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## Fundraiser for Kole: Canadian country artists rock the AUD



Steven Lee Olsen and his band onstage in Virden's AUD Theatre.



JoJo Mason strikes a balance with rap style country music.

PHOTOS BY ANNE DAVISON

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE ADVANCE

While entertaining music fans last Saturday evening, nearly \$14,000 was raised to help Kole Wheeler.

Headliner Steven Lee Olsen and opening act JoJo Mason rocked the AUD Theatre on Saturday night. Both bands were cheered by a young audience - drowning out regular applause.

As a tour promoter, Bradley Westbrook (Tapper Entertainment) made arrangements for this country rock show to move to Virden from its original Winnipeg scheduled venue. The event was accompanied by a fundraiser for Kole who was injured when a train hit his truck in early January.


The crowd included community members showing their support, and Kole's family members had front-row balcony seating.

A raft of raffle prizes including Yeti coolers, bags and bottles were available in the theatre's multi-purpose room on the balcony level. Here drinks, and 50/50 tickets were also sold.

Westbrook said that along with the AUD Theatre donating \$800, "just under \$14,000 will help out the Kole Wheeler family."

On Jan. 26 Kole posted on his Facebook: "To everyone that is aware of what has happened to myself... thank you to Virden hospital, police, firefighters, EMS, who wished me well and even donated... I hope each and everyone of you know my family, Teyanna and I are very, very appreciative. To the town of Virden and surrounding areas it truly restores (faith in) humanity to see how everyone jumped in to help or offer a hand in such a difficult time."

Kole's family responds: "We will be forever grateful for our miracle, and Koles survival is nothing short of just that. He is recovering well physically with small improvements every day, regarding his TBI. We would like the community as a whole to know we appreciate each and every one for donating, praying, your well wishes, and meals that were given to our family. We truly are lucky to live in such a wonderful community. Thank you to our Fire department, EMS staff, doctors, nurses and hospital staff. Thank you, Brad Tapper entertainment, volunteers, family and friends for putting together an amazing night at the Aud theatre. JoJo Mason and Steven Lee Olsen you two are true gentleman and are so very talented. Thank you all for coming together to honour our son in such a big way. Kole is truly loved by many and it has definitely been shown in many ways."



**HOME GAME  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17  
VS. WINKLER  
FLYERS  
PUCK DROPS AT 4:00PM**

## Inside...



**SOUTHWEST EXPO  
SHARES WEALTH  
OF KNOWLEDGE**  
*P10-11*



**KURT BROWNING  
IS COMING TO  
TOWN**  
*P2*



# Kurt Browning to instruct and perform in Virden

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Canadian figure skating icon Kurt Browning will be on the ice at Tundra Oil & Gas Place arena providing inspiration, coaching expertise and choreographical insights. SkateVirden club is excited about the upcoming seminar with Browning on Feb. 21-23 and the Ice Show on that Friday evening.

Hosting professional skaters is not new for Virden's skating community. Last February celebrated figure skaters Elvis Stojko and Gladys Orozco were guest instructors.

SkateVirden's drive for excellence now brings Browning who is referred to by Skate Canada as 'the kid from Caroline' (a hamlet almost an hour west of Red Deer). "He developed his skills at Edmonton's Royal Glenora Club and went on to revolutionize the sport of figure skating with his unique combination of strong, yet graceful jumps, creativity and charismatic appeal."

SkateVirden club president, Samantha Greenbank says, "We are very lucky to have skaters in the Skate Canada community that want to give back to inspire young skaters." Browning is considered a great role model for all the kids, especially the boys in the club.

Greenbank says, "Kurt Browning is an incredible person that wants to help kids in the sport. We have some young male skaters in the Skate Virden club so it's exciting for them to see and talk to a male figure skater that has been there."

With 140 skaters in the club, and skaters from outside clubs coming in as well, classes were filling up quickly last week.

An ice show for the public on Feb. 21, 'Willy Wonka

on Ice' will feature a performance by Kurt Browning. This yearly SkateVirden show is an opportunity for family and the community to enjoy SkateVirden's talented students of all ages, and to see the adult synchro team perform says Greenbank.

As well, Tundra Oil & Gas Place arena will be open all weekend during the seminar, for anyone to come watch what's happening.

Browning competed in three Olympics. He was Canadian and World Senior Men's Champion in 1989, 1990 and 1991, and became the first Canadian man to win three consecutive World titles. Performing his memorable 'Casablanca' routine, he added his fourth Canadian and World crowns in 1993, the most World titles won by a Canadian singles skater. "His unparalleled success and style earned him legions of fans around the world and many honours, including the prestigious Order of Canada in 1989." (SkateCanada.ca).

Featured in a 2023 CBC Sports broadcast, Browning was described as "Mr. Excitement ... jumper extraordinaire," as clips of his performances over the years were played. One commentator called him "the most



PHOTO BY TINA WELTZ

Kurt Browning, internationally known figure skating champion.

versatile skater in the world." It was March 25, at the 1988 World Championships in Budapest, Hungary, when Browning landed the first ratified quadruple jump, a toe loop in the competition, an accomplishment listed in the Guinness Book of Records.

Browning is also renowned for thrilling performances with Stars on Ice. The upcoming 2025 Stars on Ice Canadian Tour features both Elvis Stojko, King of Rock on Ice, and Browning as choreographer. That tour debuts in Halifax, with a stop in Saskatoon this May as Stars on Ice tour heads westward (www.starsonice.ca).

# Charity begins in Virden, kindness meets needs

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

As Manitoba winter temperatures drop and the cost of food, well the cost of everything really, rises we have people on the margins of managing. But a Virden woman is reaching out to people, one by one.

It all began with a simple invitation to share Christmas greetings through a drop-off community mailbox, probably triggered by the postal strike. A family's Christmas mailbox campaign (see "Big Guy's Helpers connect people" Pg. 8, Dec. 13 Empire-Advance) was an invitation to drop off letters to 'Santa', and people did. Some people, including kids, told stories of need and Meredith and her husband discovered there were people in Virden without enough food and winter wear.

Determined to meet the need, Meredith put out an appeal on Facebook and within days donations were gathered for a family in Virden. But it didn't end there.

Through interesting circumstances, again shared on her Facebook page, Meredith began to tell of finding people sleeping outdoors in Brandon during mid-January bitter winter weather. She, with the support of her husband, got involved and one connection led to another. They helped get people off the street. A pizza business donated food to a family and on and on go the deeds of kindness.

In early February, Meredith appealed for help to put together a food hamper for yet another family ... with five kids.

Her appeal read like this: "If anyone would like to chip in, I'll be placing a grocery order. Food donations can also be dropped off at our house and set by the fence gate." And the need was met.

On the frigid morning of Feb. 9, she posted: "Looks like a good day to take a carload of warm winter donations to those experiencing homelessness. We've got winter coats, hoodies, socks, winter boots, toques, mitts,

hand warmers and warm blankets today!"

Other 'strangers' have been helped as well. A man who was sleeping on the street needed warm clothing, a vulnerable young person fearful of being trafficked, and recently a pregnant woman needing a place to live, these are some of the people that Meredith has provided for, not by herself, but by sharing specific needs and becoming a link for donations to help people she doesn't personally know.

But, she says there's more to it than that. She attributes these acts of kindness that seem to domino to God's provision and direction.

"He just lines things up," says Meredith. "He puts us where we need to be, lots of nudges on the heart pointing us where to go."

She's in wonder at all that has happened since the family's Big Guy campaign that was designed to be Virden centric.

"It's been really incredible, especially since we aren't an organization or registered charity. We've had donations come in from across Canada, as well as from the US. It's been a wild nine weeks to put it lightly... It's a pretty amazing testimony to the greatness of God."



SUBMITTED PHOTO

This adorable box at Arts Mosaic is being used to collect artwork from kids in Virden to be shared with seniors at care homes.

Meredith is a conduit. She's been delivering kids' artwork, gathered at Arts Mosaic in Virden, to seniors at the local care homes.

Like the Good Samaritan, she has stopped to help others and she's posted a message to the dozens of people who have donated: "Please know that everything you've all donated is so appreciated, not just appreciated by the recipients, but by me as well."



# Letter to the Editor

## RE: Health Auxiliary invites help for ultrasound

To interested individuals and organizations:

In our community, you each have been a big part in our organization over the years, and we cannot thank you enough for your support.

Our Health Auxiliary's mandate is to add to the comfort and welfare of the clients of the Virden Health Centre, the Westman and Sherwood Nursing Homes as well as the Emergency Medical Services. In order to achieve our purpose, we endeavour to support projects deemed to be in the best interest of patient care in the community in which we serve.

Every year we receive 'wish lists' from the facilities - items they need but are unable to purchase through their own sources. We try our best to make these wishes come true and we often reach our goals thanks to the help of the communities and organizations at large.

This year we do have several smaller pieces of equipment we are hoping to purchase, but our main item that we feel is of utmost importance in our hospital is the ultrasound machine. This piece of equipment will be beneficial to clients in the hospital, the nursing homes as well as the EMS.

In cases of emergencies, this machine will allow a quicker response time in diagnosing, resulting in quicker care. Then, in a routine doctor visit for a diagnostic procedure, including aorta, appendix, bladder, cardiac, deep vein thrombosis, gallbladder, gynecology and obstetrics, to name a few, this unit will be invaluable by once again providing a quicker treatment response without the need to be referred to a larger facility. For our area, this referral could be an hour's drive in any direction as well as often having to wait for a scheduled appointment, further delaying a diagnosis. If we have this machine, it would alleviate the waiting time for diagnosis and travel time which can be a problem for our aging population.

In order to purchase equipment such as this, we rely on financial support from individuals and organizations such as yourselves. For all our endeavours in helping to keep our facilities operating at their best, we couldn't accomplish this without your support.

The Ultrasound Machine will cost approximately \$72,000. Any amount of financial support to put towards this project would be so greatly appreciated. We feel this machine will greatly help with patient care as well as aiding our health care staff in efficiently making diagnosis, resulting in positive outcomes all around.

Thanking you in advance for your time and consideration in this worthy project.

Sincerely,  
Thelma Quinn  
President, Virden & District Health Auxiliary

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# National anthems are to be respected

## In my opinion

### REF TO WRITER

### GERRY NOLAN



I was not happy to hear the Ottawa Senators home crowd boo the American National Anthem. I was also not happy to hear the Nashville Predators home crowd boo the Canadian National Anthem. As well at the Winnipeg Jets home game the home crowd booed the American National Anthem. What

a disgrace!

When I was a kid growing up you stood at attention with your hat off, a sign of RESPECT, something which sorely lacks these days. We also sang God Bless the Queen, same way at attention with our hats off.

Politics vs politics, Trump vs Trudeau. That is one thing. At a hockey

game 2 teams are facing off to compete to see who can win the game.

To the people who booed, you are not a great example to our youth of the nation. The people that boo are just an example to how far our nation has fallen when it comes to respect. I think they may have never made it out of their sandbox. Childish!

I am a proud Canadian and would never dream of booing the American National Anthem, that is not in me to do that. You do realize that if America wanted to take us over they just would, because we have no means at all to stop

them and you can thank our nations leaders for that.

We need to stand up for our country and sing loud and proud each time we hear our anthem being played. God knows at the Winnipeg Jets games we certainly hear True North yelled loud and clear. Well, how about at all their games the fans pay a little RESPECT to the American anthem, stand straight with your hat off and when they begin the CANADIAN National Anthem sing as loud and proud as you do when you yell TRUE NORTH. Would that not send shivers up your back?



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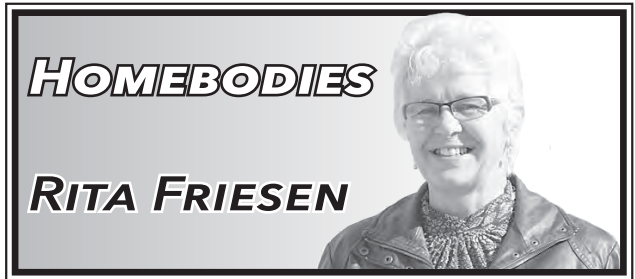
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# Tundra

By Chad Carpenter



## After work...

I am my father's child. Whenever dad saw print he needed to pick up the paper, the book, the magazine, the personal mail- whatever- and read it. He was not always an observant person. However after visiting a cousin's home he commented that a place could be kept very tidy when there where no books or papers lying around. He did notice the complete absence of reading material! If he had investigated I am certain dad would have found a well worn Bible at the bedside, and to his credit, he didn't go check! Saying all that to confess that while visiting a dear elderly friend- ninety four, ninety five is elderly!- I noted a book of poetry on her coffee table. It intrigued me, not everyone enjoys poetry. Gently scanning through the pages a short poem arrested my attention, "After Work" by John Oxenham. It spoke so clearly that I snuck a pen and wrote the title on the palm of my hand. My memory being what it is isn't what it was, and I wanted to recall and research the work. Oxenham wrote in the Victorian era, was British and authored some thirty novels.

"Lord, when Thou seest that my work is done, Let me not linger on, With failing powers Adown the weary hours- A workless worker in a world of work. But, with a word, Just bid me home, And I will come Right gladly- Yea, right gladly Will I come."

Alliteration catches me in 'the feels'. A workless worker in a world of work. Something I never wish to experience, and all the more poignant as I sat with my friend. Still living mostly independently, still present though there are life memories that get shared at every tea time, contented and mostly at peace. During our time together we speak of the past, the wonder of good memories that surround us, the support of family, and our faith. It was with a mixture of humility and pride that she recited Psalm 23, and John 3: 16 – both key scriptures in many denominations- spoke them with assurance in both the English and Ukrainian language. Then I re-evaluate 'a workless worker in a world of work'. No longer knitting, curling, baking, gardening, or crocheting, sitting with memories, being thankful and resting in her faith. That looks a lot like work to me!

Again, having said that, I identify with the closing lines very strongly as well. 'Just bid me home and I will come right gladly'. I look around at the state of this world; political, economical and socially and I am thankful that I am old. I am thankful that I'm not raising a family, trying for an education, seeking employment or trying to purchase a home. I am thankful for my safe home, my yard and garden, my abilities- physical and mental-, well aware of how transient all of these are.

So, Isabel, thank you continuing to be a mentor, whether you know it or not. In all these ramblings, faith is the anchor. Faith is my anchor. Working with a purpose while I can, ready to come when called. "Right gladly will I come."

# In search of truth

Amid the flood of information that washes over us every day, I long for news media, academics and the general public to actually think about their responses and their reactions.

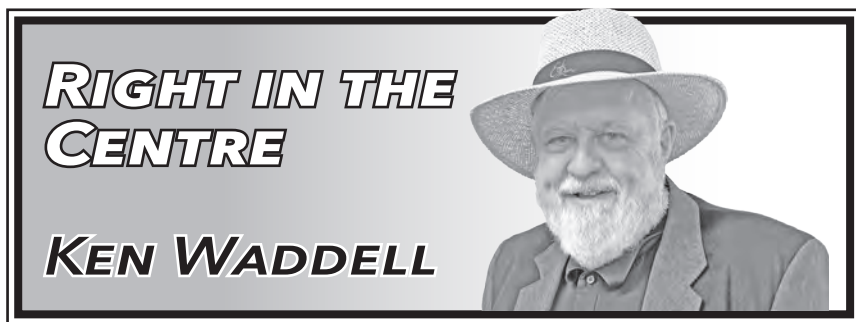
Lately, the largest source of information by far has been Donald Trump's office. The newly elected United States President has been issuing seemingly endless proclamations and obviously with mixed reviews.

Some people think that everything Trump says or does is wonderful. Some think everything he says or does is terrible, despicable even. Neither extreme is true.

Consider his suggestion to rebuild Gaza under control of the United States. Some say it's ridiculous, some say it's illegal and unprecedented. However, consider the facts. Gaza is an area about 24 miles long and six miles wide. I think it's smaller than an average rural municipality in Manitoba. It is basically a defeated country, in a war that certain Hamas backed citizens of Gaza caused. They invaded Israel, killed several hundred people and took many prisoners. The buildings and infrastructure have been destroyed by the Israeli attacks. Thousands have died, hundreds of thousands of people are displaced. The roots of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict goes back many centuries. I have been told that Israel at one point in time backed Hamas. A quick internet search shows "Hamas was initially discreetly supported by Israel as a counter-balance to the secular Palestine Liberation Organization."

So what is the solution to this conflict that can be somewhat traced back 3,000 years.

Consider that Gaza has about 2.2 million people in that little area, half of which is urban, half is agricultural.



"If people or countries object to Trump's plan, then let them come up with a better one."

It's been reported that 80 per cent of its income has been foreign aid. Foreign aid money that arguably went into building Gaza also went into bomb shelters, bombs, armaments and drones. It is now destroyed and they really have nobody to blame but themselves.

Trump's idea on Gaza may be outlandish and unpopular but it is not without precedent.

In 1918, World War I ended with the defeat of the Germans. Many of Germany's assets and colonies were divided up among other countries. My understanding is that the Congo was a German colony and was given to Belgium to compensate for how the WWI devastated that country.

After World War II, many pieces of Europe and Germany were divided up. And guess who financed and guided a lot of the re-development? The United States did.

Trump's plan is not new, rebuilding war torn countries has been going on for years.

Any plans for Gaza, including the

two state idea, will be difficult and long suffering.

If people or countries object to Trump's plan, then let them come up with a better one. Maybe that's what Trump is looking for. Trump's proposals and proclamations seem outrageous. Some say he is an immoral man but that alone didn't seem to sway the American people from voting for him. It didn't sway them from voting for a past list of presidents who were less than pristine in behaviour either. No matter how much we may dislike Trump and his ideas, we are likely faced with four more years of him.

I think our lives will be a lot easier if we have strong leaders in Canada to make a strong case for Canada and Canadians. Not everything Trump says is wrong, but sorting out the truth from the fiction will keep us busy.

*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.*

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### 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



# The truth about hypnosis

## Debunking the Biggest Misconceptions

**HOLISTIC WELLNESS**  
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**MARIE EVELYNE GINGRAS**

When most people hear the word hypnosis, they picture a swinging pocket watch, a mysterious voice counting down from ten, or someone being forced to cluck like a chicken on stage. Thanks to Hollywood and stage performances, hypnosis has been surrounded by myths and misconceptions for decades. But in reality, hypnosis is a legitimate therapeutic tool that has been used for pain management, therapy, stress relief, and even medical treatments.

One of the biggest misconceptions about hypnosis is that it makes people lose control. Many assume that once they are hypnotized, they will be at the mercy of the hypnotist, unable to think for themselves. In truth, hypnosis is the opposite of mind control. It is a state of heightened focus and awareness. During hypnosis, individuals remain completely in control and can come out of the hypnotic state whenever they choose. The hypnotist is simply a guide, helping the person access their subconscious mind, but no one can be hypnotized against their will or forced to do something they do not want to do.

Another common myth is that only gullible or weak-minded people can be hypnotized. Hypnosis is a natural state that most people experience every day. Have you ever been so absorbed in a book or a movie that you lost track of time? Or driven home only to realize you do not remember part of the drive? That is a form of hypnosis where your mind is deeply focused while your body goes on autopilot. Hypnosis works best on people who are open to the experience and willing to relax, regardless of intelligence or personality type.

Some believe that hypnosis is just a form of sleep, but that is another misconception. While hypnosis does involve deep relaxation, the person is not unconscious. In fact, brain scans show that people in a hypnotic state have increased brain activity in certain areas, especially those linked to concentration and creativity. Unlike sleep, where the brain slows down, hypnosis actually engages the mind in a way that allows people to change thought patterns, reduce stress, and even manage physical pain.

There is also a common belief that hypnosis is only for entertainment or stage shows. While stage hypnosis is real, it is very different from clinical hypnosis used in therapy. In a medical or therapeutic setting, hypnosis is used to help people quit smoking, reduce chronic pain, manage anxiety, weight loss, and improve sleep. Studies have shown that hypnosis can be an effective tool for pain relief, helping people with conditions like migraines, fibromyalgia, and irritable bowel syndrome.

Some people worry that they might get "stuck" in hypnosis and never wake up. This is completely false. Hypnosis is a temporary state, and even if a session were to end unexpectedly, the person would naturally come out of it on their own, just like waking up from a daydream.

Hypnosis is not magic, and it is not mind control. It is simply a tool that allows people to tap into the power of their own minds. For those willing to look past the myths, it can be a powerful way to improve health, manage stress, and create lasting change.

# MJHL PLAYOFFS COMING SOON

Submitted  
 BY DEREK HOLTOM

The Dauphin Kings and the Portage Terriers dominated the MJHL Players of the Month for January.

Heading up the list is forward Cayden Glover from the Dauphin Kings, the January RBC Player of the Month. In eight games, Glover scored 10 goals and added five helpers for 15 points – nearly a two-points-a-game clip.

Also from the Kings is Matthew Haun, the Safe Work Manitoba Defenseman of the Month. In eight games, Haun scored twice and added six helpers for a point-a-game average.

The only player not from the Kings or Terriers to be recognized is goaltender Liam Ernst from the Winkler Flyers. Just like his team, Ernst was lights out, winning six of six starts, posting a 1.48 GAA, a .939 save percentage and two shutouts.

The Chevrolet Rookie of the Month is Tristan Gravenor from the Portage Terriers. The first-year player scored six goals and added four assists in just nine games to earn the nod.

And the Manitoba Pork Peak Performer for January is Nolan Nenow from the Portage Terriers. Along with being community-minder, Nenow had a strong month offensively, scoring six goals and adding nine assists for 15 points in 10 games.

The first MJHL Original 16 Players of the Week for February all hail from the West Division.

Leading the list is forward Landen Gulutzan from the Swan Valley Stampeders. In just two games the Stamps' team captain scored twice and added four assists for a six-point week.

The final two winners both hail from the Virden Oil Capitals. First up is goaltender Loic Morin. He won both games he played, posting a 0.50 GAA, a .979 save percentage and one shutout as the Oil Capitals attempt to lock down a playoff appearance. The shutout came against the power-house Kings who sport the league's top goal scorer in Cayden Glover.

The final winner is forward Tyson Draper, also from the Oil Capitals. In a pair of games Draper scored twice and added three helpers to earn this honour.

It's quite something that the MJHL has four teams listed in the national rankings for junior teams.

All three powerhouse East Division teams are ranked in the top 10 in Canada. Winkler is ranked seventh (same as last time), while Steinbach moves to eighth from ninth the previous week.

And close behind are the Portage Terriers, who moved from an honourable mention to 10th in the nation.

Speaking of honourable mention, the Dauphin Kings, who lead the West Division, earned that



honour this week as well.

It should be no surprise to see the three East Division teams ranked so close to one another, as that mirrors the standings. Pending Sunday's clash between the Dauphin Kings and the Winkler Flyers (bad scheduling there going up against the Super Bowl), the Flyers lead the Steinbach Pistons by three points and the Portage Terriers by five points. Fourth-place Niverville is now 10 points back of Portage.

The Nighthawks pretty much have fourth place locked up. The Steelers were hoping to battle with them for that spot down the stretch, but the Steelers are 2-7-1-0 in their last 10. The Nighthawks also retain two games in hand on the Steelers.

In the West Division, the Dauphin Kings are starting to slowly pull away from the Northern Manitoba Blizzard, though that race isn't settled as yet. The Blizzard are also doing what they can to keep the Neepawa Titans behind them in the standings – they split a weekend set against one another this last weekend.

And the race for fourth in the West Division sees Virden retaining games in hand and holding a three point edge over the Waywayseecappo Wolverines. Those two teams meet each other this week, a game of massive importance for both.

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**HELEN DRYSDALE****OUT OF HELEN'S KITCHEN**

Cooperatives have played an important role throughout Manitoba's history. Early Manitoba farmers had always felt that they were taken advantage of. The grain growers were the first to challenge the way in which their grain was graded and marketed. They believed, and rightly so, that unfair and at times corrupt practices occurred. As well, when buying supplies they were charged absorbent fees for their needed goods. In the 1870s the "Grange" campaigned for co-operatives, buying clubs and farmer owned elevators. Many of the first cooperatives faced challenges too great to overcome. 1906 was the beginning of effective organization by prairie farmers that formed the Grain Growers to sell their grain at profitable prices. In 1917, it merged with another cooperative, the Alberta Farmers' Co-operative Elevator Company, to become United Grain Growers (UGG). In 1924 the farmer owned Manitoba Pool Elevators Limited was established. Later that year representatives of the three provincial pools met at Regina and structured the Canadian Co-operative Wheat Producers Limited. They would gather and sell all the grain from the three provinces and the proceeds would be returned to the growers after deduction of the costs of marketing. Soon co-ops were formed to market milk, eggs, livestock, chickens and other farmer's products. Many of the first Co-ops were started by the English and Scottish farmers as that is what they had been used to in their homelands. These farmers recognized the need to work together as part of one system for the benefit of all the members.

Cooperatives are not only business enterprises created to break the power of the large for-profit corporations. A co-op is an enterprise that is owned and controlled by its members and each member has one vote in how the co-op will be run and the election of the board of directors. A co-op provides goods or services at a reasonable cost with the profits being distributed to members according to patronage in the form of dividends every year.

Taken from the "By United Effort", The Quarter-Century Story of Neepawa Consumers Co-op. "On July 30, 1929, another meeting was held in Neepawa. A definite decision was made to organize and the new consumers co-op was born. A permanent board of directors was elected, consisting of G.H.Kilburn, G.A.Drysdale, E.H.Turner, A.D.Kennedy, D.S.Carmichael, B.F.Davidson and V.Grainger. Roy Johnson and another MCW director, Hamp Hindson, addressed the meeting on the advisability of proceeding to install an oil station.

The co-op was only one month old when the gasoline tanks had arrived and the first payment had taken \$1,000 of the new co-ops total capital of \$1,200. More money was needed to put the tanks in place and to obtain a truck for delivery. When the directors met on Saturday of that week, the executive presented the problem. A personal guarantee was needed from each director-or the co-op went out of business. There was a long and serious discussion. Finally the "document" from the bank was passed around the table. Seven signatures were added and the Co-op had backing for a bank loan of \$2,500. Tanks could be set up,

a delivery truck obtained."

From this humble beginning came our Neepawa Gladstone Co-op.

In 1929 the new co-ops membership was 250 with a staff of two and \$12,000 in sales. By 1940 membership was 800 with a staff of six and sales of \$105,017. 1950 saw a membership of 1,025 with a staff of fourteen and sales of \$376,592. In 2017 the Neepawa/Gladstone Co-op had a membership of 7,500, a staff of close to 200 and sales of \$78.5 million.

In Manitoba there are general stores, gas bars, farm supplies, furniture stores, funeral services, natural gas utilities, water utilities, internet access and cable television co-ops. Credit unions are co-operatives as well. One in two Manitobans belong to a Credit Union. This is the story of the cooperative difference, people helping people to achieve a better standard of living.

I try to eat seasonal and local products, so root veggies are great in the winter. Enjoy these two recipes.

**Turnip casserole**

6 cups peeled and diced turnips  
1 Tbsp. brown sugar  
1/2-1 tsp. nutmeg  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1/2 tsp. pepper  
1/2 cup cream  
2 eggs, beaten  
1/4 cup dry bread crumbs  
1 Tbsp. melted butter

Cook turnips in lightly salted water. When cooked, drain and mash. Add sugar, nutmeg, salt, pepper, cream and the eggs. Mix thoroughly and put into a buttered casserole dish. Toss the crumbs and butter together and sprinkle on top. Bake at 375 F for 50-60 minutes until hot and bubbly. Makes 6-8 servings.

**Carrot ginger slaw**

3 cups shredded carrots  
1 stalk celery, thinly sliced  
2 green onions, thinly sliced  
1/2 cup dried cranberries

Dressing:  
1/2 cup pineapple juice  
2 Tbsp. honey  
1 Tbsp. lemon juice  
2 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar  
2 Tbsp. oil  
1-2 Tbsp. minced fresh ginger  
1/2 tsp. salt  
dash of pepper  
1 Tbsp. fresh chopped parsley (optional)

In a bowl add the vegetables and cranberries. Mix the dressing ingredients together and add to the bowl of vegetables and stir. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

**Miniota News**

Submitted

BY LINDA CLARK

Congratulations to Carson Brown who skipped his Team Brown to the top spot in the U15 Man Sask Sliding Stars at the Virden Curling Club.

Miniota Elkhorn players, coaches and parents hosted a U13 hockey tournament, being played at both the Miniota and Elkhorn rinks. Teams came from Virden, Shoal Lake/Birtle, Brandon Penguins, St. James, Brandon Predators, Brandon Oilers and Neepawa. Neepawa Funk were the A Side winners of the tournament. Congratulations to our Miniota Elkhorn team who were successful in winning the B Side banner!

The Miniota U7 team hosted a tournament on Sunday with Hamiota, Elkhorn and Birtle attending. A full house watched these young players! And then the U15 Miniota/Elkhorn/Birtle team played a game facing a loss against Gladstone/Neepawa.

Tiffany and Coralee Anderson travelled to Saskatoon where Coralee, a member of the team from Langenburg Evangelical Fellowship, participated at the Erindale Alliance Church in the annual Bible Quiz. Congratulations to Coralee who placed second in the B Division! This is Coralee's sixth and final year to participate.

"Out of clutter, find Simplicity. From discord, find Harmony. In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity." -Albert Einstein

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# Police respond to 43 calls, impaired drivers charged

Service Report - Feb. 2 to Feb. 8.

Submitted  
By WESTMAN RCMP

During the week of Feb. 2 to Feb. 8, Westman RCMP received a total of 43 calls for service. Of these, 15 were traffic related including three for operating a vehicle while impaired. Also included in the calls was an abandoned vehicle file, a well-being check, a failure to comply with court orders, three assault files and three false alarms.

On Feb. 2 Westman RCMP received a report of an unwanted person at a residence in Sioux Valley Dakota Nation. Members located a 29-year-old male inside a house where he had conditions that forbid associating with the resident. He was arrested without incident and remanded into custody. He will appear in court on two charges of failing to comply with a probation order.

On Feb. 3 during a routine traffic patrol in the town of Melita, RCMP observed a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed a speed of 131 km/hr in a 100 km/hr zone. A traffic stop was conducted, and the driver was issued a traffic offence notice for speeding, which carries a fine of \$456.

On Feb. 7 Westman RCMP were dispatched to the Sioux Valley Dakota Nation where a vehicle was in the ditch with occupants inside. All occupants tried to flee when First Nations Safety Officers arrived however, they detained the 43-year-old male who was identified as the driver. Once RCMP arrived he was arrested and charged with operating a vehicle while impaired with a blood alcohol level over 80 mg. A breath test was conducted with results of 190 mg. and 180mg. He was also charged for driving without holding a valid driver's license. He will appear in court in April for these charges. His license was suspended for 90 days and the vehicle impounded for 60 days.

To report a complaint or non-emergent incident to RCMP please call 204-748-2135. For general inquiries or administrative requests including criminal record checks please call the administration line at 204-748-2046 EXT. 3. If you are reporting an emergency, please call 911.

# Oak Lake Legion Life Memberships



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Three members in Oak Lake, in November, received their Life Memberships to the Royal Canadian Legion. Branch #79 in Oak Lake is proud to have these hard-working members with decades of service in their local community. Left to right: Dale Champigny, Murray Olive, and Pat Rampton.



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**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**Pesticide Application Programs**

Virden Wellview Golf Club intends to conduct the following pesticide control programs from May 1 to October 31, 2025. All applications are part of a comprehensive IPM strategy, and depending on pest threshold levels may or may not include:

1. Weed control in turf areas within the property. Projected dates of application are May 1 to October 31. Herbicides may include: Glyphosate, Dicamba, 2, 4-D, Mecoprop-P.
2. Fungus control in turf areas within the property. Projected dates of application are May 1 to October 31. Fungicides used may include: Chlorothalonil, Propiconazole, Fludioxonil, Azoxystrobin.
3. Insect control in turf and treed areas within the property. Target pests include: mosquitoes, tent caterpillars, cankerworms, ants, cutworms, and white grubs. Projected dates of application are from May 1 to October 31. Insecticides used may include: Malathion, Carbaryl.

Any public concerns with the above may be addressed by sending a written submission within fifteen days of this publication to:

Manitoba Environment and Climate Change  
Environmental Approvals Branch  
Box 35, 14 Fultz Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3Y 0L6



# Honoring Our Heroes: Reston and Area Veteran Banner Committee Prepares new display



SUBMITTED PHOTO

On the night the committee gathered to frame the photos Reston and Area Veteran Banner Committee member Sherrill Berry proudly displays two of her family veteran banners.

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

**R**eston and Area Veteran Banner Committee organized in February 2023 with a goal of three years working towards honouring those who served with connections to the RM of Pipestone.

As of October 2024, 98 veteran banners have been erected. 2024 brought about a change in where these banners will be displayed starting with the veterans of Pipestone connections that were hung in the new Pipestone Memorial Park on Main Street last fall. Next year the banners that previously hung along the streets in Reston will be erected in Reston Memorial Park. There will be additional cost to the change in where we hang the banners and any support towards moving the location of the banners would be welcome.

As the committee has plans to put this project on hold for the near future, 2025 may be your final opportunity to honour your veteran. All information on how to proceed, and the sponsor form, can be found on the Reston and Area Veteran Memorial Banner web page. More information will also be found on the Reston and Area Veteran Memorial Banner Facebook page.

Cost to sponsor a veteran is \$250 with a photo and short biography of the veteran requested. Anyone can sponsor and if you would like to participate but don't have a veteran in your family you can contact the committee for assistance. If the cost to sponsor your veteran is not possible right now, the banner project received a generous donation from the Virden Oilmen's Golf Tournament Committee last year to make sure veterans with no sponsor could hang as well.

Deadline to sponsor is May 1, 2025 with payment and all information submitted. Banners sponsored will hang in the fall. A tax receipt for \$250 will be issued for anyone sponsoring a veteran.

For more information on how to participate email: [veteranbannerproject@gmail.com](mailto:veteranbannerproject@gmail.com) or phone: 867-446-9922 or 204-851-1421

## Westman rinks compete at Viterra

By Dale Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The 2025 Viterra Championship wrapped up in Portage la Prairie on February 9. Reid Caruthers took home his ninth Manitoba men's curling title on the hundredth anniversary of the championship.

Virden's Jace Freeman rink of Timothy Marin, Nick Senff and Luke Robins started on a winning note with a 9-2 win over Dean Dunstone of the Granite club, followed by a 10-3 loss to Brett Walter from Assiniboine Memorial. Freeman chalked up

a 10-1 win over Dauphin's Greg Todoruk in his third game but ended his run with a tight 7-6 loss to Justin Richter from Beausejour.

The Kelly Marnoch rink from Carberry with Bart Witherspoon at third, Cromer's Branden Jorgensen at second and Virden's Brooks Freeman playing lead defeated Ryan Ostrowsky of the Granite club 8-3 in their first game. They lost their second game to Caruthers 8-1 but bounced back to defeat Ryan Hyde of Portage 8-2. Their final game was a close one, ending in a 7-6 loss to Jordan Peters

from Fort Rouge.

The Hamiota rink of Travis Gregory, Wes Gregory, Quinn Robins and Riley Willows lost two straight to Ryan Thomson of Morden and Steve Irwin of Brandon.

The Irwin rink, with Hamiota's Travis Brooks playing lead had three decisive victories in a row only to lose two close ones against Sean Grassie of Deer Lodge and Jordon McDonald from Assiniboine Memorial. Both Grassie and McDonald were eliminated by the eventual champion Reid Caruthers

“ We discuss money matters because money...matters!

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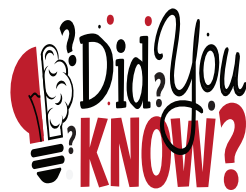
# Happy Valentine's Day!



## Love songs cheer Westman residents

SUBMITTED PHOTO

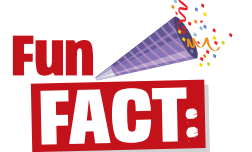
Using his vast vinyl collection Ed James brought his record player to provide a Valentine music show for Westman Nursing Home residents. He says the three most popular love songs at the Westman were all by Elvis: Love Me Tender (1956), Are You Lonesome Tonight? (1960) and Love Letters Straight from My Heart (1966). "You cannot beat the classics," says James, adding, "I saw a lot of the residents moving their lips along with the music. However, there was one more that I played by Elvis called Wooden Heart (1960), which is in both English and German. To my surprise as I was singing along in German, there were some people in the back singing in German."



The average resting heart rate for an adult is between 60 and 100 beats per minute.



- English:** Love
- Spanish:** Amor
- Italian:** Amore
- French:** Amour
- German:** Liebe



Around 250 million of these are grown for Valentine's Day each year. They are a popular offering as a gift of love.

Answer: Red roses

### WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

There are four differences between Picture A and Picture B.



Answers:  
 1. Heart below card is upside down 2. Missing red pattern on right wine glass 3. Card has message 4. Chocolates replace heart confetti



## BUYING OR SELLING?

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# Local students perform in Westman honour bands

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Families packed the Western Manitoba Centennial Auditorium on Saturday to hear students of the Westman Honour Bands perform. Students hailed from dozens of junior highs and high schools in Westman to come together, learn and perform in the concert hall.

Brandon University Symphonic Band, opened the 3pm concert under the direction of Wendy Zander. Among three thrilling selections the 'Movement for Rosa' was in honour of Rosa Parks, the American activist in the civil rights movement known for her pivotal role in the Montgomery bus boycott – a fitting tribute in Black History Month. The audience was invited into the Symphonic Band's performance by second year music student Daelyn Fefchak. A Virden native, Fefchak led the audience with her guitar in singing the hymn that became a key anthem of the American Civil Rights movement, "We Shall Overcome."

The 2025 Westman Junior Honour Band and the Westman Senior Honour Band then performed one after the other. To prepare for their performances, the students had a rigorous set of practices on Friday and Saturday within their instrumental sections and then as whole bands.

Two days of rehearsals prepared 91 junior high students to perform together under Chloe Plamondon, band teacher from Seven Oaks School Division (Winnipeg). She holds a Master of Music and a Baccalaureate in school counselling. All five pieces were exciting to hear in this beautiful building where there isn't a bad seat in the house. The Westman Junior Honour Band's final selection, 'Hearth' by Matt Neufeld warmed with gentle harmonies and finished up with the

near silent, slight crackling sound as if from a cozy living room hearth, created by the students crunching empty chip bags. Very effective.

Virde Jr. High: Anika Zapata (oboe); Zoe Desjardins (Clarinet); Brock Frizzley (trumpet); Nevaeh Barkley, Grayson Ritchie, Nash Studer and Emmy Studer (all trombonists); Toby Whittle (euphonium); Landon Plaisier (tuba); Anna Leask (percussion). Elkhorn: Shilo Warnica (clarinet); Ryan Anderson (alto saxophone). Oak Lake Community School: Reinhardt Winters (trumpet).

## Westman Senior Honour Band

The senior band, much smaller in number, was directed by Rob Monson who teaches instrumental music at Fort Richmond Collegiate. A tuba player, he has performed with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. Monson is passionate about the power of music to express the deepest human feelings and to bring people together. The first piece, 'Bandology' had just the right traditional marching band flavour. The last of four pieces, 'Urban Scenes' took the listener from an early city morning,



PHOTO BY DALE DAVISON

Daelyn Fefchak leads the audience in 'We Shall Overcome'.

on into the hubbub of the day. Great stuff!

Virde Students: Jesse Kreutzer (alto saxophone); Austin Babiak (trumpet); Carson James (trombone); Abigail Torrance (percussion). Elkhorn student: Joshua Baer (tenor saxophone).

The concert was an opportunity to highlight the International Music Camp at the International Peace Garden straddling the border between the United States and Canada. One student from each of the junior and senior honour bands was announced as scholarship recipient to attend IMC.

# Expo shares wealth of knowledge



PHOTO BY ANNE DAVISON

Before everyone headed home on a snowy afternoon, area business, Lucky Break Ranch (not pictured) received mention as an expo supporter since its inception; and the group of business pitch winners were called to the stage: (l-r) Hudson Mealy (Impact Tile Drainage), Dylan Calverley (Outlaw Detailing), Deanna Langlois (Southwest Safety Consulting), Gracie Lawrence (With Love, Gracie) and Dora Waldner (Pipestone Pet Treats).

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

A handful of entrepreneurs got a boost for their business at the Southwest Business and Entrepreneur Expo held in Oak Lake Community Hall last week. The business owners went home with cash or advertising credit in their pockets. There was no shortage of exciting ideas and entrepreneurial spirit shared by keynote speaker Hailey Jeffries. Breakout sessions on a variety of topics were available to meet individual interests.

Unfortunately, there was money left on the

table. A number of awards geared for specific areas could not be presented due to insufficient eligible businesses.

And just as important, this was an expo worthy of an audience of a thousand not just about a hundred, as turned out. The knowledge capital would be difficult to quantify. And to that end, there was at least one inventor in the crowd who was set to take some of the ideas and information and run with them.

Food products and service turned out to be a theme for the day with Oak Lake Community Hall kitchen a shiny (stainless steel) example

of a community initiative that will give back for years to come.

One of the organizers, Rachelle Stannage with Sifton economic development expressed her pride seeing a panel of four local food businesses start the morning off. Jolene Thiessen with Enjoy Real Spice, Kristi-Lyn Buckley with Deer Meadow Farmacy, Mike Hatfield with Cornerstone Coffee Roasting Co. (coffee on tap at the lunch counter) and Trevor Gompf with Bison Spirit Ranch are marketing their products in some cases across Canada and into the USA. Stannage noted that "they talked about how they all

support each other," and said, "The highlight for me was getting to watch these businesses from our own community."

## Pitch Winners

The Business Pitch Competition is always exciting. At this year's Expo, five businesses from the Southwest Region pitched their new, start up or expanding business to a panel of three judges for a chance to win cash awards.

Two young entrepreneurs took home prestige, recognition and cash:

'Outlaw Detailing' and 'With Love, Gracie' were the two Rising Stars recipients of \$250 each, sponsored by Rural Municipality of Sifton

Outstanding Business Pitch winners were:

\$1000 to Impact Tile Drainage in the Municipality of Grassland – sponsor, Emblem CDC

\$1000 to With Love, Gracie in the Rural Municipality of Wallace-Woodworth – sponsor, RM of Wallace-Woodworth

\$1000 to Southwest Safety Consulting in

Virde – sponsor, Town of Virde

\$1000 to Pipestone Pet Treats in the Rural Municipality of Pipestone – sponsor, RM of Pipestone

Outlaw Detailing won two more awards: \$1000 Advertising Credit for Most Creative Pitch – sponsor, Golden West-CJRB Radio 1220; and \$1000 for the Judges Choice Pitch – sponsor, Sunrise Credit Union.

Impact Tile Drainage won \$1000 for Best Overall Pitch – sponsor, Community Futures Westman

## Proud to support the Oak Lake CARE Centre



Avery Brigden (Tundra - Surface Land Representative) presenting to Tammy Hall, Alayna Bailey, Sadie Bailey, Wyatt Krantz, Kacey Ryall, Jude Grant, Madelynn Rookes, Kennedy Leepart, & Lexi Morcombe





# Successful Manitoba food processor shares the journey

By Dale Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Southwest Expo keynote speaker Hailey Jeffries of Prairie Fava shared compelling insights applicable to the ag industry, food production businesses and to any fledgling entrepreneur.

Prairie Fava contracts with fava farmers across Canada, processes fava beans at its plant in Glenboro and sells fava ingredients to food processors in North America, Japan, and South Korea.

This bean processing company's achievements earned them the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce Start-Up of the Year Award in 2019. Jeffries explained, "I did the pitch competition and won \$1,000 and I thought I was set for life."

Despite her passion for the family's new business, reality set in. She discovered the journey to success also required persistence and patience. She stated, "people tend to overestimate what they can achieve in one year but underestimate what they can accomplish in a decade."

Jeffries has learned that entrepreneurship is unpredictable and always changing, citing the current threats of tariffs as a major challenge to an export-oriented business like hers. This unpredictability may be a factor in the decline in entrepreneurship since 2000, with 120,000 fewer entrepreneurs today.

## GROWING PAINS

As Jeffries worked to create and grow Prairie Fava, she discovered that there was an attractive business opportunity with the beans. The crop fits well into rotational cycles and is highly effective at nitrogen fixation. They are exceptionally high in protein, fiber, and micronutrients and plant-based proteins are becoming more popular in the food industry. But Jeffries soon found a serious challenge to overcome in

the growth of her new business. There was no established market for selling the beans.

Jeffries took a bag of beans to the Food Development Centre in Portage La Prairie where she discovered the importance of extensive market research before launching a business. She advises entrepreneurs to ask, "What's the market saying? What's the market doing? What are your goals in business and where do you want to be? How do you want this to look in the future?"

During her market research journey, she attended a conference in Saskatoon where she sat next to a representative for General Mills, a multinational marketer of processed foods. He found that she was a fava bean processor and invited her to submit a sample of her flour. Excited by the prospect of marketing her product through a large company she arranged to have some beans milled and sent some flour to General Mills. They responded with questions about the quality, saying that the flour was too gritty and contained black specks. This setback was a valuable lesson, leading Jeffries to focus the company's efforts on de-hulling the beans before milling. She no longer calls these situations setbacks or mistakes or even challenges. She calls them "learnings", and values them as opportunities to improve.

## CASH IS KING

To make money you need to spend money but the process of purchasing raw materials, processing them, and waiting to be paid can lead to a cash flow crunch. Careful financial planning is essential, and Jeffries now has advisors who help with sales, cash flow management and financial strategy.

Jeffries says that traditional banks are often reluctant to finance high-risk ventures like hers. Companies must consider



PHOTO BY ANNE DAVISON

Hailey Jeffries makes the rounds visiting the displays at the business expo in Oak Lake Community Hall on Feb. 5.

their long-term goals. Do they plan to develop the business to pass on to the next generation? Or sell it for a profit? Do they plan to expand into the international marketplace? These decisions influence the types of investors, advisors, and funding strategies that will work best to grow the company.

Government grants can provide important funding for a growing business, but every grant has specific eligibility criteria and can take time before the funds are received.

## FIND A MENTOR

Jeffries believes that a successful entrepreneur should listen to new ideas, filter out the noise and stay focused on the company's direction. Because she was trying to start a business without any firsthand experience, she sought help to fill in her knowledge gaps. Jeffries advises entrepreneurs to find a mentor and to seek guidance from people with expertise. She pointed out that business conferences like the Southwest Business and Entrepreneur Expo are a great source of information and a great place to meet other business people.

# Harnessing AI for business

## ChatGPT comes to the Expo



PHOTO BY ANNE DAVISON

James Chambers demystifies ChatGPT for the Southwest Business and Entrepreneur Expo audience.

By Dale Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

James and Angie Chambers have been baking together since their teenage years and now they own and operate Chez Angela Bakery and Cafe in Brandon. They create their baking, in fact their whole menu from scratch using local seasonal ingredients at their Tenth St. location. Chambers credits Angie as the real driving force behind the venture, but his experience as a software developer is coming in handy.

Along with the usual social media and business applications, Chambers is finding a valuable tool in ChatGPT, an artificial intelligence (AI) platform. On Feb. 5 he shared his knowledge and experience in a breakout session at the Southwest Business and Entrepreneur Expo in Oak Lake.

He explained that a generative pre-trained transformer (GPT) is a digital framework that has been trained with huge quantities of data to hold conversations with users. The GPT will answer questions and respond to requests using its broad knowledge base to offer both creative and practical solutions.

James and Angie found that as their bakery restaurant catering business grew, the complexity of planning increased. Chambers said, "She started to become overwhelmed with the amount of work that had to go into planning her schedule, ordering groceries, picking the groceries up, planning out the day to make sure everything was done in time, and answering questions via social media." They were able to use AI to deal with this but, citing several errors in the introduction it wrote for his presentation Chambers cautions, "ChatGPT is a really eager assistant that will surprise you with what it can do. It will impress you with the knowledge it has, but it's also wrong a lot of the time."

Chambers continued to provide examples of how AI has helped him automate catering estimates. By entering the expected number of guests, the tool automatically calculates ingredient quantities and other factors that help Chez Angela provide quick accurate estimates for potential customers. Now, over half of catering inquiries are confirmed as bookings during the initial phone call.

## CREATIVITY

Practical matters like planning and organization are well suited to GPT assistance but a more recent development has been their ability to perform creative tasks. Chambers demonstrated how he used the tool to develop a complete business plan for a hypothetical startup business. The request to ChatGPT: "I would like to start a small woodworking company that makes custom furniture from reclaimed wood. I only have about \$150 to start my side hustle, but I have access to a community wood shop where I have access to all the tools. Please help me form a creative plan to get started in my journey."

ChatGPT responded by producing a detailed business plan for the new enterprise, including suggestions about locating used wood. Through the back and forth of the conversation the suggestions and ideas became more refined and specific and wrapped up with a name, a slogan and a logo for the new business. Creative ideas and suggestions like these make the promotional aspect of a new business easier.

## GRANT WRITING

An important aspect of starting a new business or a

non-profit is the ability to secure government grants and other sources of funding. Applications for grants are time-consuming and complex and need to have a persuasive proposal with all requirements met. Chambers simulated a grant from the Manitoba Accessibility Fund and asked ChatGPT to suggest ideas for funding opportunities. The AI analyzed the grant's requirements and the website of a chosen nonprofit, the Brandon Neighborhood Renewal Corporation, to suggest potential projects. It then drafted a grant application, supplying an executive summary, a staffing strategy and a timeline for the project.

## HOW IT WORKS

In conclusion Chambers explained how ChatGPT does what it does. It remembers details from previous conversations, such as business names and preferences and presents suggestions and ideas where the user doesn't have to repeatedly provide context. ChatGPT does not possess knowledge in the way humans do but it predicts the most relevant response based on a very large pool of training data.

At the beginning, the end and throughout his presentation Chambers stressed that like all AI, ChatGPT needs to be constantly checked for accuracy. Seems it's just as fallible as we are.



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# SPORTS

## OIL CAPS ARE CURRENTLY 4TH IN WEST DIVISION

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virден Oil Capitals earned points in both of their Manitoba Junior Hockey League contests last week.

The squad fell 4-3 to the Swan Valley Stampedeers in a shootout and earned a point in the standings. The Oil Caps picked up two points with a 5-3 victory over the Selkirk Steelers. With 40 points and a 19-23-1-1 record, the team sat fourth in the MJHL MGEU West Division standings as of Feb. 10. That had them in the division's final playoff spot. The Waywayseecappo Wolverines were three points behind at 37 (17-25-2-1).

### Stampedeers 4, Oil Caps 3 SO

On Feb. 7 in Virден, the visiting Stampedeers took a 1-0 lead in the first period and extended it to 3-0 in the second frame. The Oil Capitals scored three straight goals in the third period to force overtime. Hometown defenceman Ty Plaisier, Liam Goertzen, and Tyler Dodgson all lit the lamp.

In the shootout, Ben Groome of Swan Valley was the lone shooter to score. Aidan Taylor and Riley Fequet scored on the powerplay for the Stampedeers in regulation. Ryder Boddez had a shorthanded goal. Loic Morin stopped 29 shots for Virден, while Elias Giaccari-Dimitriou made 31 saves for Swan Valley.

"Obviously, we didn't start the game the way we wanted to and when you combine that with taking too many penalties, our game certainly went in the wrong direction," Virден head coach Tyson Ramsey said. "Towards the later part of the game, we played

a better brand of hockey that looked a little more like the way we have to play to be successful and to tie it up late and get a point is huge but at the end of the day we didn't play well enough to win."

### Oil Caps 5, Steelers 3

On Feb. 8, in Selkirk, the teams traded goals until just after halfway in the third period. That is when Goertzen scored unassisted to put the Oil Caps up 4-3. In the final minute, Luke Robson added an empty net goal.

"In Selkirk, I thought we had a good start and our compete was there for a good portion of the game," Ramsey said. "We were structured and tight defensively and didn't give them extra chances or scoring opportunities. Our special teams were good and it was really nice to see Gavin Renwick get the win in goal. Hopefully we can build on that effort this week."

Renwick made 39 saves. Selkirk's Ethan Sawyer stopped 45 shots in the loss.



PHOTO BY VIRDEN OIL CAPS

Virден Oil Caps played Swan Valley Stampedeers on Feb. 7.

The game was tied 1-1 after one period. Following the second frame, the Oil Capitals were on top 3-2.

Virден's own Bryce Bryant scored the game's first goal. His Oil Caps' teammate Marshall Light of Moosomin put in a pair, including one on the power play, in the second. Selkirk's goals came from Landon Jamieson, Luke McCarthy, and Remy Hlady.

## VIRDEN OIL KINGS VS RIVERS JETS

By Gerry Nolan  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

On Saturday February 8, I attended the game between these two clubs in Rivers as they are two of the top teams in the Tiger Hills Hockey League.

It was nice to see such a huge crowd in attendance, pretty much standing room only.

The game itself was not what I expected from these two top ranked teams. I must say the goalies, Riley Lamb from Rivers and Eric Reid from Virден, were terrific! I would say Lamb had the tougher shots to stop but Reid also made some timely saves as well.

Rivers just seemed to not get their skating legs, it seemed like they were skating in sand. Their passes were not tape to tape, just not their best game.

Virден on the other hand was moving the puck on the tape, skating was no problem for them as they pressured Rivers defense, thus more quality shots on goal and scoring chances.

Virден took the first couple of penalties and Rivers just could not seem to get their shots through to the net and if they did, Reid stood tall for the Oil Kings. It was then Rivers turn to go to the box and Virден to go on the powerplay.

Virден scored about a minute into the Rivers penalty on a great shot to the top corner. I do not think Lamb had any chance on this goal as he was screened on the play.

Virден scored again on a fluky type of goal and that just seemed to take the air right out of Rivers sails and Virден ended up winning this game 4 to 1.

There were 24 penalties assessed in this game, there was really no need for this to happen.

Remember what I had said earlier in my referee memory articles, there is always a call or 2 you can not miss in a game or it is going to get out of control for you.

In the first 5 minutes of the game, a Rivers player was accidentally high stuck actually up by the eye



PHOTO BY CELIA NOLAN

Rivers Jets played at home on Saturday, February 8 against the Virден Oil Kings.

by a Virден player. The official stood about 15 feet away from this infraction and there was NO penalty assessed.

The Hockey Manitoba Association introduced a 4-man officiating team a few years ago. What they hoped to achieve was the back official would pick up any infractions behind the play and assess any penalties they saw.

A few minutes after the Rivers player scary eye incident by way of a high sticking infraction that was missed or let go, as the play was moving up ice and into the Rivers zone away behind the play near the top of the circle back in Virден's defending zone, a Rivers player cross checks a Virден player from behind across the back of the neck and knocking his helmet off and knocking him down to the ice. NO penalty called. From this point on early in the game with these 2 penalty calls missed, things got carried away,

tempers on both sides flared, and the result of all this was lots of pushing and shoving. There was also a lot of delay in the game with the officials meeting together and players having meetings on the ice, it just slowed the game to a stand still and when that happens both teams lose their focus on the game and there are altercations.

Another factor for this was Virден was simply the better team in that game and I believe the pace at which Virден played frustrated Rivers as they turned Rivers scoring attempts away easily.

In conclusion, the game dragged on with so many stoppages via penalty, discussions and needless conversations. Get the game going all ready!

Playoffs are just around the corner, good luck to both teams going forward and we will see how it all shakes out. You can follow along by going to the Tiger Hills Hockey League website!



# SPORTS

## LOCAL PAIR HELP U18 WILDCATS

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Two local players have important roles for a young U18 AAA Westman Wildcats hockey team.

Virden's Jaedyn Hoemsen, a forward, is in her first year with the club after playing for the U15 AAA Wildcats last season. Reston's Kylie Hack is in her second season protecting the nets for the U18 AAA Wildcats. She was on the squad last season as a major U15.

"This year's U18 AAA Westman Wildcats team is younger than teams from the past," head coach Troy Gould said. "We only have three grade 12s, five grade 11s, eight grade 10s with two major U15s to complete our roster. Although we are young, we have the character of a veteran group completing every night and a hard team to play against. Wins haven't come easy this year, but our opponents know when they play the Wildcats they are in for a battle."

Hack has a team-high seven wins. She has a 3.03 goals against average.

"She is a good team player, competitive and strives to do her best for the team every time she gets the call to play," Gould said. "Although she is on the smaller size in stature, she makes up for it with her athletic ability and never quitting on pucks."

Through 31 games, Hoemsen was fifth on the team in scoring. She had five goals and nine points.

"(She) is a gritty two-way player that is very hard to play against," Gould said. "As a first-year player in the U18 AAA league, Jaedyn has adjusted quickly to the speed and physical side of the game. She is a versatile player playing both wing and center this year as well as playing on the power play."



Jaedyn Hoemsen.

PHOTOS BY SHARLA GEORGE PHOTOGRAPHY



Kylie Hack.

## HOCKEY MEMORIES, PART 1

REF TO WRITER

GERRY NOLAN



Tournament of champions is a hockey tournament presented by the city of Brandon. They also go out to some of the rural areas for those towns to host tournament games before all the winners meet in Brandon. There are teams from all over Manitoba as well as some from Saskatchewan and the United States.

During my early years of officiating, Wallace Henderson invited me to go to Oak River to officiate. This was my introduction to T of C tournaments. I also worked games in Elkhorn. After working senior hockey in Souris, I was invited to work T of C games as well. It was at these rural towns I was able to see other officials work games. I did not know these individuals before this time. It was there I discovered there were lots of young guys just looking for an opportunity to work senior hockey. This was a win, win for both sides!

The Reston Midget Tournament was also another place I worked and saw the potential for officials to work games. I was the Referee In Chief of the North Central Hockey League and the Junior C League so I was always looking for officials to cover off these games.

One night Kerry Smith and I went to Shoal Lake to be linesmen in a AAA Midget Hockey League game. We did not know who was to be the head referee. We arrived in Shoal Lake about 45 minutes before the game. It was here we met Bill Klein the head referee for that game.

Bill greets us and says while you guys get ready I am going to go and watch the 2 teams warm up before

the game.

Bill was confident, a good skater, had a sense of humour and knew the rule book. We hit it off immediately. Billy had a great game that night. He made Kerry and I feel great out there. We all had a great game! I asked Bill if he would be interested in working in the North Central Hockey League as I was the Referee In Chief at that time. He agreed immediately. It is funny how some things that happen just lead on to another open door.

I started to work with Bill doing lines as I just did not want to base what I saw in just one game. Billy was the real deal so I gave him more assignments. It was during this time he brought along another fellow to do lines that would quickly become another individual who would become a referee that I could trust and do games for me. Lawrence Ruddick was his name and we hit it off immediately. I gave Lawrence assignments in the North Central as well. We were becoming a real good team.

Here is a bit of a side story.

Bill Klein was a sergeant in the army. He was based in Shilo. Lawrence Ruddick was a tire salesman. He lived south of Griswold. From now on in this story, Bill Klein is either called Sarge or Billy and Lawrence Ruddick is called Razor!

When I was Referee in Chief of the North Central Hockey League which will be now known as the NCHL, I tried to assign officials who lived closer to a team's hometown to cut down mileage they would have to pay. In play-off time, generally I would not be concerned about the mileage as you wanted the officials that I thought were guys who had a strong year working the games.

I had 3 referees and 3 or so linemen in Russell, so Angusville which was not that far from Russell would get more Russell officials and save them some cost.

To be continued next week...

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## Obituary

IN LOVING MEMORY  
ETHEL FRANCES BOWLES  
DECEMBER 8 1923 - FEBRUARY 5 2025  
101 YEARS



Mom passed away peacefully at the Sherwood February 5 with her son David by her side. Funeral will be Thursday February 13 at 11 am at the carscaddens funeral chapel.

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# CLASSIFIEDS

## Obituary

IN LOVING MEMORY  
 RUSSELL "HUCK" SMITH  
 JUNE 28, 1924 - OCTOBER 15, 2024



Russell Smith, known to everyone as "Huck", was born June 28, 1924 living his whole life on the farm in the Errol district (near Lenore) until they retired to Virden in 2002.

He married Dorothy Weber on November 10, 1945. They worked side by side on their mixed farm of beef and dairy cows, pigs, chickens, grain, hay and a huge garden. Farming was hard work and long days but Mom and Dad always provided well for their family even during the years of no or little crop due to hail or drought.

Even though there was always lots of work to be done, our parents made time for their children's baseball, curling, church and 4-H. They always took part in all the community activities. Dad helped each of us with our 4-H calves and then later helping Rick's three daughters.

Huck curled his entire life at Lenore and then Virden, stopping at age 90 because he thought he might fall. After the milk cows were gone, he and Dorothy took up golfing which became his passion until he was 92 and his knees said "enough"! He met so many folks as he and Dorothy went to various towns to play cards and shuffleboard. Having met at a dance, they continued dancing until those dancing friends became fewer and fewer.

After Mom passed in July 2023 he was lost without her after 77 years 8 months but carried on and continued living in their home. He filled his time doing puzzles, watching curling and Blue Jays. He celebrated his 100th birthday with a day spent with his many friends and family. He was hospitalized September 19, went to Reston PCH October 12 where he played Pool Noodle, went to Pub Night and passed away October 15.

Huck was predeceased by his wife Dorothy, son-in-law Marcel Chacun, great grandson Jackson Dudar, his parents William and Elizabeth (McKinnon), his nine siblings and their spouses and several nieces and nephews.

Dad is survived by daughter Maxine Chacun and her family – Wayne Chacun (Will Noseworthy); Dana (Mike) Dudar and Dany; Marcee Chacun (Todd Smith), Avery and Michelyn; daughter Dianne (Terry) Hayward and their family – Tara (Brett) Cameron, Brodie and Cody; Darcy (Diane) Hayward, Shaela and Teegan; Darla Hayward; daughter Shirley (Barry) Smith and their family – Jeff (Anna Marie) Smith; Jennifer Smith and Nicholas; Stacey Smith (Jason Bachman); son Rick (Brenda) Smith and their family – Shelby (Robin) Rampton, Paige and Eric; Kyleigh Smith, Ryker, Ajay and Marco; Erica (Rob) Fowler, Carson and Aiden.

Huck's life was celebrated on November 12th at Tundra Place with Cathy Coulter (daughter of a childhood friend) officiating. Dad had one last ride by his home farm before being laid to rest by his beloved Dorothy in Breadalane Cemetery.

His grandchildren (who were the apples of his eye) were his pallbearers.

### Thank you

Many many thanks to everyone for all the handshakes, hugs, cards, gift cards, flowers, food, messages and visits we received after Dad's passing. Thank you for donations to Lenore Community Club and Virden Handi Van in Dad's memory. A special thank you to those who attended Dad's service and to each of you who visited Dad at home and in the hospital – you made him so happy with each visit.

**Rick and Brenda, Shirley and Barry, Dianne and Terry and Maxine**

## 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 **Assistant Chief Administrative Officer**.

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 filed 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

### 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).

#### 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 is required
- Previous work experience in a municipal environment will be an asset
- 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](mailto:info@wallace-woodworth.com)

Mail/Drop-off: R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth Municipal Office  
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 Resumes will be reviewed as they are received.

This posting will remain open until a suitable candidate is located.  
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### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

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- Planning and implementing engaging activities for families.
- Ideal Candidate

**We are looking for someone who:**

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- Has strong organizational and problem-solving skills.

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Hours: Full-time, 40 hours per week, including weekends and evenings.  
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- Ability to display initiative and problem solve;
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- Strong organizational skills with ability to handle conflicting priorities, deadlines and scheduling conflicts;
- Ability to work independently and with a team in a fast-paced and high-volume environment with emphasis on accuracy and timeliness;
- Ability to perform mathematical computations such as percentages, fractions, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division quickly and accurately;
- Ability to maintain confidentiality;
- Proficient in Accounting Software, Microsoft Office including Word, Excel, and Outlook;
- Minimum two (2) years of clerical experience in a computerized office setting;

**Schedule:**

- Monday to Friday, 70 hours bi-weekly

We offer a competitive salary range of \$22.62 to \$31.01 per hour and includes a comprehensive employee benefit plan once eligible.

**Applications will be accepted until Friday, February 28th, 2025.**

**How to Apply:**

Mailed to: c/o Human Resources, RM of Pipestone, Box 99, Reston, MB, R0M 1X0  
Emailed to: hrpipestone@rmofpipestone.com  
Or faxed to: 204-877-3999

We thank all applicants for their interest, however, only those being considered for an interview will be contacted. Disability accommodations available upon request.



### 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.  
**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)  
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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.first-andsecondmortgages.ca](http://www.first-andsecondmortgages.ca)

## Help Wanted

### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

#### CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

The Council of the Rural Municipality of Pipestone is seeking an individual that will bring strong leadership skills to this position. If you are looking to make an impact with a progressive, dynamic Municipality, we are looking to hear from you.

**Key Responsibilities:**

Direct the general administrative affairs of the Municipality and perform all duties and responsibilities in accordance with The Municipal Act.

- Recommend objectives, policies and programs to Council and provide support and advice on new initiatives and fiscal matters.
- Direct the implementation and monitor the progress of policies and programs approved by Council.
- Recruit and develop all municipal management and administration employees and develop a plan to attract and retain quality employees.
- Provide responsible financial planning and management of a budget of over \$13.6 million.
- Develop positive relationships and maintain open communication with all stakeholders and constituencies of interest to the Municipality.

Strong communication, analytical and leadership skills are just some of the requirements of the position. Ideally, you will possess technical skills and experience in organization oversight, human resource management, and municipal administration. Candidates who have post-secondary education in a relevant discipline bring an educational advantage to the position.

The Rural Municipality of Pipestone has a population of 1422 and features the communities of Reston, Sinclair, Cromer and Pipestone. Agriculture and oil provide a strong economic base. The developed recreation facilities, businesses, and housing make the municipality a desirable place to live.

The right candidate can expect a comprehensive salary and benefits package.

Individuals interested in this position should send a resume and cover letter by email to [hrpipestone@rmofpipestone.com](mailto:hrpipestone@rmofpipestone.com).

The selection committee intends to review applications as received and interview as early as March 10th, 2025, with applications continuing to be accepted until the right candidate is found. We thank all who apply and advise that only those selected for further consideration will be contacted. Disability accommodations available upon request.

**How to Apply:**

Mailed to: c/o Human Resources, RM of Pipestone, Box 99, Reston, MB, R0M 1X0  
Emailed to: [hrpipestone@rmofpipestone.com](mailto:hrpipestone@rmofpipestone.com)  
Or faxed to: 204-877-3999

We thank all applicants for their interest, however, only those being considered for an interview will be contacted. Disability accommodations available upon request.



## For Sale

### Farmland for Sale in RM of Pipestone

	2025 Assessment	2024 Taxes
NW 12-7-27 WPM	\$134,100	\$333.18

Land is located on Road #2 Highway and Huston Road in the RM of Pipestone. Frontage or Area: 139.68 Acres as per 2024 Property Tax Bill. Land has been used as hayland (alfalfa/brome) for past several years. Land is fenced. Manitoba Hydro Meter on property to old yard site.

NW 12-7-27 WPM: MTS Caveat in place (MTS Tower situated on property).

\*EXC Road Plan 1353 BLTO; EXC Plan 43187 BLTO; EXC ALL that portion taken for the Right of Way of the Canadian Pacific Railway to SS Plan 42411 BLTO.

Mineral and oil rights are exempt.

Interested parties should rely on their own inspection.

Highest or any offers not necessarily accepted.

2024 taxes are paid, 2025 taxes will be paid by the purchaser.

Deadline for offers is Friday, Mar. 7, 2025.

For more information, call or text 204-918-3840.

Offers to be mailed to:

High Bluff Ranch Ltd.  
PO Box 57  
Reston MB  
R0M 1X0



# HAVE NEWS?



**PHONE OR EMAIL US YOUR NEWS TIPS**

# Empire-Advance

305 Nelson St W, Virden 748-3931  
[sales@empireadvance.ca](mailto:sales@empireadvance.ca)



## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

### EQUIPMENT OPERATOR

Permanent Full-Time position

**Duties & Responsibilities Include:**

- Operation of heavy equipment including bulldozer, scraper, semi-trailer, tandem gravel truck, backhoe, motor grader, wheel or loader.
- Perform road building and road repairs.
- Cleaning culverts & drains
- Perform loading, hauling and spreading of materials.
- Operate heavy equipment to move, load, and unload cargo.
- Perform excavating work for water and wastewater main maintenance and repair.
- Mowing as required

**Qualifications:**

- Class 3 driver's license, prefer Class 1 license.
- Experience operating heavy equipment with high skill level and several years of experience.
- Satisfactory criminal records check.
- Successful medical examination.

**Schedule:**

- Monday to Friday, 100 hours bi-weekly, Summer (typically April – October)
- 80 hours bi-weekly, Winter (typically November – March)

Wage dependent on experience. Wage range \$29.21 - \$36.06 per hour.  
Full benefits package available after eligibility.

For more information about this position or for a job description please contact the Public Works Manager at 204-761-5121

Applications will be accepted until a suitable candidate is located.

### SENIOR ELECTION OFFICIAL

Applications are being accepted for the position of Senior Election Official (SEO) for the Rural Municipality of Pipestone.

The SEO is responsible for the overall municipal election process and must be able to interpret and understand all aspects of legislation pertaining to the municipal election process and provide consistent advice to other election officials and to the public.

This position starts once appointed by council resolution with varied hours of work in the year of a regular election, falling in the months of September and October.

**Duties will include:**

- appointing other election officials as required;
- establishing and maintaining the voter's list;
- giving public notice of nominations;
- receiving and verifying the nominations;
- establishing and equipping the voting places;
- giving public notice of elections;
- printing the ballots;
- overseeing all aspects of the election on election day and all other duties as established in the Municipal Councils Election regulation and The Northern Affairs Act.

In the years when a regular election is not required, the SEO will be responsible to update and maintain the voter's list and to conduct by-elections, if required.

The successful applicant must have some election experience, strong management, communication and interpersonal skills. Computer experience would be a definite asset.

Remuneration is \$26.00 per hour.

For more information about this position please email [hrpipestone@rmofpipestone.com](mailto:hrpipestone@rmofpipestone.com).

The Letter of Interest from applicants should include education and experience and will be accepted until February 21st, 2025

### SUMMER STUDENT POSITIONS PIPESTONE ALBERT RECREATION COMMISSION

The RM of Pipestone is currently accepting applications on behalf of the Pipestone Albert Recreation Commission for the Summer Student positions. This is an exciting opportunity to contribute to our community by planning and leading engaging recreational activities.

**Position Overview:**

Successful candidates will play a key role in delivering, engaging and enjoyable recreational activities for our community.

**Primary Responsibilities:**

- Assisting in the planning and execution of summer program activities.
- Participating in and supporting community events.

**Qualifications for the ideal candidate will:**

- Be energetic, creative, and passionate about working with children.
- Demonstrate strong teamwork and communication skills.
- Bring a positive attitude and enthusiasm to their role.
- Hold a valid driver's license and have access to a reliable vehicle.

**Position Details:**

- Full-time: 30 - 40 hours per week, including some evenings and weekends.
- Hourly wage: \$17.52.
- Casual hours may be available for the right candidate before summer and into the fall.

**Application Information:**

For additional details or a full job description, please contact call 204-877-3768 or email [morgan@rmofpipestone.com](mailto:morgan@rmofpipestone.com).

**Application Deadline:** Resumes will be accepted until noon, March 14, 2025.

**How to Apply:**

Mailed to: c/o Human Resources, RM of Pipestone, Box 99, Reston, MB, R0M 1X0  
Emailed to: [hrpipestone@rmofpipestone.com](mailto:hrpipestone@rmofpipestone.com)  
Or faxed to: 204-877-3999

We thank all applicants for their interest, however, only those being considered for an interview will be contacted. Disability accommodations available upon request.

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

### UTILITY FOREMAN

Permanent Full-Time

**Duties & Responsibilities Include:**

- Responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations, planning and supervising work schedule for the department. Oversee utilities-related work contracted to third parties, ensuring adherence to safety standards, RM policies, and job requirements.
- Complete monthly and periodic reporting to Provincial authorities, Council, and CAO.
- Plan and manage routine inspections, cleaning, calibration and preventative maintenance on equipment and systems. Oversee sewer flushing, hydrant maintenance, utility winterization, water connections and disconnections, manhole markings, and timely meter readings.
- Investigate and resolve operational issues and escalate as necessary.
- Respond to ratepayers' inquiries promptly and professionally.

**Qualifications and Certifications:**

- High School diploma, GED, or equivalent.
- Possession or ability to attain the following certifications within a reasonable timeline:
  - Level 1 – Water Treatment Plant
  - Level 1 – Water Distribution
  - Level 1 – Wastewater Treatment
  - Level 1 – Wastewater collection
- Post-Secondary education in mechanical, engineering, applied science, or related field is considered an asset.
- Valid Class 5 driver's license.
- Satisfactory Criminal Record Check.

**Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:**

- Comprehensive knowledge of equipment, facilities, materials, and methods used in providing potable water and wastewater treatment services.
- Familiarity and good working knowledge of related statutes and regulations.
- Ability to establish priorities, manage tasks with minimal supervision, and problem-solve efficiently.
- Strong communication skills, both verbal and written, with the ability to interact respectfully with the public.
- Basic computer skills and use of MS office to develop and build reports and plans.

**Schedule:** Monday to Friday, 80 hours bi-weekly, on-call as required.

Competitive wage dependent on experience. Full benefits package available after eligibility.

For more information about this position or for a job description please contact the RM office at 204-877-3327

Applications will be accepted until a suitable candidate is located.

### SUMMER GREEN TEAM POSITIONS

The RM of Pipestone is now accepting applications for Summer Green Team positions. These roles are ideal for individuals seeking hands-on experience in landscaping, facility maintenance, and community beautification. Positions are available to start in May or July, with earlier start dates negotiable.

**Position Responsibilities:**

- Planting, watering, and maintaining flowers and trees.
- Tilling, weeding, and mowing grass.
- Landscaping, painting, and general maintenance of municipal facilities.
- Operating and maintaining motorized equipment, including power mowers, clippers, and other landscape maintenance tools.

**Position Details:**

- Full-time position, with some evening and weekend shifts required.
- Open to youth aged 15 to 29 years who are residents of Manitoba and legally entitled to work in Canada.

**Application Information:**

For additional details or a complete job description, please contact 204-851-1280 or email [tara@rmofpipestone.com](mailto:tara@rmofpipestone.com)

**Application Deadline:** Applications will be accepted until Friday, March 14, 2025.

### OFFICE CLERK – SUMMER TERM

The RM of Pipestone invites applications for an Office Clerk – summer term position. The position is available to start in May and will conclude end of August.

**Position Description:**

- Process payments received at the counter, and by mail, reconciles payments, and prepares bank deposits;
- Answers and directs public inquires received in person and by telephone;
- Issue Tax Certificate
- Various record keeping and filing
- Updates Royalty report and reconciles to general ledger to ensure it completeness and reports to council monthly.
- Reconciles PAREC billed invoices to payments received.
- Makes updates to the Municipal website

**Skills:**

- Basic computer skills and use of MS office.

**Schedule:** Monday to Friday, 70 hours bi-weekly

Wage dependent on experience. Wage range \$17.52 - \$21.63 per hour.

This position is eligible to Youth aged 15 to 29 years, resident in Manitoba and legally entitled to work in Canada.

For more information or a job description please contact the office at 204-877-3327 or email [hrpipestone@rmofpipestone.com](mailto:hrpipestone@rmofpipestone.com).

**Application Deadline:** Applications will be accepted until Friday, March 22nd, 2024

**How to Apply:**

Mailed to: c/o Human Resources, RM of Pipestone, Box 99, Reston, MB, R0M 1X0  
Emailed to: [hrpipestone@rmofpipestone.com](mailto:hrpipestone@rmofpipestone.com)  
Or faxed to: 204-877-3999

We thank all applicants for their interest, however, only those being considered for an interview will be contacted. Disability accommodations available upon request.



# Manitoba Government tackles causes of crime in Westman alongside law enforcement

**Submitted**  
By MB GOVERNMENT

The Manitoba government is supporting families in western Manitoba by providing a 50 per cent funding increase to Community Mobilization Westman (CMW), Justice

Minister Matt Wiebe announced today. "This initiative tackles the root causes of crime by teaming vulnerable folks and families up with social service agencies, and community supports," said Wiebe. "Our funding will help law enforcement

partner with community organizations so supports can move quickly and target chronic issues that lead to crime." The Manitoba government is providing an additional \$40,000 to Community Mobilization Westman. Twice a week, this

program brings together more than 20 professionals from 16 different organizations in a hub to co-ordinate services and supports for at-risk individuals or families. Participating agencies include the City of Brandon, the Brandon Police Service,

the Brandon School Division, Manitoba Child and Family Services and Prairie Mountain Health. "To help keep Manitobans safe, we need an 'all hands on deck' approach," said Municipal and Northern Relations Minister Glen Simard.

"Our government supports initiatives that see law enforcement and community organizations working side by side. By getting tough on the causes of crime, we are improving public safety for all Manitobans."

*continued on page 19*

## VIRDEN



CENTRE OF IT ALL

Tundra Oil & Gas Place: 204-748-2736

Facility Bookings: 204-748-2440

Emergency After Hours: 204-851-5540

Town Office: 204-748-2440

Waste Disposal Grounds: 204-748-6033

Animal Control: 204-851-1810

### Employment Opportunity Municipal Clerk/RCMP Detachment

The Town of Virden is accepting applications for a full-time, permanent position for a Municipal Clerk at the Westman RCMP Detachment, Virden. The successful applicant will report to the Staff Sergeant. The applicant will be required to perform all clerical duties as well as learn all aspects of the computer systems utilized by policing.

The successful applicant must possess:

- a grade twelve diploma (relevant post-secondary education is an asset);
- strong communication skills and the ability to deal with other government organizations and the public in a positive, friendly and open manner, often in stressful situations;
- the ability to work co-operatively and independently in a small office setting, while dealing with distractions and interruptions;
- the ability to perform varied and multiple tasks within deadlines;
- knowledge of various computer software systems;
- the ability to respect and promote confidentiality

**The successful applicant must be able to be security cleared.**

Detailed job descriptions are available at the Virden Town Office or the Westman RCMP Detachment.

Detailed resumes marked "Municipal Clerk/RCMP" will be accepted by:

**Faye Pope, Office Manager - Town of Virden**  
236 Wellington Street West, Box 310  
Virden, Manitoba, R0M 2C0  
Ph: (204)748-2440 Fax: (204)748-2501  
Email: office.manager@virden.ca

The hiring panel will accept and review applications as received, and interview as early as **February 24, 2025**, with applications continuing to be accepted until the right candidate is found.

The Town of Virden thanks all those who apply, but only those who are selected for an interview will be contacted.

**Upcoming Council Meetings:**  
February 25 & March 11

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

### Request for Proposals Animal Control/Pound Keeper

The Town of Virden is requesting proposals for contract animal control/pound keeper services for the community.

Responsibilities would include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Enforcement of all provisions of the Town of Virden Animal Control By-law.
- Apprehension and impoundment of any animal as referred to in the By-law, as running at large in the municipality, in a timely manner.
- Provision of proper care for any animal impounded.
- All record keeping as required under the By-law and requested by Council.
- Enforcement of fines, as provided under the By-law.
- Patrolling the Town at regular intervals to ensure compliance with the Town's By-law.
- Provision of an alternate for response, if not available in a reasonable amount of time.
- Trapping of wild animals such as skunks, which become a nuisance, except those specifically exempted under agreement.

The contractor will be required to provide their own vehicle and a cell phone, or answering machine available to the general public, and carry current Workers Compensation coverage or similar insurance.

A complete listing of the specifications for contracted animal control and pound keeper services is available at the Town Office. Proposals will be accepted until 4:00 pm, Friday, February 28, 2025, in writing, to the following:

**Faye Pope, Office Manager - Town of Virden**  
236 Wellington Street West, Box 310  
Virden, Manitoba, R0M 2C0  
Ph: (204)748-2440 Fax: (204)748-2501  
Email: office.manager@virden.ca

For further information, please contact Faye Pope at (204) 748-2440.

### Employment Opportunities

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

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice is hereby given that the Town of Virden intends to conduct the following pesticide programs during 2025:

1. To control noxious weeds within the Town limits of the Town of Virden. The projected dates of application will be from April 1, 2025 to October 31, 2025. The herbicides to be used include one or more of the following:  
**Picloram \* Amitrol \* Target \* Transorb \* 2, 4-D Ester**

2. To control noxious weeds at the waste disposal grounds and surrounding area in the R.M. of Wallace, located on SE 24-11-26W. The projected dates of application will be from April 1, 2025 to October 31, 2025. The herbicides to be used include one or more of the following:  
**Picloram \* Round-up \* Target \* Primatrol \* 2, 4-D Ester Atrazine \* Amitrol**

3. To control rats at the waste disposal grounds at various times during the coming year using the **rodenticide Bromadiolone**.

4. To control the following insect pests including grasshoppers, mosquitoes, elm bark beetles, canker worms, etc. within the limits of the Town of Virden. The projected dates of application will be from May 1, 2025 to October 31, 2025. The insecticides to be used include one or more of the following:  
**Cygon 480EC \* Vectobac \* Cholorphyrifos**

Objections to the proposed program may be submitted in writing within fifteen (15) days of the publication to:

**Manitoba Environment and Climate  
Environmental Approvals Branch  
Box 35, 14 Fultz Blvd.  
Winnipeg, MB R3Y 0L6**

### Request for Pricing

The Town of Virden will accept pricing for the 2025 season up to 4:00 PM on Friday, February 28, 2025, for the following:

1. Supply of Construction Equipment and Materials
2. Sidewalk Repairs and Asphalt Patching
3. Supply of Septic Vac Truck and Hydrovac
4. Tree Trimming and Tree Removal
5. Dust Control

For additional details please contact the Virden Town Office.

Forms are available at:  
<http://www.virden.ca/p/tenders-and-requests>.

Phone: (204) 748-2440  
Fax: (204) 748-2501  
Email: executive.assistant@virden.ca



## Westman program receives 50 per cent funding boost

*continued from page 18*

In total, the Manitoba government provides \$120,000 to Community Mobilization Westman, Simard noted.

“As Mayor of Brandon, I am grateful for the Province of Manitoba’s increased support of Community Mobilization Westman,” said Mayor Jeff Fawcett, City of Brandon. “CMW is instrumental in fostering community engagement and addressing local issues. This increased funding will assist several of their initiatives including improving the safety and security of families in our community. On behalf of Brandon city council, I want to thank the province for investing in and supporting Community Mobilization Westman.”

“We are grateful for the additional funding and support,” said Janis Irvine, co-ordinator, Community Mobilization Westman. “Collectively, we are a model of what collaboration can look like between organizations and agencies which can mitigate risk and prevent further harm. We bring our knowledge together to find better work practices and address the barriers that prevent community safety and well-being.”

The additional funding for Community Mobilization Westman is being made through Manitoba’s Guns and Gangs Suppression Strategy, made possible by more than \$4.6 million in funding from the Government of Canada through its Gun and Gang Violence Action Fund.

## Mike Ramsden receives the King Charles III Coronation Medal

Submitted  
By VAUGHN WILSON

On Friday, February 7th, Mr. Dan Mazier, MP for Dauphin, Swan River and Neepawa, attended the Woodworth Legion to present the King Charles III Coronation Medal to Michael Ramsden - an outstanding Canadian who has dedicated his life to service.

From his early days in Army Cadets to a 29-year military career in the Canadian Army and Royal Canadian Air Force, Michael has served with distinction across the country and beyond.

As a Flight Engineer, he played key roles in search and rescue missions and global operations, earning two peacekeeping medals.

Even after retiring from flying, he continued his service through ground search and rescue and now supports veterans through his work with the Woodworth Royal Canadian Legion Branch #118.

Michael’s lifelong commitment to Canada is truly

inspiring.

Mr. Mazier completed his presentation with the following words “Congratulations, Michael, and thank you for your service!”



SUBMITTED PHOTO

MP Dan Mazier, right, presents Michael Ramsden, left, with the King Charles III Coronation Medal.

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# APPLIANCE SPECIALS

We picked up a number of specials from our appliance suppliers to pass on to our customers!



### DISHWASHER

Built-in, stainless steel interior and front, 10 in stock, made in Italy.

MSRP \$899 Now **\$599**



### RANGE

Smooth top, fan convection, air fry, stainless wsteel front, 6 only.

MSRP \$1549 Now **\$1199**



### WASHER

Top load washer, white, 5 only.

Now **\$699**

### PORTABLE DISHWASHER

White, 6 only.

MSRP \$1249 NOW **\$899**

### 25 CU FT FRIDGE

French door, bottom freezer, stainless steel front.

MSRP \$2499 NOW **\$1999**

### DRYER

White, 5 only.

MSRP \$999 NOW **\$799**

### BUILT-IN DISHWASHER

White, 4 only.

MSRP \$849 NOW **\$538**

### SLIDE-IN RANGE

Smooth top, stainless steel, true convection, air fry with tray, 5 only. deluxe.

MSRP \$2199 NOW **\$1499**

### SLIDE-IN RANGE

Induction, smooth top, true convection, air fry, deluxe, 1 only, small dent in side.

MSRP \$2799 NOW **\$1999**



### 19 CU FT FRIDGE

Bottom drawer freezer, white, 5 in stock.

MSRP \$1799 Now **\$1149**

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