kansas tint laws were 20%. RCMP determined Kansas tint law is 35%. The driver was fined \$705 for speeding, \$174 for illegal tint, and was issued a serious offence notice.

March 4 - RCMP received a request for assistance

from SVDN First Nations Safety Officers. The community's officers had conducted a traffic stop and believed the driver to be intoxicated. RCMP attended and observed a strong odor of alcohol coming from the driver and open liquor in the vehicle. The driver was provided a breath test and the sample which resulted in a "FAIL". The driver was issued a 90-day licence suspension, 30-day vehicle impound and a \$237 fine for open liquor.

March 4 - RCMP were conducting proactive patrols of SVDN and determined there was an individual at a residence that currently had a warrant for her arrest. Police went to the residence and spoke with an individual that stated no one else was present. RCMP believed this to be deceitful as they'd seen other people in the residence and asked for permission to check. This request was denied and RCMP were told to return with a warrant. Police set up containment of the residence, continued their investigation and got a warrant to enter the home. They entered and located the female hiding in a crawl space along with a male who is known to be on conditions not to be with this female. Both were arrested and removed from the house. They were remanded and remain in custody.

March 5 - dispatched to a residence in Pierson where a possible theft had just occurred. RCMP attended the residence and saw signs of recent activity, however the property was vacant upon their arrival. RCMP conducted an investigation and spoke with the complainant and property rep, and determined a variety of tools were taken from the residence. The complainant became un-cooperative with the police during the investigation, so, RCMP have concluded the investigation.

March 6 - RCMP were conducting speed enforcement on Commonwealth Drive in Virden and observed a vehicle traveling 83 km/hr in a 50km/hr zone. The

driver was issued a \$482 fine for speeding.

March 6 - dispatch to an assault in SVDN between siblings. RCMP attended and spoke with the complainant, who was the victim. The complainant recanted their previous report and stated no assault occurred. With no visible injuries, RCMP concluded their involvement.

March 7 - RCMP were conducting patrols of Virden and observed a vehicle traveling with dark tint and no front licence plate. The vehicle was stopped and the driver displayed signs of impairment by a drug. A roadside drug test was positive for cocaine and THC. The driver was issued two licence suspensions.

March 7 - dispatched to a two-vehicle collision on Highway 1 east of Virden where Fire and EMS were on scene upon police arrival. RCMP determined a Semi hauling an empty flat deck trailer was turning right off Hwy 1 when it was struck from the rear by the SUV. The SUV entered the centre median ditch, heavily damaged and then caught fire and was completely burnt. The driver was able to exit the vehicle, neither driver were injured. East bound lanes of Hwy 1 were closed for about an hour and a half.

March 8 - RCMP conducting speed enforcement on Commonwealth Drive in Virden observed a vehicle traveling 92 km/hr in a 50 km/hr zone. The driver was issued a \$599 speeding fine.

March 8 - RCMP received a report of a possible impaired driver on Hwy 1. A police patrol located the subject vehicle. RCMP observed the vehicle to be moving across the lanes and crossing the line, entering the shoulder multiple times. The vehicle was stopped and the driver was arrested for drug impairment.

To report a complaint or non-emergent incident to RCMP please call 204-748-2135. For general inquiries including criminal record checks, call the admin line at 204-748-2046 Ext. 3. To report an emergency call 911.

If you witness a crime and wish to remain anonymous please contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477. The tip line is not traceable, and they do not subscribe to caller ID or call display.

## Citizen makes rescue before vehicle burns



PHOTO BY WDFD

Two WDFD firefighters on the hose working from the closed eastbound lane of Highway 1.

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Eastbound traffic on Highway 1 was interrupted early Friday morning when an SUV hit the ditch after grazing the rear end of a semi truck that was making a turn.

The accident occurred just a few kilometers east of Virden near the Bellview Road.

The call came in to Wallace District Fire Department (WDFD) at 08:24am, March 7, and Virden fire station was dispatched to the two-vehicle accident.

While on the way to the accident the fire department was advised that the SUV had burst into flames.

The quick work of a Good Samaritan is noted by WDFD Station 1 deputy chief Cory Nixon: "Huge

thanks to the quick thinking of an individual (name withheld) who, while we were en route to scene, was able to assist the occupants from the vehicle before it started on fire, undoubtedly saving their lives. Hats off to you sir!"

On arrival, "Crews worked quickly to extinguish the fire. Minor injuries were sustained by occupants."

"Fire engine 1 was staged to deploy a hand line (fire hose) with two firefighters extinguishing the blaze while Rescu 1 was staged to stop highway traffic to ensure the scene was safe for working."

EMS and RCMP were also on scene. Virden Towing picked up the vehicle once the fire was extinguished.



## LEAD the herd

**DUC programs put you ahead!**  
**CALL TODAY for 2025 signup:**

- ✓ **Forage**  
Experience exceptional establishment results.
- ✓ **Marginal Areas**  
Reduce weeds and salinity. Increase returns.
- ✓ **Sod Seeding**  
Rejuvenate pastures with legumes.

**CALL TODAY**  
**204-285-9779**

Funding for these programs is made possible through partnerships with Manitoba Beef and Forage Initiatives and the Conservation Trust.





# HELEN DRYSDALE

## OUT OF HELEN'S KITCHEN

Bake and flip it! Upside-down cakes have been a staple at family gatherings and potlucks for years. This dessert began as "skillet cake," which was a cake made in a cast-iron skillet on the stovetop and flipped before serving. It was made this way as most people did not have ovens at that time so cakes were cooked on a stovetop. The earliest known recipe for upside-down cake was published in 1876 in a cookbook called American Cookery. Apples or cherries were often the fruit used to top the cakes.

In 1901 Jim Dole started the Hawaiian Pineapple Company now known as Dole and began producing and marketing canned pineapple. Pineapple had been grown in Hawaii since the early 1800s, and there were canneries there by the 1880s, but no company canned on the scale of the Dole business. Dole's machine operation could peel, core, and cut 100 pineapples per minute. Dole needed his market to grow. In 1925 to help expand the market for canned pineapple the Company ran a contest for pineapple recipes. 60,000 submissions came in for pineapple recipes to be judged by a panel of food specialists. The chosen recipes would go into a cookbook called "Pineapple as 100 Good Cooks Love It". The winner of the \$50 cash prize was Mrs. Robert Davis of Norfolk Virginia for a pineapple upside down cake recipe. It is said that 2,500 of the 60,000 submissions were recipes for pineapple upside-down cake. The company advertised the downpour of that particular recipe to promote the popularity of the dessert thus increasing the sale of canned pineapple.

In the 1920s and 30s upside-down pineapple cake was considered special as pineapple was a very "glamorous fruit". I find this recipe in most old cookbooks especially from the fifties, sixties and seventies. We usually think of pineapple for this dessert but many fruits work. Cranberries, tropical fruits such as mango, apples, peaches or whatever fruit you fancy. I like upside-down cakes as they are perfectly easy to make and perfectly delicious.

Are you looking for ways to use the ripe bananas on your counter? This banana upside-down cake is a great option!

### Banana upside-down cake

#### Topping:

4 Tbsp. butter, melted  
2/3 cup brown sugar  
1/2 cup pecans or walnuts (optional)  
3 firm medium bananas, cut into 1/2-inch slices

#### Cake:

1 cup flour  
1 tsp. baking powder  
Pinch of salt  
1/2 tsp. cinnamon  
1/4 cup oil or melted butter  
1/2 cup sugar  
1 egg  
2 tsp. vanilla  
1/2 cup milk

Preheat oven to 350 F. Butter a 9 inch round cake pan. In a bowl, combine together butter and brown sugar. Spread into the bottom of the prepared pan. Arrange banana slices to fit tightly together over brown sugar mixture in the pan. If using nuts sprinkle them on the bananas. Set aside. In a bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, salt and cinnamon. In another bowl add the remaining ingredients and stir together. Add this to the flour mix and stir until combined. Spread this over the bananas. Bake for about 40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the centre of the cake comes out clean. Remove from oven and allow to cool slightly, about 5 minutes. Run a knife around the edge of the pan to loosen the edges before inverting onto plate. If you wait too long, the caramelized brown sugar will stick to the pan and the cake will not come out properly. Enjoy!

### Blueberry float pudding

(reprinted from last week as the last line was missing)

2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
1 Tbsp. lemon juice  
1 cup flour  
1/3 cup sugar  
1 tsp. baking powder  
1/2 cup milk  
3 Tbsp. butter melted  
2/3 cup sugar  
1 Tbsp. corn starch  
1 cup boiling water

In a small bowl toss the blueberries with the cinnamon and lemon juice. Layer the berries in a lightly greased 8X8 inch baking dish. In a bowl combine the flour, 1/3 cup sugar and baking powder. Stir in the milk and melted butter and then spoon evenly over the berries. Combine the 2/3 cup of sugar and cornstarch and sprinkle over the batter. Slowly pour the boiling water overall. Bake at 350 F for 45-50 minutes until cake tests done.

## Breathe your way to balance: Easy breathwork practices for a calmer you



Take a deep breath in... and let it out.  
Feels good, right?

Now imagine using that same breath to calm your mind, lower your stress, and even boost your digestion all without stepping foot in a gym or popping a pill. Welcome to the wonderful world of breathwork, where your lungs double as your very own wellness toolkit.

Breathwork is not just some new-age trend with a fancy name. Humans have been using conscious breathing techniques for thousands of years, from ancient yogis perfecting pranayama to monks using breath to sharpen focus during meditation. Fast forward to today, and science is catching up and studies show that changing how we breathe can lower blood pressure, ease anxiety, improve sleep, and even help with pain management.

When you are stressed, your breath gets shallow and fast, like you are running from a bear (even if the bear is just an overflowing inbox or traffic jam). Your body thinks danger is near and fires up the fight-or-flight mode, flooding your system with stress hormones called adrenaline and cortisol.

Breathwork lets you hack that system. By slowing your breathing, you are basically whispering to your nervous system, "hey, we are safe" and your body listens! Heart rate

slows, digestion improves, and your brain fog starts to clear.

There are tons of techniques out there and you do not need to be a guru to try them. One of the easiest is box breathing. Breathe in for four counts, hold for four, breathe out for four, hold again for four. It's just like drawing a square with your breath. It is a favorite trick used by athletes, first responders, and CEOs to stay cool under pressure.

If you want something even simpler, try belly breathing. Sit back, put a hand on your belly, and breathe deep enough to make your hand rise and fall. This type of deep diaphragmatic breathing is like a warm hug for your nervous system, perfect for calming jitters or unwinding after a long day.

For the adventurous types, there is holistic breathwork, which involves intense, rhythmic breathing sessions designed to unlock emotions, release tension, and even spark creative breakthroughs. It is a wild ride (best done with a trained guide), but for many, it is like therapy just without "the talking". This is something to look into if you are an adrenaline junky for sure.

The best part about breathwork? You can do it anywhere. Stuck in traffic? Breathe. Nervous before a meeting? Breathe. Need a mini vacation but your budget says no? Breathe.

With just a few minutes a day, you can turn your breath into your secret superpower, balancing your body and mind without any fancy equipment or pricey memberships.

So, take a deep breath and discover just how powerful your lungs really are.



Like Karl, you can:

## GET YOUR HOME INSULATED FOR FREE.

With the **Energy Efficiency Assistance Program**, you can also:

- Get a FREE Home Energy Check-Up to find more ways to save.
- Get a new natural gas furnace upgrade for \$9.50\* or \$25\*\* per month for 5 years.
- Get FREE energy efficient light bulbs, showerheads and aerators, air sealing products, and other energy saving items.

Find out if you qualify today  
[efficiencyMB.ca/EEAP](http://efficiencyMB.ca/EEAP)  
204-944-8181 or toll free 1-844-944-8181

**EFFICIENCY MANITOBA**

\*When replacing a standard efficiency natural gas furnace.  
\*\*When replacing a mid-efficiency natural gas furnace.



# MJHL HONoured THE BEST

**MJHL HOCKEY**  
**DEREK HOLTOM**

Lots of honours to get to this week, as the MJHL honoured the best of the week, month and year in a series of releases.

From the monthly away winners, Connor Paronuzzi from the Steinbach Pistons won the RBC Player of the Month award thanks to his 25 points (nine goals, 16 assists) in 10 games effort. This outburst has only added to his lead atop the MJHL scoring leaders.

The Safe Work Manitoba Defenseman of the Month is Isaiah Peters from the Winkler Flyers. In 12 games the rear guard scored six goals and added 13 assists for 19 points.

The Original 16 Goal-tender of the Month is rookie goaltender Mariko Bercier from the Waywayseecappo Wolverines. He won six of nine starts, posting a 2.22 GAA, a .935 save percentage and one shutout to help his team pass the Virden Oil Capitals in the standings.

The Chevrolet Rookie of the Month is Remy Hlady from the Selkirk Steelers.

He earned the honour after scoring eight goals and four assists in 10 games.

And the Manitoba Peak Performer is Caden Hegarty from the Neepawa Titans. Along with being community minded, Hegarty put up 17 points (eight goals, nine assists) in 10 games to earn this award.

The Northern Manitoba Blizzard took two of the three Original 16 Players of the Week.

Miguel Bouvier from the Blizzard is one of those winners, thanks to a four-goal, two-assist effort in three games.

Teammate Brett Ward was also recognized. The blueliner scored three goals and added two assists in three games to earn the honour.

The final winner is goaltender Cole Sheffield from the Dauphin Kings. He won both of his starts, posting a 1.50 GAA and a .955 save percentage to earn the honour.

The MJHL also announced their all-star teams for the year.

The first-team all stars

include forwards Miguel Bouvier from the Northern Manitoba Blizzard, Connor Paronuzzi from the Steinbach Pistons and Cayden Glover from the Dauphin Kings. The two defensemen are Isaiah Peters from the Winkler Flyers and Naaman Hofer from the Dauphin Kings, while the goaltender is Liam Ernst from the Winkler Flyers.

The second-team all stars include forwards Cam Bullinger from the Portage Terriers, Jayce Legaarden from the Winkler Flyers and Adam Vigfusson from the Niverville Nighthawks. The blueliners are Noah Szabo from the Steinbach Pistons and Parker Scherr from the Portage Terriers, while the goalie is Cole Sheffield from the Dauphin Kings.

The all-rookie team includes forwards Koy Funk from the Portage Terriers, Rohan Guevarra from the Selkirk Steelers, and Kam Thomas from the Winkler Flyers. The defensemen are Reece Gault from the Steinbach Pistons, Maxime Lavoie from the Winkler Flyers, and goaltender Mitchell Kathler from the Portage Terriers.

# Miniota News

**Submitted**  
BY LINDA CLARK

Word has been received from Jan Carnegie, Melville SK of the death of her sister-in-law Betty Carnegie who died on March 5. Betty would have been 103 years on March 7. Betty, from a family of 9 children, was the last remaining child of Ernie and Elizabeth Carnegie who ran the Arrow River General store for many years.

Deepest sympathy is extended to Stan, Kim and Braydon Bohrn on the death of Kim's aunt Eve Deneve at Regina.

Rod McKean and Mandy Sanders enjoyed a trip to Punta Cana, taking in the beaches and hot sun.

The Miniota School held their annual Jumprope for Heart at the Miniota Hall on March 6. Amazing jumping and tricks from all the students!

The Miniota Anglican and United Women hosted a World Day of Prayer service at the United Church on Friday, March 7, presenting the worship service prepared by the women of the Cook Islands. We had a wonderful turnout, with women from three other communities

joining us, for worship and fellowship.

Our thoughts are with the family and friends of Ernie Stowe who died this past week at the Assiniboine Centre in Brandon. Ernie was well known for his interests in guns and shooting and was a member of the Miniota Gun Club.

The U13 Elkhorn Miniota Hockey team travelled to MacGregor to participate in the C Hockey Manitoba Provincials. Proud to say the boys came home with the consolation banner! Congrats to the boys, coaches and their parents!

Visiting with Linda Clark and other local family members this past weekend was Julie, Reese and Carley Halipchuk, Ottawa; Daryl and Melanie Clark, Ituna SK; Ella Clark and Caleb Kotylak, Saskatoon and Scott and Donna Gammack Garson MB, as well as other family members of the Clark and Reid families.

The Miniota Fire Department held another successful fishing derby with gorgeous weather. The fire department would like to thank everyone who came out and supported this fundraising event. Chief Nick reports that even though there were



PHOTOS BY MINIOTA FIRE DEPT.

Families have fun during the Miniota Fish Derby at Hoopers Lake.

a few bites, no fish were caught, but nobody seemed too disappointed. The kids had fun sledding and winning prizes and that is what matters the most. The lucky winner of the 50/50 draw was Debbie Lee of Virden. The department had four nice raffle prizes this year thanks to the sponsors. Lunch was provided by the Miniota Discoveries Learning Centre. A wonderful day to be out enjoying nature and in support of our local Miniota Fire Department!

"It's not what you gather, but what you scatter, that tells what kind of life you have lived." Helen Walton

# REF MEMORIES

REF TO WRITER

GERRY NOLAN



In 25 plus years of officiating, I never had a player punch me or hit me with a stick intentionally. On faceoffs sometimes I got hit with sticks and along the boards sometimes a puck would hit me. Others were not as fortunate as myself, here are some stories.

I did get spit on by a player. I served him a match penalty which means hockey Manitoba and the league would have to deal with it. He received a one-year suspension for that.

Joe fan seemed to think if you were getting paid you had to take that crap. What a bunch of B.S. that is. You cannot make a living out of officiating in local arenas.

Two officials including our MLA Greg Nesbitt and his fellow official Bob White got punched both in the same game. The game was called off. The suspension was the team was kicked out of the league for failing to control their players. The team returned years later to the league. Both officials quit shortly after that.

Another referee was followed home by a player. The player had been kicked out of the game and obviously was mad about it. In the end the official and family who were upset at that time were fine, still unsettling. The player was banned from ever playing in that league again.

A referee doing a game was cross checked by a player in the face. The official did not get hurt. The player was given a one year suspension. The official hung them up at the end of the season.

A player, the North Central Hockey League had a great offensive season and also was voted as the winner of the Most Gentlemen trophy award. In game 3 in the next season, he punched an official. He was suspended for one year. I knew the player and asked him why he hit an official? His answer, his teammates had pestered him about being soft.

Another referee was threatened to be taken to court because a penalty he called was not a 5-minute penalty as the team thought. There was a 2-minute penalty issued on the play in question. The player did miss one game but was back playing after that.

An official is sitting with his family at a Wheat King game. His cell phone rings. A team executive representative is calling and is drunk. He was using abusive language because of a game the official called the night before. He in fact called him several more times. The result was a 18 game suspension to this man.

An official is working a game where the home team loses 15-2. He comes out after the game to find all 4 tires on his car slashed. That would take a lot of games to pay for that. The result was that the official quit

The Question is why would anyone want to officiate with B.S. like this? You certainly are not getting paid enough or have the security to make sure you are safe. This all happened in Westman rinks in your area. Really makes you want to get out there and referee. If there are no officials there are NO games.

In all these incidents players, fans and team executive members were the culprits. I have heard recently fans that were kicked out of an arena for bad behaviour this winter. Maybe it is just time to stand up for the officials and ban these idiots for a couple of years or maybe they should just be banned forever from going into a local arena! Fans, parents and team representatives if you can not control yourself, do us all a favour and stay away from the arena! Stay home!





**Contact:**  
[info@pphmb.com](mailto:info@pphmb.com)  
204-748-1788

**Services:**

- Plumbing
- Heating
- HVAC
- Hydronics
- Geothermal
- Septic Tank
- Electric & Gas Boilers





**Serving**

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Oilfield
- Residential

540, 7th Avenue  
Virden, MB ROM 2C0  
Phone: (204) 748-2790  
Email: [info@lrbelectric.ca](mailto:info@lrbelectric.ca)  
Web: [www.lrbelectric.ca](http://www.lrbelectric.ca)



AIR CONDITIONING      DRAIN CLEANING  
PLUMBING                      HEATING

204-748-2108



# Unbreakable bonds

**MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS**  
**DELSIE MARTIN**

In my column I speak a lot about emotional connection to family, friends and intimate partners but there is a major emotional connection that I have neglected to speak on, your connection with your pet. Pets are not just animals; they have become family. We connect with them in ways that's beyond human understanding, yet we know that the connection is there. I believe that we can connect with animals on a spiritual level, and we see proof of this in how well animals can help us heal.

Petting/cuddling animals releases oxytocin in our body. Oxytocin is a hormone that reduces stress and helps to promote feelings of comfort. Spending time with animals also lowers cortisol levels (the hormone associated with stress). Playing with an animal causes our body to release endorphins (the bodies natural painkillers). In addition to their effect on hormones, animals such as dogs and horses have been used for decades to help people cope with anxiety, depression and

other mental illnesses like PTSD. Emotional support animals not only provide comfort but can provide companionship during a time where someone can feel most alone. Interacting with other pet owners helps with socialization and meeting like-minded individuals. Walking a dog or riding a horse are forms of exercise and can promote overall wellbeing. Caring for a pet provides structure and routine and this sense of responsibility can be beneficial for mental health. This sense of responsibility can be great for children and this bond that animals have with their children can also help those children in expressing their emotions. Highly trained service animals or equine assisted therapy can be essential in the care of folks who are struggling with PTSD. We can see in how integral animals can be to healing how our connections with them run deep.

Our connection with our animals also becomes apparent when they are injured. Humans are wired for empathy, and we natur-

ally share in the distress of our animals. We feel empathy for them on a level as deep as if they were human. It's painful to see our loved ones in distress and not know how to help. We may feel guilty wondering if we do enough for them, but I assure you that this guilt only means that you care and the fact that you care makes you a great pet owner. We have a fantastic vet clinic in Neepawa, if you have any concerns about your pet, don't hesitate to reach out to them, everyone is very welcoming.

Finally, our connection with our animals shows when they pass away. The grief that comes with the loss of a pet is very real and for some, can feel as painful as losing a human family member. To these individuals their deceased loved one was not "just an animal", they were a living, breathing representation of love. There is no prescribed time limit on how long it takes someone to grieve and grieving the loss of a pet is no exception. If you have lost a pet and are struggling, don't be afraid to reach out for help from someone who understands. Honor your pet's life through books, photos or rituals. Honor your pet in death, but most of all, honor them in life with how you treat them each day.

## Canadian Royal Purple shifts gears

Submitted  
BY ROYAL PURPLE

After four years of focusing on partnerships with the Canada's Brain Injury Associations, the Canadian Royal Purple is reaching out to additional partners and unveiling a template for Community Led Awareness and Prevention programs (CLAPPS).

"It's time for us to look at a broader approach to the Canadian brain injury scene," says Sandi Lougheed, Chair of the CRPS National BrainLove Committee. "We will still be supporting brain injury awareness and prevention but there are further needs to be addressed."

For the past three years, the Canadian Royal Purple has been distributing national Care Bags to Canada's shelters on the third Thursday in October. The national goal is to double this number every year as the need grows.

"With the help of partners, we have delivered nearly 4000 care bags to the shelters, recognizing the connection between interpersonal violence and the resulting brain injuries," says Lougheed.

"The statistics are not pretty. One in three women encounters interpersonal violence and, of those, one in eight

suffer brain injury due to being hit or strangled," says Lougheed. "These are brain injuries that are totally preventable."

"Shelters are facing increasing numbers with limited resources. Many of these shelters specialize in the intake of women, children and to a lesser degree men who are fleeing the effects of interpersonal violence. The Care bags show caring and contain information on the effects of brain injury. It is important that the Canadian public join in saying 'no' to this ongoing cause of brain injuries and to begin to understand and support the survivors."

Lougheed says, "As volunteers, we can lead in the organization of awareness and prevention. We can make a difference one community at a time with community-led action programming." March 1st in Prince Albert, Sask. marks the national kick off to the Canadian Royal Purple's BrainLove month in Canada. Over 1000 volunteers will be putting up posters and distributing information about brain injury and its prevention. Join the national on-line auction and other fund-raising events in support of these programs."

For information and statistics, please see [www.canadianbrainlove.org](http://www.canadianbrainlove.org)

## Kenton Seniors News

By Karen Anderson  
WOODWORTH SENIOR SERVICES

Walking in the Hall continues Monday to Friday from 9-12noon.

The WSS regular Foot Care Clinic continues with Tanis Boyd every 6 weeks in the WSS office with the recent clinic held on Feb. 26. The cost is \$50. Tanis will send in details to Blue Cross if a client has that Insurance.

A Palliative Care Workshop was presented by Cathy Coulter on Jan. 14 and Jan. 21 at the Kenton Hall, sponsored by the Hamiota Palliative Care Committee and Woodworth Senior Services. It was very informative on end-of-life decision-making and included forms that should be filled out. It was also well attended by residents of other communities. We hope to repeat these sessions in April or May.

Monthly senior noon meals at Brierwood Creek Restaurant continue.

We've had sad news in the community in December and over the holiday season. Sincere sympathy to the families, relatives and friends upon the deaths of Bill Drake, Connie Ellis, Joyce Heamen and Michael Wood.

Some residents have received a new plastic Manitoba Health card. The se-

lected photo on it is the Northern lights as chosen by the public. It can be applied for either online at Manitoba Health website or toll free at 1-800-392-1207.

The Voluntary Community Income Tax program is now available as of March 3 with locations in Brandon, Elkhorn, Hamiota and Virden.

Mike Ramsden represents the Kenton Legion on our WSS board and as a community and board members, we are pleased he was honored with the Coronation Medal on Feb. 7, a deserved honor as he serves the community well.

It's been a busy season for sports, with local hockey games / tournaments as well as regular curling games and bonspiels. Again local meals during the bonspiels were popular.

Coverage of the World Women's Curling from South Korea starts March 16 at 1am ET on TSN with the Homan rink representing Canada. The World Men's will be at Moose Jaw starting March 29.

There are two lunar eclipses this month, the first on March 14 resulting in a very red moon. So, hope for a clear evening around 10pm.

Now the question is, how will March leave us? It started as a lamb. Hopefully the weather is good for Spring Break and the Brandon Winter Fair.

## Virden, Elkhorn fire chiefs named RM of Wallace-Woodworth council meeting March 11

By Dale Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Wallace District Fire Department was looking for a new fire chief after Tyson Van Eaton, opted not to renew his contract as chief. This week at the RM of Wallace-Woodworth council meeting, Reeve Clayton Canart announced Cory Nixon, formerly the deputy chief, is moving into the position of Station 1 fire chief while Aaron Lewis will serve as fire chief of Station 2.

Reeve Clayton Canart reported on the Wallace District Fire Department board meeting he attended on March 10.

Canart said, "There was an election for the fire chief for Station 1 and Corey Nixon was elected to be the new fire chief for Station 1, so that gives us Corey Nixon as fire chief in Station 1 and Aaron Lewis as the fire chief in Station 2."

Canart said to council, "When our previous fire chief decided that they were wanting to go a different direction, the board had many discussions and decided that we would like to try a different route

and talked with the membership and the executives and decided that we were going to try a trial period.

"Hopefully it's a long-term situation where we're going to have a chief out of each hall, and they will work together with the board and the CAOs (chief administrative officers of Wallace-Woodworth and Virden) to set budget and policy and keep continuity between each hall..."

He said the plan is for the chief position to be decided by an election.


"Fire department members will be able to decide who they want their chief to be and so far everyone seems to think it's a good idea and we're looking forward to moving forward and this kind of new model."

The reeve noted that the practical work of the fire department interrupted the voting process. "A fire call came so they all had to exit the hall, and we waited for them to come back to finish voting."

**SIT. SWAB. SEND.**

Yes, it's a poop test. And yes, it could save your life.

Order yours today: **ColonCheck / 1-855-952-4325**

 Cancer Care Manitoba  
Action Cancer Manitoba

### VIRDEN LIONS HALL



CALL TO BOOK YOUR  
**SPECIAL EVENT**  
**204-264-0785**

230 Nelson St W • Virden, MB

Hall capacity is limited based on current Manitoba Public Health restrictions/guidelines; renters and attendees must comply with up-to-date Manitoba Public Health Orders.



# CURLING CLUB'S 125TH BONSPIEL UNDERWAY

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Family is definitely a major theme this week at the Virden Curling

Club's 125th Bonspiel.

The event, which runs March 10-16, celebrates the club holding its 125th men's bonspiel. However, the bonspiel also commemorates 135 years of curling in the community. The bonspiel includes men's, women's, juniors', seniors', and stick curling division. There are more than 120 rinks participating. There are opportunities for many family members to take the ice this week.

"I am looking forward to enjoying my entire family being involved this week," said Virden's Tricia Hayward, who is curling in the women's division. "My sister is coming home from Vancouver and she is curling with a couple of my girls. Chloe, my oldest, and my mom work for the club and run the canteen and will be preparing food all week and dinner for the banquet. My brother, son-in-law and my sister's partner have entered a rink and both Brad (her husband) and I are skipping rinks as well. It will be a family affair and should provide some good curling - maybe not from any of us though."

While the 12th Bonspiel has drawn rinks from outside of Virden, the community and surrounding area are definitely well represented. For example, Hayward is curling this week with her regular Tuesday night rink: Stacey Lane, Alana George Whittle and Tarin Nahachewsky. Brent Duncan is curling in the men's division. His family has a long history with the event and the club.

"I believe this will be the largest spiel Virden has had in many years," he said. "It's a chance to visit with people who all have at least one thing in common - the love of the game."

On Tuesday morning, Jay Kinnaird, the organizing com-

mittee's chair, said things had started well at the bonspiel. He reported a busy day Sunday at the curling club to start things off. Kinnaird said that the installation of the arena ice at Tundra Oil & Gas Place went well. Men's curling was starting there that morning.

"Jay Kinnaird deserves a huge pat on the back for his work as chair for the bonspiel," Virden curler Cory Barkley said. "It was his idea and work that has seen it to fruition. It wouldn't have got done without him."

Local young curler Jace Freeman, who recently won the U21 men's provincial title, is the two-time defending champion of the event. He is seeking a threepeat with plenty of family around.

"All family members will be taking part, including assisting in working on various aspects of running the event, as well as competing with assorted teams," said Graham Freeman, Jace's father and coach. "I'm sure it will be a great week for the Virden Curling Club honouring its past, present and promoting the future."

Freeman's wife, Roxanne, and his older son, Brooks, will also be curling. Roxanne's brother, Cory Barkley, won the curling club's 100th men's bonspiel with a young rink that included Darcy Hayward, Jason McKenzie, and David Draper. Barkley made it to the finals three more times but was unable to secure a win. This year he is competing with friends Jason Lewis, Micheal Langlois, and Jon Draper. In addition to himself and his sister, Barkley's father, George, and his daughter, Joelle, will also be competing.

"The 125th is a big celebration for our club and just the sheer size of the spiel is going to be memorable," said Barkley, who is on the organizing committee. "It's been a bit of work for the committee, and we hope all the teams have a great time. I'm also playing with my buddies and have a



PHOTO BY ANNE DAVISON

Senior men's curling is in full swing in TOGP arena on Tuesday, March 11. Over 250 teams are signed up to compete in the weeklong Virden 125th Bonspiel. Skip Tim Webber (red jacket) of Hamiota plans his team's next rock while skip Dave Jorden of Virden considers his next move.

pile of old friends coming home for the week from all over the province, which is exciting. We also have some great history type celebrations going on with some new honorary life members being inducted and a bit of a ceremony on Saturday ... which I look forward to attending as well, some very deserving names being honored. Just getting everyone in the room Friday night for the banquet and calcutta and seeing everyone will be a riot. Should be a fun week. Oh... and the curling will be good too."

While Jace Freeman was winning the men's U21 title earlier this year, the daughter of one of Barkley's former teammates was earning the hardware on the female side. Shaela Hayward is the daughter of Virden product Darcy Hayward. Her dad will be competing this week as well her aunts: Darla Hayward and Tara Cameron.

"We're very excited to play in the Virden 125 Bonspiel," Shaela Hayward said. "We're excited to play on some arena ice as well to prepare for nationals. A lot of my family will be there and will be playing in it, so it'll be special."

## ANDREW TURNS PRO



SUBMITTED PHOTO

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Virden's Tanner Andrew is now playing pro hockey.

The son of Brock and Andrea Andrew recently inked a contract with the ECHL's Norfolk Admirals after his post-secondary hockey career finished. The Virginia-based team is, in baseball parlance, the AA affiliate of the National Hockey League's Winnipeg Jets. As of Feb. 10, Andrew had seen action in two games with the Admirals.

Andrew was one of the captains this school year for the Rochester (N.Y.) Institute of Technology men's hockey team. He had seven goals and nine assists in 34 games this past winter.

In the junior ranks, Andrew spent parts of three seasons with his hometown Virden Oil Capitals of the Manitoba Junior Hockey League. He finished his junior career with a 2020-2021 season split between the MJHL's Winkler Flyers and the B.C. Hockey League's Chilliwack Chiefs.

## Made in Manitoba Helping local farmers



### Conservation Easements

Average payment to protect habitat on a Manitoba farm is \$137,000.

### Wetland Restorations

Average payment to restore drained or altered wetlands on a Manitoba farm is \$3,700/acre.

Nearly \$12 million in programs for southwest Manitoba

Call today 204-285-9779



Funding for these programs is made possible through a partnership with the Conservation Trust







**CLEAN UNDER PRESSURE**  
High Pressure Cleaning Systems

**CALL NOW:**  
**204-922-2092**

HOT PRESSURE WASHERS FOR ALL YOUR FARM NEEDS



**K.K. Penner**  
TIRE CENTERS INC.




*"Manitoba's Tire Specialists"*



Highway 5 North Neepawa 204-476-5566  
www.kkpenner.com



**CANPRESSCO**  
CANADIAN CAMELINA OIL

COLD PRESSED  
BALANCE OF OMEGA 3, 6, 9 RICH IN VITAMIN E

Kay De'Ath  
Authorized Manitoba Distributor  
204-476-3446  
kaycanpresso22@gmail.com



 Kay De'Ath - Canpresso

**TAYLOR LAW PATERSONS LLP**  
*Barristers • Solicitors • Notaries*

269 Hamilton Street, Neepawa MB R0J 1H0  
P: 204-476-2336 | E: info@taylorlawpatersons.ca  
www.patersons.ca



Serving Farmers for over 60 years!

Offering Custom Cleaning, Color Sorting, Inoculants, Seed Treating and Seed sales.

Oak River, MB  
204-566-2422

Available Commodities are as follows:  
Hybrid Fall Rye, Oats, Barley, Wheat, Peas, Forages, Canola, Corn & Soybeans.



Big Enough to Take on Your Challenges, Small Enough to Care.

**CHRISTIANSON T D S**  
225 Ellen Street, Neepawa, MB

PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE | NEEPAWA | MACGREGOR | GLADSTONE

christiansontdslaw.com  
(204) 704-4000



**Matt Rempel**  
Birnie, MB  
Cell: (204) 841-0988  
matt@rempebackhoe.ca

- Excavations • Trenching • Landscaping • Gravel • Topsoil • Shale • Laser Ditching
- Certified Installer for Holding Tanks, Septic Tanks & Drain Fields
- Construction Site Prep • Dozer work • Brush Clearing



**STRUCTURAL DESIGN & ENGINEERING**  
RESIDENTIAL - COMMERCIAL - INDUSTRIAL

SERVING MANITOBA AND SASKATCHEWAN

<p><b>RESIDENTIAL SERVICES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full House Plans</li> <li>Foundations: Reinforced Concrete</li> <li>Permanent Wood Foundation (PWF), Piles (Concrete or Helical)</li> <li>Garages, Sheds and Deck Plans</li> </ul>	<p><b>COMMERCIAL SERVICES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full Building Plans and Layout</li> <li>Coordination of Mechanical, Electrical and Geotechnical Engineering Services</li> <li>Foundation &amp; Building Framing Design and Certification</li> </ul>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

31 - 3RD AVENUE NE  
DAUPHIN, MB R7N 0Y5  
1-204-629-2215





WWW.EDIFICEENGINEERING.CA

**ROLAND WEIR**  
*Realty & Appraisal*

**WE COMPLETE CERTIFIED RESIDENTIAL, ACCREDITED AGRICULTURAL AND COMMERCIAL APPRAISALS**

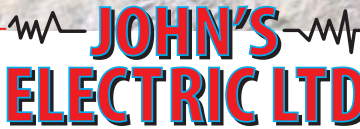
UNIT 30B 1015 26TH ST. BRANDON, MB. R7B 2B9  
weir1@mymts.net • www.rolandweir.ca  
**204-727-7100**

providing water well services to the Westman area for over 60 years.

Residential Water Wells • Irrigation Wells • Well Abandonment  
Well Cleansing and Refurbishing • Acidizations  
Artesian Well Containment • Exploration Drilling/Test holes  
Well Flow/ Pump Tests • Pump Installment and Repair  
Monitoring well/ Piezometer installation

**Jeff Dickson**  
Box 718, Rivers, MB. R0K 1X0 • 204-328-7112 • Cell: 204-729-7770



**JOHN'S ELECTRIC LTD**  
ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS

Serving the Westman and Parkland Regions for over 45 years.

Neepawa, MB 204-476-3391  
Dauphin, MB 204-572-5028

**Authorized GENERAC Dealer**  
Providing power back up systems for your farm and home



Delivering Grains, Feeds, Dry and Liquid Fertilizers

204-476-0129  
duncalfetransport@gmail.com




**M2 REALTY**  
SPRAY-ON SYSTEMS LTD

- CERTIFIED CLOSED CELL SPRAY FOAM
- RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL.
- ROOFING FOAM AND COATINGS
- BLOWN IN ATTIC INSULATION

For more information call:  
204-867-7264 or 204-212-0232  
Email: mcrealfom@live.ca



Neepawa-Gladstone Co-op - Call Tracy: 204-476-6908

FUEL • LUBRICANTS • PROPANE

**HayHandler.com**  
Plasma Table Cutting  
Rebuilt Combine Table Augers • Rebuild Hydraulic Cylinders  
Roller Mills Regrooved • MFWD Housings Rebuilt  
Steel and Aluminum Welding • Machine Shop Service  
**Line Boring and Welding**

**Penno's Machining & Mfg. LTD**  
Eden • 204-966-3221 • www.pennosmachining.com  
pennosmachining@gmail.com





# Everything for your farm

Agriculture is our nation's most important single industry. That's not only because it furnishes our daily food, but because it's the basis of many other important businesses that are a part of Canada's economy. The Neepawa Banner & Press, Rivers Banner and Virden Empire-Advance, as well as all the businesses on this page are proud supporters of the ag industry.




**NEEPAWA TIRE LTD.**  
 Highway #16 West  
 Neepawa 204-476-5091

**STELLAR APPAREL**  
 Men & Ladies Wear

 stellarappareleneepawa  
 243 Hamilton St.  
 Neepawa, MB  
 Tuesday-Friday 10:30am-5pm  
 Saturday 10:30am-4pm

We carry Berne Workwear for Men, Women & Children - sizes up to 3XL!  
 We also have mens & ladies clothing and accessories!








**CLEAN UNDER PRESSURE**  
 High Pressure Cleaning Systems

**CALL NOW:**  
**204-922-2092**

CUSTOM AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT CLEANING

**GA GARTON'S AUCTION**



April 10 - Sifton, MB



April 16 - Valley River, MB



April 23 - Ethelbert, MB

**ONLINE AUCTIONS**  
[www.gartonsauction.com](http://www.gartonsauction.com)



**RE/MAX**

**Terri Cosens**  
 Real Estate Professional  
 204-748-7699  
 Serving The Virden Area  
 tcosens@remax.net  
 RE/MAX Valleyview Realty  
 Unit A - 1209 Richmond Ave., Brandon, MB R7A 1M5

**Duncalfe TRANSPORT**  
 Neepawa Manitoba

Delivering Grains, Feeds, Dry and Liquid Fertilizers

204-476-0129  
 duncalfetransport@gmail.com





# SPORTS

## OIL CAPS FIGHT FOR PLAYOFF BERTH IN FINAL WEEK

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

In the final week of the Manitoba Junior Hockey League regular season, the Virden Oil Capitals are firmly focused on earning a postseason berth.

As of March 9, after going 1-2 last week, the Oil Capitals were three points - 49-46 - behind the Waywayseccappo Wolverines for the final playoff spot in the MJHL MGEU Western Division. Virden had a 22-31-1-1 record. The Wolverines were 23-29-2-1.

Virden head coach Tyson Ramsey said this week his team is "just focused on what we can control and trying to bank as many points as possible."

The Oil Capitals entered the week with three games remaining in the regular season. They were slated to be on the road against Swan Valley on March 11 and the Northern Manitoba Blizzard the next night. Both contests were after the Empire-Advance deadline. On March 15, the Oil Capitals wrap up their regular season in Neepawa.

The Wolverines were to host Dauphin on March 11 and the Winnipeg Blues on March 14. The Waywayseccappo squad is in Dauphin on March 15.

### Sabel Commits

Oil Capitals veteran forward Brett Sabel announced his commitment last week to study and play at Marian University. The school is located in his hometown of Fond du Lac, Wisc. Its hockey team competed at the NCAA Division III level. Last week Sabel was named the squad's Top Defensive Player. He has also enjoyed



PHOTO BY VIRDEN OIL CAPS

Oil Caps celebrate a goal.

a career best season offensively with 10 goals and 24 points in 53 games.

### Titans 4, Oil Caps 1

Marshall Light scored the visitors' lone goal on March 8. Virden goalie Loic Morin stopped 17 of the 19 shots he faced.

For Neepawa, Jackson Kohut scored on the powerplay to make it 1-0 in the first period. Caden Hegarty gave the Titans a 2-0 lead early in the third frame. Light scored to cut the Neepawa lead to one, 2-1. In the final two minutes, according to the MJHL stats, Ryan Gower scored into an empty net on a powerplay while

Mason Hartley also found the back of a goalie-less goal. Neepawa goalie Mason Lobreau made 23 saves.

### Oil Caps 3, Pistons 1

The Oil Capitals concluded their home regular season schedule with a win in front of 846 fans. Brooks Siemens lit the lamp in the first to give Virden a 1-0 lead. It would hold through the second session. Virden increased its advantage thanks to goals by Tyler Dodgson and hometown product Bryce Bryant. The latter's marker came on the powerplay. The Pistons got a goal of their own with the man advantage, with Grady Hoffman scoring, to make it a 3-2 game. Light, who hails from Moosomin, had two assists. Morin made 32 saves. For Steinbach, Christian Green stopped 14 shots.

### Nighthawks 4, Oil Caps 2

With 703 looking on, the Oil Capitals jumped out to a 2-0 first period lead at home on March 4. Light and Adler Johnston did the honours. Bryant earned an assist on both markers.

The Nighthawks scored twice in the second period to knot the contest at 2-2. They added two more in the third. Morin stopped 29 of the 33 shots he faced. Scoring for Niverville were Bryce Warkentine, Dawson Zeller, Alex Ballard, and Lucas Bertolin. Austin Dubinsky had 34 saves.

## HARD WORK LEADS U13 BROWN TO A1 GOLD

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Playing hard and playing together paid off for Virden's U13 Brown hockey team.

The squad won the gold medals at the Co-ed Under-13 Rural A1 provincials. It was undefeated at the March 7-9 event in Morden.

"The kids worked hard throughout the weekend and played a strong team game," head coach Lonnie Brown said. "It seemed like most games we got contributions from several different players."

The Virden squad beat the hosts, 3-2, in the finals. Brown said, "Us coaches felt like we carried the play in the first and third period. We were a bit flat and tired in the second period. In the end, I would say the kids' focus and determination is what allowed us to hang on to the win"

Virden led 1-0 after the first period and 2-1 at the second intermission. It improved its lead to 3-1 just over halfway through the third. Asher White scored all three of Virden's goals.

"Asher is the type of kid that really shows up in big games like that," Brown said. "He has really good chemistry with his linemates (Tyler Warkentin and Bauer Challner). He is also very defensive minded and plays hard on both sides of the ice."

Of the team's success, Brown said, "Obviously, it always feels great for the kids to win provincial gold. Us coaches are really proud and happy for them."

The players on the team have enjoyed great success on the ice the past few seasons. Brown said for four

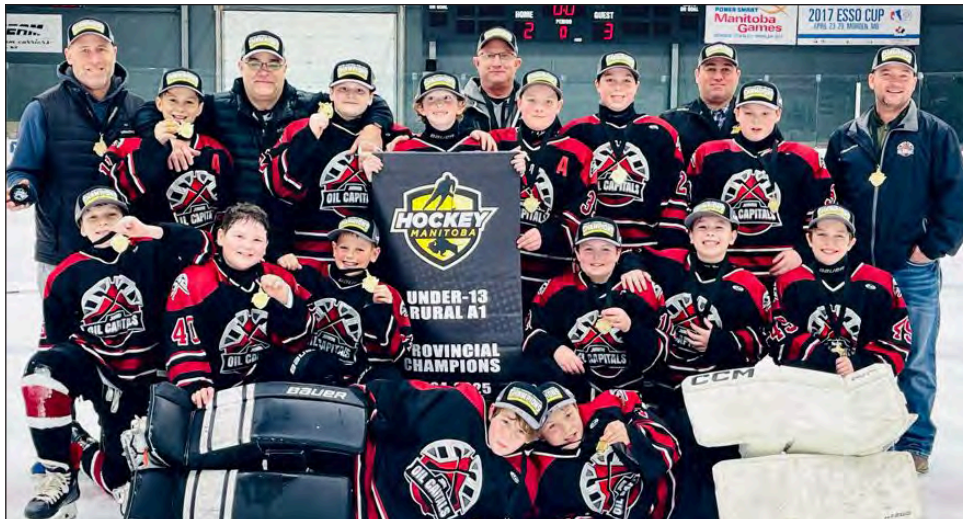


PHOTO BY SHARLA GEORGE PHOTOGRAPHY

players it was their third gold medal in as many years. That group included Slone Brown, Kesler Brown, Bauer Challner and Braxton Murray. Coach Brown said, "that is pretty special for the group of boys."

The Virden bench boss guided the team this season along with Dave Challner, Cameron Hodgins and Marc Berry. Coach Brown said:

"We had a tough first half of the season while we worked out some kinks, but as the season progressed we continued to work on our weaknesses, and slowly started to gain some confidence. I think the biggest thing we enjoy about this group is the fact that they are all fantastic kids. They all get along and really enjoy being around one another. There are a few real characters in the room that have a knack for making everyone laugh."

The roster included Rhett Klassen, Tyler Warkentine, Braxton Murray, Bauer Challner, Dax Kenderdine, Slone Brown, Brayden Radford, Chase Hodgins, Kale White, Shane Sharp, Asher White, Ryver Forbes, Grayson Smith, Kesler Brown, and Noah Hall.



## The 2024 R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth Ward 2 Water Utility Annual Report

is now available on the R.M. Website  
[www.wallace-woodworth.com](http://www.wallace-woodworth.com)

Paper copies can be picked up at the  
Virden Municipal Office.  
Please contact the office  
prior to pick-up.

## Empire-Advance

### OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

#### Existing Facilities:

- ◇ Single office
- ◇ Ample Parking
- ◇ Heat
- ◇ Water
- ◇ Internet

\$400 per month

### Contact

Ken Waddell, Publisher to view the space:  
Email: [kwaddell@neepawabanner.com](mailto:kwaddell@neepawabanner.com)  
Or Phone 204-476-6214





# SPORTS

## OIL KINGS TAKE LEAD IN DIVISION FINALS

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

This week the Virden Oil Kings are hoping to earn their spot in the Tiger Hills Hockey League Final.

The senior team took a 2-0 lead last week over the Hartney Blues in the THHL Western Division Final. After winning game one, 8-1, as reported in the Empire-Advance, the Oil Kings were victorious in the second tilt, 7-1.

“We had a slower start on Friday than we’re used to, but we got a couple powerplays, were able to find the net on one and we took over the game from there,” the Oil Kings’ Tanner Lewis said. “We used our speed and poise with the puck to make plays. We did a good job of controlling the play, supporting each other and making small little chips and area passes to be able to get to pucks first. We did a good job of getting up in the play to create odd man rushes that we had success on. Everything starts from the defensive zone though. We did a good job of getting back and shutting down their chances. When they did get possession, we kept them to the outside and made sure (goalie Eric) Reid could make the easy save. When we did have break-downs, Reid was excellent.”

Game three of the best of five series was set for March 11 in Hartney after the Empire-Advance deadline. If needed, game four would be in Hartney on March 14. The fifth contest would be held in Elkhorn on March 16, if required.

“The Blues have a lot of experience and have been in these types of games plenty of times,” Tanner Lewis said. “They have guys with good hockey IQ, and

can capitalize on their powerplays when given the opportunity. (Justin) Holder is a goalie that can steal games, so making sure we’re bearing down on our chances when we get them is crucial, and we’ve been doing a good job of finishing.”

The Oil Kings’ offence was firing on all cylinders in the first two games of the series. Reid said, “It’s a blast. I’ve got the best seat in the house and our guys have been clicking all over the ice and all through the lineup. It’s been really impressive to watch.”

However, the Virden squad has also been responsible in its own end.

“We have had the puck a lot over the last couple games and when we do give it up our defence has been great,” Reid said. “They don’t give up a lot of quality chances and keep shots to the outside which makes my job a lot easier.”

### Western Division Finals Oil Kings 7, Blues 1

On March 7 at home, the Oil Kings grabbed a 2-0 lead with a dominant performance. Reid only allowed one goal - which was on a powerplay - on 23 shots.

Tanner Lewis got the scoring started for Virden with a powerplay marker at the 18:51 mark of the first period.



PHOTO BY DALE DAVISON

Saves like this one from netminder Eric Reid kept the Oil Kings in the game in period one.

That seemed to open the flood gates. The Oil Kings scored four goals in the second. With just over two minutes gone in the period, Shane Keown netted the game winner. Ty Lewis had back-to-back goals. The first one came shorthanded. Tanner Lewis’ second goal of the night made it 5-0 for Virden.

In the third period, Bradley Bowles lit the lamp twice. A shorthanded marker by him was followed by a Hartney goal by Mark Agnew. Bowles then capped the scoring.

Bowles and Ty Lewis each recorded four points. Defenceman Dillin Stonehouse and Nolan Wallace each had two assists. Blues goalie Holder made 14 saves.

## U13 ANDRIES EARNS A BRONZE

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

With “Mustard” ringing in their ears, the resilient players on the U13 Andries hockey team captured the bronze medals at the Co-ed Under-13 Rural A provincial tournament.

In Dauphin, the team fell 4-2 to Russell in the semi-finals. It bounced back to defeat Thompson, 12-2, in the bronze medal game.

“After the loss against Russell in the semifinals, the kids basically said we are here and not going to settle for less than a medal,” head coach Aaron Andries said. “We worked hard ... to get the upper hand quickly. Kids and coaches were having a lot of fun on the bench for the first two periods, and tried a few different things to see how they would work.

“Thompson came out in the third and got a couple of quick goals and we had to get our composure and answer back, which we did. The resiliency of this team to come together is amazing and has been all year.”

During the after goal fly-by for the team’s first five markers of the bronze medal tilt, the players were yelling “Mustard.” Before the event, Andries and his son/assistant coach Hunter had to choose a goal song for the tournament.

“After thinking back through the year, the kids have listened to ‘TVOff’ by Kendrick Lamar before and after the games as a pump up song,” Aaron Andries said. “Standing outside the room, all you hear is the one part of the song that says ‘Mustard!’ and the kids screaming this part. So Hunter and I clipped this part of the song and made it our goal horn without telling the kids which song we chose. When we scored our first goal in the (Credit Union Place) and that song came on, the look on the kids’ faces and excitement it brought them still brings a smile to my face.”

The team opened the tournament with a 4-2 win over



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Dauphin. It fell 5-4 to Carman and then bounced back to defeat the same team, 7-1.

Speaking of the team’s performance at provincials, Aaron Andries said, “I was most pleased with the hard work the kids put in. They were down in the first game 2-0, made a comeback to win 4-2. That shows the grit of our team. Again against Carman, we lost the round robin game, 5-4, and played them again the next game and won 7-1. Sometimes we take a bit to get going, but we usually figure it out.”

The coach enjoyed having the connection with the players this season. He said, “I really enjoy every one of them and their little quirks and getting to know them.”

Aaron Andries also appreciated being able to coach with his older son.

“I get to be there with two of my kids and see how he relates to the team and how he offers his knowledge of the game with not only me but them too. He has built quite the connection with these kids and because of his experiences this year with this team, he wants to coach a minor hockey team in Regina, while attending university there next year.”

The team this year included Jack Murray, Crewe Holleman, Will Elliott, Brayden Andries, Boden Higginbotham, Gavin Rudneski, Brax LeBlanc, Meredith Masson, Laney George, Grady Hay, Demi Hodson, Mack Draper, Owen Rowand, Garrett Gompf, and Grayson Ritchie. The staff included head coach Aaron Andries, assistant coaches Hunter Andries and Dallas Ritchie, and manager Ashlee Ritchie.



# SJHL ACQUISITIONS PAY OFF FOR OIL CAPS



Viriden Oil Caps # 4 Nate Schaefer.



PHOTO BY VIRDEN OIL CAPS

Viriden Oil Caps # 25 Cole Robertson.

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Two players acquired from the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League have made an immediate impact with the Viriden Oil Capitals.

Nate Schaefer and Cole Robertson were both added to the Manitoba Junior Hockey League team at the Jan. 10 trade deadline. The Oil Caps are the third team this season for both Schaefer, a defenceman, and Robertson, a forward.

"I love the beautiful rink and great fans," said Schaefer

of playing in Viriden.

Both have chipped in offensively since joining the Oil Caps. What has allowed them to succeed?

"I think the coaches put me with linemates that play the game in a way where I am really comfortable and able to work off of them," Robertson said.

**Nate Schaefer**

Schaefer hails from Harper Woods, Mich. The suburb is about 14.5 kilometres from downtown Detroit. In his rookie junior season, the 2006-born defenceman's hockey journey has taken him to the British Columbia Hockey

League's Blackfalds Bulldogs (Alta.), the Flin Flon Bombers of the SJHL, and now the Oil Caps and a spot in the home of Carrie and Matt Tapp. Schaefer had two goals and eight points in 24 games for the Bombers. In 20 contests with Viriden as of March 9, the 5-foot-11, 170-pounder had posted two goals and 11 points. Both of his goals for the Oil Caps came on the powerplay.

"He is a very skilled player for such a young guy," Viriden head coach Tyson Ramsey said. "He thinks the game so well and can be a difference maker offensively. Defensively, he has a great stick and he competes so hard physically against opponents. He has added to our depth on the back end and has made a difference already on our powerplay. He is going to be a really fun guy to watch and coach as he gets older.

**Cole Robertson**

Robertson, who billets with Marcy Moorehead, hails from Winnipeg. The 2005-born forward spent last season with the Amarillo Wranglers of the North American Hockey League. He played a couple games there this season before joining the SJHL's Estevan Bruins and now the Oil Caps.

Robertson recorded two goals and two assists in 16 games for Estevan. The 6-foot-2, 215-pound forward had four goals and 11 points in 17 contests for the Oil Capitals, as of March 8.

"Cole is a big body with very good skills," Ramsey said. "He has made an immediate impact in our lineup and has fit in very well in the dressing room. He is physically strong, can hang on to pucks and has an ability to score. He is hard to play against and when he competes hard he is very hard to stop. He has been a great addition and we are excited to have him here next year as well."

# BRYANT, ENGLOT, PLAISIER AMONG OIL CAPS' AWARD WINNERS



**Stillwater Adventures**  
**Most Valuable Player**  
**#28 Noel Englot**  
Presented by: Bryce Galbraith



**Fountain Tire**  
**Fan Choice Award**  
**#6 Ty Plaisier**  
Presented by: Mandy Taylor



**CIBC**  
**Most Sportsmanlike Player**  
**#7 Bryce Bryant**  
Presented by: Shelby Rampton

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Hometown products Ty Plaisier and Bryce Bryant took home some hardware, while Noel Englot was named the Most Valuable Player when the Viriden Oil Capitals presented their annual awards last week.

The event took place after the Manitoba Junior Hockey League team's final home game of the regular season on March 6. In his second season with the team, Englot was tabbed as the Still Water Adventures Most Valuable Player. As of March 8, the forward from Candiac, Sask. led the Oil Caps with 40 points in 55 games. He was tied for the team lead in goals with Liam Goertzen, who joined the team in January. Both had 17. Against Swan Valley earlier this season, Englot recorded four goals and five points. What allowed him to have a successful season?

"I think it's just been being more confident with the puck and having the trust in myself to make plays and put the puck in the back of the net," Englot said.

Plaisier received a trio of awards last week. The son of Shawn and Debra Plaisier was named the team's Gardewine Hardest Working Player. He shared the Cross Plumbing & Heating Top Defenceman Award with team captain Ethan Guthrie. After the votes were tallied, Plaisier received the Fountain Tire Fan Choice Award. In all three of his Oil Caps' seasons so far, he has won or shared the honour.

"It meant so much that I had the support from the fans and the team," Plaisier said of the trio of awards. "The fan

favourite award is one that I am super proud to have been picked for. In Viriden, we have the best fans and community in the MJHL, and I am lucky to be a part of that."

This season Plaisier had three goals and 17 points in 41 games, as of March 8. Through that date, Brandon's Guthrie had recorded five goals and 20 points over 55 games in his final junior season.

Bryant took home two awards. He was named the CIBC Most Sportsmanlike Player. As well, the son of Daren and Roanne Bryant shared the Twin Valley Co-op Three Star Award with Luke Robson. The awards are indicative of the success Bryant has had in his second junior campaign. As of March 8, the forward was second on the team with 36 points in 41 games. He had 13 goals. Of his successful second season, Bryant said:

"I've really enjoyed the grind of the second half and the commitment the team has made to push toward the playoffs. It's been up and down but in the end it's another day at the rink working towards the same goal and that's what's the best about it."

Robson is capping his junior career with a strong season. The forward from Carberry had 11 goals and 24 points, as of March 8.

Tyler Dodgson was named the Wallace District Fire Department Unsung Hero. The defenceman from Winnipeg, who is in his last season, was fifth on the team in scoring, as of March 8. He had 27 points, including 13 goals, in 55 games.

"Tyler does a lot of little things on and off the ice," Viriden head coach Tyson Ramsey said. "He is the first in the gym,

first to the rink and has quietly scored some big goals for us. He is a natural leader and mature beyond his years. He plays a ton of minutes and competes hard."

Moosomin's Marshall Light shared the Alexandria Hotel Most Improved Player Award with Bottineau, N.D.'s Brooks Siemens. As of March 8, Light was fourth on the team in scoring. He had 15 goals and 28 points in 55 games this season. That surpassed the nine goals and 15 points the forward posted in the previous season split between the Oil Caps and the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League's Battlefords North Stars. In Siemens' rookie season, the forward has made great strides while recording three goals and nine points in 31 games. Seven of his points have come since Jan. 1.

Brett Sabel received the Black Gold Trucking Top Defensive Player Award. It was the second time the graduating player from Fond du Lac, Wisc. has won the award in his three-year junior career.

Calgary's Carson Wright quickly immersed himself into life in Viriden. The rookie earned the Sunrise Credit Union Most Community Minded Award. He is the team's RBC Community Ambassador.

Goertzen joined the Oil Capitals in January. He quickly made an impact. The forward from Homewood had eight goals and 12 points in 20 games with the Oil Caps, as of March 8. Overall, he recorded 17 goals and 34 points in 50 games. Goertzen's successful first season was recognized with the Silverline Oilfield Services Rookie of the Year Award.



# U11 BRAYBROOK CLAIMS RURAL A GOLD



PHOTO BY VIRDEN MINOR HOCKEY

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

With perhaps a little bit of extra motivation, Virden Minor Hockey's U11 Braybrook team won the gold medals at provincials.

The successful squad went 4-0 at the Co-ed Under-11 Rural A provincial hockey tournament. The event was held in Flin Flon on Feb. 28-March 2. In the finals, the Virden team beat Neepawa, 5-1.

"At the end of the day, it came down to willingness and determination," head coach Brett Braybrook said. "We have pushed proper work habits all season and, in the end, it paid off. They had a little fire in

their bellies losing 3-2 in overtime at the Rural Tournament of Champions, and they knew they didn't want to feel that again. These boys also had a little extra motivation throughout as there was a reward at the end of the journey. Let's just say the 10 of them don't have a career in hairdressing."

At provincials, the U11 Braybrook team beat Flin Flon, 9-4, and Dauphin, 6-2, in the round robin portion of the tournament. In the semifinals, Virden defeated Swan River, 11-2.

"The most impressive thing over the course of the weekend was our puck movement," Braybrook said. "For kids that are nine and 10, it is amazing seeing them work together. The other thing for me was our consistency throughout the weekend on both sides of the puck. We had one bad period all weekend and during that period our goalie was rock solid."

The team has been together all season long. It has developed and grown.

"This was a group that had some challenges throughout the course of the year with our consistency," Braybrook said. "The coaching staff of Robyn Brown, Joe King and Kurt Goulden were so helpful throughout the season and helping grow these young players."

Members of the team included: Rally King, Brock Brown, Mason Koop, Braxton Goulden, Gabriel Lawrence, Khail Douglas, Zayden Hunkin, Connor Elliot, Carson Mooney, Jax Braybrook, and Ayden Kristinnson.

## CLASSIFIEDS

### Announcement



#### Power Builder Advertising WORKS!

- GET SEEN by over 360,000 Manitoba Homes!
- Use your LOGO!
- Create instant top of mind awareness
- Showcase your info, business, product, job, announcements or event
- We format it, to make it look great!
- Starting at \$339.00 (includes 45 lines of space)
- The ads blanket the province and run in MCNA's 31 Manitoba community newspapers
- Very cost effective means of getting your message out to the widest possible audience

Contact this newspaper NOW or MCNA at 204.947.1691 or email classified@mcna.com

www.mcna.com

# VEA BUSINESS DIRECTORY

YOUR LOCAL MARKETPLACE FOR GOODS & PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

## Meighen Haddad LLP

LAW FIRM

**Ashley T. Joyce**  
ajoyce@mhlaw.ca  
Virden  
255 Wellington St. W.  
Virden, Manitoba ROM 2C0  
204.725.8769

**Stephen K. Branigan**  
skbranigan@mhlaw.ca  
Redvers, SK  
21 Railway Avenue,  
Redvers, Saskatchewan  
306.452.6016

www.mhlaw.ca @mhlaw.ca @MHLaw.ca

## BDO

CANADA LLP www.bdo.ca

### Chartered Professional Accountants

Accounting and Auditing • Ag Advisory and Farm Programs  
Bankruptcy and Insolvency • Business Advisory  
Business Valuations • Estate and Succession Planning  
Information Technology Solutions • Taxation Services

255 Wellington St W, Virden | 204-748-1200 | 1-866-236-7656

## THE BLANCHARD

Oak River, MB R0K 0T0  
(204) 566-2131

### HOTEL, LOUNGE, AND RESTAURANT

Happy Hour  
Wed-Fri  
5pm-7pm

## MNP

National in scope, local in focus

Proudly providing Accounting, Consulting, Tax & Digital Services

Virden Office | 204.748.1340

Wherever business takes you MNP.ca

## PATERSONS

Barristers • Solicitors • Notaries

**DANE C. KINGDON, B.A., J.D.**  
DKingdon@patersons.ca  
463 Seventh Avenue S., Virden  
P: 204-727-0685  
F: 204-728-4670 / 204-727-6668  
E: info@patersons.ca  
www.patersons.ca

## Assiniboine WINDOW & DOOR

Supply & Install Residential Windows & Doors  
- FREE ESTIMATES -  
Call Kevin Bonner today! 204.851.5240

JELD-WEN WINDOWS & DOORS HURON WINDOW CORPORATION

## Sanders WATER & ICE

Michael & Jennifer Sanders and Family  
204-748-1907 ~ sanderswaterandice@gmail.com  
Not Just N'ICE People!

## Physiofirst

462 7th Ave South Virden, MB  
Phone: 204-748-3608  
Fax: 204-748-3643  
Email: phys1st@mymts.net

1129 19th Street Brandon, MB  
Phone: 204-727-6806  
Fax: 204-728-3489  
Email: phys1st@mymts.net

www.physiofirstclinic.ca

## KEYSTONE WEALTH MANAGEMENT

aviso wealth

1 204-748-6823  
512 - 7 Ave South, Virden, Mb ROM 2C0 PO Box 975

Mutual funds and other securities are offered through Aviso Wealth, a division of Aviso Financial Inc.

## Reston/Melita Chiropractic Clinic

Dr. Shannon Gervin, D.C.

Box 456 Melita, MB R0M 1L0

Reston- 204-877-3104  
223-4th St, Reston  
Mon and Fri 8:30a - 4:30p

Melita- 204-522-3543  
155 Summit St, Melita  
Tues and Thurs 8:30a - 4:30p

## McNEILL HARASYMCHUK

### McCONNELL Attorneys at Law

Glen Harasymchuk, B. Sc., LL. B. • Anique Timmerman, JD  
• Jessica Humphries, JD

Buckingham Building, 243 Raglan Street West  
P.O. Box 520, Virden, MB ROM 2C0  
Phone: 204-748-1220 • Fax: 204-748-3007



# CLASSIFIEDS

## Coming Events

**MINIOTA UCW  
ROAST BEEF SUPPER**

**Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup>**  
5:00 pm

at the Miniota Community Hall  
Adults \$20 • 10 & under \$6 • 5 & Under Free

## Obituary

### IN LOVING MEMORY ROBERT LLOYD COOPER



It is with heavy hearts that the family of Robert Lloyd Cooper announce his passing, on Monday February 24, 2025 at the Reston Health Centre.

Robert is survived by his beloved wife Linda Cooper (Ashcroft), children Melanie (Nelson), Shawna (Ben), Kyle (Lindsay). His grandchildren Breanna (Brett), Shaelyn (Dominic), Danielle (Chad), Brandi (Gavin), Katie (Scott), Nairn, Mason, Natalie. His great grandchildren Kylie, Novalee, Jake, Isobel, Olivia, Johnny, Roe. Robert is also survived by his brother, Allan Cooper, with whom he held a very special bond with and as well as his many nieces and nephews.

He is predeceased by his parents, Frank and Mildred Cooper, father and mother in law Cecil and Jennie Ashcroft and his 10 siblings.

Robert was born in Virden, and raised in Bernice Manitoba. He married his wife, Linda Cooper, in 1966. They raised their three children in Tilston and then moved to Sinclair in 1978. They moved around some over the years, but returned and made their home in Sinclair.

We are all going to miss his great stories, warm hugs, and kind western soul. He was a true cowboy, often found in his cowboy boots and hat. Robert spent a lot of his early years horseback riding and working his team of horses. He also worked as a heavy equipment operator. His biggest enjoyment and love in life was his family. He left us all with some beautiful memories that we will cherish forever.

A private service will be held at a later date. In memory of Robert, donations may be made to Parkinson Canada or to the Heart & Stroke Foundation. Messages of condolences may be made at [www.kowalchuks.net](http://www.kowalchuks.net).

## Coming Events

*Birthday Celebration*

Join us to celebrate  
Barry Nolan's  
90th Birthday  
March 22, 2025.  
Come and go tea  
2 - 4 pm  
at Princess Lodge,  
247 Princess St.  
Virden

## Obituary

### IN LOVING MEMORY BERRY, HOLLAND JAMES SEPTEMBER 8, 1937 - FEBRUARY 23, 2025



It is with great sadness we said goodbye to Holland Berry of Calgary, AB, who passed peacefully on Sunday, February 23, 2025, at the age of 87 years.

Born on September 8, 1937, in Toronto, ON, Holland moved at a young age to Cromer, in Southwestern Manitoba, where he developed a lifelong connection to the area. After his time in Cromer, he lived in Virden, MB, and then spent time in Texas and Ontario before ultimately settling in Calgary, AB, in 1974.

In 1959, Holland married his beloved wife, Gwenneth G. Gerrand, in Virden, MB, and they shared over 65 wonderful years together.

Holland earned a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Manitoba in 1960. He then continued his studies at Texas A&M University, where he obtained a master's degree in 1966, and a doctorate in Petroleum Engineering in 1968.

Throughout his professional career, Holland held a variety of leadership roles in oil and gas in Dallas, TX, Ottawa, ON, and Calgary, AB. His work led him around the world, including to Russia, Egypt, Venezuela, and China, where he played a key role in various exploration and production projects and presented at numerous industry conferences.

Holland was an active member of The Rotary Club, dedicating much of his time to volunteering and supporting communities in the Calgary area. He was also a member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church of Calgary.

He had a lifelong passion and mastery for all things mechanical, often spending time maintaining his many vehicles and even rebuilding engines. Holland also enjoyed golfing with family and friends at the Canyon Meadows Golf and Country Club, a hobby he pursued well into his later years. He will be remembered for his honesty, integrity, and always being someone others could rely on.

Besides his loving wife, Gwenneth, Holland is survived by his three sons: Craig (Dr. Jennifer Froelich) of Calgary, AB; Kent (Colleen) of Houston, TX; and Cameron (Allison) of Houston, TX. He is also survived by six grandchildren: Grace of Calgary, AB; Jessica of Austin, TX, and Derek and Rachel of Houston, TX; and Kathryn of Dallas, TX, and Caroline of Houston, TX.

Holland is also survived by his two brothers: Don (Joan) of Brandon, MB, and Bryon of Penticton, BC; and one sister, Joan (Peter Tamblin) of Calgary, AB, as well as numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. Holland was predeceased by his parents, Holland and Mary Berry, and his brother, Douglas Berry.

A celebration of his life will be held at a later date.

If friends so desire, memorial tributes may be made directly to the Canadian Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation, Attn: Calgary Chapter (47 Squire Bakers Lane, Markham, ON L3P 3G8, Telephone (905) 294-7645, [www.cpff.ca](http://www.cpff.ca).

Condolences, memories, and photos may be shared and viewed with Holland's family at [www.MHFH.com](http://www.MHFH.com).

In living memory of Holland Berry, a tree will be planted in the Ann & Sandy Cross Conservation Area by McInnis & Holloway Funeral Homes.



## Help Wanted



### WE ARE HIRING FOR SUMMER 2025 EMPLOYMENT!

**Public Works Support** 1 Position  
**Elkhorn Green Team** 1 Position  
**Kenton Green Team** 1 Position  
**Wallace-Woodworth Green Team** 1 Position

#### Applicants must:

- Youth must be between the ages of 16-29
- Have a social insurance number
- Hold a valid driver's license
- Physically able to perform manual tasks (Be physically able to lift 50 lbs)
- Willing to work outdoors
- Have the ability to work with minimal supervision
- Work well as a member of a team
- Ensure all standards of Workplace Health & Safety are followed

#### Duties may include:

- Maintaining Green Space on R.M. Grounds
- Assisting Transportation, Utility, and GIS Staff
- Operating lawn mower, grass trimmer
- Assist in recycling programs

The start date is as early as May 27. The end date will be on the last week of August.

## GIS TECHNICIAN SUPPORT

#### Job Description

The successful candidate will help improve productivity and efficiency by supporting all departments via Geographical Information System technology products. This position is also responsible for providing information to council members, staff, ratepayers and businesses.

#### General Duties

- Support the Administrative, Transportation and Utility departments by creating various databases for the purpose of asset management, spatial analysis and delivery of final map products & solutions
- Data collection with survey equipment for database updates
- Perform 3D aerial surveys of aggregate stockpiles and other municipal infrastructure with RPAS technology
- Creation of maps, graphs, spreadsheets, and other information items for project stakeholders
- Handle incoming locate requests for R.M. owned underground infrastructure
- Perform road construction surveys and surface water management elevation surveys

#### Job Requirements

- Proficiency with ESRI ArcPro, ESRI Geodatabases & Microsoft Office Productivity tools
- Working knowledge of the principles and practices of GIS, spatial analysis and cartography
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Excellent logical and analytical thinking. Ability to identify problems and create solutions.
- Organizational skills & the ability to work alone are a must
- Strong sense of self-motivation & attention to detail
- Must possess valid Class 5 driver's license
- Would be considered an asset if the applicant is currently enrolled in a university degree in GIS, Environment, Geography or Computer Science program, or a two-year diploma in GIS or Land and Water Management

Interested candidates should submit a resume by:

E-mail: [info@wallace-woodworth.com](mailto:info@wallace-woodworth.com)

Mail/Drop-off: R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth Municipal Office  
154023 PR 257 Box 2200 (Corner of 83 Hwy & PR 257) Virden, MB R0M 2C0

Any questions regarding this employment opportunity, please call Brianna Hughes at (204) 748-1239.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

We appreciate your interest in this position. However, only those applicants chosen for an interview will be contacted.

[www.wallace-woodworth.com](http://www.wallace-woodworth.com) | 204-748-1239 | [info@wallace-woodworth.com](mailto:info@wallace-woodworth.com)

## Service

## For Sale

## Auctions

### HIP/KNEE Replacement?

Other medical conditions causing TROUBLE WALKING or DRESSING?

The Disability Tax Credit allows for **\$2,500 yearly tax credit and \$20,000 Lump sum refund.**

Apply NOW; quickest refund Nationwide!

**Expert Help: 204-453-5372**

### BATTERIES FOR EVERYTHING! 50,000 BATTERIES IN STOCK

\*Auto \*Farm \*Truck \*Construction \*ATV \*Motorcycle \*Golf Carts \*Rechargeables \*Tools \*Computers \*Medical \*All phones \*Chargers \*Marine \*RV & more Shipping/Delivery avail.

**THE BATTERY MAN**  
1390 St. James St. Winnipeg  
**TF 1-877-775-8271**  
[www.batteryman.ca](http://www.batteryman.ca)

### Online McSherry Auctions

**Estate & Moving**  
March 19th @ 7:00PM

**Estate & Moving**  
March 26th @ 7:00PM

**Firearms & Ammo**  
March 27th @ 7:00PM

**McSherryAuction.com**  
204-467-1858  
or 204-886-7027  
[mcsherrytd@gmail.com](mailto:mcsherrytd@gmail.com)

## Manitoba Community Newspaper Association Province Wide Classifieds

### NOTICES

Advertisements and statements contained herein are the sole responsibility of the persons or entities that post the advertisement, and the Manitoba Community Newspaper Association and membership do not make any warranty as to the accuracy, completeness, truthfulness or reliability of such advertisements. For greater information on advertising conditions, please consult

the Association's Blanket Advertising Conditions on our website at [www.mcna.com](http://www.mcna.com).

**URGENT PRESS RELEASES** - Have a newsworthy item to announce? An exciting change in operations? Though we cannot guarantee publication, MCNA will get the information into the right hands for **ONLY \$35.00 + GST/HST**. Call MCNA (204) 947-1691 for more information. See [www.mcna.com](http://www.mcna.com) under the "Types

of Advertising" tab for more details.

**NEED MECHANICS/CLASS 1 DRIVERS? SEASONAL HIRING? SELLING SOMETHING?** Jump on our great prices and start getting responses! Book your blanket classified ads, seen in the 31 Member Newspapers which are seen in over 368,000+ homes in Manitoba. Please **Call THIS NEWSPAPER NOW** to book, or call MCNA

at (204) 947-1691 for more details or to book ads. MCNA - Manitoba Community Newspapers Association. [www.mcna.com](http://www.mcna.com)

### FINANCIAL SERVICES

Private mortgage lender. All real estate types considered. No credit checks done. Deal direct with lender and get quick approval. Toll free 1-866-405-1228 [www.firstandsecondmortgages.ca](http://www.firstandsecondmortgages.ca)

### PROPERTY FOR SALE / LAND FOR SALE / REAL ESTATE

Nice 20-acre retirement or subdividing opportunity 4 miles west of Brandon on paved road. 1,572 sq.ft. home including appliances, wheelchair accessible. 1-level, attached garage. Also, additional adjoining subdivided 5-acre lot. Immediate possession, private sale. \$750,000.00. Call 1-204-723-0083 for appointment to view, anytime.



**Service**

**Will Do Custom Snow Blowing Of Driveways**  
204-748-5144

**Help Wanted**



**NOW HIRING AG/HEAVY DUTY MECHANIC**

COME AND DEVELOP YOUR MECHANICAL SKILLS AT OUR BUSY, WELL-EQUIPPED SHOP LOCATED IN ARCOLA, SK. ALL SKILL LEVELS WILL BE CONSIDERED.

**WE ARE WILLING TO APPRENTICE THE RIGHT CANDIDATE.**

WE OFFER COMPETITIVE WAGES, A COMPREHENSIVE BENEFITS PACKAGE AND RRSP/DPSP PLAN. HOUSING IS AVAILABLE.

**SUBMIT YOUR RESUME** jjtrucking@sasktel.net Fax: 306-455-2433 **VISIT OUR WEBSITE:** www.jjtruckingltd.com

**For Sale**

**MANITOBA'S LARGEST RECORD & MUSIC SALE**  
SUN, Mar 16th 2025  
10 AM – 4 PM

Over 90 tables of records, tapes, CDs, posters, books & memorabilia.

**Admission \$5.00**

12 and under FREE

**Caboto Centre**  
1055 Wilkes Ave.,  
Winnipeg

Early (8AM) admission \$30.00

**For info:**  
204-990-3463 or  
431-374-6925

**WANTED**

**COIN COLLECTIONS**



**CASH FOR COIN COLLECTIONS & ACCUMULATIONS OF COINS! ROYAL CANADIAN MINT COINS, OLD COINS, OLD PAPER MONEY, SILVER COINS, GOLD COINS, RARE COINS ETC.**

Also buying all Silver, Gold, Nuggets, Scrap, Coins, Old Jewelry, Bullion, Ingots, Sterling Silver, Old Quality Watches working or not, Rolex, Omega ++

**Todd**  
204-904-9705

**Help Wanted**



**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

**ASSISTANT CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

**Job Description**

The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a motivated individual with excellent administration and finance skills for the position of **Assistant Chief Administrative Officer**. ACAO with the annual salary range being \$65,000 to \$80,000.

Under the direction of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), the Assistant Chief Administrative Officer will assist the CAO in performing all duties as directed by the CAO and to act on behalf of the CAO in their absence; providing services to all residents and ratepayers in an efficient and effective manner.

The successful candidate should possess excellent financial and managerial attributes.

**Duties and Responsibilities**

- Assist the CAO in the daily operations of the Municipality
- Develop reports, by-laws, and municipal policies
- Develop, manage, and administer annual and multi-year capital and operating budgets
- Create strategic and long-range people resource planning for the Municipality - ensuring an engaged workforce resulting in optimal people performance
- Coordinate approval process of subdivisions, conditional use orders and variation orders with conditions from Council
- Act as the Municipality's FIPPA Officer and Senior Election Official
- All other duties as assigned

**Skills and Qualifications**

- Holds a Certificate in Manitoba Municipal Administration, or Professional designation in any related field of the assigned portfolio will be an asset.
- Work experience with Muniware or similar municipal accounting software will be an asset
- Knowledge of Manitoba municipal provincial and federal legislation relating to municipalities
- Knowledge and experience of the Manitoba Planning Act and processes
- Strong communication, people management, and organizational skills

**LANDFILL SITE ATTENDANT HARGRAVE & KOLA**

**Job Description**

The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a motivated individual for the position of **Landfill Site Attendant** for the Hargrave and Kola Nuisance Grounds location. The Landfill Site Attendant assists the Public Works Superintendent in operating the waste disposal grounds in compliance with the Waste Disposal Ground Operating Permit for the site, municipal policies, and Workplace Health and Safety regulations. Certificate in Landfill Operations is an asset (applicant must be willing to take the necessary certification courses). This is a unionized position.

**Description and Qualifications**

- Full-time position
- Must be willing to work Saturdays, and one evening per week during the summer months.
- Direct all users to appropriate disposal or storage locations for all items being disposed.
- Ensure source separation of garbage and recyclables.
- Accept tires, general scrap iron, and spray containers; store at proper locations and keep area tidy.
- Assist in transferring or disposing of waste, as required.
- Maintain daily records of waste entering the disposal site.
- Keep all buildings and areas of the landfill site clean and well maintained.
- Ensure that fires are not set and all controlled burns are supervised and recorded.
- Report all concerns to the Transportation Superintendent and Chief Administrative Officer.
- Other duties, as required.
- Must be punctual, motivated, self-starter, and able to work without supervision.
- Good interpersonal skills to deal politely and effectively with the general public.
- Ability to meet physical demands of the position and have an excellent safety record.
- Class 5 Driver's License required.

**WEED SUPERVISOR**

**Job Description**

The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a motivated individual for the full-time seasonal position of **Weed Supervisor**. Weed Supervisor with an hourly rate ranging from \$23.50 to 28.00.

Under the direction of the Chief Administrative Officer and Council, the Weed Supervisor is responsible for the Enforcement of the Noxious Weed Act and other weed control activities in areas under the Municipality's jurisdiction.

**Duties and Responsibilities**

- Monitor, mow, and perform herbicide application on properties and roadsides in the Municipality.
- Operate weed control equipment and vehicle with sprayer.
- Keep daily records of all activities performed and prepare weekly and annual reports to the municipality and Province.
- Develop and maintain positive internal and external communication. Takes appropriate action to address issues pertaining to weed and pest control issues. Must have the ability to deal with public concerns and inquiries.

**Skills and Qualifications**

- Must be eligible for and capable of obtaining Provincial applicators license (Rural Municipal) and permits pertaining to the use of pesticides and herbicides under the Manitoba Pesticide and Fertilizers Control Act (license), the Manitoba Environment Act (pesticide use permit) and Canada Pest Control Products Act (product label uses)
- Valid Class 5 licence (Class 3 or higher would be considered an asset)
- Familiarity with noxious weeds, their identification, biology, and control as well as the implications of soil and other conditions in the area is considered an asset
- Knowledge and application of various pest control methodologies
- A familiarity and good working knowledge of related statutes and regulation
- Computer proficiency (MS Office)
- Ability to learn department specific software including ESRI, Field Maps, Mobile App
- A degree or diploma in Agriculture is considered an asset
- Proven analytical problem solving and conflict management skills
- Will work mostly unsupervised, must have excellent time management, and organizational skills
- Ability to work successfully with the Transportation Superintendent and co-workers

**UTILITY OPERATOR**

**Job Description**

The Rural Municipality of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a motivated individual for the permanent full-time position of **Utility Operator** at the Virden Municipal Office.

The Utility Operator reports to the Utility Manager and will be responsible for providing support for the water treatment; distribution operations; and wastewater systems within the Municipality, until they are certified to manage the systems on their own. This is a unionized position.

**Duties and Responsibilities**

- Support Distribution Operators and Water Treatment Plant Managers
- Perform general maintenance tasks on a regular basis
- Do daily checks on the booster stations (distribution systems) and Water Treatment Plants (WTP), when trained to do so
- Read and record data from the booster stations, WTP and supply wells
- Complete reports on Word, Excel and other computer software
- Operate flush outs on distribution system
- Assist during water breaks and line locates, as needed
- All other duties as assigned

**Skills and Qualifications**

- High school graduate at minimum
- A Class I or II Certification in one or all the Water and Wastewater Facility Operators Certification Program from the Province of Manitoba is an asset OR be willing to complete the courses and certification necessary to work on the water & wastewater system through the Manitoba Environment and Climate Change Certification Program
- Holds a valid Class 5.0 Driver's License
- Able to work shifts and on call weekends
- Proficient with computer applications – Microsoft Office products including Excel, Word, Outlook, etc.
- Computer experience in GPS equipment, ArcMap software, GIS data collection, and Google earth is an asset
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Attention to detail, thoroughness, and organizational skills are required
- Any mechanical trades experience or mechanical work experience would be considered an asset
- Physically capable of walking through rough terrain

**MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTANT**

**Job Description**

The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a motivated individual for the maternity leave term position of **Municipal Accountant** at the Virden Municipal Office. The position starts immediately with a projected end date of March 31, 2026. The successful candidate will be responsible and accountable for the overall financial management of the Municipality. This position will report directly to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). The successful candidate can expect an annual salary reflective of their experience and qualifications ranging from \$49,000 to \$70,000.

**Duties and Responsibilities**

- Assist the Municipality with long term financial and strategic planning, and risk management strategies
- Assist Council with the preparation and implementation of the Annual Financial Plan, as approved by Council
- Ensure that all programs and services are delivered to all residents and ratepayers in a manner making best efficient and effective use of the financial resources of the Municipality and as outlined in the Municipality's Financial Plan
- Manage the ongoing control of the accounting, budgeting, credit, insurance, tax, and borrowing issues of the Municipality
- Manage payroll administration and submission of all documentations required for the municipal benefits plan; Workers Compensation Board and other relevant legislative requirements
- Supervise the day-to-day financial operations of the Municipality and continually strive to improve financial operating procedures and improving upon the control systems in place where possible
- Maintain the Municipality's ledger accounts and be solely responsible for their ongoing review and any/all changes
- Ensure that all external reporting is completed in a timely manner as required within Provincial and Federal legislation
- Uphold a strict level of confidentiality
- All other duties as assigned

**Skills and Qualifications**

- Previous work experience in a financial management capacity, preferably working in a municipal environment is required
- A Chartered Professional Accountant designation will be an asset
- A Certificate in Manitoba Municipal Administration will be an asset
- Experience with the Muniware Accounting Program will be an asset

A complete job description is available upon request. The successful candidate can expect a salary reflective of their experience and qualifications. Interested candidates should submit a resume with three references by:

E-mail: info@wallace-woodworth.com

Mail/Drop-off: R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth Municipal Office  
154023 PR 257 Box 2200 (Corner of 83 Hwy & PR 257) Virden, Manitoba R0M 2C0  
Resumes will be reviewed as they are received.

This posting will remain open until a suitable candidate is located.  
Only those selected for an interview will be contacted



# Heaman, Kotylak enjoy Florida football trip

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Two Virden Collegiate Institute student-athletes recently headed south to test their

football prowess.

Jacoby Heaman and Ryder Kotylak competed for the Manitoba Selects program at the North American Youth International Championships. The prestigious event was held in February 21-23 in Haines City, Fla. The Manitoba team finished third at the tournament with a 2-1 record.

“Overall, the opportunity itself to go down to the states and play football against people from another area in front of big audiences was the most enjoyable part,” Heaman said.

## The Trip

The Selects bussed down to the Sunshine State starting on Feb. 12. The team returned to Manitoba on Feb. 26. Before the tournament, the Selects played exhibition games against Miami and Lakeland squads.

Heaman noted that the playing style was different down south. Heaman and Kotylak were used to playing nine-man football with the VCI Golden Bears compared to the 11-aside gridiron style they competed in.

“I enjoyed everything about Florida, but mainly the warm weather, and tough competition,” Kotylak said.

In addition to the football action, the team had the opportunity to visit Disney Springs, the University of Florida, Buc-ee’s country store, and Iowa 80. The latter is the world’s largest truck stop and it is in Walcott.

On the Manitoba Selects’ Instagram page, it was stated, “As a program, we take great pride in providing life-changing experiences that go far beyond sports. We’re not just building athletes—we’re expanding horizons, creating lifelong memories, and shaping well-rounded individuals.”

## Jacoby Heaman

A Grade 11 student, Heaman only started playing football last year. The son of Kayla Kotylak, Cory Heaman, and Laura Heaman said: “I have played many other sports and this one is by far my favourite. I feel it just fits well with the speed I like to play at.” The Selects and Golden Bears are certainly pleased he opted to try the gridiron game.

“Jacoby is a late bloomer when it comes to football,” said Marc Talbot, one of VCI’s coaches. “I didn’t get my first look at him until spring of 2024 when he put on pads for the first time in our spring training session. With his size and quick feet, I knew where I wanted him to play. Defensive end. He was strong enough on the line that he wasn’t getting pushed around by the opposing team. With roster complications, Jacoby had to play DE and also (linebacker). With the Selects, he was DE. His footwork, speed off the line and ability to get around the opposition has really improved with this program. It is scary to see what kind of a player he would have been had he started in Grade 9 instead of Grade 11. With Jacoby entering Grade 12 next year, I will be counting on him to be a leader on the defensive line.”

On the Florida trip, Heaman demonstrated his versatility and willingness to help his team. A Manitoba Selects representative wrote in an email, “Jacoby started the program as a D-line and practiced most of the year at the position. However, when our center got hurt in Florida he stepped up big time and became the center securing the snaps for the quarterback, which helped us secure the wins we had down there.”

## Ryder Kotylak

The son of Samantha Kotylak and Robert Heringer was deployed by the Selects as a “utility man” at the receiver positions. A team representative wrote in an email, “Being a young player, he was able to step in at any position when our older guys needed a breather. ... He’s very smart and has a bright future in our program.”

Kotylak, who also plays defensive back, has played football for two years. He said he enjoys everything about the sport. Kotylak demonstrated his passion for the game last summer.

“During the pre-season summer workouts that the team did, and I organized some of them, he put in a great effort,” Talbot said.

With the Golden Bears, the Grade 10 student found himself competing against older players at the varsity

level. Talbot said, “After watching him play on a JV team, against JV defenders, his skills seem to shine. I’m very excited to see how he plays for the Bears for the next two years. I can see Ryder taking what he learned playing with the Manitoba Selects and bringing it to the field, and the locker room to make us a better football team and help to take us to the next level.”

## The Program

The Winnipeg-based Selects program is for players ages 10-18. Since early November, Heaman and Kotylak have been heading to the capital city to practice for their age group’s travel football team.

The squad competed in Minneapolis in December and Moose Jaw in January. An awards supper will be held this month. In May, the team will play in the Canadian High School Football Showcase in Edmonton. A Selects representative stated in an email that there “the players will get the chance to compete in a combine in front of American and Canadian universities for the chance to get a scholarship.”

In order to participate at this level, players need the strong backing of their families. Heaman and Kotylak



SUBMITTED PHOTO

#54 Jacoby, #10 Ryder.

appreciate what their parents have done for them.

“Parental support is huge for me being on this team, because I look up to my parents a lot, and they have taken care of me my whole life. Appreciate them a lot,” Kotylak said.

# VIRDEN



CENTRE OF IT ALL

Tundra Oil & Gas Place: 204-748-2736

Town Office: 204-748-2440

Facility Bookings: 204-748-2440

Waste Disposal Grounds: 204-748-6033

Emergency After Hours: 204-851-5540

Animal Control: 204-851-1810

## Virden Pioneer Museum

### Assistant Curator

Term of Employment: April 28, 2025 – August 30, 2025

- create special tours for school classes, Day Care facility children, and Day Camp groups as well as regular guided tours
- create a display Day at Farmers Market every Friday; special displays at Downtown Events; Special Museum Day & BBQ, and a possible Kid’s Day with heritage activities
- identify artifacts & catalogue verifying locations in the inventory on the computer and display or place the item in storage as required
- create social media updates and changes to web site as required
- provide interactive tours to visitors

For full details about this opportunity, please visit [www.virden.ca/p/employment-opportunities](http://www.virden.ca/p/employment-opportunities)

Deadline for applications is April 15, 2025.

## Summer Employment Opportunities

- ★ Lifeguard Instructor
- ★ Assistant Lifeguard
- ★ Assistant Head Lifeguard
- ★ Green Team
- ★ Program Events Leader & Assistants

## Upcoming Council Meetings:

March 25 & April 8

Please Note:  
Town of Virden Council meetings begin at 7:00 PM

## Tax Prepayment Discounts

The Town of Virden offers tax prepayment discounts as outlined below to taxpayers wishing to pay an installment or installments on their 2025 property taxes.

Those wishing to prepay may pay an amount or a series of amounts that in total does not exceed the amount of their 2024 property taxes.

The discount rate is equivalent to an effective annual interest rate of 3%.

Month of Payment	Discount Rate	Savings on \$1000.00
March	1.75%	\$ 17.50
April	1.50%	\$ 15.00
May	1.25%	\$ 12.50
June	1.00%	\$ 10.00
July	0.75%	\$ 7.50

Tax prepayments made in the months of August, September or October will be accepted at par.

Tax prepayments can be made by mailing a cheque with the tax roll number written on the reverse to the Town of Virden, Box 310, Virden, MB, R0M 2C0, e-transfer to [clerk@virden.ca](mailto:clerk@virden.ca), via online banking, or by attending the Town Office in person during normal business hours.

For more information, please call 204-748-2440.



# Card tournament combines skill, fun and food



PHOTO BY ED JAMES

Fun and conversation followed by good cookin' on March 6 at Elkhorn Leisure Centre.

**Submitted**  
BY ED JAMES

In most Westman and eastern Saskatchewan rural communities you'll find a seniors' drop-in Centre that provides a wide variety of entertainment, information and a good measure of friendship. Centres offer these things on a daily or weekly basis in a surrounding that's safe and comfortable. In fact, in some Centres there is even a handy van service to pick you up and take you home. Over a morning coffee you can tell tales, tall and other wise, or try to understand the world around you that seems to be changing so much. That is, if all parties are agreeable.

The Elkhorn Leisure Centre offers all of the above, with a few extras such as information sessions, a monthly pot luck supper, Christmas and New Years parties, monthly birthday parties, card and shuffleboard games. And

small groups can rent the facility for family events.

However, on March 6 the Centre was the site of a '500' card tournament with senior groups from Virden, Souris, Reston and Elkhorn members, with about 40 people showing up to take part.

It was a day-long event with the Elkhorn group providing not only a hot lunch, but coffee and snack breaks throughout the day.

Various team members would play a set number of hands of '500', then turn in their score and move to another table to play another team in hopes of increasing their point lead. (I hope I have all this right as I have never been a card player, since math and figures are not my friends.)

Watching, you saw a mixture of serious players, novice players and those who were in it for the fun and companionship.

For the most part everyone

was having a great day, perhaps after being shut inside during the long cold winter weather we had.

At the end of the day, winners with the highest scores were announced, and given their prizes of colourful handmade aprons made by tournament organizer Cecile Fisher. This was followed by a door prize draw, a 50/50 draw and one more final coffee break and homemade treats, with members from the away teams thanking the Elkhorn club for their hospitality.

Said Cecile Fisher, "This tournament today gave our, and other area seniors a fun day of cards and friendship and perhaps a bit of friendly competition. A seniors' Centre like ours is a place where peers can laugh, share memories, learn new skills, make new friends, share with old friends and if wanted, talk about the changing world around them."

# \$2000 for ultrasound machine



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Courtney Laursen and Terry Law, representing the Virden Oilmen's Golf Tournament, recently made a donation of \$2000 to go toward the ultrasound machine for the Virden Health Centre. Representing the Health Auxiliary are Gwen Clarke, Carol Anne Trowell and Thelma Quinn.

Proud to support the Pipestone Albert Fire Department

Avery Brigden (Tundra - Surface Land Representative) presenting to Aaron Smith  
Sherri Murray and Lance Bartel (Kingston Midstream) presenting to Dean Brooker



Settle In For A Worry-Free Lifestyle

Tired of Winter  
**MOVE-IN SPECIAL**  
Call  
**204.202.1871**  
Schedule Your Tour Today!

Ask About Our Blossom Living Support Program for Residents with Mild Cognitive Decline

**VICTORIA LANDING™**  
Retirement Residence

10 Victoria Ave. E, Brandon, MB

[www.allseniorscare.com](http://www.allseniorscare.com) f X YouTube PROUDLY CANADIAN



# Tribute to a horse named Thomas



Merle Coleman leads four generations of riders in the Saturday morning parade down Seventh Ave. in Virden. At 90+ she still loves to ride. - Virden Empire-Advance Aug. 24, 2018

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Just a couple of weeks ago, a special horse went to greener pastures. Thomas, a 33-year-old sorrel gelding was

Virden horsewoman Merle Coleman's mount for decades. Horse and rider pleased audiences, parading by annually in Virden's on Virden streets just as they are seen here in the August 24th issue, 2018 rodeo parade. Here, Dreda Braybrook, the late Merle and Ron's daughter, is on her mount, Diamond and other riders follow.

Well on into her latter years, Merle was doing her own chores for a herd of about a half-dozen horses. In June of 2021, she passed on ahead of her faithful steed, leaving Thomas in Dreda's care.

Dreda's Diamond is also an aged mount at 32 years old. She recalls the 2010 Santa Parade, Diamond's first, where the train interrupted the floats, as it often does in Virden parades. Thomas and Merle with Diamond and Dreda were the first in line to await the train's roar by. A nerve-wracking experience for a horse, but Dreda says, "I plunked his (Diamond's) nose up against Thomas - he was fine!" Farewell Thomas.

# Shedding loneliness through Men's Sheds

Submitted  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Ever heard of a Men's Shed? All over Canada, Men's Sheds have emerged as vital community

hubs, offering older men a space to connect, engage in meaningful activities, and enhance their overall well-being. Originating in Australia, the grass roots movement has gained international traction, including here in Manitoba, where 10 independent Men's Sheds are active and operating around the province.

Men's Shed Manitoba supports and promotes the establishment of Men's Sheds across the province. According to Chairman Fred Bobrowski, Men's Sheds plays a crucial role in promoting mental health among older men.

"Many older men face loneliness or social isolation, especially after retirement, but being part of a Shed

provides a vital sense of belonging," says Fred. "We often hear from Shed members how their Shed community has helped them feel valued, supported and less lonely."

All Men's Sheds are autonomous and offer a diverse range of activities, tailored to the interests and skills of their members. Activities range from woodworking to metalworking, gardening, card games, crafting -- and there's always an opportunity to talk over coffee. Most often, Sheds partner with local non-profit organizations to take on community projects, such as building furniture for local schools or charities, creating toys for childcare centers, and participating in environmental conservation efforts like tree planting or community gardening.

"The aspect of giving back is key," says Fred. "When we know we're helping our community, we really feel that sense of purpose that can be lost after retirement." adds Fred.

In addition to being a place to work on hands-on projects, the Men's Shed often serves as an informal setting for health education, where members can access information or hear presentations on various health topics. This "health by stealth" approach effectively reaches men who might be reluctant to engage with traditional health services. Educational workshops are also a staple of many Sheds, offering sessions on technology skills or financial planning.

The positive effects of Men's Sheds have a ripple effect,

extending far beyond the individual participants. Families benefit from the enhanced well-being of their loved ones, who often return home happy and fulfilled after a day at the Shed. And by fostering a sense of belonging and active participation, Men's Sheds contribute to building stronger, more cohesive and resilient communities.

At a national level, Men's Sheds Canada (MSC) exists to grow and strengthen the Men's Shed movement and has ambitious plans to increase the number of Sheds in Canada from approximately 150 today to 1,000 by 2032.

Recognizing the role Sheds play in supporting men's mental health, federal governments in both Australia and Ireland now include significant grant funding for Shed development and sustainability in their health and aging policies.

"Ultimately, our objective is to inform Canadian policymakers about the pressing health issues affecting older men, highlight the positive social impact of Men's Sheds, and influence government policy that supports older men's health," says MSC President Robert Goluch.

Interested in starting a Men's Shed in your community? Resources, support and startup funding is available. For information on how to join an existing Shed, start a new Shed or support Men's Sheds in Manitoba please contact menshedmanitoba@gmail.com. Website: mensshedsmanitoba.ca

For information on Men's Sheds across Canada, contact Men's Sheds Canada at info@mensshedsCanada.org. Website: mensshedsCanada.ca



## Building Camaraderie Through Men's Sheds

Interested in starting a Men's Shed in your community?

**Winnipeg or Rural Manitoba.**

Resources, support and startup funding is available.



For information on how to join an existing Shed, start a new Shed, or support **Men's Sheds in Manitoba**

please contact

[menshedmanitoba@gmail.com](mailto:menshedmanitoba@gmail.com)

or visit:

[mensshedsmanitoba.ca](http://mensshedsmanitoba.ca)



# We Are Hiring.

Our Virden location is seeking individuals to fill the following position:

- Pump Shop Technician

Requirements:

- Valid Class 5 Driver's license
- Previous experience and current tickets are an asset but not necessary - we are willing to train the right candidate.

We offer:

- Competitive Salary + Incentives
- Comprehensive Benefits
- Dynamic work environment with career growth opportunities

send your resume to:  
[chris.murphy@swiftsupply.ca](mailto:chris.murphy@swiftsupply.ca)

or drop off at  
440 Commonwealth Drive, Virden, MB

