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SUNRISE CREDIT UNION

Border Regional Library announces renovation plans

By Laranda Bailey
HEAD LIBRARIAN AND ADMINISTRATOR

Over the past couple of years, the Border Regional Library staff and board have been working towards a much-needed renovation of the Virden branch. This has been in talks on and off for many years, and we are very excited to be finalizing the plans and moving very soon to the construction process. We have been engaged with a Brandon engineering firm to generate a plan that will help our building continue to meet the community's needs and the current and future goals of library offerings.

There will be many changes in the coming months. The entrance will be modified to meet current accessibility standards, as well as to provide a community information area and an interior book return box. Our washrooms will be modernized and updated for accessibility standards.

A multipurpose room is being added onto our main floor to provide space for programming separate from the library. This space will also be able to be utilized by other organizations and individuals looking for a quiet space to use for studying, meetings, presentations, and a myriad of other possibilities.

A general refresh and change in layout will help make the library feel welcoming to more members from our community and provide a space that can work for a variety of activities. We will have room to house alternative items for lending in addition to our books.

We have been applying for grants and funds throughout the year to raise enough money for such a substantial project. So far, we have been grateful to receive the following:

- Oak Lake and Area Foundation - \$2,500
- Virden Area Foundation - \$10,000
- Kingston Midstream - \$35,000
- Brandon Area Community Foundation - \$50,000
- MB Arts, Culture, and Sport Community Fund - \$85,000
- Tundra Oil & Gas - \$100,000

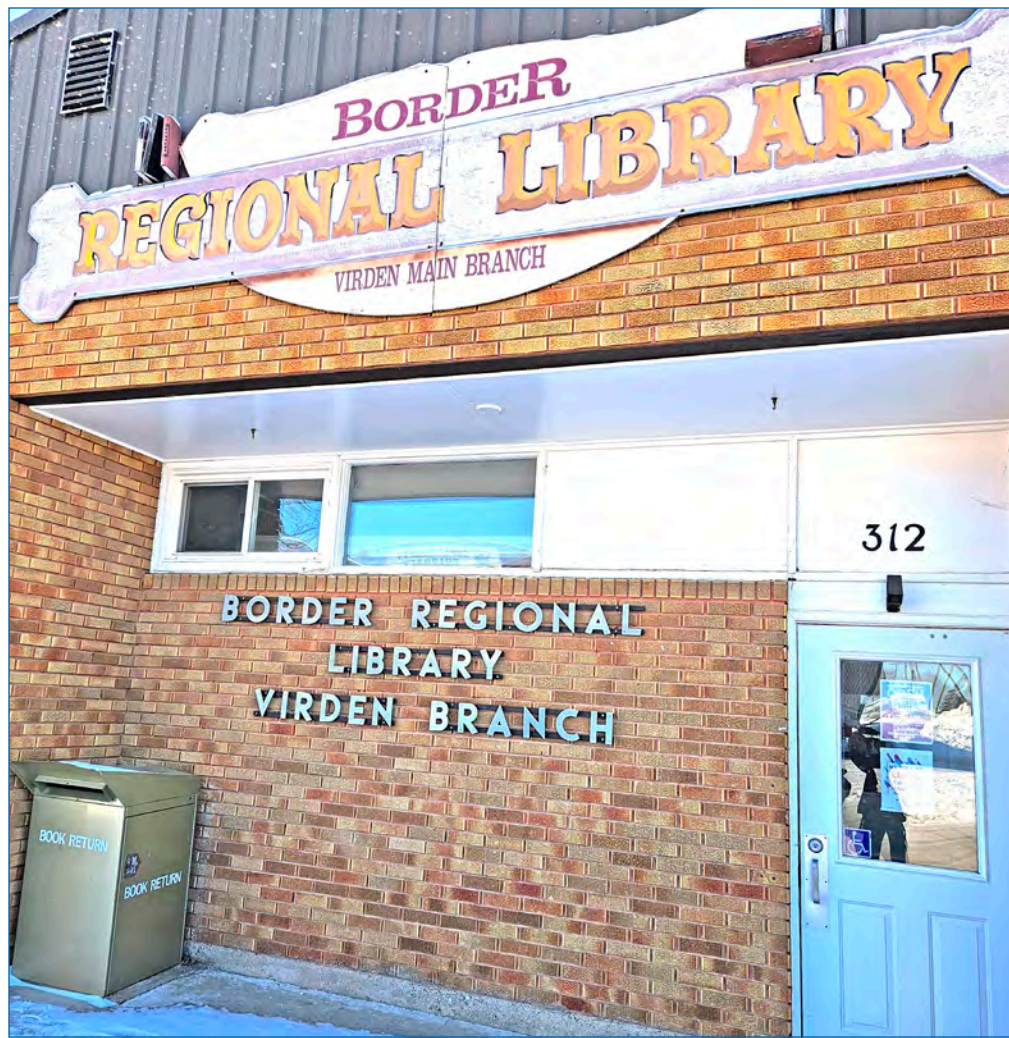


PHOTO BY ANNE DAVISON

Accessibility renovations coming soon to Border Regional Library.

This project will be financially supported by the Town of Virden and the RM of Wallace-Woodworth as co-owners of the building. It has already received support from individual donors. We will be looking into additional fundraising activities over the coming months to ensure we have enough money to complete the renovation and purchase additional furniture and technology to update the space fully.

We are grateful to all the organizations and individuals that believe in having a vibrant and welcoming space such as this for everyone in the community to be free to use.

Libraries are a valuable asset to their communities, and with the changing world, it's important to have a place to

freely access information and take part in activities with other community members. Border Regional Library staff and board are happy to offer such a facility in each of our communities, and we look forward to being able to provide broader and diverse services in our newly updated building!

If you are interested in donating, please stop by the Virden branch and speak with Laranda, head librarian and administrator, or call us at 204-748-3862. Online, visit borderregionallibrary.ca where you will find a Donate & Support button in the right-hand corner. Keep an eye on our website, Facebook and Instagram pages where we will be keeping everyone up to date with the project once construction starts.



HOME GAME
FRIDAY, JANUARY 17
VS. NIVERVILLE
NIGHTHAWKS
PUCK DROPS AT 7:30PM

Inside...



WHEELER
FUNDRAISER
CONCERT
P15



EMERGENCY
EXPERT
TRAINING
P2

Emergency expert trains local teams



PHOTO BY DALE DAVISON

MEC Joe Frizzley and Judy Podobni work the phones in the EOC as Public Information Officer Tiffany Cameron prepares a press release for the media.

By Dale Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Virden's Sacred Heart Parish Hall was the centre of the action last Saturday as councillors from the RM of Wallace-Woodworth and the Town of Virden joined forces with administration, public works, police, fire departments and emergency services to respond to a simulated disaster.

Shelley Napier, managing director of Napier Emergency Consulting is a highly qualified trainer and educator with national and international experience including work with NATO in Europe and Asia. Her personal experience in emergency response provided a wealth of practical examples of situations responders face in a disaster. She opened the training session by explaining why an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) is a crucial part of the response to a disaster.

The EOC is a physical location where information from the disaster site is collected and evaluated. This

information is used to keep local government up to date and help them make decisions about evacuations or declaring a state of local emergency, and to coordinate support for the responders at the site.

When a local council declares a state of emergency, they have the broad powers and responsibilities under the Emergency Measures Act, including control of travel and mandatory evacuation in the affected area. They can also use these powers to procure and distribute essential resources and maintain essential services.

SIMULATED TORNADO SCENARIO

As this simulation begins on June 23, Environment Canada is forecasting severe weather with heavy rain and the potential for thunderstorms for most of the day. After a severe thunderstorm in the morning a tornado watch was issued and soon upgraded to a tornado warning. At 11:30 am a tornado touched down north of town and moved across Highway One, knocking over grain bins at the co-op ag centre and destroying

the Tim Hortons, before tearing off the roof of the Comfort Inn. The twister crossed King Street between the hospital and the senior's residence collapsing the residence roof and damaging the southwest wing of the hospital. After 20 minutes on the ground the funnel dissipated northeast of Virden.

As calls for help came in the scope of the disaster became evident, and the emergency plan developed by Westman Emergency Group (WEG) of the R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth and Town of Virden was activated. The purpose of this emergency plan is to provide for a prompt and coordinated response to emergencies or disasters affecting these municipalities.

First responders kept in contact with the EOC through an internal phone system that had been set up in the Sacred Heart Hall for this simulation, and they soon reported that the emergency had expanded significantly with a large fire at the co-op bulk fuel depot that then threatened the Redfern fertilizer outlet, a potential source of explosion and toxic smoke. This development and other surprises challenged the group's ability to react quickly to the changing situation, a factor in most emergencies.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Up to date information and solid communication are required to allow the responders, the EOC and the local governments to ensure that nothing is missed. Shelley Napier stressed the importance of 'closing the loop' and confirming that all critical needs are being met.

This information is essential for the response teams to operate efficiently, and communication with the public is no less important as public cooperation and assistance is crucial in an emergency. Effective communication with print, network and social media was practiced during the simulation, with video interviews of the reeve, mayor and CAOs recorded and played back to the group.

Napier gathered feedback from participants to close the training session and all said that the simulation provided insight into emergency response and disaster preparedness. It was agreed that an understanding of the resources available to them and plans prepared in advance can make both responders and the public more confident when faced with a disaster.

Former MEC and current Town of Virden councillor Marc Savy told the Empire-Advance that although the province does not mandate any specific training, all local MECs have taken all the provincial courses as a condition of their employment with the Westman Emergency Group. Savy added that the Emergency Measures Act does mandate the types of training exercises and when they are conducted. This training was a functional exercise that needs to be completed every four years.

MFNPS Chief Palson lost in fatal fire

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Early on Wednesday, Jan. 8 a fatal fire occurred at a home near Portage la Prairie. When the blaze was extinguished, human remains were found within. This was the home of Manitoba First Nation Police Service, Chief Doug Palson.

MFNPS serves 10 communities including two local Dakota Sioux First Nations of Canupakpa and Birdtail.

Sheri Thomas, speaks

for the police service:

"With a heavy heart, the Manitoba First Nation Police Service shares the sudden and tragic news of a house fire that occurred earlier this morning at the residence of our Chief Doug Palson."

"Although the investigation is on-going, we believe that Chief Palson was the victim of this tragic incident. Manitoba First Nation Police Service is working closely alongside the Manitoba RCMP, and the Office of the

Fire Commissioner during this process."

"Our thoughts and prayers are with Chief Palson's family as they deal with this tragedy. We are also sharing in the grief and loss which is being felt by the members of the Manitoba First Nations Police Service. We are all connected as a united police family at this time."

"Chief Palson was a passionate leader who loved our police service and its members who serve our 10 First Na-

tion communities with pride and respect. Chief Palson was a remarkable leader, devoted public servant and beloved member of the policing community. He led with compassion, empathy and integrity, and was a tireless advocate for Indigenous-led, culturally safe, community-based policing."

"[He] devoted his life's work to public safety, justice and reconciliation. In the days to come there will be a more formal tribute which will celebrate his

life and his career in policing which spanned over 35 years."

"On behalf of the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council Police Commission, I would like to express our heartfelt sadness for the loss of Chief Palson to his family, friends, and colleagues. The days ahead will be challenging, but we will come together to support each other."

"The 10 First Nation communities which are policed by the MFNPS can rest assured that we will continue to serve

and protect them with honour and respect. The Police Commission has named MFNPS Inspector Jason Colon Interim Chief of Police. We will carry on the work that Chief Palson had championed throughout his career in First Nation policing. Our priority remains the health and wellness of our employees and the safety of the communities we serve."

Sheri Thomas, Chair of Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council Police Commission

MJHL NEWS

DEREK HOLTOM

The trade deadline has come and gone for another year, as plenty of players were on the move ahead of the push to the playoffs.

The Virden Oil Capitals shipped defenseman Cole Slobodian and a player development fee (PDF) to Flin Flon of the SJHL for defenseman Nathan Schaefer.

The Northern Manitoba Blizzard sent defenseman Thomas Phillips to the Kindersley of the SJHL for a PDF.

The Blizzard also sent forward Leland Cody to the Winnipeg Freeze for forward Jayden Ward.

The Steinbach Pistons shipped defenseman Aaron Krestanowich to the Northern Manitoba Blizzard for forward Sam Zagari.

The Winnipeg Blues shipped defenseman Jack Linton to the Northern Manitoba Blizzard for defenseman Dane MacInnis.

The Portage Terriers shipped forward Adler Johnston

and a PDF to the Virden Oil Capitals for forwards Kyan Grouette and Rhett Platt.

The Swan Valley Stampeders acquired defenseman Luke Scheck from La Ronge of the SJHL for a PDF.

The Stamps also sent forward Carter Zalischuk to the Selkirk Steelers for a PDF.

The Winkler Flyers sent forward Ethan MacTavish to the Swan Valley Stampeders for a PDF.

The Winnipeg Freeze sent forward Nicholas Cullen to the Swan Valley Stampeders for defenseman Ethan Hulme and a PDF.

In their final deal, the Stampeders sent local defenseman Matthew Munro to the Steinbach Pistons for future considerations.

The Dauphin Kings sent a PDF to French River of the NOJHL for forward Nolan Masson.

Dauphin also sent forward Rylan Ringor to Estevan of the SJHL for a PDF.

The Virden Oil Capitals shipped goaltender Nikolas Trakaris to Nipawin of the SJHL for a PDF.

The Virden Oil Capitals also sent a PDF to Estevan of the SJHL for forward Cole Robertson.

The Winkler Flyers traded defenseman Sully Ross to the Portage Terriers for forward Jacob Michelson.

The Waywayseecappo Wolverines sent forwards Cam Sarna and Regan Anderson to the Winnipeg Freeze for

forward Noah Oughton.

The Portage Terriers sent forward Rhett Perrin to the Waywayseecappo Wolverines for defenseman Jonah Marshall.

The Niverville Nighthawks acquired defenseman Henry Smith from Nipawin of the SJHL for a PDF.

Niverville also sent goaltender Connor Graham to Lloydminster of the AJHL for a PDF.

The Winkler Flyers sent a PDF to Rockland of the CCHL for forward Andrew Morton.

And the Virden Oil Capitals sent defenseman Jonah Vanderhorst and forward Parker Rolston to the Winnipeg Freeze for forward Liam Goertzen.

Interestingly, every team but the Neepawa Titans made at least one deal at the deadline this year.

The MJHL Original 16 Players of the Week are led off this week by forward Grady Hoffman from the Steinbach Pistons. In three games he scored four goals and added two assists.

Next up is forward Ben Groome from the Swan Valley Stampeders. In two games he scored three times and added two assists.

The final winner is forward Carson White from the Winnipeg Blues. In a pair of games he scored three times and added a pair of assists.

REF MEMORIES

REF TO WRITER

GERRY NOLAN



Somewhere along the line I became a mentor to some young officials. This was fun watching them develop into referee and linesmen in games. I worked on the ice with them as often as possible doing the two-man system as well as the 3-man system. These guys worked hard on their game and became top notch officials.

In Kenton there was Darren Good, Lance Routledge and Troy Smith. In Oak Lake there was Jeff Enns, Scott Clark, Stacy Dickson and of course, Kerry Smith. Smitty worked with these guys as well, so not all the credit to me.

These young officials developed quickly but not without trials. This way you learn the game. They were great because they were getting phone calls to go to other towns to officiate. I know they did a lot of games in Birtle so they spread their wings too.

You never know at what time you make an impression on someone, but here is a little story.

Troy Smith actually just told me this story this summer.

Troy was the head referee in this game, and I was doing lines with another person probably Lance or Darren. We were doing a game in Kenton versus a team from Brandon. Right from the get-go the Brandon coach is being a real ass. From the get-go, he questioned Troys calls and in general was loud and annoying.

Halfway through the second period, Troy has had enough and comes over to me and asks, Gerry if you were the head referee in this game, what would you do. I told Troy, remember the conversation I have had with you young officials. Eliminate the problem! If someone is being a problem, get rid of it. I also said if I was head referee I would have thrown him out in the first period. You are not getting paid near enough money to take his shit!

Troy looks at me, blows his whistle just as we are about to face-off, skates over to the Brandon bench and tosses the coach out of the game. The coach's jaw drops, and he left rather quietly. As I was escorting the coach off the ice I said to him, if you have anything else to say you will receive a gross misconduct. What is far worse than this, is the example you have been to your minor hockey team and to the town to represent. There was no other words spoken.

Troy really gained confidence from that game and became a better official.

Kenton Cougars senior team is playing in Rossburn. Kevin Laraway, who was from Oak Lake, was playing defense for Kenton. At one point during the game a Rossburn player is trying to get the puck from Kevin. The Rossburn player backs off and Kevin who had his skate on top of the puck, takes his foot off the puck. The forechecker comes at him again and Kevin puts his skate back on top of the puck. This goes on several times when the Rossburn player yells at Kevin to quit doing that to which Kevin responds, go tell it to your mommy. The Rossburn player just turns and skates away, shaking his head. Kevin gets control of the puck, makes a pass and the game resumes. Kevin could not remember that incident but I do!

Brian Braybrook from Virden is in a scrap one night. As the fight continues to go Brian says, can you not hit harder than that? The guy was shocked and withheld his punch which he stopped throwing. Brian did not stop and got a few extra punches in. Never heard that line except for when Brian said it and won the bout easily.

Murray Braybrook is in a fight one night and he and his opponent fall down on to the ice with Murray on top. Murray keeps punching his opponent but is punching him in the stomach. The receiver of these punches says he is hurting me, he is punching me in the stomach. My answer was guess you should not fight then. One of our favourite stories!

Brian Mytopher, who is playing hockey with Virden, has just served a 4-game suspension for spearing and this is his first game back, and they are playing in Elkhorn. On his second shift of the game, Brian spears a player from Elkhorn and I call the penalty. "Sorry Brian!" Brian replies, "You know I have just finished a suspension for spearing, and I guess well, Ger see you next year!" Brian sort of chuckles and skates off. I think Brian was just watching too many Philadelphia Flyer games when they were known as the Broad Street Bullies.

Dauphin versus Oak Lake midget game. Apparently in a

previous game Jason Taylor of Oak Lake had gotten under the skin of the Dauphin team and was sitting a suspension thus was not playing in the game.

In the second period Jason comes out of the waiting room, just standing at the doorway in the corner where the exit is. Of course there is a screen on top of the door that will not bend anytime soon.

The captain of Dauphin sees Jason and goes charging toward the door, with his team following him. They are jumping at it to try and knock it down. The only thing that gave was the players because they were not going to move that door. Jason leaves the rink and order is finally restored, but not before some serious penalties were assessed.

I gave the Dauphin captain a Game and Gross Misconduct as well as the Dauphin best player and the coach as well for failing to control his players.

I do not know what Jason did to them and I wondered why Dauphin did not like him. I liked Jason. I found him to be such a nice young man!

Last one for now. I am officiating a game in Elkhorn. Elkhorn is playing Rossburn in the old North Central Hockey League. Elkhorn wins the game 19 to 1. Rossburn coach and a couple of other guys come banging on the referee door and are going to lay a licking on me. The official's door is in the middle of the downstairs with each teams dressing room at either end. It is getting loud down there and they are pounding on the door. All of a sudden, I hear, "Hey, what the hell are you doing down there?" I hear the scuffle of feet that picking them and putting them down in a hurry. I peer out of the officials door and who do I see but the two Bowles boys Delbert and Garry standing in the hallway. Guess the Rossburn guys figured they better cut tail in a hurry or someone was going to get hurt!

Thanks, Debert and Garry for having my back, I never forgot that! When you consider this is senior hockey and you just lost by 18 goals, yep, my fault.

Second last one. Brian Glasman was a good player but had far too much to say. I had my run-ins with him and did not like the way he conducted himself on the ice, one night in Kenton, Donald Best of the Cougars had enough of Brian too. There was a short fight, and Brian is down in the corner, he came in second. I go over to Brian and I said, "Are you okay Brian?" Brian said to me, "Do you really care?" I said, "No I do not care; I was just trying to be polite!"

See you next time!

Elkhorn Agricultural Society ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, January 21
7:00 p.m. at the Elkhorn Leisure Centre
Everyone welcome

\$10.00 membership needs to be paid prior to the meeting in order to vote.



For more info, please contact Darren Johnson 204-748-8919

Greg NESBITT MLA for Riding Mountain

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Lenore Curling Club's ANNUAL BONSPIEL

Thursday, Jan. 30 -
Saturday, Feb. 1

\$100.00 entry Fee

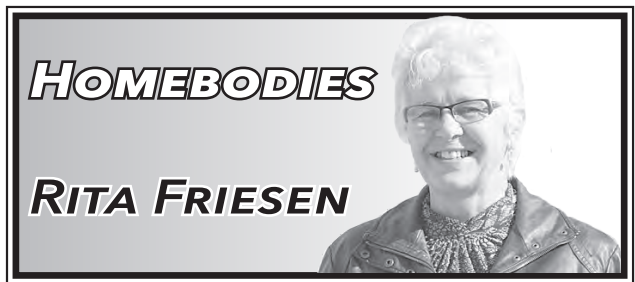
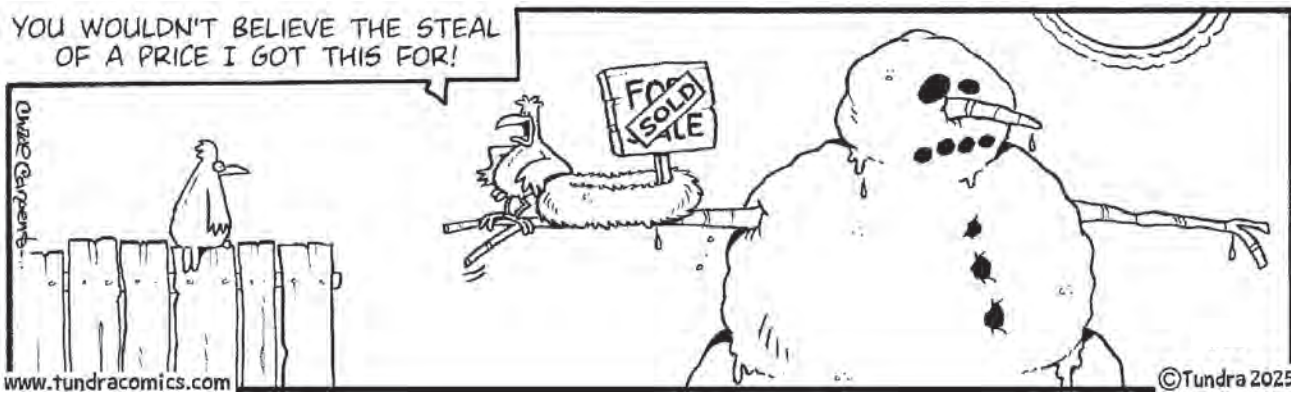
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Tundra

By Chad Carpenter



Winter wonderland...

Some housing and immigration questions

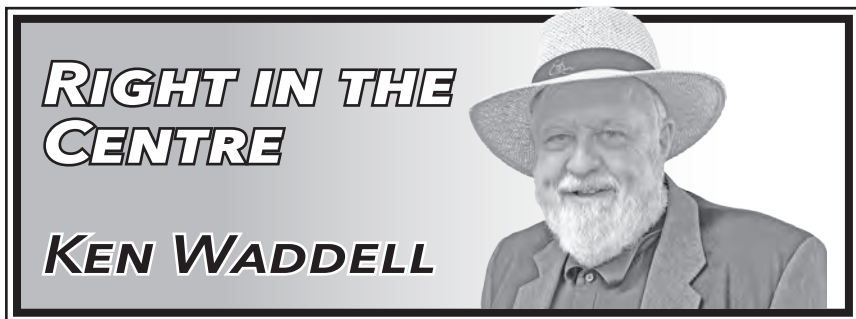
Population growth and immigration numbers are in the news again.

In 2023, 2,656 people left Manitoba, 25,591 people moved into Manitoba, 11,994 people died and 17,146 babies were born. The Province of Manitoba wants to bring in another 12,000 foreign worker immigrants in 2025. Companies are begging for more workers to fill waiting jobs in many sectors. Universities and Colleges are protesting cuts in foreign student numbers imposed by the federal government. Educational institutions have been charging much higher fees for foreign students than Canadians. There's a lot of forces at play here.

The federal cutback on foreign students is coming as many places in Canada simply can't find housing for the extra students or workers. An internet search on January 13, 2025 showed eleven real estate listings for Neepawa, 52 for Virden, eleven in Rivers and 103 for Brandon. Some of those listings are empty lots so they are likely a year away from a liveable house. It appears that in rural Manitoba a serviced lot for a single family home runs around \$45-60,000.

The upcoming Liberal leadership race and the likely soon to follow Canadian election will be fought on many issues but two of the big ones will be immigration and housing. How many newcomers does Canada need or more importantly, how many newcomers can be housed?

In some smaller towns, there has always been the question as to why not convert unused retail space into housing. There is a general rule,



enforced, I believe, by the province that only the back half of retail main floor space can be used for housing. In Neepawa, new apartments have to have one and a half parking spots per residence. That seems restrictive.

Some rural towns have strict regulations against modular homes and almost no provision for so-called "Tiny Homes". That's a bit ironic as there are, in most small towns, some very small one bedroom houses that have been there for many decades. Back in the day, people built what they could afford as opposed to building the most you can finance nowadays.

Now this is an interesting point. If you add up all the homes in Canada and all the families or people that need homes, we likely have way more than one home per family. How so? Just count up the number of times where people own two or three homes and I don't mean rental properties. If you figure in all the cottages and summer homes, there are way more homes in Canada than we "need". If we lived in a communist country, and that wouldn't be a good thing, there would be more than enough houses as one family would only theoretically be "allowed" to own one home.

There's another little secret and that is Manitoba Housing. It has, at times, been a gong show where there are empty MH units in rural towns. Some have been sold off, some aren't rented and some have been let go to ruin. I guess that shows up the bad side of government owned housing.

The Conservative Party of Canada, or at least their leader Pierre Poilievre, claims to have a lot of solutions to housing. It looks like they could be in power in a few months so it will be interesting to see how they handle housing and immigrations.

One thing, when towns started to get a larger number of foreign workers, there were a few people who objected that the newcomers were "taking our kids jobs." It didn't take long to debunk that idea by simply asking, "Oh, where are your kids now?" The answer was often a city far away. Newcomers didn't take "kids' jobs", the kids left a long time ago and many wouldn't take the kinds of jobs newcomers would do anyway.

The next few months will be interesting times.

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.

The daily walks are invigorating, breath taking, challenging and delightful. Several times this winter I have walked past the light pollution of our town, into the darkness, and simply gazed at the beauty of the winter night sky. There is the silence, there is the depth of darkness, and there is the glory of the stars, the moon reflecting on the snow, the vastness of our world. 'My little dog must think it queer to stop without a town house near'....(Robert Frost mutilated!) Arie sits patiently, a steady companion, alert for any unusual sound or movement, delighted with the tracks of deer and rabbits. We stand but for a lengthy moment for it is winter, in Manitoba. Day time walks have been wondrous this winter as well. We had the magnificent hoar frost, on the coldest days there are exhaust fumes lingering and fogging up the streets, and the stark dark of barren branches against the icy blue sky. These are the scenes I embrace, sense and feel—even after donning a quilted walking skirt, the warmest parka, boots and mitts for me and a warm jacket for Arie and applying foot wax on all four paws. There are days we grab two short walks for safety rather than one long one. This is a part of my winter wonderland.

There is another part! It is my winter wonder land. I wonder if it pays to clear the drive or wait until the next blow comes through. I wonder if my garden and lawn area are damaged when I scoop salty snow slush off the drive and out of the garage on to the sleeping yard. I wonder if I should be borrowing or buying a roof rake and removing some of the snow from the house and garages. I wonder if the wind chill indicates that Arie and I should skip taking a walk. One doctor advised me that if I thought it was too cold for the dog, perhaps it was too cold for me to be out long as well.

My winter wondering expands, and I am good at imagining...I wonder who would I call if the power went out while I was in full recline in my powered recliner!!! I had a test run of that a while ago. I am still agile enough to clamber over the side to safety, but it ain't pretty! That five minute trial also had me wondering where the flashlights and candles were and which ones needed new batteries. I wonder if we will see blizzards like I have seen in the past. I can't say that I ever walked on snow banks high enough to touch the telephone wire- back when we had lines and poles for our telephones- but I know folks who did. I can recall family members needing to be dug out of their farm homes, the snow being high enough to block exit by door or window. I can recall trenches deep enough that one could not see over the edge to the horizon for highway travel- Southern Manitoba, but I remember.

I shall attempt to focus on the wonderland, not the wonder land.

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Police seize unattended rifle

Westman RCMP Report Jan. 5 to 11

Submitted
WESTMAN RCMP

During this week, Westman RCMP received a total of 64 calls for service. Of the 64, 21 were Traffic Related including nine Speeding Violation files. Also included in the calls for service were 2 Assault files, 3 Wellbeing files, 3 Mental Health Act files, 4 Fail to Comply with Court Orders and Disobeying the Court, 4 Uttering Threats Against a Person files, 1 Unsafe Storage of Firearms file, and 3 False Alarms.

On Jan. 9, Westman RCMP were dispatched to an abandoned vehicle in the RM Pipestone. While checking to see if there were any occupants RCMP observed a rifle unattended and no persons within the vehicle or area.

The vehicle was towed as it was not registered, and the rifle and ammunition were seized for safe keeping and further investigation.

On Jan. 9, during a routine traffic patrol in the RM Wallace-Woodworth, RCMP observed a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed a speed of 140 km per hr in a 100km per hr zone. A traffic stop was conducted, and driver was issued a traffic offence notice for Speeding, which carries a fine of \$573.

On Jan. 9, Westman RCMP were dispatched to a business in the Virden for a domestic assault. RCMP located the subject of complaint, and an assault was disclosed. The 37-year-old male was placed under arrest and will appear in court in March for assault

and fail to comply with undertaking condition.

On Jan. 10, Westman RCMP received a call for an unwanted person in a dwelling in the settlement of Sioux Valley Dakota Nation. After investigating the matter, a 35-year-old male was arrested for uttering threats against a person, breaking and entering with intent, and 2 counts of fail to comply with a probation order. He was remanded into custody and will appear in court this month.

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

Miniota Community Centre expansion receives council support

From Prairie View Council minutes

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

At the Dec. 10 regular meeting of Prairie View Municipality council voted to support up to 25 percent of the Miniota Community Centre expansion.

The MCC Facility Expansion Project came before council with a resolution for financial support with a motion by Coun. Delbert Cole, seconded by Trent Peel.

The Miniota Community Centre (MCC) is owned and operated by a board of community volunteers who manage several key facilities within the community, including the skating arena, curling rink, community hall, and baseball diamonds.

There's been a significant increase in registration for sports and activities at the MCC, demonstrating the growing demand for recreational opportunities in the community. Accommodating this growth within the existing footprint of the MCC facility has become increasingly challenging, leading the Board to take on the Multi-Sport Facility Expansion and Enhancement Project to meet the needs of the community.

A report in the Oct. 25, 2024 issue of the Empire-Advance told of the fall fundraiser that Miniota held where Jeff Odgers drew a crowd of over 200 and the community raised \$40,000 toward their goal for expanding the facility.

The Council of Prairie View acknowledged the importance of MCC to the local community and supports the vision of expanding and enhancing the facility. Councillors voted to support the project with a commitment to contribute up to \$351,000. This sum makes up 25% of the total project costs with the funds coming from CCBF. Formerly known as the Gas Tax Fund, the Canada Community-Building Fund is a permanent, indexed fund provided directly to municipalities, flowing through provinces and territories to support strategic infrastructure investments. It provides over \$2 billion annually for local priorities.

Manitobans continued to benefit from PC initiatives

Under the Dome

Submitted
BY GREG NESBITT MLA

Here's a look back at some of the many ways Manitobans continued to benefit in 2024 from long-term investments by your former Progressive Conservative government.

Thanks to prudent, people-focused governance, PC measures have been able to help Manitobans well after our time in office.

Affordability

Several PC affordability measures were grandfathered into 2024 to help Manitobans keep more of their hard-earned money.

- Upto \$1,399.00 in savings for Manitoba families since January 1, 2024.

- \$160 million in tax savings for low-income and middle-class families via increased personal income tax bracket thresholds.

- Thanks to PCs' 50 percent School Tax Rebate, Manitoba homeowners have been able to save an average of \$774.00 for one final year.

PCs will continue pushing for meaningful action on affordability as Manitobans face higher costs in 2025 when poor NDP policies take full effect.

Health Care

- Expanded emergency department and two new in-patient wings at Selkirk

Regional Health Centre

- Completed RRC Polytch's new, state-of-the-art Simulation Centre, which will focus on training nursing, allied health professions, and community services.

- More diagnostic services in the Parkland region—including the addition of a new CT scanner in Swan Valley, a quadrupled-size Cancer Care unit in Russell, and an expanded Cancer Care unit at Dauphin Regional Health Centre.

- More medical training seats at post-secondary institutions. As result of long-term PC investments, the U of M welcomed the largest class of medical students in its history in August!

- More support for Manitoba seniors—including a new program to help cover the cost of home accessibility and safety upgrades, as well as a new \$66-million personal care home officially underway in Lac du Bonnet.

- More internationally-educated healthcare workers across Manitoba.

- More specialized services at the Health Sciences Centre—including a new adult epilepsy monitoring unit and Manitoba's first stroke unit.

- PCs are also strengthening healthcare in Opposition, with the province

- committing to lowering the breast cancer screening age to 40 following months of PC advocacy.

- PCs also successfully passed a bill to bring attention to mental health challenges faced by men in Manitoba and promote mental wellbeing.

Education

- A newly-opened school and daycare in Morden as part of PCs' 23-school plan.

- Hundreds of new daycare spaces this year, including in Altona, Kleefeld, Lorette, Melita, Morden, Oakville, Portage la Prairie, Saint Adolphe, Stoney Mountain, Tyndall, and Winnipeg.

- PCs' Ready-to-Move (RTM) Child Care Project has been so successful that it was awarded the 2024 Project of the Year! The community of Elkhorn is expected to open their new child care facility this spring.

- More meaningful curricula and resources for Indigenous education with the Mamāhtawisiwin framework, as well as the Teachers Idea Fund (scrapped by the NDP).

- Expanded early learning and child-care training programs in the 2023/24 and 2024/25 academic years.

- In Opposition, PCs successfully pushed the province to implement a ban on cell-phones in the classroom and expand PCs' \$10.00 daycare initiative.

Public Safety

- A new Winnipeg Transit safety officer team and new community safety officers in Portage la Prairie and Hanover.

- An upgraded detention centre in Brandon.

- New institutional safety officers at several hospitals across Manitoba, as well as at the U of M.

- Expanded Rapid Access to Addictions Medicine (RAAM) clinic services.

Community Development

- More local community projects across Manitoba supported by PC grant programs, which have been cut or scrapped by the NDP for 2025.

- Expanded support services for survivors of sexual violence.

- A new online resource for free menstrual products.

- Safer combatives sport competitions with the Combative Sports Act now in effect.

- Progress on the Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgon redevelopment.

- In Opposition, PCs successfully passed bills to establish Community Foundation Day, recognize Tyndallstone as the provincial stone of Manitoba, and introduce a new specialty Manitoba Parks licence plate to help fund critical park infrastructure projects.

Economic Growth

- PC investments have also

- bolstered Manitoba industries, workforces, and infrastructure into 2024:

- The Port of Churchill exported critical minerals for the first time in over two decades in 2024, following over \$200-million committed from PCs with the feds to Arctic Gateway Group.

- CentrePort South officially kicked off its long-awaited development in Winnipeg this summer, and the CentrePort Canada Rail Park in the RM of Rosser also welcomed its second tenant this summer. With a \$40-million investment by PCs, the full Winnipeg development is expected to increase Manitoba's GDP by over \$950 million, house up to 12,000 people, and create 16,000 full-time jobs.

- More information technology training in the north.

- A state-of-the-art film studio broke ground in Niverville.

- A new solar glass project is underway in Selkirk and Hollow Water First Nation.

- A new directory of Indigenous Manitoban-owned businesses was launched this year.

- A more affordable and competitive Manitoba for businesses. Payroll tax thresholds were increased for the 4th executive year in 2024, and Manitoba businesses benefited from PCs' 50 percent School Tax Rebate on commercial

- properties for one final year.

- The St. Mary's Overpass has now opened. PCs' upgrades to this major economic corridor serve as one of many important steps taken under the previous government to grow Manitoba as a national trade hub.

- In Opposition, PCs successfully pushed the province to establish a Manitoba trade office in Washington.

While simultaneously denouncing PCs' successful efforts, the NDP have been quick to take credit for many of these PC projects and initiatives. But Manitobans know better.

2024 has been a fruitful year for our Progressive Conservative team, and we're very proud to see years of work paying off for Manitobans. Clearly the Kinew government is just as proud as we are, given how much they continue to pass off PC achievements as their own.

We look forward to seeing more fruits of our work in the new year and continuing our momentum with Manitobans to ensure the prosperity of our province.

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 include your address and phone number.

HELEN DRYSDALE

OUT OF HELEN'S KITCHEN

Cakes and Cameras

Over the holidays I never saw an "old fashioned" camera out. Today's camera is a small, digital addition to the computer that is our smartphone capable of taking high-resolution images in the blink of an eye. We take the ability to snap a photo for granted now. It takes next to no thought at all to pick up our phones and take a photo which we can instantly see and share. So today's recipe will be preceded by a history of cameras which took photography many small steps to make it what it is today. Every stage on the camera's timeline is a lesson about man's determination, curiosity and persistence.

In 1826, French inventor Joseph Niépce succeeded in producing the first photograph ever taken. However, the first images required eight hours of light exposure and later faded. In 1837 Louis Daguerre created a camera with an exposure time of around 20 minutes, created a sharp picture and which did not fade. This need for stillness made posing for a picture a serious business. No smiling. It is hard to hold a smile for that long. In 1841, William Henry Talbot patented the Calotype process, the first negative-positive process making possible the first multiple copies. 1871, Richard Leach Maddox invented the gelatin dry plate silver bromide process, which meant negatives no longer had to be developed immediately. Over the years technological advancements in camera production allowed for shortened exposure times.

In the 1800s, cameras predominantly used hefty glass-plate negatives for each exposure. The use of photographic film was pioneered by George Eastman, who started manufacturing paper film in 1885 before switching to celluloid in 1888. This made the film flexible and able to be rolled. His first camera, the "Kodak" sold for \$25. The film would need to remain in the dark box camera, which would be sent in its entirety back to Eastman's company for the images to be processed. The Kodak camera had a roll that could hold 100 pictures. For \$10 the roll was processed and the camera sent back with a new roll of film. It was advertised with the slogan "You Press the Button, We Do the Rest". The high cost of the camera and film kept photography within the reach of only the wealthy.

In 1900, Eastman introduced the Brownie, a tiny cardboard box camera with a meniscus lens, whose film could be taken out of the camera after shooting and developed at home or sent away to be developed. The Brownie camera was affordable at the price of \$1.00. One hundred thousand of them were purchased during the first year alone. The film and processing cost \$2.00 allowing the common person affordability. A "common laborer" who made around 20 cents per hour for a 50 hour week, which amounted to \$10 a week could now afford a camera and to take their own "snapshots."

A made from scratch moist cake is one of life's simple pleasures.

Banana cake with peanut butter icing

2 eggs	2/3 cup oil
1 1/4 cup sugar	1 tsp. vanilla
1 cup buttermilk (or milk)	1 cup mashed bananas
2 1/4 cups flour	1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. baking soda	1 1/4 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. cinnamon	1 cup chocolate chips
1/2 cup chopped walnuts or peanuts	

Mix eggs, oil, sugar and vanilla well. Add bananas. Mix. To flour add salt, baking powder, baking soda and cinnamon. Stir together well. Mix the flour in two additions into batter alternately with milk making sure flour mixture is last. Add the chocolate chips, walnuts or peanuts. Bake at 350 for 35-40 minutes in a 9 x 13 inch pan. When cool ice.

Icing:

1 package cream cheese, room temperature	1/2 cup peanut butter
2 cups icing sugar (add more if needed until reaches your preferred consistency)	

Icing without the cream cheese:

2/3 cup peanut butter	1 tsp. vanilla
2 Tbsp. cream or milk	3 cups icing sugar

Stir together peanut butter, vanilla and cream. Beat until smooth. Add the icing sugar and beat until spreadable.

Oatmeal spice cake

1 cup quick oats	1 1/2 cups boiling water
1/2 cup butter, room temperature	1 1/2 cups brown sugar
2 eggs	1 3/4 cups flour
1 tsp. baking powder	1 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. salt	1 tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. nutmeg	1/2 tsp. allspice
1 cup raisins	

Topping:

1/4 cup melted butter	1/2 cup brown sugar
3 Tbsp. cream	1/2 cup chopped walnuts
1 cup flaked coconut	

In a bowl, stir oats and boiling water; set aside. In another bowl, cream butter and sugar; beat in eggs until well combined. Add the oatmeal mixture. Combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and spices; add to the creamed mixture, mix well. Put into a greased 9X13 inch pan and bake for 40-45 minutes or until toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean. Combining the topping ingredients in a bowl. Spread the topping on top of the cake and put the cake back into the oven to broil for 2-3 minutes until the topping becomes bubbly and the coconut is browned.

What is Hearsay?

UNDERSTAND THE
LEGAL SIDE
JODI WYMAN



Viewers of TV shows and movies about lawyers will be familiar with the concept of hearsay. It's one of the most common objection lawyers make during a trial. But what is it?

Hearsay is information you receive from another person but you are attempting to share it. It is the report of another person's words by a witness.

These include statements like, "Bob told me the kids were home alone overnight" or "Brooke said my ex-husband is now working full-time". The person making those statements would like those statements to be accepted as the truth.

The problem is that the person with the actual information (Bob or Brooke) are not present to testify or be cross-examined. This is why this hearsay evidence is not admissible in court.

Statements made by an accused in a criminal trial or by the other side of a family or civil case are admissible because the person who made the original statement is available to testify if the statement is not true. For example, in a custody trial if dad testifies "my ex-wife said she spanked

our son on Christmas Eve" it is admissible because mom can admit or deny the statement if she wishes.

There are however exceptions to the rule.

For example, if a witness quotes someone as part of their story but is not intending to present evidence, it is admissible. So if the witness makes comments like, "The police officer told me I was being charged with an assault and had to come to the station" or "James said it was cold out which is why I went back to the house for a sweater", the statement is not intended to be admitted for the truth of it.

Also, there can be hearsay statements in "business records" such as hospital records or police files. The author of those notes does not necessarily have to attend court.

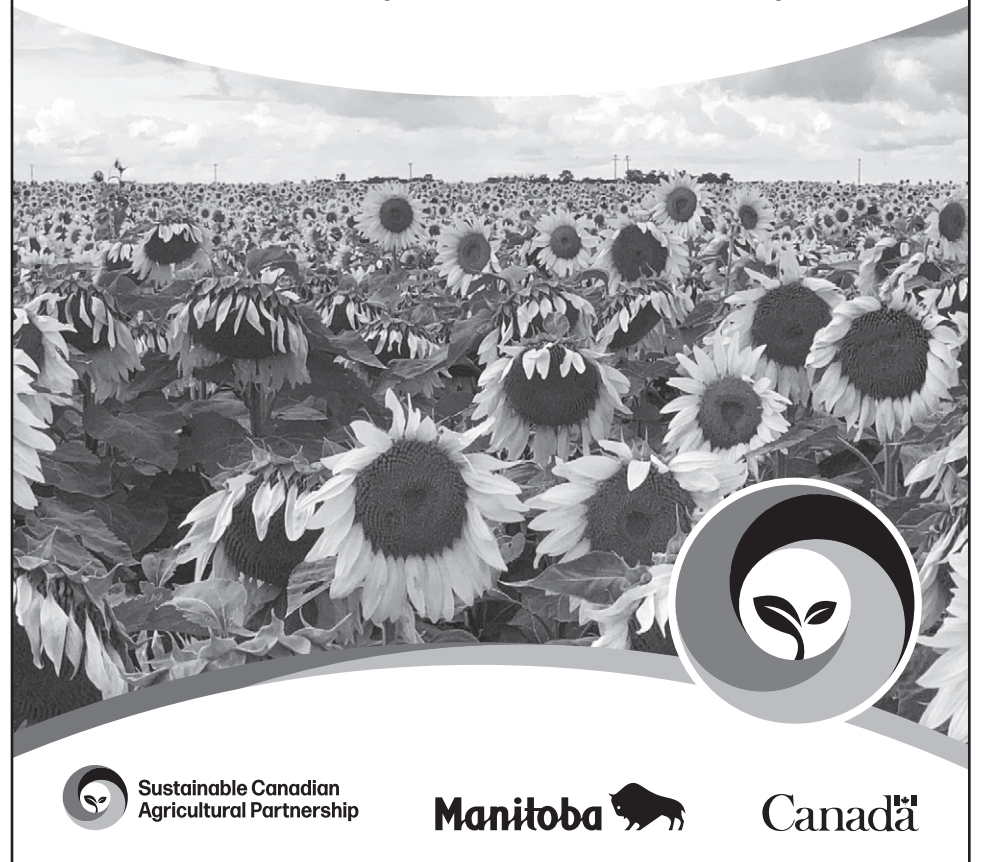
Because of the difficulty of obtaining evidence from children, often because a trial can be years after an incident, child hearsay can be admissible in court in certain circumstances. The Judges are primarily focused on whether the hearsay is important to the case and if it is reliable.

Apply now for funding to implement environmental beneficial management practices.

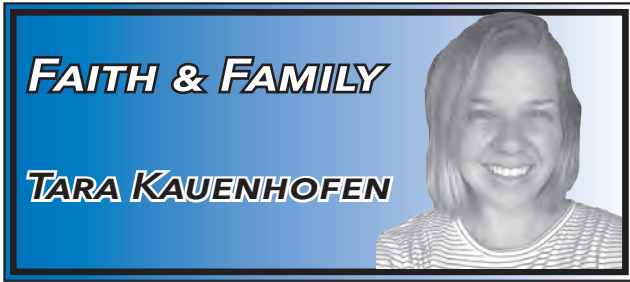
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Hours at the rink



During the winter months we spend a lot of hours at the rink.

Our oldest son plays U11 hockey this season and the commitment level for him has jumped exponentially and the skill level all around his team has also risen.

For the past two seasons, and part of this one, he has wrestled through the feeling of not knowing where he belongs on the ice, feeling less skilled than others, and not feeling quite in the right place.

For a year and a half we have seen his talent and confidence and skill grow in the goaltending position.

This was not what he thought he wanted at the time, this was not the goal scoring, power forward, glory position he had envisioned for himself when he plays mini sticks or on my dads backyard rink.

We have watched him wrestle through this, cry tears over what HE thought he wanted, grieve to some degree the vision and plans he had made for himself that weren't working out the way he thought they would.

This second half of season, he has come to admit that he truly LOVES the thrill of goaltending!

The tracking of the puck and the game, the heart racing adrenaline of someone coming towards him and slapping a shot at his head.

(Not my cup of tea and I might have a heart attack and finally get some grey hair from watching him yet, but hey! If he loves it, I'll breathe through!)

He has come to see his skill level and the improvement in his game, and understanding that stopping a shot is as important as scoring a goal!

He has stepped into his own, and allowed himself to let go of what he thought he wanted and what he thought the plans and the future would be.

This made me think about all the times I've wrestled with what God has asked of me, where my talents and giftings lie, where I thought my life would go.

The plans I had that God says no to, or that he says actually were going this direction.

Sometimes I fight tooth and nail to get away from him and his perfect plans that looked nothing like what I wanted.

Sometimes I kick and scream and pitch a fit.

Sometimes I grieve and cry over what I thought I wanted.

Sometimes we have to grieve and we fight back, sometimes we have to wrestle with the letting go of our human dreams and let the fear we feel of the unknown go and step out in faith.

Just like my son coming around, seeing and believing in his gifts and talents.

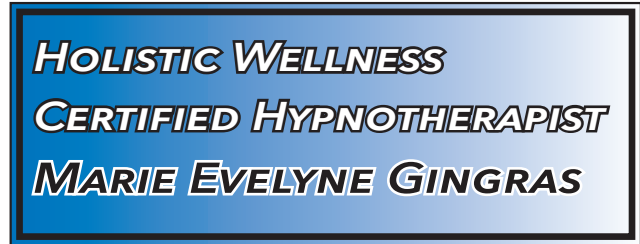
Just like him slowly loving the thing that he wrestled with in the beginning.

I always come to the conclusion that God's plans are far greater than mine.

That I CAN rest easy, in the knowing that he knows me, and that the plans he has for me far exceed my grandest imaginings.

Trouble Sleeping?

Hypnosis Might Be Your Secret Weapon



If your nights are full of tossing, turning, and staring at the ceiling, you are not alone. Millions of people are stuck in the same frustrating cycle, searching for ways to get some decent sleep. Here is some good news: hypnosis could be the natural solution you have been dreaming of.

Forget the stage antics and watch-swinging clichés. Hypnosis is a legit way to relax your mind and help you snooze better. It is all about guiding your brain into a super relaxed state where you can let go of stress and reset your thoughts. Sounds dreamy, right?

Here is the cool part—studies back it up! Research published in the journal Sleep showed that people who listened to a short hypnosis recording before bed spent way more time in deep sleep. That is the golden phase of sleep where your body heals, your brain organizes itself, and you wake up feeling like a superstar. There are tons of great apps out

there that walk you through relaxing imagery and peaceful suggestions, like "Your body is melting into the bed" (but in a non-creepy way).

A hypnotherapist (or a handy recording) helps you tap into your subconscious with calming words and visualizations. Think of it like a guided meditation with a sprinkle of science. Over time, it trains your brain to relax and look forward to bedtime instead of dreading it. The best part? Hypnosis does not come with groggy mornings, weird dreams, or that annoying reliance on pills. It is all-natural, safe, and perfect for people who are ready to ditch the meds and try something different.

Here is a method to help you fall asleep. Find a comfortable place to relax. Imagine a relaxing beach or forest or whichever favorite place you call yours. Quietly inhale your nose to a mental count of four. Hold your breath for a count of seven. Exhale through your mouth, making a whoosh sound for a count of eight. Release all the tension in your body by starting with your toes and moving your way to the top of your head, slowly by tensing and relaxing each body part.

If you are one of the millions of people that fall asleep but wake up halfway through the night, there are many ways to remediate that as well. Here is my favorite. When I wake up at 3am unable to fall back to sleep, I take my right hand and grasp my left thumb. I relax and try to concentrate on feeling the pulse in my thumb. I usually fall back to sleep within a couple of minutes and if you this often enough, it will guide your body to fall asleep every time your right hand grabs your left thumb...Fun right?

So, next time you are wide awake at 2 a.m., instead of counting sheep, try some of my tricks. Your future well-rested self will thank you!

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The Keystone Centre - Brandon, MB. - January 21, 22 & 23, 2025

Five things to know before the show

Submitted
MANITOBA AG DAYS

Canada's largest indoor farm show will kick off the three-day event on Tuesday Jan. 21. This year's show will include over 550 exhibitors with both indoor and outdoor displays at the Keystone Centre, in Brandon Manitoba. Here are five things to know before the show:

1. This year's theme is Produced on the Prairies. The theme will be evident throughout the show as we bring you products, equipment and speakers who got their start on the prairies. At the top of the main ramp you will find our NEW, one-of-a-kind vendor market featuring different local food and beverage products each day. You can get a jump start on the show, and the theme, by joining us on Monday, Jan. 20 at the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Dome Building for a food and beverage tasting event, beginning at 7:00 p.m. Tickets can be purchased for \$40 at www.agdays.com/craft-beer-event.

2. The Kickoff Breakfast will take

place at the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Dome Building from 7:30 a.m. - 8:45 a.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 21 and is presented by Heritage Co-Op. The Murray Auto Group shuttle bus will pick you up at your vehicle and deliver you to the doors of the Keystone Centre and Scotiabank has provided a safe and secure, complimentary coat check at the south end of the Flynn Arena.

3. Our biggest ever Innovation Showcase features seven categories and 34 contenders, and is presented by the seven brands of Glacier FarmMedia. Patrons can read about the innovations here and can visit the exhibitors at the show to ask questions, check out products first hand and see how these innovations might fit in their operations. Look for the green light bulbs hanging in the show to signify Innovation Showcase entries. The Winners of each category will be announced on Wednesday, Jan. 22 at 10:00 a.m.

4. This year's complimentary speaking program includes a line up you can not miss! For all the details head

to www.agdays.com/schedule There is something for everyone, with over 60 speakers and topics ranging from selecting canola varieties to managing your cattle herd and from planning for big yields to predicting global markets. The program includes 33.5 approved continuing education units for Certified Crop Agronomists.

5. Admission tickets are on sale now for the Early Bird price of \$15 per day. You can purchase your tickets at www.agdays.com/tickets 50/50 tickets are also on sale now at www.agdays.com/buy5050 (LGCA 4206-RF-44642) Last year's winner took home \$66,930.00! The winner will be drawn on January 24th at 9:00 am on Facebook Live. We are a not for profit show and any profits made on the show are paid forward to community projects and services through our Ag Days Gives Back Fund.

For more information and the latest updates please visit <https://www.agdays.com/> or follow us on Facebook, X, Instagram and TikTok @mbagdays.

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The Keystone Centre - Brandon, MB. - January 21, 22 & 23, 2025



World Class Complimentary Speakers at Manitoba Ag Days

Submitted
MANITOBA AG DAYS

Manitoba Ag Days is recognized as having the premiere speaking line up on the ag show circuit and this year is no exception. The 2025 complimentary speaking program includes over 60 speakers and offers a wide variety of formats and topics. We have speakers on the topics that are important to YOU!

Markets

Price Outlook for Oils & Fats: Implications for Canadian Canola - David Milke - Oil World
Tuesday, Jan. 21 at 11:15 a.m. in the FCC Theatre

Economic Outlook: Risks and Opportunities for Canadian Agriculture in 2025- Graeme Crosbie - FCC
Tuesday, Jan. 21 at 2:30 p.m. in the FCC Theatre

Geopolitics: What Lies Ahead? - Jacob Shopiro - The Beskope Group
Thursday, Jan. 23 at 2:00 p.m. in the FCC Theatre

Digging Into Cattle Market Data - Brian Perillet - More Than Just Feed
Thursday, Jan. 23 at 2:00 p.m. in the MNP Theatre.

Agronomy

Why Doesn't Your Nitrogen Stay Where You Put It? - Bryce Geisel - Koch Agronomic Services
Tuesday, Jan. 21 at 3:30 p.m. in the FCC Theatre

Did Verticillium Knock You Down in 2024? - Justine Cornelesen - BrettYoung Seeds
Wednesday, Jan. 22 at 10:00 a.m. in the FCC Theatre

Pushing the Limits: More Bushels per Acre - Brian Hefty - Ag PhD
Wednesday, Jan. 22 at 10:30 a.m. in the FCC Theatre

Fertility? Tillage? Crop Rotation? How do They Compare? - Kristin Simmons and Ezra Aberle - NDSU
Wednesday, Jan. 22 at 3:30 p.m. in the FCC Theatre

ROI and Balancing Your Nutrient Profile in Soils - John Heard - Citizen at large
Thursday, Jan. 23 at 9:30 a.m. in the FCC Theatre.

Livestock Do's and Don't's of Banding Calves - Jodi Suchoplas - Cattle producer
Thursday at 1:00 p.m. in the MNP Theatre



Going Green With Implants - Dr. Kim Ominski, Betty Green and Dr. Mary-Jane Orr
Thursday at 3:00 p.m. in the MNP Theatre.

Produced on the Prairies Small Town, Big Dream - Steve Langston - Langston Lane Ltd.
Wednesday, Jan. 22 at 1:30 p.m. in the MNP Theatre

Produced on the Prairies Panel - The E Butchery on Main, Engrained Flour Co and The John Howard. Society with moderator Steve Langston
Wednesday, Jan. 22 at 2:15 p.m. in the MNP Theatre.

Testing Ag Tech on a Commercial Farm - EMILI and Rutherford Farms
Wednesday, Jan. 22 at 3:30 p.m. in the MNP Theatre

The full speaker schedule can be found at agdays.com/schedule You are sure to find sessions of particular interest to you on each day of the show. Three-day show passes are available for just this reason! Visit agdays.com/tickets to purchase your admission tickets today.

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SPORTS

OIL KINGS WIN TWO

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Oil Kings earned a pair of victories last week.

The senior hockey team doubled up the Carberry Plainsmen, 10-5, on Jan. 9. It got past the Neepawa Farmers, 5-2, on Jan. 12. As of Jan. 12, the Oil Kings had a 10-2-0-1 record in the Tiger Hills Hockey League. They led the THHL Western Division. The Oil Kings' next game is at home on Jan. 24 versus Deloraine.

Oil Kings 10, Plainsmen 5

At home, the Oil Kings dominated the third period. They outscored Carberry, 6-1, to earn the 10-5 victory.

"The success we had in the third period versus Carberry was a result of sticking to the game plan and getting rewarded," Virden general manager and coach Ryan Mathieson said. "We had been controlling the play for much of the first two periods, while giving up a few high danger scoring chances. In the third, we were able to eliminate the high danger chances and execute on the opportunities we created."

Virden had led 3-2 after the first period. Things were tied up at 4-4 after two frames.

Ty Lewis racked up seven points. He scored a team-high four goals. Shane Price and Tanner Lewis both lit the lamp twice. Tanner Lewis had five points on the night. Dillin Stonehouse and Andrew Gerrand also scored.

Eric Reid made 13 saves for Virden. The Plainsmen's Connor Slipp stopped 38 shots.

Oil Kings 5, Farmers 2

The Farmers sowed their seeds early at home. They led 2-0 by the 12:08 mark of the first period. Garrett Remple



PHOTO BY DALE DAVISON

Oil Kings' Andrew Gerrand beats Carberry goaltender Connor Slipp to open the scoring in last Thursday's THHL game. Virden came out on top with a 10 - 5 win.

and Tarek Lapointe did the honours. Tanner Koroscil's marker cut Neepawa's lead to one, 2-1, by the end of the first period.

Goaltender Tristin Rinn and the Virden defence kept the Farmers at bay in the final two frames. Rinn finished with 23 saves.

Stonehouse, Shane Keown, and Jason Bowles scored for Virden in the second period. Price capped the scoring

with a third period goal.

"With three lines on Sunday, we had everyone going and our depth was on display with five different goal scorers," Mathieson said. "We've been able to find different ways to win games with big power play goals to depth scoring and our defence chipping in with some."

Neepawa goalie Brad Roncin faced a barrage of shots from the Oil Kings. Roncin made 55 saves.

LOCAL PRODUCT DRAPER DISPLAYING SKILL WITH OIL CAPS



PHOTO BY VIRDEN OIL CAPITALS

Oil Capitals player, 17-year-old Tyson Draper

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Oil Capitals have witnessed local product Tyson Draper make big strides while learning the ropes of the Manitoba Junior Hockey League.

The 17-year-old Draper is in his first season with the Oil Capitals. He is the son of Oak Lake Beach's Erin and David Draper.

"Tyson has really improved his game this season. ... Tyson works really hard on and off the ice and, as a young guy, we are really excited about what he will become as a player in this league," Virden head coach Tyson Ramsey said. "We are very lucky to have him."

As of Jan. 12, the 6-foot-1, 175-pound Draper had three goals over 31 games. He also

had an assist and 16 penalty minutes. On Nov. 22, Draper recorded a goal and an assist in a 3-1 win over the Winnipeg Blues.

"He is a big body that loves to be physical and has the ability to score goals," Ramsey said. "He can play up and down the lineup and has really carved out a role as a dependable penalty killer."

Draper has embraced the opportunity to kill penalties for the Oil Capitals. He said, "Being able to shut down a team and get some momentum for the boys is always a great experience."

Over the past few seasons, Draper has suited up for the U15 AAA Southwest Cougars, the U17 AAA Westman Ice Bandits, the U18 AAA Southwest Cougars, and the Oil Caps. Last season Draper recorded three points, including two

goals, over three games as an affiliated player with the Oil Capitals.

Of his time with the Virden club, he said it "has been a great privilege to play for my hometown team. My teammates have been great and are a tight group."

Draper also appreciates the support of his family.

"Family has been important for my career as they have been with me the whole way," he said. "They've supported me throughout my career and are continuing to do so."



SPORTS

SEEKING PLAYOFF SPOT, OIL CAPS DEAL AT DEADLINE

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

This weekend Virden Oil Capitals fans might need to refer often to their programs after the team made several personnel moves as it seeks a Manitoba Junior Hockey League playoff spot.

At the Jan. 10 Canadian Junior Hockey League trade deadline, the Oil Capitals brought in three players. Three players and the rights to a fourth, as well as player development fees, went other way in the four deadline day deals. The Oil Capitals play their first home game of 2025 on Jan. 17 against Niverville.

The Jan. 10 deals came on the heels of moves to get forward Liam Goertzen (announced on Jan. 4) and goalie Loic Morin (Jan. 6). These were reported in the previous issue of the Empire-Advance.

"I think we addressed all aspects of our team," Virden head coach Tyson Ramsey said. "Up front, we added some size, skill and leadership. We added puck moving defenceman with skill who can play in all situations and we added some veteran experience in goal. We feel very good about the guys we added and the makeup of our team going down the stretch."

The moves were made as the Oil Capitals try to solidify a playoff spot. Ramsey said, "our goal

from the beginning of the season has been to be a playoff team."

In order to acquire the players they wanted, the Oil Capitals had to part with some young men who had made contributions on and off the ice. On the team's website, Ramsey said, "it is always tough to lose good players and people, and we are extremely grateful for what the guys leaving contributed to our organization while they were here. We think we were able to find them great opportunities where they will be successful, so we feel good about that. Overall, we are very happy with the makeup of our team heading into the stretch drive to the playoffs."

Forward Adler Johnston, along with a player development fee, joined the Oil Caps from the Portage Terriers in a deal for 2005-born forwards Kyan Grouette and Rhett Platt. The 2004-born Johnston hails from Albert Lea, Minn.. The 6-foot, 200-pounder had six goals, 11 points, and 47 penalty minutes in 34 games for the Terriers this season..

Platt split last season between the Oil Caps and the Junior B Pilot Butte Storm. The Regina product had three goals and eight points in 25 games this winter. Dauphin's Grouette was in his first season in Virden after playing for his hometown Kings and the Western Hockey League's Everett Silvertips. He recorded a goal and five points in 26 games.

Another addition up front for the Oil Caps at the deadline was 2005-born Cole Robertson. He came from the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League's Estevan Bruins for a player development fee. Robertson had two goals and four points in 16 games for Estevan. The 6-foot-3, 210-pound Winnipeg product started this season with the North American Hockey League's Amarillo (Texas) Wranglers, who he competed for in 2023-2024, before being swapped to the Bruins.

On the backend, the Oil Capitals added 2006-born defenceman Nathan Schaefer. For the 5-foot-10, 175-pounder, the MJHL team sent to the SJHL's Flin Flon Bombers the CJHL rights to Cole Slobodian and a player development fee. Schaefer scored twice and recorded six assists in 24 games for Flin Flon. The Harper Woods, Mich. product also played two games this season for the Blackfalds (Alta.) Bulldogs of the British Columbia Hockey League.

After a strong rookie season with the Oil Capitals, Slobodian, a defenceman from Brandon, is playing for the WHL's Portland Winter Hawks. He has three assists in 40 games.

The addition of Morin gave the Oil Capitals three netminders, including Gavin Renwick and Nik Trakakis. At the deadline, the team moved the 2004-born Trakakis to the SJHL's Nipawin Hawks for a player development fee. He had an 8-11 record and a 3.52 goals against average.

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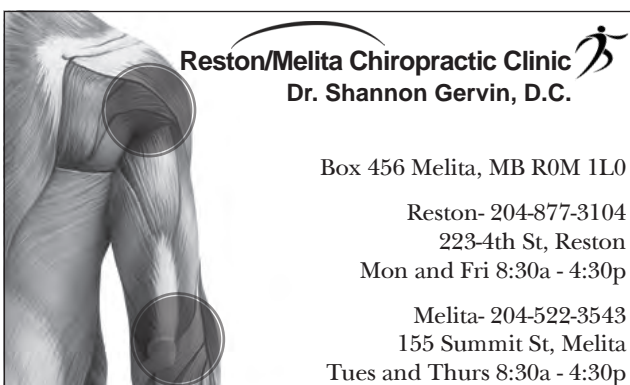


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Place your business here!

CLASSIFIEDS

Obituary

IN LOVING MEMORY CHARLES "KENNETH" WARDLE



Charles "Kenneth" Wardle passed away at the Brandon Regional Health Centre, on Sunday, December 22, 2024 at the age of 87. Ken was born on September 6, 1937 in Virden, MB. He lived on the family farm just west of Virden with his 5 siblings. After completing his grade 11 at Virden Collegiate

Ken worked various jobs in the construction industry as a carpenter and contractor. He was a proud member of the Virden Lions Club and the Virden Legion. Ken was a volunteer with Habitat for Humanity, an avid golfer and was a faithful blood donor, surpassing his goal of 200 donations. Ken will be lovingly remembered by his wife Jean Appenheimer; children Ward Thiessen and Sonia Fenton; sister Joyce (Lloyd) Williamson; nephews Brian, Blaine and Brent Turner and Miles and Vaughn Williamson; niece Natalie Wardle; daughter-in-law Sheila Crofton; grandchildren Candace Chalmers and Bryce Crofton; great grandson Price Chalmers as well as numerous cousins and friends. Ken was predeceased by his parents Gordon and Amelia Elizabeth (Kerr) Wardle; siblings Ed, Margaret, Melvin and Ellen and son Karl Crofton.

In lieu of flowers donations in memory of Ken may be made to Habitat for Humanity, The Red Cross or STARS. A private service for Ken was held.

Arrangements are in care of Brockie Donovan Funeral & Cremation Services, (204)-727-0694.

For Sale

FARMLAND FOR SALE BY TENDER IN RM OF PIPESTONE

	Total acres	2025 Assessment
NE 8-8-26W	158.57	\$128,300
SE 8-8-26W	158.38	\$140,600

Property consists of a half-section of pasture with no outbuildings. Cross-fenced electric with electric/barbed wire perimeter. One dugout plus 3 wells 20-25 feet depth into aquifer.

Mines and minerals are excluded. Located along west side of Road 154W (Highway 83) between Road 43N and 44N. Interested parties must rely on their own inspection and knowledge of the property. Highest or any offers not necessarily accepted.

Tenders must be received by Friday, February 28, 2025.

Mail or email bids to:
R and Y Neumier
PO Box 1270
Virden, MB
R0M 2C0

ryneumier@xplornet.ca
For more information, call (204) 748-6914



2025 KIRKELLA COMMUNITY PASTURE BOOKINGS

Feeders/Yearlings- Steers Only \$90.00 per season

Calves \$40.00 per head, per season, for walk-in calves born On or after January 2, 2025 and for calves born in pasture.

Deadline for applications February 7, 2025. Patron forms available at RM offices and online at wallace-woodworth.com

DEPOSITS DUE MARCH 31, 2025

This position commences as soon as possible.

www.wallace-woodworth.com | 204-748-1239 | info@wallace-woodworth.com

Coming Events

Virden New Horizons

Notice of
Annual Meeting
New Horizons
270 Nelson St W
January 20th 2025
at 1 pm.

Thank-you



In memory

Barbara Louise McLenehan-Jones
Oct. 4, 1952 – Jan. 10, 2020

Olive Louise McLenehan
Oct. 7, 1927 – Jan. 24, 2023

We think about you both in silence,
We often speak your names.
All we have are memories,
And your pictures in frames.
Your resting places we visit
And put flowers there with care.
But no one knows the heartache
As we turn and leave you there.

Love
Gordon, Justin, Kristen,
Hayden and Hadley Jones
Sandra Good, Gary McLenehan,
Debra Carnegie and Dale McLenehan and families

Thank you to everyone for the prayers, kind words, flowers and donations made in mom's name, at the time of her passing. Thank you to the Staff at the Elkwood Manor, and the Moosomin Hospital for the care and compassion you provided our mom.

These words by Helen Steiner Rice help express our thoughts: "People need people and friends need friends,
And we all need love for a full life depends Not on vast riches or great acclaim,
Not on success Or on worldly fame,
But just in knowing That someone cares And holds us close In their thoughts and prayers."

With many good wishes to all for a healthy, joy filled 2025.
The family of Irene Cousins

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Help Wanted

We are hiring!

We have a new opportunity to highlight:

Service Worker

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Casual

Competition #68-24/25

Brandon, Manitoba

Salary: \$20.70 to \$24.30 hourly

As a Service Worker in our Facilities team, you will play a key role in maintaining the cleanliness, safety, and functionality of our campus. Reporting to the Facilities Operations Manager, you will ensure that the environment is well-maintained and conducive to learning.

For more information, please visit our careers website at www.assiniboine.net/careers.

Assiniboine welcomes applications from all qualified candidates who are legally entitled to work in Canada, including Indigenous peoples, persons of all abilities, members of visible minorities, all genders and sexual orientations, and all other groups protected by the Human Rights Code.

Assiniboine College is privileged to provide learning opportunities on the lands of the Dakota Oyate, Nakoda Oyate, Ininiwak, Nehethowak, Nehiyawak, Anishininewuk, Denesuline, Anishinaabeg, and the National Homeland of the Red River Métis.

For accommodations or alternative formats, contact careers@assiniboine.net or 204 725 8729.

If you are interested in this career opportunity, please email your resume and cover letter with reference to Competition #68-24/25 to:

careers@assiniboine.net

We thank you for your interest. Those selected for further consideration will be contacted.



Manitoba Community Newspaper Association Province Wide Classifieds

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CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted



Chief Administrative Officer

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

Key responsibilities of the position include:

- Direct the general administrative affairs of the Municipality and perform all duties and responsibilities in accordance with The Municipal Act.
- Recommend objectives, policies, and programs to Council and provide support and advice on new initiatives and fiscal matters.
- Direct the implementation and monitor the progress of policies and programs approved by Council.
- Recruit and develop all municipal management and administration employees and develop a plan to attract and retain quality employees.
- Provide responsible financial planning and management of a budget of over \$4.6 million.
- Develop positive relationships and maintain open communication with all stakeholders and constituencies of interest to the Municipality.

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

Hamiota Municipality has a population of 1,234 (2021) and is located in mid-Western Manitoba. The main industries are healthcare, education and agriculture. There are many outdoor activities to do year-round and continuing growth makes this municipality a desirable place to live.

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

Individuals interested in this position should email a resume and cover letter to Hamiota Municipality at finance@hamiota.com.

The selection committee intends to review applications as received and interviews as early as January 27th, 2025, however, applications may continue to be accepted until the right candidate is found.

We thank all who apply and advise that only those selected for further consideration will be contacted.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY LANDFILL SITE ATTENDANT – HARGRAVE & KOLA

The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a motivated individual for the position of **Landfill Site Attendant (TERM)** 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

- Term, 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.

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

This posting will remain open until a suitable candidate is located.
This position commences as soon as possible.

Visit our website to see the other Employment Opportunities:

Assistant Chief Administrative Officer

Municipal Accountant

Weed Supervisor

www.wallace-woodworth.com | 204-748-1239 | info@wallace-woodworth.com

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Help Wanted

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Weed Inspector

Seasonal Position: April – November
(potential for permanent position)

Duties & Responsibilities Include:

- Responsible for the identification and eradication of weeds in both rural and urban areas per provincial guidelines.
- Complete the Rodent control program at Municipal landfill sites and transfer sites.
- Completes basal spraying under the Dutch Elm Disease program.
- Completes the mosquito control program in urban areas, including monitoring, larvicide, and spraying.
- Enforces the Noxious Weeds Act.

Qualifications:

- 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.
- Class 5 driver's license.
- 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).

Skills:

- Knowledge and application of various pest control methodologies
- Familiarity and good working knowledge of related statutes and regulations.
- Basic computer skills and use of MS office.
- Work will mostly be unsupervised, must have excellent time management, and organizational skills.

Schedule:

- Monday to Friday, 80 hours bi-weekly, April to October

Wages dependent on experience. Wage range \$27.19 - \$31.99 per hour.
Full benefits package available after eligibility.

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

Applications will be accepted until a suitable candidate is located.

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

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



Tender



2025 GRAVEL HAULING TENDER

The RM of Ellice – Archie is now accepting tenders on Gravel Hauling for the 2025 year.

Tender #1: Ward #2 Approx 10,000 yards

Tender #2: Ward #3 Approx 20,000 yards

Please contact the CAO for details

Deadline for "Gravel Hauling" quotes: Monday, February 3rd, 2025.

**Trisha Huberdeau, CMMA
Chief Administrative Officer**

PO Box 67, McAuley, MB R0M 1H0

Email: mcauley@rmofellicearchie.ca

Phone # (204) 722-2053 / Fax # (204) 722-2027

VIRDEN



CENTRE OF IT ALL

Tundra Oil & Gas Place: 204-748-2736

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Waste Disposal Grounds: 204-748-6033

Emergency After Hours: 204-851-5540

Animal Control: 204-851-1810

Under the Authority of the Planning Act Notice of Public Hearing

On the date and at the time and location shown below, a **PUBLIC HEARING** will be held to receive representations from any persons who wish to make them in respect to the following matter:

Town of Virden BY-LAW NO. 2816

Being an Amendment to the Town of Virden Zoning By-Law No. 2769, as amended.

LOCATION: Town of Virden Council Chambers
232 Wellington Street West

DATE & TIME: February 11, 2025 @ 7:30 PM

GENERAL INTENT:

To change a drive in food service from conditional to permitted in commercial highway zoning, add permitted uses to the Commercial Residential Institutional zoning, remove the requirement for a development permit for fencing, and a map amendment by rezoning (NE 21-10-26W Lot 1-13 Block 6 Plan 21152 from "RS-1" Residential Single Family to "CRI" Commercial-Residential-Institutional Zone) and (NE 21-10-26W Lot 1-13 Block 5 Plan 21152 from "RT" Residential Two Family to "CRI" Commercial-Residential-Institutional).

AREA AFFECTED: All lands within the Town of Virden

For more information, contact Cory Nixon, Development Officer at 204-851-0028 or devofficer@tcwpd.ca



A copy of the above proposal and supporting material may be inspected at 236 Wellington St W (Town of Virden office) during normal office hours, Monday to Friday 8:30 am – 4:30 pm. Copies may be made, and extracts taken therefrom, upon request.

Upcoming Council Meetings: January 28 & February 11

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
January	2.25%	\$22.50
February	2.00%	\$20.00
March	1.75%	\$17.50
April	1.50%	\$15.00
May	1.25%	\$12.50
June	1.00%	\$10.00
July	0.75%	\$7.50

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

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

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

LiveBarn

Now available at Tundra Oil and Gas Place.
Use code **togp-live** for 10% off.
Visit livebarn.com for more information.

Garbage & Recycling

2025 schedules are now available at the Town Office or online at virden.ca.



2025 Dog and Cat Licenses

Now available for purchase at the Town Office.

SPORTS

NEW ADDITIONS HELP OIL CAPS WIN TWO

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

With new acquisitions working their way into the lineup, the Virden Oil Capitals earned wins in their last two games.

The Oil Capitals beat the Winnipeg Freeze, 7-2, and the Niverville Nighthawks, 3-2 in a shootout. As of Jan. 13, the Oil Capitals had a 14-21-0-0 record. They sat fourth in the Manitoba Junior Hockey League's Western Division, which would give them a postseason berth if the playoffs started that day.

"I think the additions to our lineup created some excitement and energy within our group," Virden head coach Tyson Ramsey said of the two wins. "Our guys competed extremely hard and the game against Niverville was arguably our best in a while. We were structured, disciplined and fast."

Incoming goaltender Loic Morin had an immediate impact, as did other newcomers. He backstopped the Oil Caps to both wins. Morin had a 1.922 goals against average and a .925 save percentage. He was named one of the MJHL's Original 16 Stars of the Week.

After the Empire-Advance deadline, the Oil Capitals were to play in Selkirk on Jan. 14. The team returns home on Jan. 17 to play the Nighthawks. The next night they are in Winkler to play the Flyers.

Oil Caps 3, Nighthawks 2

Virden's own Bryce Bryant was the lone scorer in the shootout on Jan. 12 to lift the visitors to the win. After a scoreless first period, Cole Robertson scored in his Oil Caps debut to give his team a 1-0 lead.

In the third period, Niverville took a 2-1 lead on goals by Matthew Bertolin and Matteo Speranza. Virden captain Ethan Guthrie, a defenceman, knotted the game at 2-2 to force overtime. Morin, in his second game with the team, stopped 29 shots for the Oil Caps. He did not allow any of Niverville's three shootout shooters to score.

The Nighthawks' Austin Dubinsky made 37 saves. Pipestone's Luke MacKenzie had an assist for Niverville.

Oil Caps 7, Freeze 2

The Oil Capitals dominated the Freeze on the road on Jan. 7. The visitors outshot the hosts, 56-23. Morin made 21 saves for Virden.

The Oil Caps opened the contest with four straight goals. Brett Sabel, Brooks Siemens, Marek Miller, and Daniel Tokariwski all lit the lamp. It was Siemens' first MJHL goal. Tokariwski's goal came shorthanded. Dominic Thomas scored for the Freeze to create a 4-1 score after one period.

Halfway through the second frame, Ty Genik scored for Winnipeg to make it a two-goal game, 4-2. With less than a minute and thirty seconds remaining in the period, newcomer Liam Goertzen, formerly of the Freeze, scored. That made it 5-2. In the third period, the Oil Capitals got goals from Tyler Dodgson and Goertzen.

Ben Chornomydz stopped 49 shots for the Freeze. Former Oil Cap Jonah Vanderhorst recorded an assist. His ex-Oil Caps teammate, Parker Rolston, was also in the lineup.

Olson's Country Night in Canada tour to play AUD Theatre



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Fundraiser for Kole Wheeler

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

While Kole Wheeler convalesces in Winnipeg following a serious collision with a train over a week ago, his friends and community have reached out to support Wheeler and his partner, Teyanna Beltz, in what may be a long journey.

Just this week Kole's co-worker, Bradley Westbrook, arranged for a fundraiser concert at Virden Aud Theatre in February. Westbrook under his business name, Tapper Entertainment, worked with the Steven Lee Olson's Country Night in Canada tour to reroute their Winnipeg show to Virden. They agreed to come to the Aud Theatre on Feb. 8th.

Westbrook says, "A dear friend and co-worker Kole Wheeler was in an accident Sunday, Jan. 5th. To raise money for him and his family to help ease financial stress on his long journey to recovery, we have decided to cancel

our Winnipeg show and move it to Virden as a fundraiser for Kole."

There will be additional opportunities to help Kole at the concert through a raffle draw, prizes, a 50/50 draw and a donation jar.

Steven Lee Olson's songwriting has earned him an important place in the country music scene with over 80 million global streams. He's a Grammy nominated singer-songwriter with two double-platinum certified #1 hits in the USA.

In 2019, Olsen took to the stage himself and as a solo artist, he has continued to make his mark with multiple Top-10 singles and a Grand Ole Opry debut. Olson and Jojo Mason are on a cross-Canada tour.

Jojo Mason has six Top 10 tracks and he's earned a Music Canada Gold-certification for his single Better On You. Mason has accumulated over 50 million career

streams to date.

Westbrook is glad he can, through Tapper Entertainment, do something for Wheeler. Tapper Entertainment arranges tours and shows. A rapper himself under stage name, Brad Tapper, Westbrook collaborates with friend Caleb Lesnar, in Tapper Entertainment. But Westbrook is a rigger in his day job. That's how he and Kole became close - "working side by side on a Corex drilling rig."

Kole is also a firefighter and last week the Empire-Advance brought news of a 'donation boot', a fundraiser for Kole and Teyanna at the Virden Legion, initiated by fellow firefighters. Over the week, 'the boot' was filled with donations, large and small, amounting to nearly \$2 thousand. A spokesperson for Wallace District Fire Fighters said, "We are truly fortunate to have such thoughtful members and non-members who support Kole and his family."

Teyanna has expressed gratitude for the support they are receiving: "Words can not begin to describe the amount of love, support and kindness myself, Kole and his family have felt while navigating this journey so far. Our entire community has rallied together to help support the most important man in our life, and it doesn't go unnoticed. It's truly remarkable to hear the impact that he has had on so many of you. From elementary school, hockey, work and more. He has built a family outside of his own, that care for him like no other."

Country Night in Canada is a concert not to miss. Tickets are available online, or (cash only) at the Virden Flower Attic after Jan. 16). Support tickets are \$10; any other donations can be sent by-transfer directly to Kole's mother, amandawheeler@outlook.com. The doors will open at 8pm and the show starts at 9pm. For online tickets go to Tapper Entertainment on Facebook.

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WORLD JUNIOR HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

By Gerry Nolan
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

At the World Junior Hockey Tournament in Ottawa the Canadian team lost out in the Quarter final again this year. This marks the 2nd straight year this has happened. The hand picked team looked so dis-jointed right from the get go. There did not seem like any chemistry whatsoever. The power play was a disaster and we took way to many selfish penalties. Those penalties took away any momentum and rhyme that they may have gained in any contest. When we did get momentum they would shoot themselves in the foot and take another bad penalty.

I think the pressure of playing in Canada, the frustration of the way they were playing

and could not score came out in taking that frustration out on the opposition but by way of penalty.

The Canadian team had no forecheck which resulted in the opposition having all day to make a play. Canadian teams are known for the hard forecheck, putting the opposition up against the glass and really playing in your face hockey. This method would cause opponents to bail on a puck or rush their play and result in turn overs. There did not seem to be any of that this year. When they did hit, it was lead by a roughing or elbowing infraction. I thought the officiating was done well this year. There are always penalties you disagree with but it is what it is.

The team was all about Eastern Canada

this year, 14 of them. Eastern players do not have the grit of Western Canadian players. Western Players will hit all night, wear down the opposition and cause them all kinds of problems.

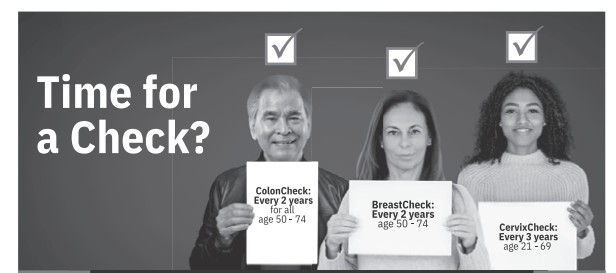
The best player for Canada in my opinion was Brayden Yager. I liked McKenna too, both western league players. Easton Cowan who was supposed to be all that and a bag of chips came up way short on team play. It was all about him. I even saw him circle around his own defense men with the puck, no passing until he had nowhere to go. A very selfish player, to the point of it was all about him.

Carson Bjornson goalie from the Brandon Wheat Kings, did not even get a sniff. Maybe he should have. He is older and more

experienced.

The management, coaches of team Canada came up way short in their selection of players. Can you spell POLITICS? I can! This happens way too often in hockey, I have seen this happen time after time.

In conclusion I am still proud of our boys. They did their best and I will always cheer for them. This team really are still kids, finding their way. We are disappointed with them, but not in them. Maybe our hockey program just is not working the way the so-called experts think. Maybe time to re evaluate the way we play. If the wheel isn't broke well leave it be. Changes need to be made but as a wise person told me one-time, Wise men say, only fools rush in! Until next time.



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The Reston Art Club displays work at Station



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY ALIX POTREBKA

Members of Reston Art Club in front of just some of their pieces at the opening reception in Virden's Station Gallery.

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The first art display for 2025 from the Reston Art Club. You can see their beautiful work in the CP Station on Sixth Ave in Virden throughout January and February.

The show got off to a strong start with an opening reception Thursday evening, where Young at Heart choristers entertained.

Reston Art Club has been meeting for 35 years. Several of the members are founding members and have been involved continuously for the entire time. The group currently includes 22 members - adults and some youth. The club meets weekly in October, and November, and from February to April before they offer a show to the public in May.

To learn something new, the club holds a one-day retreat each fall with an instructor. But they're not afraid to try out ideas from within their club.

On display in the Station you will see works in oils, ink and oil rousing, watercolor, acrylic, chalk pastel, texture art, scratch art, coffee, and alcohol inks.

A spokesperson for the group says, "We sometimes amaze ourselves with the works we create."

Current members are Bev Reid, Donna Davis, Cathy House, Monica Campbell, Janelle Campbell, Judy Lochhead, Sylvia Halls, Marianne Olfrey, Robin Duncan, Eleanor Tamilowicz-Cowan, Keri Bartel, Tya Bartel, Sherri Kendrick, Blaire Kendrick, Marcus Atchison, Kristin Bodin, Terrina Kirkpatrick, Kayla Kirkpatrick, Laurel Morris, Tannis Chalmers, Gwen Thomson, and Mina McDowell.

Of note: Reston Art Club has been selected to host the Westman Juried Art Show this year on April 27, at RES in Reston where wonderful works of art will be on display from some very talented artists in the Westman region. The public is invited to this visual feast.

SOURIS RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

Job Opportunity - Operational Administrator (FULL-TIME)

The Souris River Watershed District is accepting applications from qualified individuals for a fulltime position of Operational Administrator

Job Objective:

The Operational Administrator will assist SRWD with communications, education, advertising and promotion including organizing SRWD events and attendance at community events. They will undertake the role of the calculation of grant receivables and associated reporting from external funding. They have a significant role in the maintenance and updating of policy. Assists the Board with meetings and distributes and uploads minutes.

Job Location: This position may be located in either the Reston or Deloraine Office with some travel between the two offices on occasion

Skills Required:

- The ability to work both independently and as part of a team
- A high level of creativity
- The ability to think critically and analytically
- The ability to write and speak clearly for a variety of audiences
- Knowledge of government processes and procedures would be an asset

Qualifications:

- Graduate of a degree, diploma or certificate program in business administration, education, communications or equivalent relevant skills or experience.
- Experience in curriculum development for both youth and adults
- Experience in communications (newspapers, public speaking, video production, newsletters, promotions)
- Experience in web site development and maintenance is an asset.
- Experience in social media.
- Experience in financial reporting
- Knowledge of budgeting
- Experience with accounting software (Sage)
- Microsoft office software (Excel, Word, and PowerPoint)
- Previous experience in an office or outdoor setting
- Experience in management of employees would be an asset.

Compensation:

- 35 hour work week
- Salary range \$52,000.00—\$67,000.00
- Employer paid Blue Cross Health Benefits Plan III
- Municipal Employee Benefits Pension

Interested applicants may submit a cover letter and resume including salary expectations and a list of 3 references by 4:30 p.m., Friday, February 14, 2025 to:

Email: dean@srwd.ca Attention: Dean Brooker General Manager
or

Souris River Watershed District Attention: General Manager
Box 339, 404 4th Street, Reston, MB R0M 1X09
Ph: (204) 877-3020 Fax: (204) 877-3090

Email: dean@srwd.ca
For more information please call the General Manager at 204 851 7157

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