

Empire-Advance

serving virden & area since 1885

MARCH 7, 2025 | EMPIRE: VOL 120 NO 29 / ADVANCE: VOL 139 NO 31 | PUBLISHING FRIDAYS

READY IN 20 MINUTES OR LESS

LUNCH

MAIN + SIDE + DRINK

FOR ONLY \$15

Boston Pizza
VIRDEN, MB

*CONDITIONS APPLY. ASK YOUR SERVER FOR DETAILS.

SUNRISE CREDIT UNION

f x @ You Tube

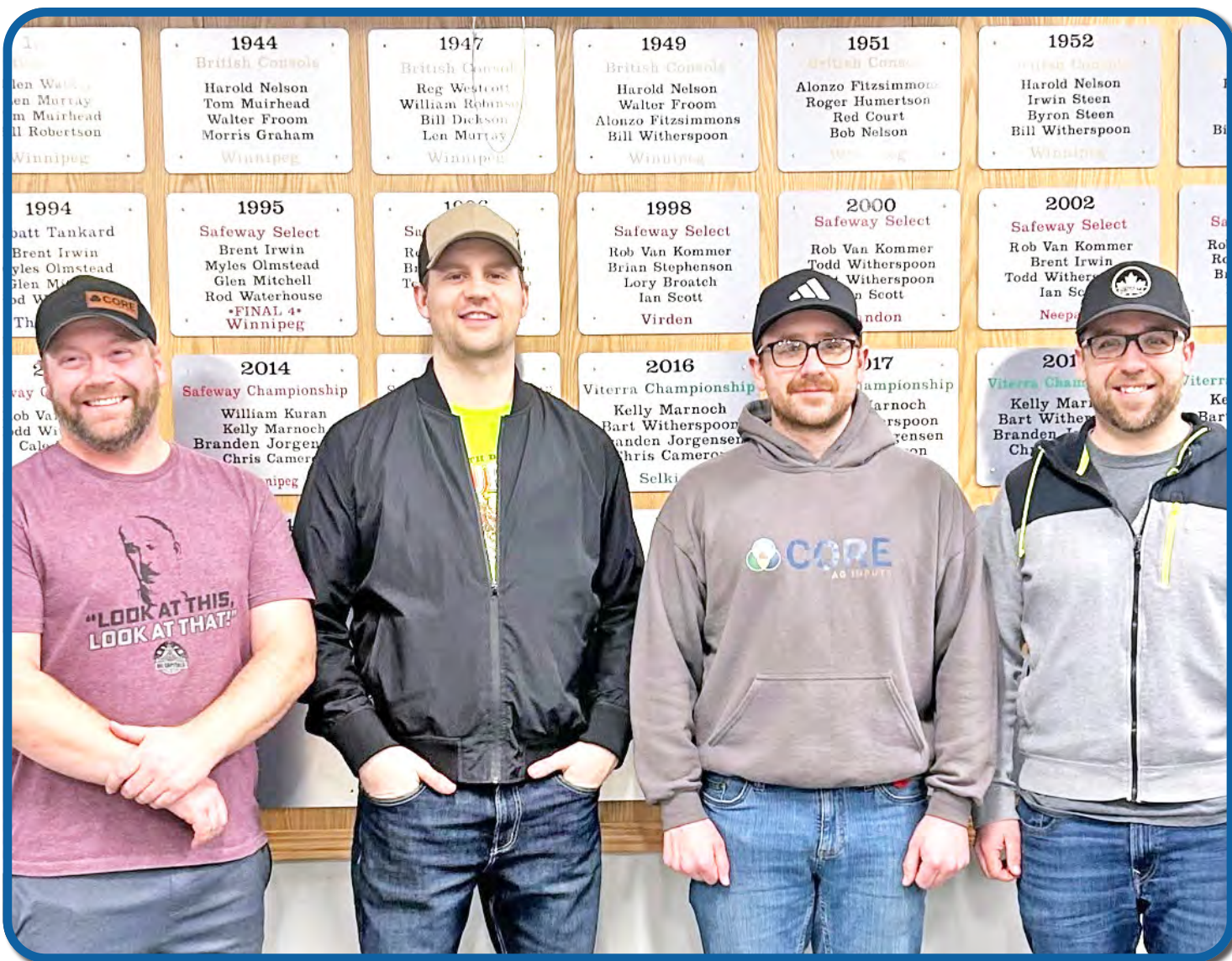
THIRTY GRAND

IN YOUR HAND

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

*Some conditions apply, visit sunrise.mb.ca for details.

Virden 125 rink wins Superspiel



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The undefeated curling team L to R Tyler Strachan, Tyler Pateman, Kris Kinnaird, and Jay Kinnaird.

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE ADVANCE

Playing under the Virden 125 banner, a local rink went undefeated to win the “A” event at the Curl Carberry McCain Superspiel.

Skipped by Jay Kinnaird, the rink included Kris Kinnaird, Tyler Pateman and Tyler Strachan. It defeated the Rylan Peters rink, 8-7, in the “A” final to complete a 6-0 run.

“For club bonspiels like this, teams need to balance the on ice curling with the off ice ‘bonspieling’ part of it,” Jay Kinnaird said. “I feel like the team we put together under the Virden 125th name was carefully assembled with this in mind, and

we were fortunate to be firing on all cylinders in both categories. The guys played great, we battled in tight games and played well enough to come out on top.”

This year the Virden Curling Club is hosting its 125th men’s bonspiel. The big event is being celebrated with the women’s, seniors, and juniors bonspiels being included as well. The bonspiel will include the use of Tundra Oil & Gas Place.

On Facebook, the Virden Curling Club noted that the Superspiel is an event the club has admired. It was noted that the local club has done its best to support the event over the years with Carberry returning the favour.

“We also have hoped to have a large

club spiel using our arena as they do annually for theirs and we can only hope our event is as successful as theirs is on an annual basis,” it was stated.

“I always enjoy going to the Carberry Bonspiel,” Jay Kinnaird said. “Their club is one of the few who is able to pull together the volunteers and local sponsors to run this annually in the curling rink and arena. The size brings lots of good rinks, and the social atmosphere is top tier. It’s a huge fundraiser for their community and you can tell with the effort they put in. Virden will see several ideas from their event incorporated into our 125th... Including them letting us use their extra rocks.”

Inside...



125TH
BONSPIEL
SCHEDULE

P9



NEW WESTMAN
EMERGENCY
GROUP TEAM

P2

New WEG team well acquainted with emergencies



Chad Orr leads the team, serving as administrator.



Joe Frizzley continues to help out on WEG.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Judy Podobni is a new member of WEG.

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Westman Emergency Group (WEG) has a team of three in place to direct responses in the event of any emergencies that arise in the Town of Virден or the Rural Municipality of Wallace-Woodworth. While they are a newly formed team, the members are very experienced in emergent situations.

Under a provincial umbrella this team is considered part of the Municipal Emergency Coordinators (MEC) structure.

Joe Frizzley has been part of the team for several years, having served with Marc Savy until the town councillor stepped away from WEG work. This winter, Oak Lake's Judy Podobni and Chad Orr of Virден have joined Frizzley, making a team of three.

"They're a great bunch to work with," says Podobni. "Wallace-Woodworth / Virден had the foresight that they want to have three municipal emergency coordinators so that there's always somebody available."

IN GOOD HANDS

A retired RCMP Staff Sergeant (S/Sgt.), Orr has taken on the role of administration. His years with the RCMP provide valuable experience for this role, particularly helping out briefly at Fort McMurray where, he says, "I did a couple of shifts in the Alberta Emergency Operations Center during the fire (2016)."

Now he's a Virден resident. "I've always enjoyed the community, so it was a natural fit when circumstances brought me here." He says of his role with WEG, "I have been tasked with the paperwork side of things for the WEG and I also liaise with Manitoba EMO (Emergency Management Organization)."

Frizzley is also a retired RCMP S/Sgt. with 26 years of experience in policing and emergency response. He and his wife Shona continue in law enforcement with Manitoba First Nations Police Services serving Birdtail Sioux First Nation and Canupawakpa Dakota Nation reserves. The Frizzleys also provide Skills 4 Life, a home-based business teaching First Aid/CPR/AED and training St. John Ambulance staff.

Podobni, an Oak Lake resident, is a certified Intermediate Paramedic. She has served Westman in emergency health for 40 years as a Paramedic and Emergency Medical Services Educator. She's now semi-retired, continuing in Westman as a casual paramedic for Shared Health (the Manitoba agency responsible for ambulance service).

Podobni says each of the three have their areas of expertise – Orr as administrator, Frizzley is an on the ground responder, and she, a medic. She says, "I'm just kind of learning both sides so that I can jump in and fill in wherever needed."

When Podobni took on the role with WEG, she saw it as a different path. "When you're on the front lines, you're

dealing directly with a scene. And normally I'd be going to the people that were affected directly by the tornado (for example) and transporting them to a facility."

But the role of the WEG coordinators takes in a bigger picture involving logistics.

With Orr's experience in the organizational record keeping aspect of dealing with community emergencies Podobni says, "I'm learning so much from him."

Virден and the RM of Wallace-Woodworth are in good hands with this team working a plan where volunteers fit into helper roles. Orr says, "We don't know how many volunteers there are but when we ask, the community answers." He adds, "We have a couple [of people], such as Beth Collier who is our scribe and looks after the books and Tiffany Cameron who is our Public Information Officer for incidents, who are invaluable!"

If there's an emergency situation such as bad weather, the RM and the Town of Virден send out alerts via text, phone, email, and social media. But you have to be signed up to receive these. Town and RM websites provide a link where people can sign up for notifications. Or you can phone your municipal office to sign up.

Festival boasts 532 entries, a busy week in Virден

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Virден Music and Arts Festival (VMAF) is right around the corner. Downtown Virден streets will be extra busy starting next week when the festival comes to town.

The festival committee says they have 532 entries booked in this year with the first performances on stage in Virден AUD Theatre.

Instrument sessions begin on Monday, March 10 in the afternoon and carry on into the evening. March 11 is a full day beginning at 9am.

Crystal White, from Brandon, a double bassist

and euphonium instrumentalist, will adjudicate the instrumental sessions.

Her musical pedigree is long. She has performed as euphoniumist with the Band of the Ceremonial Guard in Ottawa, and as euphonium soloist with the National Band of the Naval Reserve. White enjoys working with children and youth and has taught at the International Music Camp and regularly works as a substitute music teacher for the Brandon School Division.

Dance sessions, also held in the AUD are scheduled for Wednesday next week with morning, afternoon and evening

performances that day. Club dance groups, duos and soloists will perform. From the tiniest children to 18 & unders, performers will dance in a large variety of classes including ballet, tap, hip hop, lyrical, and jazz. Thursday's dance will carry on in the morning and finish up with an afternoon session.

VMAF continues in April with art on display at The Station. Vocal, choral, piano and speech sessions begin April 14 and end on April 23.



PHOTO VMAF

Crystal White instrumental adjudicator.

Watch for more details. Festival program books are for sale at Flower Attic & Gifts on Seventh Ave. and at the AUD during the sessions.

We're Growing our Team!

Meet Cory, one of our newest team members in Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba. He can help with farm, general and professional liability insurance, commercial property insurance, and more! Give him a call today.

Cory Barkley
cbarkley@knightarcher.com
204-851-6405

●●●●
knightarcher
knightarcher.com



Ultrasound gets a boost

RM of Wallace-Woodworth issues a challenge

By Dale Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

At their Feb. 25 meeting Wallace-Woodworth council discussed a request from the Virden and District Health Auxiliary to donate \$3000 toward the purchase of a new ultrasound for the facility. (See Health Auxiliary invites help for ultrasound -VEA Feb. 14)

Coun. Val Caldwell said, "I want to support it because I know how needed it is, but it is frustrating that our province has said that we're a hub in Virden for the area, and yet it's coming back to the municipal tables to have to raise the money to put a vital piece of equipment into a hospital that should be fully stocked with what we need."

Coun. Mark Humphries added, "When you talk about doctor retention, to have equipment that's local to keep that medical professional close by, that is definitely one that they want."

(See Virden doctors train for ultrasound and Health Auxiliary starts fundraising blitz-VEA Feb. 21)

Coun. Lyle Kinnaird suggested donating \$5,000 but added, "I would just like to see some commitment from some of the other municipalities perhaps match or set a goal that everybody contributes."

Reeve Clayton Canart agreed saying, "If the other surrounding municipalities will match \$5,000, and \$5,000 each with bridge financing it would enable them to purchase it right away and they can pay it (bridge financing) back as they fundraise the rest of the money."

After a thorough discussion Humphries moved that Wallace-Woodworth donate \$10,000 to the purchase of a portable ultrasound for the Virden and District Health Centre, enable bridge financing for \$63,000 and issue a challenge to other municipalities in the district to match the donation. Coun. Diana MacDonald seconded the motion, and it was passed.

NDP must account for failures as Manitoba Legislature resumes



After spending the last three months working and meeting with constituents in the Riding Mountain constituency, it's time for me to return to the Manitoba Legislature as your elected Member of the Legislative Assembly.

The spring sitting of the Legislature, which began on Wednesday, March 5, will be eventful as my colleagues and I in the Official Opposition push the NDP government to account for Manitoba's declining economy, rising taxes, worsening health care and lack of a strategy for potentially devastating U.S. tariffs.

The 25 per cent tariffs planned for Canadian goods and services heading to the United States are the most serious economic threat in years to our province and its industries, though Wab Kinew and the NDP have offered no real plan whatsoever to defend Manitoba and the jobs our families need. The premier only made a show of trying to appease the U.S. Trump administration's border security concerns by announcing in Emerson that Manitoba conservation officers, already overworked, would begin border patrols as an addition to their regular tasks without additional training or more officers hired.

The uncertainty over the tariffs comes as our provincial economy is already severely weakened by the premier's anti-business attitude and this government's tougher regulatory barriers that have driven away private investment, dropped Manitoba to the bottom of national business rankings and increased unemployment from four per cent to 6.2 per cent in 2024 - a 55 per cent hike in joblessness that amounts to more than 15,000 additional Manitobans out of work. Meanwhile, mining company Vale is considering a possible departure from Thompson in northern Manitoba.

In fact, Kinew has yet to present an economic plan for the province after his NDP formed government almost 18 months ago. What he has done, instead, is drive up the provincial deficit to \$1.3 billion this year after running it up to \$1.9 billion last year, and simply push taxes higher on families and businesses. The NDP's stoppage of a phase-out of education property tax will hit cottage and commercial property owners hardest. And their removal of a tax credit on the basic personal amount will have the effect of an income tax increase on skilled professionals whom we must recruit and retain. Moreover, the government's move to end its fuel tax holiday will hurt all Manitobans.

Manitoba Hydro rates are rising as well, after the premier's broken promise to freeze them. No proposed rate freeze has been submitted to the provincial Public Utilities Board for approval yet this year, despite the NDP's advertisements on billboards and social media. However, at the cabinet table, Kinew and his ministers previously set an annual hydro rate increase of up to four per cent.

The government's misleading advertising has reached into health care, too, as the NDP congratulates itself for what it describes as progress. At the same time, overcrowded hospitals, ever-longer waits for emergency treatment, MRI tests, hip and knee surgeries, and severe staff shortages, point to a system in crisis. The recent death of a patient waiting in a Winnipeg emergency department, and a national report listing four of Manitoba hospitals among the eight worst hospitals in Canada, indicate the NDP's health-care advertising is not only misleading, but insulting.

Here in Westman, the Brandon Regional Health Centre was almost forced to shut its maternity ward in January because of a shortage of staff, and emergency rooms in other communities have closed. In December, only seven of 30 emergency rooms in the Prairie Mountain Health region were at full capacity and reliably open round the clock. Hospitals throughout our region were shut down for a total of 89 days in December while emergency departments, such as in Carberry, were closed for most of that month. Unfortunately, a Prairie Mountain Health board member resigned in recent weeks, as Kinew's NDP tried to shift blame to health authorities for the government's weak allocation of resources.

It isn't only hospitals in crisis in this region. Our Progressive Conservative caucus has urged the NDP to act immediately to fill a critical paramedic shortage at emergency medical service stations in Westman. In mid-January, Shoal Lake had only one paramedic for 13 intended positions, Virden had nine paramedics at a station intended for 17, Russell had five paramedics for 13 positions and Erickson had filled two of four paramedic spots. These dire shortages are threatening the safety of Westman residents and could lead to deaths. Our caucus is calling for expanded training for primary-care paramedics in rural and northern areas, and for accommodations for paramedics in Shoal Lake to help bring staff to that EMS station.

A lot is at stake as the House resumes sitting, and our opposition will push Kinew and this government to stop driving Manitoba into decline and forcing all of us to pay the price.

Greg Nesbitt is the Member of Legislative Assembly for the Riding Mountain constituency. He can be reached at 204-759-3313, toll-free 1-844-877-7767 or by email at gregnesbittmla@mymts.net. When contacting MLA Nesbitt, please provide your name, address and phone number.

Need help with your photo mess?
Not sure what to do with your VHS, Reel to Reel videos, Slides, Photos, Negatives?

Forever offers Digitization and Storage Services to help you get your memories in one safe place!

Marlene Hunter
Certified Forever Ambassador
Photo Coach and Organizer

204-838-2132 or 204-851-7000

Perfect for Personal, Business, Estates and Organizations!

Greg NESBITT
MLA for Riding Mountain

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

SIT. SWAB. SEND.

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

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

CancerCare Manitoba
Action Cancer Manitoba

CO-OP
Twin Valley

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025

This is your Co-op. Every Twin Valley Co-op member is an owner, and as an owner, you can and should have a say in your business.

To ensure the health and safety of our members, team members and Directors, this meeting will be offered both in person and virtually.

TWIN VALLEY CO-OP
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, April 10, 2025

Elkhorn Elks Hall, Elkhorn, MB

7:00 p.m. Call to Order

Advance registration is required and closes April 9, 2025.
To register please email marketing@twinvalley.co-op. If you plan to attend virtually please state this in your registration.

MEMBERS WILL VOTE ON:

- 2 Director positions up for re-election
- 1 Director position up for election

Those who submitted membership applications prior to April 1, 2025, will be eligible to vote.

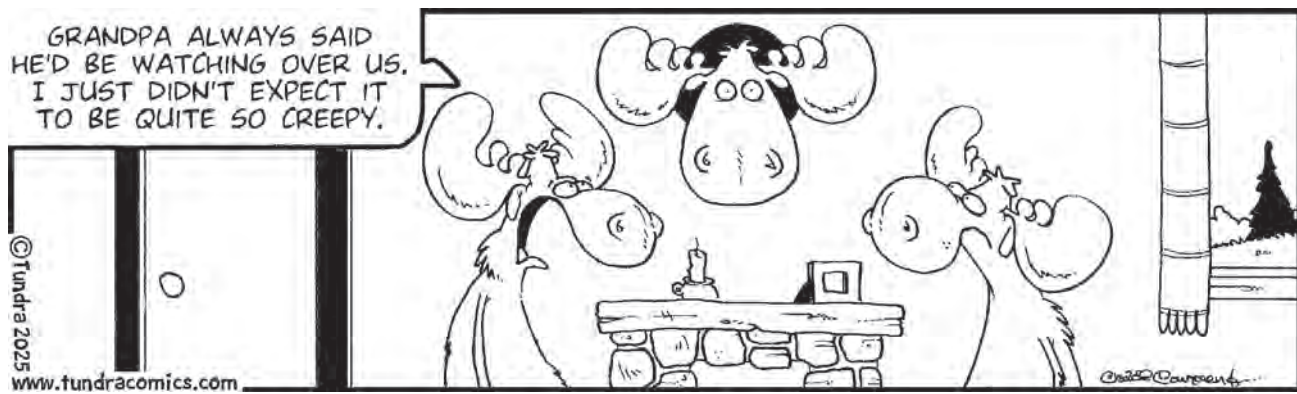
Please send any questions in advance to mark.morton@twinvalley.co-op or call 204-567-3524 no later than April 1, 2025.

www.twinvalleyco-op.co-op

*Registered trademarks of Federated Co-operatives Limited

Tundra

By Chad Carpenter



The cheque is in the mail!

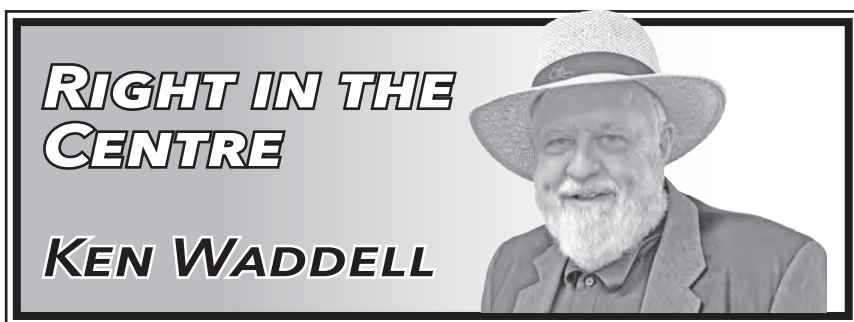
The old story goes that, “The cheque is in the mail”. That statement is usually true.

I was perplexed a few weeks ago when we started to hear about Post Office boxes being broken into and contents stolen. I couldn't figure out what was to be gained by robbing Post Office boxes. Almost nobody sends cash in the mail these days so I doubted that could be the reason.

Then somebody told me that maybe credit card renewal envelopes were being taken and now that activating a credit card is more automated than it used to be, perhaps that was the reason.

Then about three weeks ago, I was checking our Accounts Receivable and came across an account from a long time local customer that wasn't paid. That seemed strange but when I called them, they said, oh yes, that was paid. They checked their records and they had sent us the cheque and it had actually been deposited. The problem is, it had not been deposited by us, so who did deposit the cheque. The customer went to their banking institution and found out the cheque had been deposited to an account but not ours. It had been deposited to an account at a bank where we don't have an account.

That was a mystery, but by asking at my banking institution and at the one where the cheque was deposited, this is what we think happened. The cheque was stolen from our mail box at Canada Post. It was deposited by way of a night deposit at the bank but not to the “thief's” account but to another person's account where the “thief” had gained access. As soon as it was deposited, they could withdraw cash. I presume there



“ I have verified with at least three banking people that cheque fraud is rampant and that there is a ‘theft ring’ operating in western Manitoba. ”

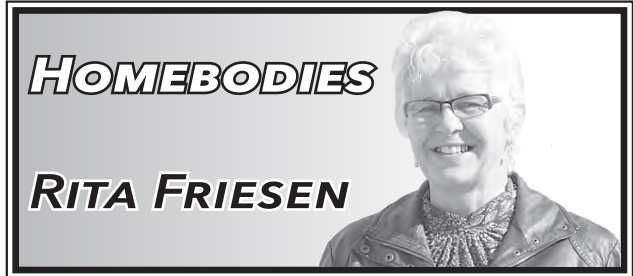
would have been a cash withdrawal limit on the account but there would be nothing stopping the “thief” from going back the next day and the next and withdrawing the limit again. If the real account holder didn't check their account or go over their statement at the end of the month, they might never know that money went in and out of their account. If the “thief” was smart, and we have to assume they are, then they would be careful to never withdraw more than the total value of the cheque or cheques they deposited. That way, the affected account wouldn't look like it was out of balance by very much at the end of the month.

Now, here's the kicker. I have verified with at least three banking people that cheque fraud is rampant and that there is a “theft ring” operating in Western Manitoba. Isn't that comforting to know.

I was also told that the RCMP are on it but, I assume it will be difficult to prove for sure. I believe bank machines are protected by surveillance cameras. In contrast, there are many Post Offices that have been broken into but Post Offices apparently don't have security cameras.

I find all this very upsetting. It's not that we don't have enough to worry about with everything else that is going on in the world. I was told by a banker that the RCMP are looking into this and many other problems. I was so frustrated that I muttered, it would be best for the “thief or thieves” if the RCMP catch them before I did.

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.



Victories!

It's not often that I am stymied when making a quilt. I was. The colours are perfect, the design pleasing, the presentation acceptable. The original plan was to ‘quilt as I go’. I've done that before. This time, no matter how carefully I watched the tutorials, yes-plural!- nothing made sense. Okay, so simply start and surely the work will fall into place. No. The end result was opening/unstitching an entire row of the quilt. Thankfully I conceded before trying more rows. Plan B then. Tying the quilt. I've done that before as well. Place the backing wrong side up, layer in the fill, place the pieced quilt top on top and start tying. Knots every five inches in any direction. Problem. I've shared with friends that my thumbs are more decorative than useful and I proved it. The backing is a fairly tight weave fleece like fabric. There was no way I could insert the needle and bring it back up without using a thimble to push the needle down, and a needle nose plier to pull it all the way through. Push, pull, tie and repeat for every knot required. The end result wasn't what I had envisioned but the gift was well received anyways. That project was on the go for weeks longer than it should have been. I would pick it, try again, sew, pick apart and walk away. And now it's done!

Last week, I scheduled an oil change for the car. Between the temperature, the wind factor and the icy walking, I chose to bring my tablet and read a book. On line. Forgot that detail. I'm not familiar with the settings on the tablet, barely find my way around my phone. Too proud to seek help, I sat and thought it through. Aha! Log in as a quest with my phone and it will sync to the tablet. I did, it did, and I happily read away. For many folks that was a no brainer. For me, a major victory.

It's almost nine years that I have lived in this home. I have grown accustomed to lights flickering, replacing burned out bulbs in one room in particular, and having a light dim when the printer is in use. I'm used to older homes and flickering lights. The other day when the microwave was in use it was surging, and the toaster was struggling. That was the tipping point. At the urgent urging of my housemate I called a electrician, who recommended one. Within an hour a pleasant, knowledgeable professional was solving the problem. The electrical panels are on the outside wall of the laundry room. Somehow, between the vibrations of the train thundering past and the washer and dryer jiving away, some connections had slightly loosened. After checking all visible connections we were asked to turn on the appliances- the oven, the microwave, the dryer, the toaster, the kettles, the fans and the lights. Not a flicker! Not a dimming light or flicker anywhere. Major victory.

These past few weeks I have been struggling with clear thinking, grief will do that. I'm improving daily. I rejoice with every victory, great or small!

Empire Advance
Serving Virden and area since 1885

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

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



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

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



STAFF

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

Car accidents plague Virden, Sioux Valley home burns

Westman RCMP Service Report for Feb. 23 to March 1

Submitted
By WESTMAN RCMP

During this week, Westman RCMP received a total of 53 calls for service. Some of these calls included 16 traffic files, 1 arson, 1 firearms offence, 2 theft under \$5,000, 4 mischief, 1 forcible entry, 2 fail to comply with order, 2 coroners act, 2 traffic collisions, 4 calls -911 act, 1 person reported missing, 1 impaired operation, 2 immediate roadside prohibitions for impairment, 1 counterfeit money and 1 break and enter.

On Feb. 23, RCMP received a report of a structure in flames in Sioux Valley Dakota Nation (SVDN). Police attended and observed a residence to be fully engulfed, with the fire department on scene. The home was fully destroyed by the fire. The incident appears suspicious in nature and RCMP continue to investigate.

On Feb. 23, RCMP received a report of possible gun shots in SVDN. Officers attended and spoke with several neighbors who all confirmed hearing the same sound but were unsure if they were fireworks or gun shots. RCMP had reports of fireworks the night prior in the same area. RCMP conducted patrols but found no evidence of firearms being used in the area.

On Feb. 24, RCMP were conducting speed enforcement in the vicinity of the Virden Collegiate Institute. Police observed a driver traveling 48 km/hr through the posted 30 km/hr zone. That driver was fined \$285 for speeding.

On Feb. 25, RCMP received a report of several vehicles damaged at a residence in Virden. RCMP attended and observed one vehicle had a tire slashed, a second vehicle had paint dumped on it. RCMP continue to investigate.

On Feb. 25, RCMP were conducting cellphone enforcement in Virden. Police observed a driver pass by while holding up their phone. RCMP conducted a traffic stop, the driver admitted they were making a call. They were fined \$672 and issued a 72-hour license suspension.

On Feb. 25, RCMP received a report of a break and enter that occurred in the last two weeks at a home in Melita. Suspects gained entry through an unlocked door and stole four rings and a pair of earrings. RCMP continue to investigate.

On Feb. 26, RCMP received a call of a two-vehicle collision near the Virden Co-op card lock. RCMP, Fire and EMS were dispatched. One person appeared to be trapped. Both drivers were tested on Alcohol Screening Devices and both drivers were sober. Two people were transported to hospital with minor injuries.

On Feb. 27, RCMP received a report of a single vehicle accident in Virden. The vehicle exited the roadway and crashed onto a private yard. The driver and two passengers got out of the vehicle and began walking. Police attended and located the group. The driver failed a breath test and was issued a 90-day license suspension and a 30-day

minimum impoundment of their vehicle.

On Feb. 27, RCMP conducted a traffic stop on Highway 83 while conducting proactive patrols. A driver was read a Breath Demand, provided two samples and failed. The driver was issued a 90-day license suspension and a 30-day minimum vehicle impound.

On Feb. 28, RCMP conducted a traffic stop on 7th Avenue, in Virden. The driver was read a Breath Demand, and provided one sample, failing the test. But they refused to provide a second sample. The driver was issued a 90-day license suspension and a 30-day minimum vehicle impoundment.

Library renovations going forward

By Dale Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

At the Feb. 25 council meeting of the RM of Wallace-Woodworth, Councillor Mark Humphreys provided an update on the library renovation project. After many years of effort to improve library infrastructure the renovation project is now confirmed. The goal was set six years ago when Humphreys joined the library board and now the renovation will begin on March 7.

The project remains on track despite funding challenges. The board managed to secure an \$80,000 grant towards the project, but the completion of the renovation was originally scheduled for March and a firm date will enable the grant to be extended until September.

Humphreys said, "After probably 24 years plus spinning wheels on this project from wanting to look for a new building, wanting to put a second floor on the existing library, wanting to change locations...24 years later we've got a renovation for the key centre (Virden branch) that's actually got the button

pressed."

The contract for the renovation has been awarded to Roger Branum Construction. The council acknowledged the persistence and dedication of the board in reaching this stage.

CONSERVATION A PRIORITY

Tim Gompf, the Natural Area Manager with the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) attended the meeting to explain the aims and activities of the organization. The NCC is a non-profit organization dedicated to biodiversity conservation across Canada.

The organization works to secure land through donations and purchasing properties. They also use conservation agreements and easements. In Manitoba, NCC owns 104 properties, ranging from a small 60-acre lot to an 8,700-acre parcel in the Rat River Swamp in eastern Manitoba. There is an interpretive site at Fort Ellice that was recently expanded to include a three-kilometer walking trail.

NCC conducted 10 workshops in South-west Manitoba, including one in Virden. The workshops focused on

sustaining species at risk, managing development in ecologically sensitive areas and preserving biodiversity and ecosystems.

Gompf said, "At Sioux Valley... 110 people showed up, students, elders, council members. There were probably 15 different First Nations represented at that meeting."

One of the priorities identified in the recent Trans Canada West Planning District development plan review was the protection of nature in the district. (See - You can still have your say - VEA Feb. 28). According to Gompf's presentation, NCC develops policies to ensure "Natural areas and habitats should be protected from incompatible uses which may adversely affect the sustainability of the land or the resident flora and fauna."

Co-operative partnerships with organizations like the Association of Manitoba Community Pastures (AMCP) are important for conservation, as much of the remaining prairie ecosystem is now occupied by livestock. One major initiative is the Weston Family Stewardship In-

centive Program, which funded 30 projects for pasture patrons, including solar-powered watering systems and fencing. The Wallace Community Pasture received \$60,000 in funding for species control, such as mowing invasive plants.

Community pastures play a critical role in maintaining natural habitats and biodiversity as grasslands help preserve natural infrastructure, mitigate flooding, and store carbon. They also serve as a vital habitat for pollinators, which cannot survive solely on agricultural fields like canola or wheat. Additionally, grasslands filter and clean water runoff, playing an essential role in ecosystem health.

Plains Rough Fescue, a native prairie grass, is disappearing rapidly and 85 per cent of native prairie in Manitoba has already been lost. NCC believes that preserving these lands is essential for future generations as they have ecological, cultural, and economic significance.

Conservation agreements allow continued land use while ensuring long-term protection for the prairie.



Elkhorn and Area Foundation Inc.

Invitation for Grant Applications - 2025

The Board of Directors of the Elkhorn & Area Foundation wishes to inform the public that it will be receiving applications for funding from any charitable, cultural, educational or recreational organizations in the Elkhorn area possessing a Revenue Canada Charitable Registration number.

Grant decisions will be made by the Board of Directors in accordance with the Foundation objectives and the Guidelines for Grant Applications.

Completed applications for funding will be received until **March 31, 2025**. Grant application guidelines and application forms are available on our website: elkhornandareafoundation.ca or completed applications can be mailed to: Elkhorn & Area Foundation Box 25 Elkhorn, MB R0M 0N0



Providing a Unique Opportunity for Each of Us to Invest in the Future of Our Community



LEAD the herd

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

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

CALL TODAY
204-285-9779



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

ag.ducks.ca

HELEN DRYSDALE

OUT OF HELEN'S KITCHEN

When I am in my sewing room I like to make simple meals to free up my time to sew. Try these two tasty recipes for your sewing day or any day when you are busy.

Pork chop casserole

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Tbsp. oil | 6 pork chops |
| 1 medium onion | 1 stalk celery |
| 1/2 red pepper | 1/2 tsp. salt |
| 1/4 tsp. pepper | 2 cups beef broth |
| 1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce | |

In a frying pan heat the oil and brown pork chops. Place 3 chops on the bottom of a lightly greased casserole dish. Sauté onion and celery in the pork chop drippings. Layer raw rice over the pork chops in the casserole dish. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place the onion, celery and peppers over the rice. Cover with remaining chops. Combine the broth and Worcestershire sauce and pour over chops and rice. Bake covered at 350 F for 1 hour or until rice is cooked.

While the oven was on I made this simple but sensational dessert.

Blueberry float pudding

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

In a small bowl toss the blueberries with the cinnamon and lemon juice. Layer the berries in a lightly greased 8X8 inch baking dish. In a bowl combine the flour, 1/3 cup sugar and baking powder. Stir in the milk and melted butter and then spoon evenly over the berries. Combine the 2/3 cup of sugar and

Province issues flood outlook Predicts low-to-moderate risk of Spring flooding

Submitted
By MB GOVERNMENT

Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure's Hydrologic Forecast Centre has released its February Flood Outlook Report, which indicates a low-to-moderate risk of significant spring flooding in most Manitoba basins.

Spring flood risk is largely dependent on weather conditions from now until the spring melt and throughout the spring.

Currently, there is a moderate risk of flooding along the Red, Assiniboine and Pembina rivers and in the Inter-lake region including the Fisher and Icelandic rivers. The risk of spring flooding is low along several other rivers, including the Roseau, Rat, Saskatchewan and Churchill rivers. Water levels are expected to remain below community flood protection levels. The risk of flooding is low for most Manitoba lakes throughout the spring period. Most lakes are expected to be within the desired operating ranges after the spring runoff.

The Red River Floodway and the Portage Diversion are only expected to be operated under unfavourable weather conditions. Additionally, minimal operation of the Portage Diversion may be necessary to mitigate

ice-related water level rises on the lower Assiniboine River (from Portage la Prairie to Winnipeg).

The Shellmouth Reservoir is being operated in consultation with the Shellmouth liaison committee to reduce the risk of flooding downstream on the Assiniboine River, while also providing sufficient storage for water supply and recreation.

Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure is conducting normal spring ice-cutting and breaking work along rivers to reduce ice-jam related flooding. Ice-cutting and breaking is currently underway on the Red River. Ice-cutting and breaking will start along the Icelandic River once breaking is completed along the Red River.

The Manitoba government, local authorities and First Nations communities are proactively preparing for any spring flooding. This includes reviewing emergency plans, information sharing between governments and preparing resources used in flood responses.

The 2025 spring flood outlook report is available at: www.gov.mb.ca/floodinfo/pdf/2025/february_2025_flood_outlook_report.pdf.

The next flood outlook is anticipated to be released in late March.

Miniota News

Submitted
By LINDA CLARK

The Miniota rink this past Sunday was beautifully decorated with the theme of "Winter Wonderland" for the annual ice show by the Miniota Figure Skating Club. Thirty-seven skaters performed under the instruction of Andrea Langlois and Claire Armitage. Helpers this year were: Elly and Lily Priestley, Jocelyn Brown and Myelle Priestley. Our skaters from beginners to level 5 and seniors were: Bohdi Bajus, Hadlee Brown, Lacey Gurr, Kelsey Gurr, Jazlyn Sheane, Declan Hill, Bo Brown, Kacey Heaman, Eloise Gardham,

Claire Gregory, Sammy Oliver, Reghan McLennan, Renn Gardham, Blayke Campbell, Samantha Hill, Amanda Gregory, Lawson Maluga, Amy Gurr, Jemma Sheane, Cooper Brown, Willen Priestley, Lucy Heaman, Shay Gardham, Emery Gardham, Jack Cole, James Oliver, Melodie Cymbalistic, Charlotte Cole, Andie Gardham, Madison Brown, Maci Fenty, Ezmae Armstrong-Wall, Anna Cole, Myelle Priestley, Lily Priestley, Jocelyn Brown, Claire Armitage, Elly Priestley, and Savana Sandstrom. Following the show, a full house attended the smorg in the hall organized by the figure skating mothers with the proceeds to the MCC. A wonderful show to conclude the figure skating year!

Team Tiffany Brown along with her sister Lexi curled in the U21 Manitoba Jr. Provincial

Championship at Brandon Curling Club this past week. Congratulations girls on this achievement.

The U13 Hockey Manitoba Female Provincial championship was held at Hamiota this past weekend. Congratulations to Gracie Muir and her Hamiota Huskies team mates on achieving the silver medals. Well done!

Many of our hockey teams are in playoffs. Keep me informed of your results. Plus, if you have been holidaying let me know.

Sympathy is extended to the Higgins brothers Edgar, John, Mel and Neil and their families on the death of their brother Bill Higgins at his home in Crandall on Feb. 12.

"Human greatness does not lie in wealth or power, but in character and goodness."
-Anne Frank



RM OF SIFTON PUBLIC NOTICE REGARDING THE 2025 FINANCIAL PLAN

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to subsection 162(2) of the Municipal Act that the Council of the Rural Municipality of Sifton intends to present its financial plan for the fiscal year 2025 at a public hearing that will be held:

Oak Lake Community Hall
474 Cameron St., Oak Lake, MB
Thursday, April 10, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

Persons wishing to make a presentation in person at the hearing must register by contacting the Municipal Office (204-855-2423 Ext. 1) no later than 4:00 p.m., April 9, 2025.

Copies of the financial plan are available for review and may be examined by any person during regular office hours of the municipal office.

RM of Sifton

**Phone: 204-855-2423 Ext. 1, Email: cao@rmofsifton.com
Mail: Box 100, Oak Lake MB ROM 1P0**



Miniota Golf Club

Join Our Team

Miniota Golf Club is accepting application for the following positions for the 2025 Golf Season

- **Greenkeeper**
- **Greenkeeper Assistant**
- **Clubhouse Manager**
- **Clubhouse Assistants**

Applications close March 15, 2025

**Applications to be sent to
Miniota Golf Club
Applications
Box 291
Miniota, MB ROM 1M0
or norjst@gmail.com**

**Contact for more information
204 748-5567 or norjst@gmail.com**

SPORTS

U11 CORBETT WINS BRONZE AT A1 PROVINCIALS

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Hard work definitely paid off for Virden Minor Hockey's U11 Corbett team.

The squad won the bronze medals at the Co-ed Under 11 Rural A1 provincial tournament. Provincials were held Feb. 28-March 2 in St. Claude.

"There was no secret to the team's success - just good hard work," head coach Jason Corbett said. "Being a B team, we have a very wide variety of players that came together. The team included some highly skilled kids, the consistent contributors, and the kids that would just grind it out every game. Everyone worked hard and contributed with what they could.

"We had two kids in the top four goal scorers of the provincial tournament, which included Colby Hodson. Colby was the top goal scorer over the entire weekend, and he scored all of our goals in the bronze medal game, including the OT winner.

"We really worked hard this year to stress an up-tempo style that applies a lot of pressure, and that seemed to pay off. Guys that aren't known for getting a lot of points still learned to hurry into the offensive zone, working hard to have the other team turn over the puck or disrupt their breakout."



PHOTO BY VIRDEN MINOR HOCKEY

The U11 team started the provincial tournament 3-0. It beat Beausejour, 6-2; St. Claude, 13-2; and Neepawa, 10-1. In the semifinals, the Virden team lost 3-1 to a Winkler squad that went on to win the championship. However, the Corbett crew rebounded to defeat Beausejour, 3-2 in overtime, and claim the bronze medals.

"We were able to dig deep and grind out the third and OT period to come back and take the game," Corbett said. "We just didn't quit. I was very proud of our boys - we were down 2-1 going into the third and Beausejour came out super high energy. The boys took a look at themselves and made the decision to not give up, which is impressive coming off of the tough semifinal loss earlier in the day."

Earlier this season, the team developed its resilience. The U11 Corbett squad won the U11 B division of the South West Recreational Hockey League tournament.

"In the league tournament, we had four one-goal games, which I think helped us for provincials," Corbett

said. "The boys learned resilience and how much they could accomplish if they never give up and keep putting in the work."

The coach was very pleased to work this season with what he described as a "stellar group of kids."

"They were a true team and so well behaved - everyone was always included and encouraged," Corbett said. "They just supported each other every step of the way. I was very proud of their accomplishments this year, but I'm prouder of how great of people they are becoming. It was always fun and entertaining coming to the rink. I never had to worry about their behaviour, and I always felt supported by the parent group. The coaching/management team were unbelievably supportive and always had great input."

Players this season included Colby Hodson, Preston Ritchie, Rory Hagan, Dylan Tapp, Luke Anderson, Will Mytopher, Maddyn Hayward, Greyson Flannery, Astor Corbett, Fletcher Stoop, Brody Hunt, and Jesse Bouchie.

Virden Curling Club celebrates historic 125th anniversary Curlers call community to enjoy traditional Canadian winter pastime

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Excitement is building as the date of Virden Curling Club's 125th Bonspiel approaches. In celebration of this milestone, a week-long, multi-league bonspiel, is planned for March 10 - 16. Entries have poured in, and the organizers have social events in store to create "one of the best small-town bonspiels you'll ever play!"

Virden will be a busy place with curling guests and fans in town.

In a normal year, this would be men's bonspiel time, but men won't be the only ones curling in this big event because ... "To celebrate, we wanted to combine our men's, women's, seniors', and juniors' into a single event," says the chairperson of the 125th Bonspiel, Jay Kinnaird. "This requires an additional five sheets of curling ice in the arena and is allowing us the space to invite the community to enjoy the traditions, camaraderie, entertainment, and of course the curling itself."

Curling Action

The men's and women's divisions will run a combined 27 draws.

Senior men's, senior women's, and sturling (stick curling) will occupy the daytimes from Tuesday to Friday. Juniors will curl on Wednesday afternoon.

Kinnaird who is also the drawmaster says, "In total, we expect over 120 teams to play 250 curling games in eight days: 60 men's teams, 32 women's, approximately 24 seniors, about a dozen sturling teams."

Curling action begins a day early with the men's first draws starting at 12:30pm Sunday, March 9, while the curling ice is prepared in Tundra Oil & Gas Place arena.

"Virden Curling Club is one of the busiest rural clubs in the country, with 300+ strong membership, hosting regular leagues for all skill levels at all ages

from October to March," says Kinnaird. "The club also hosts hundreds of additional players each winter in other events, such as club bonspiels, regional play-downs, provincials, and rental events."

This bonspiel is shaping up to possibly be the largest rural bonspiel event in Canada in 2025 (and the world for that matter), better than VCC organizers anticipated. Kinnaird admits that claim is difficult to confirm but says, "We are ecstatic to have over 120 rinks entered into the various divisions of the event, far exceeding our expectations."

For comparison's sake, "If you include cities, the largest bonspiel in the world (Manitoba Open in Winnipeg) hosted 225 rinks this year, and I've not heard of any other cities who come close to that."

To add to the excitement, two newly minted Manitoba Junior Champions will play in this event as they look forward to competition at Nationals. Virden's Jace Freeman captured the U21 men's title last weekend at Brandon Curling Club and Shaela Hayward from Carmen (with Virden connections) won the U21 women's.

Ice makers and organizers

He says, "From our dedicated executive board members, to league organizers, to members who pick up kitchen or bar shifts, volunteer effort is critical to our sustainability."

League organizers are Mandy Taylor and Erin Barkley for the women's, Tyler Strachan runs the men's, Jim Lyons and Greg Tough run the seniors' and Cory Barkley organizes the junior teams.

Virden's ice makers are dedicated and experienced. Geordie Barkley is the head ice maker, with Danny Knott the facility assistant. Several others support the ice crew, including Jace Freeman, Brooks Freeman, Graham Freeman, and Cory Barkley. "For this event, that crew will run the ice at the VCC as usual."

However, with five additional sheets in TOGP arena Kinnaird says, "We've hired Farrol Asham from Por-

tage to help us install and maintain the arena ice. A crew of volunteers will support him."

Celebrating the sport

Curlers and their fans will have opportunity to socialize throughout the week, bid in the Calcutta and on Friday evening entertainment is planned in the Sunrise Banquet Hall with one man band Grant Leutschaf of Winnipeg playing tunes. (However, the hall events may be at capacity just with the curlers. Watch VCC Facebook for last minute details).

Men's and Women's final draws start Saturday morning and Saturday is a big day that includes ceremonial events.

Both men's and women's honorary life members will be announced on Saturday afternoon at about 3pm, all part of the 125th ceremonies where Scottish bag pipes lead the teams into the arena.

Curlers will enjoy an evening banquet and live entertainment with a Brandon band, "Along for the Ride."

Kinnaird and the VCC board hope community members from Virden and area pack the stands, not only for the ceremony presentations. "We hope that curler fans and non curlers alike, come and check out what the VCC and the sport is all about!"

TOGP ice arena is in demand during the winter and Kinnaird says, "We appreciate the support of the various arena user groups who have patiently allowed us to rent the ice surface. We realize that hundreds of skaters and hockey players have been displaced for 10 days, and we thank you for your understanding as we celebrate this milestone."

Backing the Virden Curling Club 125th Bonspiel celebration are prizes and raffles. "Local business support is critical to our continued success. Virden and area businesses donate their hard-earned money and merchandise to sponsor our bonspiels, buy advertising, and support projects without hesitation. Without this support, we could not continue to sustain our facility for the community," says Kinnaird.

Virден Curling Club 125th Bo

VIRDEN

Welcome Curlers and Fans!

From Mayor, Council and Town of Virден Staff

Home hardware building centre

WELCOME ALL CURLERS SWEEPING INTO TOWN

298 6 AVE S, VIRDEN 204.748.2011

Custom Creations Let your creativity take flight

Welcome Curlers and fans!

204-748-3541 ~ www.customcreationsmb.ca ~ 479 - 7th Ave S, Virден

Your **Dollar Store** With More

WELCOME ALL CURLING TEAMS!

340 King St E, Virден ~ 204-748-3409

WELCOME CURLERS! YOU ROCK!

Flower Attic & Gifts

261 7 Ave S, Virден

GOOD LUCK TO ALL CURLERS!

Integra Tire Auto Centre

Virден a curling town from the get go

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The sport of curling took root in Canada a couple of centuries ago. The Montreal Curling Club, in 1807, became the first organized sporting club in North America. On the Prairies, Virден was just getting going in the 1880s, with curling not far behind, taking hold in 1889.

As the 2024-2025 curling season rolled around it marked the 135th anniversary of the Virден Curling Club, and its 125th bonspiel. Ten of those years did not have a bonspiel due to two world wars and a pandemic.

Chairperson of the celebratory 'spiel, Jay Kinnaird researched the roots of VCC. Kinnaird said, "The organized curling group in Virден was invited in 1888 to be founding members of the Manitoba Branch of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club (presently CurlManitoba). But we didn't make the meeting. (Perhaps we missed the train to Winnipeg... that is lost in history.)"

Newspaper Highlights:

1909: VCC's 10th bonspiel welcomed curlers with a banner across the street from the Alexandra Hotel. Thought to be the largest to date, the February 'spiel had 27 rinks entered; 17 outside rinks included: Elgin, Moosomin, Griswold, Pipestone, Lenore, Elkhorn and Oak Lake. The paper records, "The accommodation at the rink is first class and the committee deserves commendation...."

Ivan Caldwell's Virден rink took first; H. Koester from Brandon was 2nd; Cameron of Elgin and Gould of Virден stood 3rd and 4th.

Mr. A. Frame was president of the club with H.A. Carscadden and S.J. Wilson on the executive.

1949: The bonspiel opened with a service at St. Mary's Anglican Church. This bonspiel "will go down in sporting history as the largest ever held in Virден with 79 rinks in play." Club president was D.A. Gray, Dave Petch was secretary-treasurer. The last draw was at 11pm and "This year the club decided to eliminate one of the competitions so that unusually late draws would not be necessary." Harold Waines was commended for the excellent ice.

1956: "President Bill Carefoot told of the progress being made on plans for a new curling rink and on the financing of the project through the sale of shares in the limited company, Virден Curling Club Ltd."

1958: In the Ladies' Open 'Spiel, 20 Virден rinks and 15 from other towns participated. "The (men's) bonspiel was opened by a curlers' church parade to St. Paul's United Church on Sunday night." Les Shoemaker was drawmaster, Ollie Williams and Ed Hayward were ice makers with assistants Gary Williams and Charles Smith.

Virден curlers took part in the Winnipeg Consols. Jim Duncan's rink was a three-man team including Larry Duncan and Henry Polk. George Shoemaker's team included Ken Cook, Glen Fowler and Colin Fowler.

Virден Collegiate held a bonspiel with Lyle McDougal's rink of Jim Treliving, Doreen Williams and Ronnie McDole winning the Grand Challenge event. The Murray Duncan rink of Mary Fontana, Gerry Hoffman and Kay Noseworthy was 2nd.

The Virден local of Manitoba Farmers' Union also held a 15-rink bonspiel during that final season in the original rink.

NEW RINK

April 9: "Curler-Carpenters Trade Brooms for Hammers" and sure enough the new facility was ready for the fall of 1958.

Dec. 10: "Novelty Bonspiel Begins Activities in VCC New Rink."

Dec. 17 records the grand opening, with Hon. John Thompson cutting the ribbon, and Mayor J.C. Cury throwing first rock, "pulling on the button." Reeve of the RM of Wallace, H.C. Odell held the broom.

1959: The 60th Open 'Spiel was held on 11 sheets including use of the skating arena.

1972: On Jan. 5 the Manitoba Consols were held in Virден. Organizers said the event "will go down in history as one of the best ever." Virден's Ted Bridgett rink with Murray Duncan, Bill Grant and Bob Duncan competed. "Over 10,000 people turned out over the five days to watch Manitoba's 32 rinks battle for the honour to represent the province in the Brier."

Noel Buxton for Manitoba Curling Association said the attendance surpassed events held in Winnipeg, adding. "The first day of the Consols proved, attendance wise, far better than the first day of the Brier held last year in Quebec City."

1984: The Labatt's Provincial Tankard hosted by VCC saw hotels booked plus 25 homes out of 35 offered were booked as bed and breakfasts; restaurants stocked up on food.

1985: High School Zone 9 was won by Dallas Clarke, Jason Lewis, Robin Hanson, and skip Graham Freeman.

1998: The Safeway Select Manitoba Championship was held Feb. 5-8 where the Dale Duguid rink earned the Manitoba title.

1999: Virден Oil Riggers hosted the Special Olympics. The Oil Riggers team earned the gold medal with skip Chris Leach and Gary Remple, John Graham and John Scott coached by Carol Anne Trowell.

2014: Sixteen women's teams competed to represent the province at the Scotties Tournament of Hearts in Montreal. Over 11,000 fans watched the action at TOGP.

2019: VCC hosted the Manitoba Viterra Men's Championship.

2023: Golden Gals Provincials were hosted in Virден.

These are just some history highlights of a club that has enjoyed strong community support, a



WELCOME,



The B. Russell rink from... el event. Left to right Fran... ss and Bernard Russell (skip)

Bonspiel & 135 years of Curling

Week of Curling Schedule

DATE AND TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
Sun. March 9 - Evening	Mens Curling Draws start at 6:30pm	VCC
Mon. March 10 - Evening	Mens Curling Draws start at 6:30pm	VCC
Tue. March 11 - Daytime	Senior Curling Draws start at 10am	VCC & TOGP
Tue. March 11 - Evening	Womens Curling draws start at 6:30, Womens & Mens at 9am	VCC & TOGP
Wed. March 12 - Daytime	Senior Curling Draws start at 10am	VCC & TOGP
Wed. March 12 - Afternoon	Junior Curling at 3:30pm	TOGP
Wed. March 12 - Evening	Mens Curling draws start at 6:30pm	VCC & TOGP
Thu. March 13 - Daytime	Senior Curling Draws start at 10am	VCC & TOGP
Thu. March 13 - Evening	Mens & Womens Curling draws start at 6:30pm	VCC & TOGP
Fri. March 14 - Daytime	Sturling (Stick) Curling draws start at 9am	VCC & TOGP
Fri. March 14 - Afternoon	Mens & Womens Curling draws start at 2:30pm	VCC & TOGP
Fri. March 14 - Evening	Banquet Cocktails & Live Entertainment at 5pm (tickets only)	SCUH
Fri. March 14 - Evening	Calcutta Auction at 7:30pm	SCUH
Fri. March 14 - Night	Live Entertainment - Grant Leutschaft (One Man Band) (tickets only)	SCUH
Sat. March 15 - Daytime & Evening	Mens & Womens Curling draws start 9am, last draw 10pm	VCC & TOGP
Sat. March 15 - Afternoon	Bag Piper & 125th Ceremony at 4pm - All Welcome!	TOGP
Sat. March 15 - Evening	Happy Hour from 5 to 6pm	Tundra (Concourse Bar)
Sat. March 15 - Night	Live Entertainment - Along for the Ride (tickets only available at VCC bar)	SCUH
Sun. March 16 - Daytime	Mens & Womens Curling draws start at 9am	VCC & TOGP
Sun. March 16 - Afternoon	Mens & Womens Event Finals at 4:30pm	VCC & TOGP

Location Chart:

Viriden Curling Club - VCC

Tundra Oil & Gas Place - TOGP

Sunrise Credit Union Hall - SCUH

VIRDEN DODGE.CA
 CHRYSLER DODGE // Jeep RAM

Welcome curlers!
 Rock the House!

300 Frontage Rd, Viriden - 204-748-3396

**CURLING IS THE GAME!
 ROCK ON CURLERS!**



VIRDEN FORD  173 King St E, Viriden, MB 204-748-1775

**Welcome Curlers!
 You Rock!**



LRB ELECTRIC
 204-748-2790

BP Boston Pizza

Welcome Curlers and fans!



WELCOME CURLERS & SPECTATORS!



Pinnacle
 PLUMBING & HEATING

171 7th St N
 204-748-1788

**WELCOME CURLERS!
 HAVE A ROCKING GOOD TIME!**



VIRDEN SUPER THRIFTY
 WE CARE... Your Family Drug Store

GOOD LUCK TO ALL CURLERS!



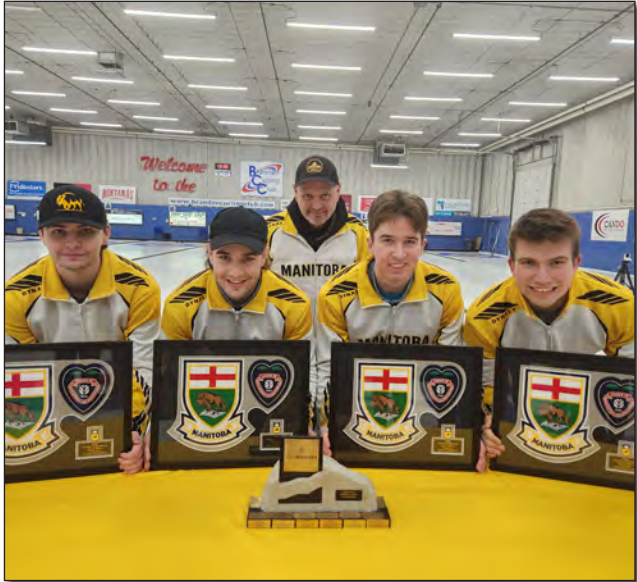
BRANDSOURCE
 Kullberg's HOME FURNISHINGS

346 King St E, Viriden
 204-748-3331

Lenore, winners in the Alex...
 is Alexander, Bob Laurie, Donald...
 rink has been start...
 will see. The...
 The bonspiel...

SPORTS

U21 CURLING CHAMPIONSHIP



Team Freeman

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Sunday was a banner day for a Virden-based junior rink and another team with an area connection.

Virden's Jace Freeman led his rink to the men's Under-21 championship at the first Co-ops of Manitoba Provincial Junior Curling Championships. He is the son of Graham and Roxanne Freeman. The rink's second is Nick Senff. His father, Danny, is originally from Virden. Freeman's Virden Curling Club rink beat Team Sugden, 6-4, in the final of the event, which ran Feb. 26-March 2 at the Brandon Curling Club.

"It means so much to me to win the junior provincial final," Jace Freeman said. "I've won a few U-18 provincials in the past and those felt incredible, but winning this U-21 provincial felt even more surreal. After losing the junior provincial final by a matter of inches the past two seasons, it felt amazing to finally win this final, and it makes it even more special to win in my last year of juniors."

On the women's side, Shaela Hayward skipped her rink to the championship. Her father is former Virden resident Darcy Hayward. The Carman rink beat Onanole's Cassidy Dundas, 8-7. The top two men's and women's rinks all earned the right to represent the province at the 2025 New Holland Canadian Juniors in Summerside, P.E.I. on March 22-30.

"I'm looking forward to going to my third and final junior national with the hopes of reaching the podium once again," said Freeman, who won national bronze in 2024. "I've been to P.E.I. once before for the Canada Winter Games and know how beautiful of a province it is, so I'm looking forward to soaking it all in."

Team Freeman

At this year's bonspiel, the Freeman rink went 5-1 in the round robin. That earned it a bye into the provincial final and a berth for nationals. However, the squad wanted the buffalo and went on to win it.

"It was a fantastic week," coach Graham Freeman said. "The host committee put on an excellent event. The ice conditions were very good, and the overall competition level we received for the other teams we played was extremely good. The entire field played us tough every game and the boys certainly had to earn it."

The final was 4-4 heading into the last end. On his first shot, "Jace made a nice double takeout on this first shot to lay two points," Graham Freeman said.

"We played the 10th end clean with the hopes of leaving me an easy shot for one point," Jace Freeman said. "We didn't really miss a shot in that end, which left Nash Sugden a tough draw around one of ours in the top of the rings but he came up just light, so I didn't have to throw my last rock."

Senff and lead Luke Robins hail from Winnipeg. Third Timothy Marin is now based in the Manitoba capital but is originally from New Brunswick.



Team Hayward

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Team Hayward

Hayward made two tough shots in the final end to earn the women's championship. It was the second straight provincial junior title for her and teammate Keira Krahn. They were joined on this season's rink by Grace Beaudry and Emily Ostrowsky.

"It was an incredible week and a very dramatic final and I am so proud that we came out on top," Hayward said. "For Keira and I to defend our title, it means so much. It means even more that we could win both Emily and Grace's first buffalo. My team played outstanding all week and we cannot wait to go represent Manitoba at the Canadian Juniors."

After round robin play, Team Hayward was in second place. It beat top seeded Team Dundas, 9-6, in the one versus two game.

Last season Hayward became the first curler to win three Manitoba championships in the same year. With the latest title, she now has won four provincial championships in just over a year.

Team Brown

A young junior women's rink based out of the Virden Curling Club gained valuable experience at the U21 provincials. The rink is skipped by Miniota's Tiffany Brown and includes her twin sister Lexi at lead, Virden's Joelle Barkley at third, and Hannah Low of Maryfield, Sask. throwing second.

At the provincial event, the team went 1-3. One of their games was featured on YouTube on the Curl Manitoba channel.

"I was very happy with the girls' effort and participation in the event," coach Cory Barkley said. "We were the youngest team in the event by several years and, much like the whole season, this event was a first for the team. So, playing older teams, some provincial champions already with experience, and watching and learning from them is very positive for the girls."

"I think throughout the year as they got more comfortable, they also started to form bonds with not only our own group, but curlers on the other teams as well which is really what makes the sport great. Probably just taking part in the event and learning and working as hard as they did in preparation for it is my biggest takeaway. They are a talented group of kids, and they have a bright future in the sport."

REF MEMORIES

REF TO WRITER

GERRY NOLAN



Starting in late January, and going forward until mid March, the Provincial hockey playoffs and tournaments are held each year. You play different teams from all over Manitoba to crown a champion in each category. I will be focused more on the senior side of the playoffs.

The playoff round was a best of 3 series for each round. You never knew what you were getting into as a referee as you had not seen these teams play. The North Central Hockey League and the Southwest Hockey League were leagues I was familiar with but, the other leagues not so much. The Tiger Hills and Souris Valley leagues representatives were similar to the NCHL and SWHL, so sort of knew what to expect.

Teams that came west from around Portage and Winnipeg were a different animal. Teams seemed to want to prove they were tougher and better than the local teams, which led to a lot of penalties in a game. Silly really!

Provincial hockey series also saw teams bring bus loads of fans to visiting arenas and it could be really loud in the rink which was great. Also, there may have been a pint or two drank on the way to games, some just had too much!

One year Kenton met Holland in the playoffs. The team went on one bus and there were 4 buses with

spectators going to Holland, others drove their vehicles as well, so you can imagine the time they would have had. All the teams were like this, great fan bases. Holland also had fans come to Kenton as well.

One series in particular stands out. The Ste. Rose Royals played against Kenton. What was different about this was that CKDM in Dauphin carried the game on the radio. Imagine a live broadcast from the barn in Kenton.

The Kenton rink literally had people hanging from the rafters. It was a sellout!

Ste. Rose had a defenseman that must have been at least 6 foot 9 inches on defense. He was a tree!

Ste. Rose won the series but, oh what a night that game was in Kenton. The fellows from Kenton that played in that game some 40 plus years ago, still talk about that game.

All the teams in the NCHL had people follow their teams all season, and there were lots of fans. It made for a great atmosphere and lots of excitement in these rinks. Unfortunately for the NCHL, eventually the league folded as there were not enough players to play, but oh for the memories they left behind. I could talk for a long time about Provincial senior hockey but I will leave it there for now.

Next week I will talk about some of the crap officials put up with, so stay tuned!

WE DISCUSS MONEY MATTERS BECAUSE MONEY...MATTERS!

GIC Rates
3.62%
1 YEAR

annual interest rate as of Mar 4, 2025
(source: Aviso Wealth)

CALL NOW

keystonewealth.ca

204-748-6823

512 - 7th Ave. Virden, Mb

KEYSTONE WEALTH MANAGEMENT
aviso wealth
Mutual funds and other securities are offered through
Aviso Wealth, a division of Aviso Financial Inc.

Disclaimer: Unless otherwise stated, mutual funds, other securities and cash balances are not covered by the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation or by any other government deposit insurer that insures deposits in credit unions.

SPORTS

VIRDEN OIL CAPS TAKE GOLD IN PROVINCIAL TOURNAMENT



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Players: McKinnley Walton, Novalee Hack, Ziyah Careme, Khloe Volk, Willow Hodson, Emory Frizzley, Brynn Jones, Meredith Masson, Laney George, Fergie Bertholet, Kinsley Robertson, Demi Hodson, Ella Wohlgemuth, Harley Cook, Payton Flannery, Makayla Gabrielle, Grace Cole, Scotlyn Malcolm.

By Gerry Nolan
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Hamiota hosted the U13 female provincial hockey tournament this past weekend. There were actually two championships declared at the event.

Pool A consisted of the host Hamiota team, Deloraine, Virden, Grand Plains and Altona. The Pool B consisted of teams from Minnedosa, Oakville, Arborg and La Broquerie. The teams played a round robin format with the top teams moving on to the Gold, Silver and Bronze medal games. In the Pool B division, La Broquerie defeated

Arborg 5-2 to capture the Bronze medal.

In Pool A division play, Altona defeated Southwest 3-2 in double overtime. The winning goal deflected in off a defender's hand. Southwest were also shorthanded at the time while serving a penalty. What an entertaining game, lots of chances to win at both ends of the rink. Congratulations to both teams!

In Pool B the final featured Minnedosa vs Oakville. Earlier in the weekend, these two teams had played in round robin play and had a 0-0 tie, so you know it would be close. Again this game went into double overtime.

FIGHTING IN HOCKEY, IS IT WORTH IT?

MJHL HOCKEY
DEREK HOLTOM

The topic of fighting is once again front and centre in the world of hockey following a wildly successful Four Nations Face-Off in hockey.

Weeks later, people are still buzzing about the three fights that started the round-robin game between the United States and Canada. Fighting in international hockey is almost unheard of, but this was something run by the NHL and it was electric. American media couldn't get enough of it – especially since the Americans won that game.

When the two teams met in the final which Canada won in overtime (and which featured no fighting majors) a few days later, interest was through the roof on both sides of the border.

The trend in hockey has been to do away with fighting, especially in the junior A level. Fights are rare now as the powers that be want to promote speed and skill.

But clearly, the start to that Canada-USA game caught lightning in the bottle. You have to imagine the NHL will try to repeat this best-on-best format in the future (it was so successful, the rudderless NBA is considering an international format in the future).

All that said, not all fighting is right or appropriate. Last week as the Waywayseecappo Wolverines faced the Neepawa Titans, Xander Mecas was assessed 17 minutes of penalties and is now suspended indefinitely by the MJHL for being assessed a one-man fight with aggressor early in the second period.

Perhaps it was payback for a major check to the head penalty assessed to Neepawa's Logan Paquette in the first period (which earned him a game ejection and a one-

game suspension in further discipline), but there is no justification for sucker punching a hockey player full stop. The Neepawa player never had a chance to defend himself and appeared to be out on the ice as Mecas continued punching him until other players and officials intervened.

So fighting in hockey, is it worth it? I guess that all depends who you talk to. There are risks (think concussions, broken bones, etc.), but players will tell you there is a time and place for it (defending your star player for example). Expect the debate to continue.

Swan Valley captain Landen Gulutzan was also handed a one-game suspension for a major hit to the head. That occurred on Feb. 21 against the Waywayseecappo Wolverines.

Portage's Dawson Madden also earned a five-game holiday for Game Misconduct (11.3c). In layman's terms, he got suspended for spitting. That took place on Feb. 15, the same day Dauphin's Naaman Hofer was also handed a five-game suspension thanks to a cross checking major.

That's not great timing for the Kings, losing their top-scoring defenseman in Hofer (he's also battling Isaiah Peters from Winkler for the points lead for defenseman in the league) as the Kings are already without Cayden Glover with a broken wrist. Dauphin went 1-2-1 in the first four games without Hofer, allowing them to keep an eight-point cushion on the Northern Manitoba Blizzard for top spot in the West Division.

One of the top defensemen in the MJHL heads up this week's MJHL Original 16 Players of the week Winkler's Isaiah Peters managed 11 points in four games, scoring four goals and adding seven assists.

Next up is Steinbach goaltender Christian Green. He went a perfect 3-0 while posting a 1.67 GAA, a .938 save percentage, along with one shutout.

The final winner of the week is Owen Warnick from the Selkirk Steelers. In a trio of games, Warnick scored three goals and added five helpers for an eight-point week.

What a hard fought game this was. Minnedosa won the gold medal with a 2-1 victory and claimed the gold medal, Oakville the Silver. This game was decided by a good clean shot that beat the goalie high on the glove side. This was also a very entertaining game. Both teams left it all on the ice, what a game!

The Pool A championship game had the host Hamiota squad up against their counterparts from Virden. Virden came out strong and scored 3 goals by the halfway mark of the first period and never looked back, winning this game 6-2. This was also a well played game by both teams. Virden won the Gold medal and were very deserving of it in this game. Hamiota had a couple of chances to get back in this game when they had a two man advantage for a brief time, but Virden really bore down and killed these penalties very effectively. Congratulations to the Virden U13 squad on the Gold medal. Hamiota played really well and should be very proud of winning the silver medal.

No tournament is as successful as this without the work of a lot of volunteers. To Nicole Wilson who was the convener of the weekend and her recruits, what an excellent job you all did. Hamiota has a great complex to host these events. The canteen was busy too, so thanks to all who gave their time to make this a great tournament.

Just a reminder as well, as the Hamiota High School team begin their playoffs Thursday March 6 in Hamiota at 8.00!

CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ASSISTANT CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Job Description

The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a motivated individual with excellent administration and finance skills for the position of **Assistant Chief Administrative Officer**.

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

The successful candidate should possess excellent financial and managerial attributes.

Duties and Responsibilities

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

Skills and Qualifications

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

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

WEED SUPERVISOR

Job Description

The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a motivated individual for the full-time seasonal position of **Weed Supervisor**.

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

Duties and Responsibilities

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

Skills and Qualifications

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

LANDFILL SITE ATTENDANT - HARGRAVE & KOLA

Job Description

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

Description and Qualifications

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

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

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

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

Obituary

IN LOVING MEMORY
DARCEY ALLAN SMITH
FEBRUARY 16, 1964 - JANUARY 11, 2025



The family is sorry to announce the passing of Darcey Allan Smith

Darcey lived in Mahon, Islas Baleares, Spain. Formerly of Virden, Manitoba.

He was predeceased by his Mother Iona Smith and Father Bob Smith, Grandparents George and

Eva Chrisp and John and Verna Smith.

He is survived by his brother Rick Smith and nieces Lindsay and Megan (son Conner) Cousins and friends in Spain and Canada.

Darcey attended Mary Montgomery School, Virden Junior High, and Virden Collegiate. After high school he attended Pollock's Hair School in Brandon. After training he worked in Winnipeg.

After taking a vacation in London, England to visit relatives he took a job there till moving to Spain. Approximately 15 years ago, when he went on holiday to Menorca he liked the people and the climate and stayed until his passing.

Darcey enjoyed travelling as a hobby. Also played the organ by ear at his Anglican Church in Spain. Through his travel met Richard Gere while they were both walking their dogs in London. Also, was in an Elton John video while in England and belonged to a ballroom dancing group.

He took his mom on a trip to Las Vegas and to Florida with his travels through the years.

A Memorial Service will be held at a later date.

Coming Events



HEY! YOU!

If you are reading me, that means others are too! Place your Classified here!

CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Municipality of Two Borders would like to invite applications for:

1 Seasonal Full Time Mower Operator

Qualifications: Ability to operate a tractor and a commercial ditch mower, perform minor repairs to equipment, operate two-way radios and other communication equipment. Ability to conduct pre-operational checks on equipment, clean and lubricate equipment. Ability to take direction from the Foreman and to work alone.

Pre-requisite: Valid driver's licence.

Hourly wage: Wage Negotiable, approximately 50 hours per week.

Anticipated start date is approximately June 2, 2025.

Applications will be accepted until March 21, 2025, or until suitable candidates are found. We appreciate your interest in this position, however, only those applicants chosen for an interview will be contacted.

To obtain more information and a complete job description contact the CAO Grace Carr at 204-522-3263 or inquire by email at info@twoborders.ca or cao@twoborders.ca.

Help Wanted



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Green Team – Summer Student Positions

The Municipality of Two Borders would like to invite applications for Summer Student Positions, under the Green Team Program.

Position Description:

- Planting and watering of flowers & trees, tilling, weeding, mowing grass.
- Landscaping, painting, maintenance of Municipal facilities.
- Maintenance of motorized equipment power mowers and other landscape maintenance equipment.

Pre-requisites:

- Valid Class 5 driver's licence is preferred

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

This position will commence on or before, May 12, 2025.

The deadline for applications will remain open until suitable candidates are found.

To apply, please submit your resume and indicate your available starting date:
Mail to: PO Box 429, Melita, Manitoba, R0M 1L0
E-mailed to: info@twoborders.ca

Only those applicants chosen for interviews will be contacted.
Thank you for your interest.



Park West School Division

Journeyman Mechanic or Licenced Mechanic

The Park West School Division invites applications for a mechanic position for school buses and fleet vehicles, start immediately. Both Journeyman and safety certified mechanics are encouraged to apply.

This is a six-month term position with the potential for ongoing employment, depending on performance and business needs. We are also open to considering applicants who are a new Journeyman and would be willing to provide tuition assistance.

The position will remain open until filled.

For more details and application information, please contact Dan Voth, PWSD Transportation Supervisor, at (204) 842-2111 or visit our website at www.pwsd.ca, and select the following links: Division / Employment / Current Opportunities / Mechanic.

Service

HIP/KNEE Replacement?

Other medical conditions causing **TROUBLE WALKING or DRESSING?**

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

Apply NOW; quickest refund Nationwide!

Expert Help: 204-453-5372

Will Do Custom Snow Blowing Of Driveways

204-748-5144

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.
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 under the

"Types of Advertising" tab for more details.
CAUGHT YOU LOOKING! NEED CLASS 1 DRIVERS? SEASONAL HIRING? SELLING SOMETHING? Jump on our great advertising 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
FINANCIAL SERVICES
Private mortgage lender. All real estate types considered. No credit checks done. Deal direct with lender and get quick approval. Toll free 1-866-405-1228 www.firstandsecond-mortgages.ca

For Sale

MANITOBA'S LARGEST RECORD & MUSIC SALE

SUN, Mar 16th 2025
10 AM - 4 PM

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

Admission \$5.00

12 and under FREE

Caboto Centre
1055 Wilkes Ave.,
Winnipeg

Early (8AM) admission \$30.00

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

WANTED

COIN COLLECTIONS



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

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

Todd
204-904-9705

Announcement



Response Builder Advertising WORKS!

- GET SEEN by over 360,000 Manitoba Homes!
- Create instant top of mind awareness
- Showcase your info, business, product, job, announcements or event
- We format it, to make it look great!
- Starting at \$239.00 (includes 35 lines of space)
- The ads blanket the province and run in MCNA's 31 Manitoba community newspapers
- Very cost effective means of getting your message out to the widest possible audience

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

www.mcna.com

Auctions

Online McSherry Auctions

Estate & Moving
March 12th @ 7:00PM
Featuring Coins & Paper Money

Estate & Moving
March 19th @ 7:00PM
Man Cave Auction

McSherryAuction.com
204-467-1858
or 204-886-7027
mcsherrytld@gmail.com

For Sale

BATTERIES FOR EVERYTHING! 50,000 BATTERIES IN STOCK

*Auto *Farm *Truck
*Construction *ATV
*Motorcycle *Golf Carts
*Rechargeables *Tools
*Computers *Medical
*All phones *Chargers
*Marine *RV & more
Shipping/Delivery avail.
THE BATTERY MAN
1390 St. James St.
Winnipeg
TF 1-877-775-8271
www.batteryman.ca



PHONE OR EMAIL US YOUR NEWS TIPS

Empire-Advance

305 Nelson St W, Virden 748-3931
sales@empireadvance.ca



VIRDEN



CENTRE OF IT ALL

Tundra Oil & Gas Place: 204-748-2736

Town Office: 204-748-2440

Facility Bookings: 204-748-2440

Waste Disposal Grounds: 204-748-6033

Emergency After Hours: 204-851-5540

Animal Control: 204-851-1810

Summer Employment Opportunities

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

Spring Thaw Reminder

As spring approaches, please use extreme caution around creeks, culverts and drainage ditches within the Town of Virden and surrounding areas.

For everyone's safety, please keep children, pets, and yourselves out of danger, and off of thin ice.

Upcoming Council Meetings: March 11 & 25

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

Tax Prepayment Discounts

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

✉ info@virden.ca 🌐 www.virden.ca 📘 Town of Virden 📷 @virdentown ✂ @virdentown

VEA BUSINESS DIRECTORY

YOUR LOCAL MARKETPLACE FOR GOODS & PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

BDO

CANADA LLP

www.bdo.ca

Chartered Professional Accountants

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

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

PATERSONS

Barristers • Solicitors • Notaries



DANE C. KINGDON, B.A., J.D.

DKingdon@patersons.ca

463 Seventh Avenue S., Virden

P: 204-727-0685

F: 204-728-4670 / 204-727-6668

E: info@patersons.ca

www.patersons.ca

Meighen Haddad LLP

LAW FIRM

Ashley T. Joyce
ajoyce@mhlaw.ca

Stephen K. Branigan
skbranigan@mhlaw.ca

Virden
255 Wellington St. W.
Virden, Manitoba R0M 2C0
204.725.8769

Redvers, SK
21 Railway Avenue,
Redvers, Saskatchewan
306.452.6016

🌐 www.mhlaw.ca 📷 @mhlaw.ca ✂ @MHLaw.ca

MNP

National in scope, local in focus

Proudly providing Accounting, Consulting, Tax & Digital Services

Virden Office | 204.748.1340

Wherever business takes you MNP.ca

KEYSTONE
WEALTH MANAGEMENT

aviso
wealth

☎ 1 204-748-6823
📍 512 - 7 Ave South, Virden, Mb R0M 2C0 PO Box 975

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

Reston/Melita Chiropractic Clinic
Dr. Shannon Gervin, D.C.

Box 456 Melita, MB R0M 1L0
Reston- 204-877-3104
223-4th St, Reston
Mon and Fri 8:30a - 4:30p
Melita- 204-522-3543
155 Summit St, Melita
Tues and Thurs 8:30a - 4:30p

THE
BLANCHARD

Oak River,
MB ROK OTO
(204) 566-2131

HOTEL,
LOUNGE, AND
RESTAURANT

Sunday
Buffet
March 9th
4pm - 8pm

Physiofirst

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

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

www.physiofirstclinic.ca

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

Supply & Install Residential Windows & Doors
- FREE ESTIMATES -

Call Kevin Bonner today! 204.851.5240

McNEILL HARASYMCHUK

McCONNELL
Attorneys at Law

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

Buckingham Building, 243 Raglan Street West
P.O. Box 520, Virden, MB R0M 2C0
Phone: 204-748-1220 • Fax: 204-748-3007

SPORTS

HOCKEY NOTES: VIRDEN PLAYERS HELP RIVERS WIN GOLD

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

A number of Virden area athletes helped the Rivers Jets win the U18 Female Rural B provincial championship.

At the provincial tournament in Rivers, which ran Feb. 20-23, the Jets beat the Brandon Wheaties, 2-1, in the finals. From the Virden area, the team included Ceanna Mitchell, Celeste McDonald, Jasmyne Andries, Molly Studer, and Callie Stuart.

“Every game that we played this weekend, the effort level from all players was 110 per cent,” Jets head coach Trevor Peters said. “Even our first game of the tournament that we lost, I would love to know the shot count to know how lopsided the shots ended up for us. Brandon’s goalie faced and stopped a lot of pucks that game.”

U11 Stewart

The Virden U11 Stewart squad placed fourth at the Co-ed Under-11 Rural A2 event. This provincial tournament was held in Warren on Feb. 28-March 2.

“I was really pleased with how our kids played and bonded,” coach Brett Stewart said. “They are a really fun and caring group of kids. Four of our five games were decided by two goals or less. Those types of games are excellent situations for the kids to learn and grow in, and I know that they all took something away from the weekend.”

The team opened the tournament with a dominant 9-0 victory over Steinbach. It then beat Morden, 3-2, and St. Eustace, 2-0. The Virden squad lost 4-3 in overtime to Warren Hueging. It fell 5-4 to Winkler. Warren Hueging won the tournament. Warren Hoas was second and Winkler third.

Virden U15 A

In the Under-15 Rural A provincial tournament, the Virden team won the consolation final. The event was held Feb. 21-23 in Dauphin. The squad was a combination of Virden Minor Hockey’s two house league teams. The third roster team had minimal practice and only one exhibition game.

“It took some time to figure each other out and gel. We got better with each game as the tournament went on,” head coach Brett Braybrook said.

The team lost twice on its first day of play. It then won twice on the last day of competition. Braybrook congratulated the team.

“It has been a great group to work with over the years,” he said. “Majority of the boys will have played in their last minor hockey provincials. The majors will graduate from minor hockey and the minors will have aspirations of moving on in their hockey careers. I am very proud of this group of young men and wish them nothing but the best.”

Elkhorn Female U11 Rural B

The Elkhorn hosts fell in the bronze medal

contest of the Female U11 Rural B provincial tournament, Feb. 20-23. Head coach Tyler Mitchell said, “they played their hearts out and that’s all we can ask.”

The team was 2-1 in the round robin. It fell 7-2 in the semifinals to Rat River and 4-2 to Thompson in the bronze medal contest.

“Really proud of our girls,” Mitchell said. “We were right in every game. Even the semifinal loss was closer than it looks, we just let one player get away from us. It was a really fun and competitive tournament to be a part of. All the teams were very evenly matched so almost every game was close.”

In the gold medal game, Lorette defeated Rat River, 3-1. Mitchell praised the parent group for their role in holding a successful tournament.

“As a coach, your job is simple and straightforward,” he said. “The hours you put in directly correlate to the reason everyone is there: the girls playing hockey. But the amount of hours each set of parents put in working the gate, timebox, prize table, kitchen, and preparing food makes the whole system run. A huge thanks to our amazing parent group who book off that weekend to help us put on the tournament.”

The coach also praised the community for stepping up “big time.”

“Parents, grandparents, and siblings from all other teams in our association are expected to help and they always outdo themselves. I can’t say enough good things about how Elkhorn Minor Hockey comes together to host these events. It does not go unnoticed, and I am proud to say I am from a community that can pull that off.”

“And finally, this weekend was a major drain on our rink staff and board. Our boiler went down leaving us without hot water to flood. Our caretaker Chris Anderson and the entire rink board, alongside many handymen and women, put in tons of extra hours all weekend long to try and fix the problem. Their difficult weekend ensured a great weekend for over 100 girls on the ice. We really appreciate it.”

U9 Jamieson

Virden’s U9 Jamieson won the C division of the South West Recreational Hockey League tournament in February. The team won a close game versus Virden’s Hunter team. U9 Jamieson coach Kelsey Jamieson said both teams battled hard.

“The team worked hard all weekend and played strong defensively - never giving up more than three goals in a game all weekend,” Jamieson said.

OIL CAPS GET BIG WIN, FIGHT FOR PLAYOFF BERTH

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Oil Capitals earned a crucial victory over the Winnipeg Blues last week as they continue to battle for a Manitoba Junior Hockey League playoff spot.

The Oil Caps dominated the Blues, 5-1, on the road. That ended a six-game losing streak that included falling to 1-0 to the Waywayseecappo Wolverines earlier in the week.

As of March 2, the Virden squad had 44 points in the MJHL standings with a 21-29-1-1 record. That had them three points behind the Wolverines for fourth spot in the MJHL’s Western Division and the last playoff spot in the division. Waywayseecappo had 47 points due to a 22-29-2-1 record.

The Oil Caps were to host the Niverville Nighthawks on March 4 and the Steinbach Pistons on March 6, after the Empire-Advance deadline. On March 8, the team is in Neepawa to play the Titans.

Oil Caps 5, Blues 1

On Feb. 26 in Winnipeg, the hosts scored first but it was all Oil Capitals after that. Rookie Liam Goertzen got the Virden onslaught started with his 17th MJHL tally of the campaign. Captain Ethan Guthrie, a defenceman, scored with nine seconds remaining in the first frame to make it 2-0.

“Westuck to our game plan even after giving up the first goal of the game and we did a better job of capitalizing on our chances,” Virden head coach Tyson Ramsey said. “Our penalty kill and goaltending were also very good.”

In the second, defenceman Tyler Dodgson increased the Oil Capitals’ lead to 3-0. Teammate Marshall Light of Moosomin made it 4-0 before the second intermission. In the third, Dodgson capped the scoring with his 12th of the season, which was into an empty net.

Virden goalie Loic Morin allowed one goal on 32 shots. His Winnipeg counterpart, Samuel Couture, made 31 saves. Brock Assailly scored the Blues’ goal.

Wolverines 1, Oil Caps 0

In Waywayseecappo, Dylan Duzan scored the game’s lone goal in the second period on Feb. 25. Morin had 27 saves. Mariko Bercier made 32 for the Wolverines.

“I thought we played a very solid game,” Ramsey said. “We outshot and outchanced them and I thought we were the better team certainly in the third period. At the end of the day, we weren’t hard enough at their net and I thought their goaltender was very good.”

Proud to support the
Sinclair Local Improvement District



Gary Nicholson and Avery Brigden (Tundra - Surface Land Representative)

Reach your **TARGET** audience.



ADVERTISE WITH US!

(204) 748-3931 ~ virdenempireadvance@outlook.com



SPORTS

OIL KINGS TAKE LEAD IN THHL DIVISION FINALS

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

With a dominant game one performance, the Virden Oil Kings grabbed an early lead in their Tiger Hills Hockey League Western Division Finals series.

On March 3, the senior team beat the Hartney Blues, 8-1, at home. Game two of the best-of-five affair is on March 7 in Virden. A full schedule was unavailable at the Empire-Advance deadline.

"I feel we played well right out of the gate and didn't look back," Oil Kings coach Ryan Mathieson said. "We had a full bench (which doesn't always happen in senior hockey) and all four lines were going for us. Our power play scored on their first two opportunities, going three for four on the night. Hartney, being a skilled team, were able to create some good looks on any Oil Kings miscues but (Eric) Reid made some big saves allowing us to retain the momentum. A key for us was staying out of the penalty box and not allowing their power play to go to work. With all four lines going, we are able to keep the pressure on Hartney and limit their time in our end, where they can be dangerous. There was a great crowd at Monday's game, and they helped feed our momentum throughout the game. We are playing our best hockey at the right time and will look to build on that going forward as we expect a push back from Hartney in game two Friday in Virden."

In game one, the Oil Kings led 4-0 after the first period. They were up 7-1 at the second intermission. Special teams played a factor in Virden's success. The Oil Kings killed off the Blues' lone powerplay opportunity. Meanwhile,

they were three-for-five with the man advantage.

For the Oil Kings, Bradley Bowles and Ty Lewis both racked up five points. Lewis paced the squad with a hattrick. Also scoring for Virden were Jason Bowles, Bradley Bowles, Elisha Bambridge, Nolan Wallace, and Jeremy Johnson, who finished with four points. Reid made 16 saves.

Jesse Linner had Hartney's goal. Blues goalie Justin Holder allowed seven goals and made 16 saves. Reiden Bodin came on in relief. He had one goal against and five saves.

Scouting Report

The Oil Kings swept the Melita Bisons, 3-0, on the opening weekend of the senior squad's postseason. The Virden team was idle last weekend as it waited for the Blues to beat the Boissevain Border Kings, 3-1, in the other divisional semifinal. In the regular season, the Oil Kings and Blues split their contests. Virden triumphed 7-3, while Hartney won 8-2. Virden was the division's top seed with a 13-2-0-1. The Blues were third at 9-4-2-1.

"Matching up against Hartney, we will need to utilize our speed and transitions to keep the play in their end as much as possible," Mathieson said. "Hartney has a skilled group that cycles the puck well in the offensive zone so limiting their time there is crucial to our success. We will need to get to the net and execute on our chances as Hartney has solid goaltending stingy defense. We split the regular season series with Hartney with both teams winning at home, which should make for a great West Final."

Before the divisional finals, Mark Agnew had led the



PHOTO BY DALE DAVISON

The Brad Bowles - Jeremy Johnson - Ty Lewis line were at it again as they opened the scoring in the first game of the THHL West division final against Hartney on March 3 at TOGP.

Blues in the playoffs with five goals and 11 points in six games. Teammate Zack McMillan had four goals and 10 points. Holder earned all five postseason wins. He had a 2.33 goals against average.

For Virden, Lewis and Bradley Bowles each had 13 points in the division semifinals. Lewis had eight goals over two games. Bradley Bowles had five in three contests. Reid led Virden with two postseason wins and a 1.00 goals against average. Tristin Rinn backstopped Virden to its other playoff win.

BRADBURY'S DIGS HELP COUGARS SUCCEED

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

As the Assiniboine Community College women's volleyball team's libero, Virden's Jordyn Bradbury embraced the unenviable job of digging up spikes from her opponent's best hitters.

"I enjoy the libero job because of the satisfaction of successfully reading and retrieving a powerful hit brings a sense of accomplishment and enhances the excitement of the game for us as players and for the people watching," the daughter of Darren Bradbury and Gina Tait Reiner said.

The second-year student-athlete at Brandon's ACC led the Manitoba Colleges Athletic Conference in digs (221) and digs per set (2.83) this past season. Her passing was important to the Cougars.

"Jordyn can make serve receive look very easy," head coach Kevin Neufeld said. "She tracks the ball very well and has a great competitive spirit. She has a very calm platform and great understanding of angles."

Bradbury also played some left side for the Cougars. Her versatility and ability was demonstrated last November when she was named the MCAC Women's Female Athlete of the Week. Against Canadian Mennonite University, Bradbury had 15 digs in a 3-2 Friday loss. On Saturday, she moved to left side and recorded seven kills in a 3-0 win.

"She would play anywhere but was among the best in the league at libero," Neufeld said.

No matter which position she plays or where the game is, Bradbury knows she has the backing of her parents.

"My Dad and my Mom have been my biggest supporters throughout my entire volleyball career," she said. "One of them is always at my game and if they aren't able to come physically then they are watching online. I couldn't ask for better support from my family."

Bradbury has enjoyed competing for the Cougars. She said, "The best part of playing at ACC is the opportunity to continue playing the sport that I love and hold dearly to my heart but also the friendships I have made this year."

At ACC, she is in the early childhood education program. Bradbury said, "This coming up year will be my final year for volleyball and school unfortunately, but I'm excited for what's to come next for my final season as well as many of my closest friends' final season."



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Jordyn Bradbury.



Get a **\$100 rebate** on each qualifying window and door you install in your home.



Windows and doors must be:

- ✓ ENERGY STAR® certified
- ✓ At least triple pane glass (where applicable)



EFFICIENCY MANITOBA

Visit efficiencyMB.ca/windowsanddoors to learn more.