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The **Voice** *Altona • Rhineland • Morris*

THURSDAY, JANUARY 29, 2026
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Full circle



Ang Stoesz in the Rhineland & Area Food Bank's new home at the Altona United Church—the same church where the idea for a community food cupboard began nearly 30 years ago. For the full story, see Pg. 14.

PHOTO BY HOLLY THORNE-WIEBE/VOICE

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Sharing the warmth

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The annual Warmth in Winter crochet-a-thon at the Winkler Centennial Library last week resulted in a mountain of afghan squares and completed blankets.

Numerous people stopped by throughout the day to curl up on the library's comfy couches and knit for awhile in support of patients at the Eden Health Care Services psychiatric hospital in Winkler.

"We had seven or eight people actively crocheting, and several more pick up the afghan-at-home kits," shared organizer and library clerk Linda Funk. "And we had another

three people bringing in finished afghan donations."

The library accepts donations of yarn, 4x4 granny squares, and completed blankets year-round. They also have a basket of yarn set up for people to stop in and do a few stitches whenever they like.

The completed blankets are dropped off at Eden regularly, giving the patients there a taste of home while they heal.

They've been running this program for several years now, sending a dozen or so blankets to Eden annually.

"When we first started looking at doing a community quilt project like this, Eden was one of the first plac-



PHOTOS BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Above: Some of the granny squares last week's crochet-a-thon generated for the Afghans for Eden program at the Winkler library. Left: They have take-home kits available for anyone wanting to get involved with this project, which runs year-round.



es that came to mind," Funk shared. "It's a really valuable resource for the community, and people come from a long way away to get that kind of support."

Recovering from a mental health challenge is a draining experience, Funk reflected, and a gift of a soft, warm, colourful blanket can go a long way indeed toward lifting a person's spirits.

"Somebody trusting their handiwork to you, it is a little bit of a lift," she said. "And, in the most practical sense, if I'm already depressed and I'm cold on top of that, everything looks worse. Warm me up and then my outlook on life maybe improves just a little bit."

Continued on page 4

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MORDEN.CA/WINTERFEST

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- CURLING CHALLENGE
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“It’s a very interesting time we live in”

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Altona’s Steps Toward Reconciliation group welcomed Niigaan Sinclair to town last week for an evening of discussion and reflection. The Tuesday night gathering drew a sizeable crowd to the Rhineland Pioneer Centre to hear from the Anishinaabe writer, editor, professor, and activist.

Sinclair’s hour-long talk saw him reflect on a range of topics, starting with his work as a professor of Indigenous studies at the University of Manitoba. He noted a third of the students in his introductory course are interna-

tional students, many learning about Indigenous people for the first time. “Most of them have never seen snow before and now I’m talking to them about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples ... most of them didn’t even know Indigenous people existed and now here we are, four months into their time [here] ... and now, boom, here they are in my class having to understand the 46 articles of what Indigenous intellectual property rights in the list consist of. Why is it that there’s dream catchers at Walmart? Is that a violation of intellectual proper-



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Altona’s Steps Toward Reconciliation group invited Niigaan Sinclair to speak at the Rhineland Pioneer Centre last Tuesday night.

ty? So it’s a very interesting time that we live in.” Mark Carney’s recent speech at the He reflected on Prime Minister

Continued on page 5

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Sharing refugee stories



PHOTOS BY RICK HIEBERT/VOICE

Regional Connections Immigrant Services' latest Connecting Cultures Through Stories event—RED: Resilience. Empowerment. Discovery—welcomed people to the Westside Community Church in Morden Saturday for an evening of community. Filipino band D'Juan performed throughout the night while various volunteers read stories highlighting the refugee experience. All the stories came from local resettlement assistance program clients and illustrated the perseverance, courage, hope, and unbreakable spirit that brought them to their new lives in Canada.

> AFGHANS FOR EDEN, FROM PG. 2

"Yarn is no replacement for antidepressants, it never will be, but every little bit helps," Funk added. "And afghans, especially crocheted afghans, have this sort of grandma feel to them. It reminds people of that older relative who loved them and saw something in them and gave them a safe place."

Funk notes they're always looking for people to get involved with this program, be it by donating materials or volunteering their time to crochet.

The new take-home kits makes it even easier to participate—they come with instructions, a pattern for a basic square, a crochet hook, and yarn in various colours. They can be borrowed from the library for however long it takes you to complete a few squares or even an entire blanket.

"Somewhere along the way we realized that most of the Afghans for Eden work was happening at home, so it made sense to put the yarn where it's going to be used," Funk said, noting the kits have proven to be quite popular as grab-and-go projects. "People like having something to do with their hands while they're watching TV or chatting with someone."


If you'd like to lend the Afghans for Eden program a hand, stop by the library anytime.


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Morden launching Imagination Library chapter

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Just in time for I Love to Read Month coming up next week, the Morden Family Resource Centre (MFRC) has shared some exciting literacy programming-related news.

The centre, which provides a range of free early childhood education programming, is gearing up to launch Morden's very own Imagination Library.

The international program founded by country music superstar Dolly Parton mails out free books to registered kids every month from the time they're born until they turn five, helping families build up a healthy home library and a lifelong love of reading.

"She wanted to ensure that every child has access to books in their home regardless of family income," shared MFRC executive director Jen Froese.

The program has many chapters operating across Canada, including one in nearby Winkler/Plum Coulee that has been up and running for 11 years.

"Both my kids went through that program," Froese shared. "We received many great books and they still love sitting down with them."

The success of the Winkler chapter has led to numerous requests over the years for something similar in Morden, and, after researching the program and finding volunteers willing to sit on the operating committee, the time finally seemed right to take the next step.

"The Morden Family Resource Center volunteers and employees are really closely connected to the

children, schools, and healthcare in their professions," Froese noted. "A volunteer on the board was actually approached by a local physician in the area at work [who] expressed the need for this program, and we couldn't agree more."

"It has taken some planning, funding, and volunteers, but we are beyond excited to be launching Imagination Library in Morden."

In partnership with Western School Division, they've already officially formed the Morden chapter, but now need to raise funds to support the costs of books and postage fees for the first year before they can open registration.

"There is an expense to running this initiative," Froese said. "The cost is minimal for 12 books a year for one child—an average of \$47, so about \$4 a book."

"We would like to start with 100 kids, so to be able to have this run for two years we'd need at least \$10,000," she said. If they raise double that, they could start with 200 kids, Froese noted, and keep the waiting list low from the outset.

MFRC is a non-profit organization, so they're relying on the community to help them get this program off the ground.

"We run on donations and supports from grants and partnerships," Froese explained, noting they currently receive funding from the school division and South Central Regional Library. "We're hoping businesses as well as the city of Morden will partner with us on this."



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Morden Family Resource Centre executive director Jen Froese is excited to be launching an Imagination Library for the community.

Continued on page 7

> SINCLAIR, FROM PG. 3

World Economic Forum in Switzerland where he called on the international community to strengthen alliances during the global uncertainty being wrought by the current United States administration.

"Find some friends, diversify your relationships, and then, most of all, start working together as if the bully doesn't exist, because the bully lives off your fear," Sinclair summarized of the Canadian strategy of dealing with our volatile neighbour to the south.

"I want to ask the question of you tonight ... where do you think Prime Minister Carney learned that ... where do you think Canada learned to work together, to focus on one another, and to most of all commit to each other, even if we don't always agree?"

That Canadian nature has its roots in the Indigenous peoples who first called this land home, Sinclair said.

The European settlers learned a lot from the First Nations, he noted, especially the French ones who married into Indigenous families, creating the Red River Métis.

"They'd been working, living, trading with Indigenous peoples, and they were learning some things along the way," Sinclair said, noting the British settlers were generally less open to taking advice from First Na-

tions, but that didn't stop leaders like Chief Peguis from aiding the Selkirk area settlers as they struggled to survive their first winter in Canada.

Surviving Manitoba's harsh winters has always come down to cooperation, Sinclair reflected.

"Winter is coming—that's really the only truth of this place," he said. "How long would you last by yourself outside with nowhere to go? Minutes ... what the Indigenous people learned thoroughly, absolutely, is that you will never, ever survive alone. You have to commit to the person beside you and it doesn't matter how they think, how they act, how they vote, what gender they are. It doesn't even matter what they said yesterday, because you need them to share their medicines with you, share their food with you, and help you build a lodge."

Learning to get along and build a community together—sharing what you have with others, ensuring everyone is taken care of—is a hallmark of Indigenous nations, Sinclair said, and it's a character trait Canada retains by way of its social support and health care systems.

"That is the premise for treaty, that's the premise for what it means to work together, and that's also the

premise for democracy," he stressed. "It's what Indigenous peoples understood, which was a central, core principle: that the only way we're going to survive in what is often harsh circumstances is by committing to the person in front of you."

Sinclair also shared memories of growing up Indigenous in Canada and of his late father, Murray Sinclair, who headed up the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

He also spoke on the partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups in aiding Manitoba's unhoused population, and in the growing number of Indigenous leaders serving on municipal councils across the province.

"We as Manitoba do radical, radical things ... we have more Indigenous small town mayors than any other province in the country," he noted, pointing out as well that the University of Manitoba currently has more Indigenous students than at any time in its history. "3,248—that's 11 per cent of the entire campus. That's doctors, lawyers, nurses, teachers, psychologists, criminologists, kinesiologists, scientists, botanists. There's no bigger on-campus community this year at the University of Manitoba."

He reflected on the Orange Shirt movement and its meaning for all Ca-

nadians, Indigenous or not, as a way to honour residential school survivors and those who did not make it home.

"This is not about trying to figure out and feel sad about the past," he stressed of the symbolism of donning an orange shirt and participating in the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. "It's about saying, 'This is what I'm going to do for the future.'"

Educating others as to the importance of reconciliation and about the mistakes of the past is something every Canadian can do, Sinclair said.

"You're here [tonight] because you have learned, you've talked, you're interested, you're engaged—hopefully you talk about this with your friends ... go talk to a person who would never come to this event and just tell them whether you enjoyed it ... go out and talk about what you're learning, what you're thinking."

"You don't have to agree with me—just the fact that you're talking about it, talking about what it means to work together, live together, be with one another means that we are the most critically aware generation in history."

"This is critical mass ... we're talking, we're listening, we're engaging, thinking, and dreaming about what the future might look like."

The Voice



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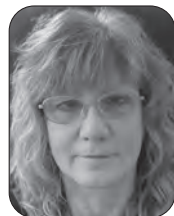
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EDITORIAL > VIEWPOINTS > LETTERS

A leader for the times

I had the opportunity to attend a speech given by not-yet Prime Minister Mark Carney last year when I attended the Sustainable Finance Forum in Ottawa. It was me in a crowd of about 400 people.

I must be honest, I found him boring and uninspiring, so I left halfway through and pursued some important networking.

Numerous factors could have conspired to colour me unimpressed. I was tired. I had been in meetings throughout Ottawa for a couple of days. The forum itself only overlapped with my interest, which is social finance, and Carney spoke more about issues of sustainability. Who knows.

Still, I have read his book *Value(s)* and found it incredibly well-written, and I am aligned with most of what it says. You should read it. I will confess to be a little annoyed by how quickly some of the values he wrote about like the importance of fighting climate change seemed to get jettisoned with the promotion of a new pipeline in Canada.

But perhaps this is the key to Carney. I believe our prime minister is a pragmatist and a realist. The kind of leader when their values run up against the wall of reality finds a way to negotiate rather than bang their head on said wall with said values.

Why am I writing this? As of press

time Carney has just finished his speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos. Say what you will about such gatherings, you cannot deny that the people who attend this run the world and much of what constitutes our lives. That makes it important.

Carney's speech was met with a rare standing ovation. Not only this, but the world press has lauded it as the most important speech given by a Canadian leader since WW2. This is high praise.

One person described the intense vertigo of going from Carney's speech to U.S. President Donald Trump's speech as "going from an iPhone to two Styrofoam cups on a string."

Why was Carney's speech, written by himself, so well-received? Perhaps because it looked at the state of the world and the crumbling of all the rules we have been used to and responded with a simple call for countries to face the new reality and move forward. In his words: "Nostalgia is not strategy."

This was a riveting speech I was not walking out on. It demonstrated many things but most clearly it cemented Carney as a leader for our time.

You know what I mean. Some lead-

ers flounder in obscurity as managers and administrators. Then there are others who seem tailor-made to tackle the issues of the day.

According to all reports Winston Churchill was a great leader during WW2 and a lousy leader afterward. I'm not saying Carney is Churchill. I am saying, like it or not, Carney is a leader made for the critical times Canada has found herself in.

Carney's unique combination of global financial experience and leadership has positioned him as prime minister exactly when we need him. Heck, even members of other parties (not Liberals) having offered grudging respect to how he has delicately navigated the nightmare that is the United States under Trump.

In one speech Carney has the rest of the world's middle powers looking to Canada for leadership and strategy. This is an excellent place for us to be now that we must negotiate new trade deals and alliances in a world where the U.S. is our largest trading partner at 75 per cent of total trade, with China coming in at number two with a mere five per cent share.

As a proud Canadian strongly opposed to the Americanization of our nation, I am happy he's got his hand on the wheel.



By Peter Cantelon

Letter policy

The *Voice* welcomes letters from readers on local matters.

Please keep your letters short (excessively long letters are less likely to be published), on-topic, and respectful.

The *Voice* reserves the right to edit, condense, or reject any submission.

Please include your full name, address, and phone number for verification purposes. Your name and city will be published with your letter. We do not print anonymous letters.

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The *Voice* is published Thursdays and distributed as a free publication to 21,141 households. Republishing in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. Printed in Canada by Prolific Printing. The *Voice* received financial support from the Government of Canada in 2021.

View the *Voice* online at www.winklormordenvoice.ca or altonavoice.ca

Winkler author pens first book: Houdini & Doyle

By Lorne Stelmach

Having only recently moved and settled in Winkler, Leon Cygman is quickly establishing himself here as a fiction writer.

He has self-published his first book of fiction called *Houdini and Doyle: The Return of Jack*, and it builds a story with two famous characters at its core: escapologist and illusionist Harry Houdini and writer Arthur Conan Doyle, who is most famous for Sherlock Holmes.

The book offers a blend of historical fiction, paranormal mystery, detective suspense, and real-life legends, and it explores the thin line between illusion and truth and how far one must go to stop a nightmare reborn.

"I've written a lot academic stuff ... I written some academic textbooks on statistics," Cygman said in a phone interview. "I always enjoyed the writing process, but this is my first work of fiction."

"I've had this idea in my head for a long time. I've always had an interest in Houdini and his magic. I've been an amateur magician, and I've enjoyed the Sherlock Holmes series and Arthur Conan Doyle's life, and the idea of reuniting them is something I've always thought about ... to tackle a problem that they can both be a part of in solving."

Cygman was born in Ukraine but his family moved to Montreal when he was about three years old. He attended university there and worked in construction for a while as an engi-

neer before going into teaching.

He had been living Calgary, where he worked as a university professor, before moving to Winkler in retirement.

The story of *Houdini and Doyle* is set in London in 1923 when a series of grisly murders shakes Whitechapel—killings horrifyingly similar to those committed by Jack the Ripper 35 years earlier. It all seems to point to one terrifying question: has Jack the Ripper returned?

Conan Doyle and Houdini team up to investigate a terrifying possibility: that Jack the Ripper's evil perhaps didn't die—it waited.

Cygman said there is something about the era and the London setting as well as even the characters that has been a real draw for him.

"That time period was quite interesting in the history of London. It was after the world war, and there was a lot of poverty in Whitechapel," he noted. "And the Jack the Ripper murders caught the imagination of a lot of people, and being unsolved still to this day creates a lot of local lore around it."

An interesting fact is that Houdini and Conan Doyle did know each other in real life, Cygman noted.

"Houdini discovered there were a lot of people trying to fake spiritualism to contact the dead ... and Conan Doyle was very interested in spiritualism. His wife was a medium, and he kind of challenged Houdini that his wife could contact Houdini's mother."

"It turned out to be a fraud, and



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

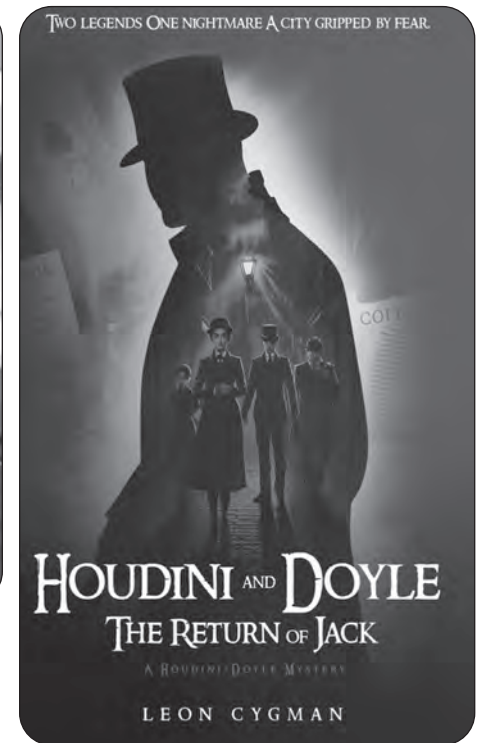
Leon Cygman's first book, *Houdini and Doyle*, is out now.

Houdini got quite insulted by that and broke off their relationship ... but my book reunites them.

"All of the characters in the book except for the detectives are real-life people," Cygman added. "And the events that I describe in the book are real-life events, and I just weave the story into their lives."

He sees two key themes at the heart of the story.

"On the surface, it's the resurgence of the hunt for Jack the Ripper, but on a bigger picture, it's about teamwork and how people from different means could attack this problem and work together."



Cygman now has his sights set on a second book which he hopes will be out by the end of the year, and there is also a third one in the works involving the same characters.

"I've certainly enjoyed the writing process a lot more than I had thought," he shared. "I'm a researcher at heart, so researching the book, making sure that everything was period correct was something important to me."

"I really love the characters and especially the Houdini and Conan Doyle partnership, so those two characters will be back again."

You can learn more online at houdinianddoyle.com.

Three Winkler measles exposure sites announced

By Voice staff

Public health officials are alerting the public about new measles exposure sites in our area.

Anyone at the locations on the specified date and times is asked to monitor for symptoms until the identified date:

- Walmart, 1000 Navigator Rd., Winkler, on Jan. 13 from 4-9 p.m. Monitor symptoms until Feb. 4.
- Del Rios Restaurant at 644 Main St., Winkler, on Jan. 15 from noon to 3 p.m. Monitor symptoms until Feb. 6.
- Gospel Mission Church at 855 15th St., Winkler, on Jan. 18 from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Monitor symptoms until Feb. 9.

Public health is also asking anyone who was at these locations during the specified times to check their immunization records and ensure they are up to date with measles vaccine.

Further information on measles, exposures, and immunization is available at www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/diseases/measles.html or

call Health Links-Info Santé at 1-888-315-9257 toll-free in Manitoba.

Symptoms of measles generally appear seven to 21 days after exposure. Initial symptoms may include fever, runny nose, drowsiness, irritability and red eyes. Small white spots may also develop on the inside of the mouth or throat. Several days after

the initial symptoms, a red blotchy rash appears on the face and progresses down the body. Measles can lead to complications including ear infections, diarrhea, pneumonia (lung infection) and encephalitis (brain inflammation).

Call your health-care provider if symptoms occur.

> MORDEN IMAGINATION LIBRARY, FROM PG. 5

"Collaboration is the key to success of this community-based program," she stressed.

If you'd like to support this project, you can make a donation online at imaginationlibrary.com/ca/af

filiate/MBMORDEN or contact the resource centre directly at 204-823-8158 or mordenfamilyresourcecentre@gmail.com.

Once the funds are raised—and Froese is hoping that will be in the

next few weeks—they will begin accepting registrations of children from newborn to age five who live in the Western School Division catchment area.

News or sports tip? E-mail news@winklermordenvoice.ca or call 204-325-6888

getinformed

Fehr Glass receives Lifetime Achievement Award

By Lorne Stelmach

A business that has been in Morden for six decades and is into a third generation of being family-owned and operated is receiving special recognition from the Morden Chamber of Commerce.

Fehr Glass and Aluminum is receiving a special Lifetime Achievement Award at the chamber's annual business gala this week.

"I can't take all the credit for it, obviously," said president Scott Fehr. "It's pretty special to be part of that and to be involved in a business that's been around for 60 years.

"Lots of emotions have gone through my mind here," he added. "it's pretty special."

Fehr thought of his grandfather Bill, who started the business and then passed it down to his sons Abe (Scott's father), Vic, and Bob.

"My grandpa passed away when I was just a baby, so I never got the chance to meet him ... or at least I don't remember him," Fehr shared. "I'm assuming his work ethic was very good, obviously, to start a business and to grow it up to the point where you can expand. And that work ethic was passed on to his kids.

"My dad would tell me stories about the second generation coming in and we would grow the business to a point where it would kind of run itself," said Fehr. "A lot of times, a third generation might come in and make bad decisions ... so it put

a lot of pressure on my shoulders to keep growing the business and not screw it up."

There obviously have been changes over the years, such as incorporating new computer technology, but they generally don't use a lot of tech otherwise.

"The world we live in now is so much less paper," said Fehr, noting even the second generation of the family still long relied simply on paperwork.

What has remained consistent is the commitment to quality and service "to deliver that quality product to the customers ... and even when there are issues with it to honour the warranty and make the problem correct again."

He doesn't see the business changing much looking ahead.

"Right now, there's no thought for expansion. We're just trying to keep up with the new products that are out there in the lines of windows and doors," said Fehr.

"We don't do a lot of manufacturing here, so it's really tough to think about expanding, unless we would get into something completely different ... that's not really on my plate."

Fehr said he is very glad to be doing business here in Morden.

"I've been here my whole life, so I kind of enjoy the small town community. That's pretty important to me. I feel connected to Morden and the surrounding areas too."



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Scott Fehr of Fehr Glass is the third generation to run the family business, which has been operating for 60 years.

SCCR named non-profit Community Builder

By Lorne Stelmach

Anything that brings attention to South Central Cancer Resource is welcome, especially if it may bring them more support, so representatives were pleased to learn of the organization receiving the Morden Chamber of Commerce's Community Builder Award for non-profits at the business awards gala.

"We're thrilled," said administrative resources co-ordinator Leora Hamm. "We've been in the community here, in the Morden community, for just over 20 years actually. To be recognized this way is just really special. It just shows that we are valued by the community, and we just really appreciate it."

She does believe recognition like this can help raise awareness of who they are and what they do and especially in terms of how they are funded.

"One of our goals over the last two

or three years or so has been to really change people's perception of South Central Cancer Resource," Hamm said. "Many people are under the perception that we are government funded or funded in part by CancerCare Manitoba or even the Canadian Cancer Society, and we're not. We are completely self sufficient just from donations.

"It's always a frustration for us," she continued. "As much as we work in partnership with CancerCare at Boundary Trails, we're not funded by them. So this type of award gets our name out there a little bit more and gives us an opportunity to explain at the gala and just reiterate to the folks there in the business community that we are not funded by anybody other than themselves and the local community."



SUPPLIED PHOTO

From left: SCCR programs resource coordinator Naomi Fehr and administrative resource co-ordinator Leora Hamm are thrilled the non-profit is being recognized by the Morden chamber with a Community Builder Award.

Continued on page 9

Orenda acquires Scoular's sunflower and bird food business

By Voice staff

A large agri-business which includes a location in Winkler was recently bought out by a Manitoba-based company.

Orenda Commodity Services has purchased Scoular's sunflower and wild bird food blending business, including its processing facility in Winkler.

The sale closed on Jan. 19. Orenda and U.S.-based Scoular stressed it will be a smooth transition for facility employees, sunflower producers, and end-use customers.

"This acquisition is a natural fit for Orenda, our producers and customers," said Orenda president Aaron El-

skamp. "Sunflowers are a unique crop with a unique market. Orenda specializes in connecting the entire value chain to create a sustainable crop that boosts the Manitoba economy."

A family-owned business, Orenda Commodity Services is an established commodity company specializing in wild bird food blending, packaging, and logistics. It employs about 80 people at four locations across the province.

Through its network of local suppliers and customers, Orenda customizes seed mixes for the retail bird food and human consumption markets; the Winkler facility handles product for both markets.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Scoular's sunflower and wild bird food blending plant in Winkler is now under the ownership of Orenda Commodity Services.

Menzies clinic expecting new physicians

By Lorne Stelmach

Menzies Medical Centre is making good progress on building up its complement of physicians, and it has been significantly cutting down the waiting list of people without a family practitioner.

With that in mind, the clinic is getting the word out to encourage people who still need a family doctor and are not registered with Manitoba Health's Family Doctor Finder to make sure they are on the waiting list.

"We really want to get the message out that we've been very successful with recruitment, and we have additional physicians joining us soon ... some as soon as the end of February," noted Nicole Walske, executive director of the Morden clinic.

The clinic is currently at 17 family physicians and two paediatricians along with two nurse practitioners, but there are two more doctors confirmed to be joining within the next six months with another potential two then a little further down the road.

It means that they have been able to really make a dent in their Family Doctor Finder waiting list, which had been at over 2,000 people as recently as 2023.

"Over the last three years we have removed nearly everyone from the Family Doctor Finder list. As of [Jan. 20], there were 21 people from Morden registered on Family Doctor Finder," Walske noted.

"We know that not everyone is registered on that list," she added. "We also know that some people have been registered and somehow are no longer on that list ... so we know there's been some significant gaps in

that program, but it is working for those who are registered and maintain their registration.

"So we want to make sure we are assigning people to a family doctor in an organized and equitable way. We want to make sure that people are following the protocols," Walske continued. "We had restricted some of the registrations to prioritize the citizens of Morden and then we went out into the region, so we will be opening it up to the region more broadly as we expand on our physician base."

"Some people maybe have accepted a physician further away thinking [it's] until I get one [closer], but once you are assigned a physician you are no longer on that list," she explained.

Walske said it feels good to see such progress being made.

"We've had huge success in recruitment. It feels good that we're not leaving patients in that stuck position," she said. "It does feel good to

"WE REALLY WANT TO GET THE MESSAGE OUT THAT WE'VE BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL WITH RECRUITMENT ..."

have some positive energy and the community feeling that positive momentum as well."

And while they are making good progress, she stressed it is always an ongoing effort.

"There's always changes; we're not entirely sure where things are at," Walske said. "There's lots of work at the hospital as well which supplements the clinical care, but right now our priority is the clinic and making sure that people have access to a doctor."

Walske also noted boosting the physician count has a ripple effect, especially by taking some pressure off the

walk-in clinic.

"We still have some growth opportunity with our walk-in. We know that there's more demand than we have space for in our walk-in, so we're looking at how we can expand that service as we have more doctors join us."

Walske encouraged people to contact the Manitoba Family Doctor Finder either online or by calling 1-866-690-8260.

"We're hoping to take additional patients at the end of February when our next new physician arrives to our community."

> SCCR, FROM PG. 8

They provide a broad range of services to a large catchment area with a population of about 65,000. It stretches from Emerson up to Morris and over to Carman and out west as far Cartwright and the RM of Roblin and everything in that area down to the U.S. border.

Perhaps one of the most vital services is that clients have access to about 80 volunteer drivers who will provide free rides to things like hospital appointments.

"They will pick you up at home and drive you to your appointment, wherever that may be, wait for you

and bring you back home again, and there's no cost to the cancer patient," Hamm explained.

"Then we also support you if you have your own driver ... you submit your mileage to us, and we will cover the cost of your fuel," she said, adding as well that there can be some financial support, say for family members to stay overnight in the city if needed. "We get much better rates at the Canad Inn at Health Sciences Centre."

Among the other services as well is a skin screening clinic held locally twice a year.

"We have a dermatologist who

comes to this area specifically," said Hamm. "She finds quite a bit of cancer, skin melanomas here in this area."

Other offerings range from providing radon testing kits to a new wellness program.

Hamm noted they are always looking for more financial support.

"We are always looking for donors," she said. "One of the things that we really love is when people get invested themselves and want to put fundraisers on for us ... we do have quite a bit of third-party fundraisers."

Multicultural Discovery Month now underway

By Lorne Stelmach

A series of cultural events are happening in Morden leading up to the Feb. 14 Winterfest celebration.

The Morden Multicultural Discovery Month initiative with the sponsorship of Regional Connections, the City of Morden, and Morden Activity Centre as well as federal and provincial funding is featuring a number of family-friendly community activities open to everyone.

Katya Shagaliyeva, who works with Regional Connections Immigrant Services, said the aim is simply to foster community connections through cultural experiences.

"We realized that we are hosting multiple events throughout the winter, and most of them are to celebrate the cultural diversity of the community," she said. "We also work with the City of Morden on Winterfest, and we decided it would be a great idea to combine all those events into one celebration, so this is how we ended up with this idea."

Shagaliyeva said they have done some similar kinds of events and celebrations at various times in the past,

but they thought to make a more concerted effort to co-ordinate and promote this as a special event for the region.

"We wanted to include Canadian culture as well, so that is why we added something like ice fishing," she added, referring to last weekend's outing at Lake Minnewasta.

Morden is blessed to have so many cultures in the community that can be represented, Shagaliyeva suggested.

"It's always great to see so many cultures and how they can be represented in one small community. We have so many people from all over the world, and so many of them are proud to share their experience with the community.

"It's also just a great opportunity for the community to learn about different cuisines and different arts," she said, adding it will perhaps help build up interest for Winterfest.

In addition to ice fishing, last Saturday also saw the latest Connecting Culture Through Stories event held in the evening featuring stories from refugees who have found a new home in our area (see photos on Pg. 4).

The schedule continues this Satur-



VOICE FILE PHOTO

A month of multicultural celebrations wraps up with Winterfest Feb. 14.

day, Jan. 31, with a family arts and culture day, which will be a come-and-go event where participants can get a chance to learn about different forms of art throughout the world. It takes place from 3-6 p.m. at the Morden Activity Centre. Countries that could be represented include Morocco, India, Nigeria, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Canada.

Next up then is a special newcomer evening Feb. 4 from 6:30-9 p.m. at the 500 Stephen Community Centre followed by Feb. 6 from 6-8 p.m. at the Morden Activity Centre with what

is being dubbed a "Happy Holiday Bash" honouring various cultural holidays.

The month will continue with a Discovery Through Diversity Family Fun Fest featuring cultural games and dance lessons Feb. 7 from 1-4 p.m. at Maple Leaf School and then Flavours Around the World Feb. 9 from 5-7 p.m. at the Morden Activity Centre highlighting global cuisines.

The month of activities will then conclude Feb. 14 with Winterfest, which features cultural pavilions all around town (see story below).

Morden's Winterfest coming up Sat., Feb. 14

By Lorne Stelmach

The annual Morden Winterfest returns in two weeks to showcase cultures from all around the world that are represented locally.

Six pavilions will offer an amazing community experience filled with food, entertainment, kids activities, and winter fun.

"We've added some new things just to kind of keep making it bigger and better, but the format as far as the pavilions being in different locations is the same, with the Canada pavilion being at the lake," said lead organizer Shelly Voth.

"It's the same pavilion lineup. The only difference with the pavilions is that the Indigenous showcase is moving locations. It's going to be in the multi-purpose room of the École Discovery Trails School instead of 500

Stephen. They just ran out of space last year."

The pavilions will all run that Saturday from noon to five p.m., with the lone exception being the ice sculpture workshop at Lake Minnewasta getting started in the morning.

In addition to the Canadian pavilion at the lake and the Indigenous cultural showcase at Discovery Trails, there will also be an East Asia pavilion at the Access Event Centre, a South Asia pavilion at Westside Community Church, an Africa pavilion at the Morden Activity Centre, and a Europe/Latin America pavilion in the Discovery Trails gymnasium.

In conjunction with Winterfest, the Manitoba Law Enforcement Torch Run will be holding its Polar Plunge in support of Special Olympics at the lake. While out there, you can also join Wilderland Adventure Compa-

ny in some special winter activities, including guided snowshoe tours, while Country Cycle be offering fat bike demonstrations.

Another popular feature is the aforementioned ice sculpture workshop. It is being expanded this year to include sculptures at three other locations: Suncatch Plaza, Bellas Castle, and at the Morden Research Station.

Now in its 16th year, Winterfest has become well known in and around Morden, Voth suggested.

"It kind of feels like it's become known for Morden, and Morden has become known for Winterfest to some extent. It's nice to have Corn and Apple as always the signature event for Morden, but it's nice to have a winter event that people think about too.

"There's hundreds of volunteers. We have a large volunteer main committee and then there's subcommittees

off of that for the different pavilions and for ice sculpturing and for kids activities," she noted.

"The theme this year will be travel the world, so we want people to start thinking about the opportunity to go to all of these different places in the world in one day without having to leave Morden," Voth said. "So the draw is just that there's more and more involvement from local people and local cultures, and there's the fact that it's both indoor and outdoor. If you want to just spend the afternoon at the lake doing different winter activities, you can ... if you're only interested in the indoor pavilions, there's lots to take in."

A free shuttle service will be running regularly between the various pavilions.

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Catan national qualifier in Winkler Feb. 14-15

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Calling all Catan fans: Louis Riel Day weekend is your chance to shine.

Sixteen13 Ministry is hosting its second Manitoba Catan Tournament on Saturday Feb. 14 and Sunday, Feb. 15 at The Bunker in Winkler (545 Industrial Dr.)

But there's much more than just local bragging rights on the line.

"This is a qualifier for the Catan National Championship," explains organizer Harold Espinosa, noting this year the only other Manitoba qualifier, so far as he knows, is in Brandon.

The winner of the Winkler event will have their hotel and airfare to the Canadian championship in Toronto covered. That tournament's dates are still to be determined, but it's expected to take place sometime in late spring.

The last time the ministry hosted this event was 2024, and its winner—Morden's Nastasha Kroeker-Ortiz—made it all the way to the semi-finals at nationals.

"We had almost 40 people out last time," Espinosa says. "I'm hoping for 100 this time around."

Every registered player will get six games, running from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the Saturday and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on the Sunday, followed by the play-offs that evening. Lunch on Saturday and supper on Sunday is included with your registration fee of \$50.

You can register online at etherlan.ca. You must be 18 years old or up to take part.

While only the last player standing will win the trip to nationals, every player will be entered to win raffle prizes, including a 3D Catan game and expansions.

Proceeds from the weekend go to support Sixteen13 Ministry's work helping those in need both close to home and around the world.

"Whatever is left goes to the ministry to help families. So we're going to be buying groceries so we can bring it to them, show we care, get to know



VOICE FILE PHOTO

Catan players will go head to head in Winkler Feb. 14-15 for a chance to win a trip to the Catan National Championship in Toronto later this year.

their families, and just pray with them, invite them to church, just be an encouragement to them," Espinosa says of their food ministry program—one of several support programs they operate across southern Manitoba.

Connection is a big part of what the ministry is all about, Espinosa notes, so it's quite fitting to host a board game weekend to support its work.

"It's interactive—people can talk,

have some fun, share their thoughts," he says of the big draw of Catan, which has been getting people into modern board gaming since the late '90s. "It's just that relationship that people have, that common ground to just play a game and relax.

"I think the second draw is the strategy of it—everybody plays until one person wins, so everybody has a blast and a half."

Greenvalley Equipment, Enns Bros. to merge

By Lorne Stelmach

Greenvalley Equipment and Enns Brothers recently announced plans to combine forces.

The two John Deere dealerships will merge to create what they say will be an even stronger John Deere dealership network to serve the province.

Company representatives touted this merger as bringing together two trusted organizations with deep agricultural roots, shared values, and a long history of supporting farmers across Manitoba. They suggest the new partnership will create a stronger, more resilient company, focused on enhancing customer service, strengthening employee opportunities, and investing in the future of agriculture.

"This represents an exciting step forward for both our customers and

our employees," said Curwin Friesen, president of Greenvalley Equipment. "By combining resources, expertise and technology, we'll be able to serve farmers with an even broader range of solutions and faster access to the parts and service they depend on."

"Our companies share the same commitment to customers, employees, and communities," added Ray Bouchard, CEO of Enns Brothers. "Together, we'll have the scale and financial strength to continue investing in innovation and meeting the evolving needs of our industry for years to come."

GVE began in 1989 when Ernie and Glen Kehler bought the John Deere

dealership in Morden. Today the company operates locations in Altona, Killarney, Morden, and Treherne.

Enns Brothers, meanwhile, had its start when Jake and Harry Enns entered the farm equipment business in

1953 as an Allis-Chalmers and New Holland dealer in Sanford. Three years later, they became a John Deere dealer, eventually moving the business to the corner of Hwy. 3 and the Perimeter at Oak Bluff. Enns Brothers currently operates nine locations

across Manitoba.

"There's always been synergies between Greenvalley and Enns. We're neighbours in the province ... we've had a strong relationship," said Friesen. "It made sense for us to talk

about joining forces to better serve the province."

Friesen stressed that "we're balancing this idea of getting bigger with also not losing local connections.

"In the John Deere world, size and scale matter," he said. "The challenge in the agriculture world for dealers like us is having the right piece of equipment on the yard ... the greater we can work together with Enns, we can fit more of those needs.

"Scale allows us to meet the needs of growers for what their equipment needs are ... and we also have that same challenge on the parts side," he added. "Now we will be tapping into 13 branches that all have inventory.

"That scale allows us to provide more offerings faster to customers; that's even true with service techs."

The merger is expected to be completed by April.

"THIS REPRESENTS
AN EXCITING STEP
FORWARD ..."

Check out the Voice online at www.winklermordenvoice.ca or altonavoice.ca

Author brings Manitoba sasquatch story to young readers

By E. Antonio

Sasquatches, giant beavers and mysterious northern sightings aren't just campfire stories for Interlake author John Warms — they're the foundation of his newest children's book, inspired by a real encounter in northern Manitoba.

Interlake-based author John Warms recently published his first children's book, *The Girl Who Met Sasquatch*, earlier this summer.

Warms, who grew up west of Carman, said his inspiration for becoming an author comes from the people he has met throughout his life. Now the author of three books, he continues to collect and share stories of strange encounters experienced by both himself and others he has crossed paths with.

"All of my books are people-driven," Warms said. "You have to enjoy what you write about, and these unusual encounters have certainly piqued my interest."

A retired teacher who spent years working in Indigenous communities in the northwest region of the Interlake, Warms said he occasionally heard stories about large, frightening and unknown creatures. Over time, he noticed these sightings were common in remote northern communities, while many people in southern Manitoba were largely unaware of them.

"My delight is to share what is somewhat secret and let it be known in other parts of Manitoba and other parts of the world," he said.

Warms gathered stories from eyewitnesses describing extraordinarily large birds, bats, beavers, snakes, sasquatches and more. Before teaching in the north, he said he had not heard of many of these creatures, later describing the experience as "an absolute gold mine of little-known creatures," and the sightings themselves as "phenomenal."

Through word of mouth and storytelling, Warms collected account after account of these eerie encounters and compiled them into his second book, *Stranger Creatures Seldom Seen*. His newest children's book expands on one of those accounts, telling the story of a young girl who encountered

a sasquatch while camped beside a lake where her grandfather did commercial fishing.

The story follows five- or six-year-old Marlene, who, after flying to a remote location with her family, was tasked with periodically checking on her baby sister while her grandmother cleaned fish by the lake. On one particular trip to the hammock, Marlene noticed a terrible smell, looked up and found herself face to face with a sasquatch.

Although the encounter took place more than four decades ago, Warms said he has remained in contact with Marlene over the years not only to confirm details, but "also to enjoy the story again and again together."

The 40-page picture book — illustrated by Warms' granddaughter — invites readers into the day Marlene saw the sasquatch with her own eyes.

Warms said writing a children's book proved more challenging than his previous work, as it required transforming a real-life account into a child-friendly story young readers could understand and enjoy. Still, he welcomed the challenge.

"I enjoy thinking and getting inside the person who is having the experience," he said. "I like dramatizing the story from the clues that have been given to me, and then try to make it exciting for the reader."

For *Stranger Creatures Seldom Seen*, Warms said he enjoyed putting on a "reporter's hat," gathering clues from across the province to determine what might be real and what might not.

"I got so many witnesses from the north, south and everywhere in between that it made sense to me their stories matched," he said. "I report what I heard and give my conclusions and insights on these findings, like a comprehensive report."

Warms said he appreciates the opportunity to showcase the wonders — and mysteries — of Manitoba, something he finds both challenging and intriguing. For him, the excitement lies in realizing what creatures may roam close to home and uncovering secrets that remain unexplained.

He has personally witnessed three unusual creatures mentioned in his books: a giant beaver, a giant



PHOTO SUBMITTED

John Warms is the author of *Stranger Creatures Seldom Seen* and *The Girl Who Met Sasquatch*, books that explore stories of Indigenous Peoples' encounters with strange and unusual creatures.

snake and a platypus-like creature. His favourite sighting was a black bear-sized beaver he saw west of Brandon in the Assiniboine River.

Based on evidence shared by Elders, Warms believes these beavers lived in large burrows. He noted that one southern Manitoba farmer discovered a massive burrow without knowing what could have lived in it.

"That's when things just clicked," Warms said. "As soon as I learned they lived in burrows — which farmers, road construction workers and grave diggers have exposed — I realized which animal was capable of making such tunnels."

His goal is to one day locate a burrow and place a camera inside to capture evidence. He also hopes to re-establish the giant beaver as the world's largest living rodent — a title lost when the species was labelled extinct.

Continued on page 13

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> **WARMS, FROM PG. 12**

Of the creatures he has yet to encounter, Warms said he hopes to one day see a giant bat, a species believed to live in large caves. Firefighters who have been near these sites have reported large collections of bones, according to Warms. If he cannot

see the bat itself, he hopes to locate one of the caves they once inhabited and search for signs of life.

"The residue may be of interest to biologists," he added.

Warm's is already planning his second children's book, which will focus on another young girl who

reportedly saw a sasquatch in the woods near Fairford.

Warm's books are available on Amazon, with his two creature books also carried by Chapters and several small shops and art galleries throughout Manitoba, including Toews Printing in Carman.

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Food bank finds a new home

By Holly Thorne-Wiebe

The Rhineland & Area Food Bank is now operating out of a new location at the Altona United Church, offering clients a fresh, welcoming space designed with dignity, privacy, and choice in mind.

The food bank officially moved into the church at 45 3rd Avenue SE in Altona earlier this month after leaving its previous location owned by Sun Valley Co-op, which required the space back for retail use. The food bank is open Mondays from 10-11 a.m. and 7-8 p.m.

"This feels like a bit of a homecoming," said longtime board member Ang Stoesz. "The concept of the food bank started in this church many years ago."

Stoesz said the search for a new home was not easy.

"We had six months to find some-



The original hand lettered sign (above) from when it started in 1997 greets visitors to the Rhineland & Area Food Bank, now operating in space at the Altona United Church (right).

thing, and we moved in about two weeks before that deadline," she shared. "There aren't a lot of spaces that can accommodate what we need, especially when privacy is such a priority."

The church offered an ideal solution, providing unused space that could be adapted to meet the food bank's needs while ensuring clients feel comfortable and respected.

"One of our biggest values is choice," Stoesz said. "That's why we don't pre-package hampers. I don't think anyone should have to take something they don't want or don't use."

The Rhineland & Area Food Bank



PHOTOS BY HOLLY THORNE-WIEBE/VOICE

has been serving the community for nearly 30 years and continues to see increased demand, driven in part by rising grocery prices and cost-of-living pressures.

"It's difficult for a lot of people right now ... newcomers, large families, people who never thought they'd need help," Stoesz said. "We work hard to make this a safe, comfortable space."

Reducing stigma has long been a priority for the organization, she added.

"We can't make assumptions and we can't be judgemental. But for the grace of God go we. This is a place where basic needs can be met."

The food bank relies heavily on com-

munity support, and Stoesz said that support has remained strong.

"We're incredibly grateful. The churches, schools, businesses, and the general public ... if we have a need and we talk about it, it's met."

Community members interested in donating, volunteering, or learning more can connect with the food bank through its Facebook and Instagram pages, by email to rhinelandfoodbankinc@gmail.com, or by speaking directly with volunteers during its operating hours.

"We're just so thankful to live in the community that we do," Stoesz said.

Altona police board looking for public feedback with survey

By Lorne Stelmach

The Altona police board is doing a survey to help gauge how the community feels about the local department.

The survey, which is accessible online (altona.ca/m/altona-police-service), is a way for the board to stay current with what the thoughts and priorities are in the community and could be a good starting point for further planning discussions.

"They're seeking information back from the community in regards to their perception of the police service," explained Chief Dan Defer. "Depending on some of the answers, it may affect our strategic plan. We have a five-year strategic plan which we work off of ... and if something comes up, it might be added to the strategic plan."

Defer sees it as offering an opportunity to get an "idea of specific priorities or areas they might want to emphasize or target moving forward. It assists the police board in the direction they would like to see the police service moving."

Altona's police board has seven members, including a council appointee, a provincial appointee, and five members of the community at large. The purpose of the board is to provide

civilian governance respecting the enforcement of the law, maintenance of public peace, and the prevention of crime in Altona and Plum Coulee.

The survey includes questions asking whether residents feel the department is meeting the community's needs and expectations, whether officers present themselves professionally and perform their duties well, and whether residents support an increase in taxes to increase local policing, to list just a few topics addressed.

Defer said any and all community input is welcome and helpful.

"Any time that you get feedback on your service ... it's good to get positive and negative," he noted.

"If there's something that the community is really happy with the way things are progressing, then obviously we continue with that. If there's something that they would like to see changed or something that could be addressed a little bit differently, then that's something that we look at and see if those alterations can be made."

The survey closes Feb. 10.

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IN MORRIS MB

Puzzle palooza



PHOTOS BY EDWARD VINCENT ARCENAL/VOICE

The Altona and Area Family Resource Centre brought teams together at École Elmwood School Friday night for the fourth annual Puzzle Palooza Fundraiser. Participants raced to be the first to complete a 1,000-piece puzzle. Proceeds go to support AAFRC's early childhood education programming.

Morris native shares history of Portage & Main

By Siobhan Maas

Former Morris resident Sabrina Janke celebrated her most recent success with a book reading at the Valley Regional Library a few weeks ago.

The podcaster promoted her first book written in conjunction with Alex Judge entitled *Portage & Main: How an Iconic Intersection Shaped Winnipeg's History, Politics, and Urban Life* to a small gathering of family, friends, and supporters.

Originally pitched as a joke, the book about Winnipeg's historic intersection has been in the works for three years.

"We tested the waters on our podcast first," says Janke, sharing recent downloads for *One Great History* are estimated at 500 per episode. "Portage and Main is fun to explore through history, not so impressive in person, yet podcast feedback was well-received."

The book arrived last November, following the timely re-opening of the intersection to pedestrian traffic in June for the first time in 46 years.

Janke and Judge used the famous intersection as a lens to explore Winnipeg history—from architecture to identity shifts in class structures and business as the city changed over hundreds of years.

"Winnipeg has lacked a good public square, even more so with the closure of one of the main squares in the city

after the 1920 strike, and so Portage and Main became a gathering place," Janke explains. "After World War II, many gathered to demonstrate, celebrate, or protest at the intersection. Most recently, after serial killer Jeremy Skibicki was convicted, a round dance was held."

**"PORTAGE AND
MAIN BECAME
A GATHERING
PLACE ..."**

As both authors continue to work on new episodes for their podcast—one about a 1930s theatre troupe and the other about bison in our province—they have already started initial research for a future book

on the Great Depression.

Portage & Main can be purchased anywhere books are sold, and 71 episodes of *One Great History* are available on your preferred podcast app.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Sabrina Janke stopped by the library in Morris Jan. 17 to share from her new book, *Portage & Main*, which she wrote with her *One Great History* podcast co-host Alex Judge.

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BRANDON UNIVERSITY

January 2026

Brandon University helps students get a great start

BRANDON, Man. – Beginning your post-secondary education is a big step, and that's why Brandon University is committed to helping you get off to a great start.

Brandon University has a 125-year history of high-quality academic programs, combined with a constantly growing support system that helps today's students put their best foot forward as soon as they step on campus. A friendly and welcoming group of student leaders greet new students when they arrive for orientation, and the helpful faculty and staff are with them every step of the way, including academic assistance, career counselling, Student Accessibility Services, personal counselling, and cultural resources such as the Indigenous Peoples' Centre. A recent addition to BU's supports is the AI and Bee Wagner Indigenous Student Transition Program, which helps students adjust to university life through mentor-

ship, academic check-ins, and guidance from Knowledge Keepers.

"Brandon University is a small university with a big sense of community," said Michelle Lemoine, Director of Recruitment and Retention at BU. "Students benefit from smaller class sizes, meaningful connections with professors, and a campus where they feel known and supported. Living in Brandon is also ideal for students who enjoy the amenities of a city paired with a small-town feel — short commutes, affordable living, and a strong sense of belonging. Many students choose to stay with BU through the completion of their undergraduate degree, and some continue on into our graduate programs."

Located on a compact but full-service campus at the heart of Manitoba's second-largest city, BU offers its 3,500 students a wide range of options to prepare for their future careers. Students can choose from 19 undergraduate

programs, six graduate programs, and four certificate programs in the Faculties of Arts, Education, Health Studies, Science, and the School of Music. Additionally, many established professionals further their careers by studying offerings such as the Master of Education and Master of Psychiatric Nursing programs, which they can pursue part-time while they work. For those looking for something else, there are 19 available pre-professional programs, where students can start at BU before moving seamlessly into their specialized program at another university.

Aiding in career preparation are built-in practicums in Education and Health Studies, as well as the Co-op program, which allows students to earn while they learn by mixing in paid work experience between academic terms.

Enoch Ouskun, who was a Co-op Business student and participant in the Indigenous Student Transition Program,

began an articling position with an accounting firm following his graduation last year, and he credited the people of BU with helping him reach his goals.

"The professors and staff were all wonderful people, and whenever I need help with anything, be it understanding a concept, getting office time to go over questions, or anything to do with deadlines," he said. "They were always helpful and understanding."

Brandon University also has robust research programs, allowing students to gain real-world experience working on meaningful projects, even at the undergraduate level. Right now, undergraduate BU students are working on projects such as cancer detection and treatment, environmental stewardship, quantum computing, and green energy production.

To learn more about BU, take a virtual tour, or set up an in-person visit at BrandonU.ca/Future-Students.

BRANDON UNIVERSITY

let's start!

BRANDONU.CA

2026 Education

Spring/Summer

Why visiting MITT's Open House might be your best winter road trip

You may have noticed MITT's name popping up around the Pembina Valley this past year. That's thanks to the college's Network and Systems Administrator program offered right in the heart of Morden. The program will be back for 2026-2027, so if tinkering with servers and fixing everyone's Wi-Fi makes your heart flutter, make sure to apply soon to snag your spot. Check out MITT.ca/events to learn how you can get a sneak peek of the program on February 25.

Not a tech person? No worries. MITT offers plenty of other in-demand programs. With their Open House coming up on February 19 at Henlow Campus in Winnipeg, it's the perfect chance to explore your opportunities. Yes, you'll have to drive to Winnipeg. But if you're willing to head to Carman just for Syl's ice cream, then a slightly longer drive to invest in your future is hardly a stretch, right? MITT's Open House is your chance to see for yourself what they offer. Here's what you can expect:

Explore campus life

Just like the Pembina Valley, MITT is a place where you can feel at home quickly. Campuses are small and easy to navigate. They're also filled with inviting social spaces and student life events that make it easy to connect with classmates.

Meet expert instructors

Meet MITT's instructors who know their in-

dustries inside and out. They're pros who've spent years working in the careers you'll be training for and are the exact people you want in your corner when you're starting your career.

See live demonstrations of hands-on learning

You'll see MITT programs in action with real tools, real labs, and real activities, not just pamphlets on tables. You can poke, press, tap, and test...just like you sample your way through treats at the Corn and Apple Festival.

Chat with support staff

At Open House, talk directly with the people behind MITT's student supports. You'll have access to information like academic assistance, financial guidance, accessibility services, mental health resources, and more. Plus, you can meet with the recruitment team about applications and deadlines to set you on the path to starting your studies. Together, they'll make your experience smoother than a fresh stretch of Highway 3 after spring repairs.

You might just discover the place that helps you launch your career. That sounds like a trip worth taking.

Ready to start your journey? Visit MITT.ca/openhouse to register and learn more.

Morden-Winkler taking part in MbTech Week 2026

By Voice staff

Morden-Winkler will share some of the spotlight as part of the upcoming MbTech Week.

MbTech Week 2026 will be shining a spotlight on the people, ideas and technologies driving Manitoba forward with a range of events next month.

"Technology continues to help how we live, work and connect," said Kelly Fournel, CEO of Tech Manitoba.

"MbTech Week is an opportunity to show Manitobans across every community and sector how the skills, technology and people needed to help drive innovations are already living and operating in their communities. To bring visibility to and connect with these local experts remains a focus for Tech Manitoba and has been for the past 30 years."

Most of the week's activities take place in Winnipeg, but events outside the city include the Southern Manitoba Technology Conference in Morden Feb. 24 and a behind-the-scenes tour

of the Valley Fiber data centre in Winkler that same day.

The conference will feature hands-on demos, expert talks, and practical strategies to help Manitoba manufacturers turn tech ideas into action.

"Morden is proving that small cities can drive big innovation," Tech Manitoba said in a news release. "MbTech Week 2026 is bringing the spotlight to southern Manitoba with the southern Manitoba technology conference, a hands-on one-day deep dive into how technology is transforming industries and communities."

"From AI and ag tech to digital tools for education and manufacturing, this event shows how local innovators, startups and organizations are solving real-world problems and reshaping the way we live and work."

"It's a story about how a regional city like Morden is becoming a hub for innovation, economic growth and community impact through technology."

For a full list of MbTech Week Events, mbtechweek.ca.

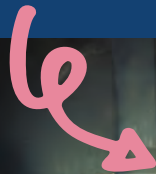
MITT Save the date

Open House

February 19, 2026

Now is better than later.

Take the next step in your career journey and find your path at MITT.



RSVP today at MITT.ca/OpenHouse

Access Credit Union commits \$250,000 to Manitoba schools

By Lana Meier

Access Credit Union is investing \$250,000 in Manitoba schools through its 2026 Focused Funding Grant, an initiative aimed this year at strengthening recreation and wellness programs for students.

Now in its second year, the Focused Funding Grant will provide \$25,000 each to 10 K-12 public schools across the province. The funding is intended to enhance programs, activities and spaces that contribute to student well-being, with an emphasis on creating safe, supportive environments where students and communities can connect and thrive.

Access Credit Union said recreation and wellness were selected as the 2026 focus after seeing a strong and growing number of grant applications in these areas in recent years, particularly those centred on student wellness spaces and recreation needs.

The credit union noted that many schools continue to rely on aging or limited equipment and facilities,

while others face space constraints — especially in Manitoba, where weather can limit outdoor activity and gathering areas. Targeted funding, they said, can help introduce new recreation options, increase participation, enhance movement during school breaks and improve accessibility.

Rural and lower-income schools may face additional challenges due to fewer available recreation resources, making school-based investment especially important. Access said the grant is intended to help strengthen spaces that serve not only students, but also the wider community.

"Investments in school recreation and wellness extend well beyond the school walls," the credit union said, noting that gyms, playgrounds and outdoor spaces are often shared with families and community groups. Enhancing these areas helps build stronger connections between schools, families and local organizations while promoting inclusive access.

Continued on page 23

Manitoba bug expert tracks rising insect threats to crops

By E. Antonio

Bugs are no strangers to Manitoba — especially for farmers and agronomists who deal with them every growing season. Helping those producers understand which insects pose a risk and which are beneficial is the job of John Gavloski, provincial entomologist with Manitoba Agriculture, based in Carman.

“A huge part of my job is educating farmers and agronomists about insects,” Gavloski said. “I spend a lot of time fielding questions, collecting insect data, and producing relevant information about insects that may harm or benefit crops.”

While Gavloski always knew he wanted to work with animals, his interest in entomology took off during university after enrolling in an entomology class taught by what he described as a “very enthusiastic instructor.” One course quickly turned into two, which eventually led to a summer job in the field — and a career that has now spanned nearly three decades.

Earlier this month, Gavloski shared his expertise at Ag Days in Brandon, where he delivered two presentations focused on insect concerns in Manitoba crops.

The first presentation addressed insects commonly found in canola crops. A major focus was the cabbage seedpod weevil, an insect that had not previously raised alarm in the province.

“I have been tracking the cabbage seedpod weevil since its arrival in Manitoba in 2017, and the levels were never reaching problem status,” he said. “But last year, the population completely exploded. Now it’s my job to inform farmers how to scout for it, how many is too many, and what steps they can take to control it.”

He also emphasized the diversity of weevils. Worldwide, there are more



Cabbage seedpod weevils are a growing concern for canola fields. Pictured is a cabbage seedpod weevil found in a canola crop near Carman.

than eight times as many species of weevils as there are birds, with some weevils being beneficial to agriculture.

His second presentation highlighted several insects that were abundant across a variety of crops in Manitoba in 2025. Gavloski discussed three different weevils, how to correctly identify them, and effective strategies for managing them. Flea beetles in canola, grasshoppers, and beetles that feed on stored grain were also covered.

The session concluded with a “Crop Talk,” allowing attendees to ask questions, similar to the weekly Crop Talks he serves as a panellist on during the summer.

“I want to make sure farmers and agronomists are getting the information they need,” Gavloski said. “I try to address most of the questions they have. I want what’s best for them, and Crop Talks help with that process.”

During the growing season, Gavloski also distributes weekly insect survey results through the Manitoba Crop Pest Updates newsletter. Anyone interested in subscribing can email crops@gov.mb.ca with the subject line “Subscribe to Insect Report.”

Despite his focus on pests, Gavloski emphasized that not all insects are harmful. Many play important roles



PHOTOS SUBMITTED

John Gavloski, provincial entomologist with Manitoba Agriculture, poses with a New Guinea spiny stick insect.

in agriculture, including pollination, decomposition, and natural pest control.

“To put it simply, if you don’t have the good guys, the bad guys will quickly take over,” he said. “The constant battle is ensuring populations don’t get out of hand. It’s about knowing how to manage insects, and that’s where I can help.”

According to Gavloski, farmers and agronomists are generally appreciative of his work, often sharing positive feedback about receiving early warnings on emerging insect issues and having opportunities to ask questions.

When it comes to crop vulnerability in Manitoba, Gavloski identified sunflowers and canola as being particularly susceptible to insect damage. Several insects feed exclusively on sunflowers, and some can be quite damaging to sunflowers grown for seed consumption.

Canola faces its own challenges, especially from flea beetles. When early crop growth is delayed, flea beetles can feed heavily on seedlings, creating what Gavloski described as a “real problem” for producers.

More information on insects and agriculture — including past seasonal reports and insect identification guides — can be found at www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/insects/.

Gavloski noted pest populations can fluctuate dramatically from year to year, depending on factors such as weather conditions and the presence of natural enemies like predators, diseases, and parasitoids.

Over his career, he has seen a noticeable increase in the number of pest species in Manitoba, adding

to the number that must be monitored. Some introduced insects arrive through natural movement, but many are human-assisted. For insects of concern on crops and trees, many arrive in the province through vehicle transportation or the movement of firewood — something that is strongly discouraged nationwide.

“Bugs are awfully good hitchhikers,” he said. “Always be conscious if you are transporting plants or soil into the province, and make sure the insects we don’t have — and don’t want — stay out.”

Looking ahead, Gavloski expects to add more invasive species to his watch list over the next few years and is already monitoring several insects that have yet to arrive in Manitoba.

While insect populations are changing, the technology used to track them in provincial surveys has remained relatively stable. Although newer, more automated traps and synthetic lures are available that can capture a wider range of insects, Gavloski still finds simpler, traditional trapping methods cheaper, easier to deploy, and at times more accurate than complex mechanical systems.

For backyard gardeners, Gavloski offered one key piece of advice: use insecticides only as a last resort. When practical, physically removing insects is often easier and cheaper, and overuse of chemicals can lead to resistance.

“All you need is a few individuals with genetics that allow them to survive the insecticide,” he explained. “Those survivors reproduce, spread their traits, and eventually the chemicals no longer work.”



Gavloski sweeps a canola field for insects.

sports & recreation

Augert, Fowlie lift Royals in wild OT thriller; Wild surge continues

By Annaliese Meier

Justin Augert and Cody Fowlie powered the Winkler Royals to a dramatic 10-9 overtime victory over the Morden Bombers on Sunday night, while the Red River Wild kept pace near the top of the SEMHL standings with a late surge past Notre Dame.

Augert scored five times for Winkler, including a natural hat trick spanning the first and third periods, while Fowlie delivered the winner at 4:10 of overtime to cap a back-and-forth contest that featured six lead changes and 19 total goals.

Winkler jumped out early as Augert opened the scoring just 1:42 into the first period, converting feeds from Phil Letkeman and Fowlie. Aaron Lewadniuk added another midway through the frame before Augert struck again at 12:25 to make it 3-0. Morden settled in late in the period, with Andrew Clark getting the Bombers on the board at 17:25.

The Bombers carried that momentum into the second. Collin Shirley and Cade Kowalski scored 59 seconds apart early in the period to pull Morden even, but Letkeman restored the Winkler lead on the power play at 7:33. TJ Matuszewski added another before Logan Christensen answered late to keep Morden within one heading into the third.

The final frame turned into a track meet. Augert completed his hat trick just 39 seconds in, but Morden responded with four straight goals — two on the power play — from Jay Fehr, Shirley and Clark to grab a 7-5 lead. Winkler answered back quickly as Brett Bergman and Augert scored 16 seconds apart, only for the Bombers to counter again with goals from Shirley and Christensen.

Fowlie forced overtime with 30 seconds remaining in regulation, burying a loose puck to tie the game 9-9 before ending it in extra time on a feed from Lewadniuk and captain



PHOTO BY RICK HIEBERT/VOICE

Morden's Jaden Townsend tries to avoid the point shot on Winkler netminder Matthew Thiessen. Winkler won it 10-9 in overtime.

Mitch Dyck.

Matthew Thiessen earned the win for Winkler, stopping 41 shots, while Aaron Brunn made 19 saves in the loss for Morden.

The Royals remain atop the SEMHL standings and will host Red River on Tuesday, Jan. 27, before travelling to Notre Dame on Saturday, Jan. 31. Morden returns home Thursday, Jan. 29, to face Warren, then heads to Île-des-Chênes on Sunday, Feb. 1.

Meanwhile, Red River continued its strong stretch Sunday afternoon, scoring five unanswered goals over the final 30 minutes to defeat Notre Dame

6-4.

Jonah Wasylak led the Wild with a hat trick, including a pair of short-handed goals late in the third period, as Red River turned a one-goal game into a decisive win. Jared Magne added two goals, while Brendan Harms chipped in a goal and an assist.

Red River built a 3-0 first-period lead on goals from Wasylak, Magne and Harms, only to see Notre Dame claw back with three unanswered goals to tie the game early in the third. Magne restored the Wild lead midway through the period before Wasylak took over, scoring twice while killing

penalties to put the game out of reach.

Jayden Catellier stopped 23 shots for the win, while Remi Bosc made 31 saves for Notre Dame.

With the win, Red River holds third place in the league at 9-3-2, just three points back of Winkler. The Wild continue their homestand Saturday, Jan. 31, against Carman, following a road game Tuesday in Winkler.

Winkler (11-2-1, 23 pts) leads the league, followed closely by Springfield (22 pts) and Red River (20). Warren sits fourth at 16 points, while Morden remains in sixth at 13 points after Sunday's overtime loss.

Check out the Voice online at www.winklermordenvoice.ca or altonavoice.ca



Nighthawks on the court

The Northlands Parkway Collegiate Nighthawks varsity boys basketball team fell to the visiting Windsor Park Royals 88-43 in SCAC Tier 1 action last week.

PHOTOS
BY KEENAN
REDHEAD/VOICE



Flyers blanked by Pistons, down Blizzard 8-1

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Winkler Flyers had a mixed weekend in MJHL action.

They headed into Steinbach Friday night to play the second-place Pistons and came home with a 2-0 loss to add to their record.

Goalie Liam Ernst and the Winkler defensive lines held the Pistons off until the third period when they scored twice in a five minute stretch to win it. Ernst made 29 saves that night

while his teammates fired 28 shots the other way, all denied by Steinbach netminder Chris Quizi.

The pendulum swung all the way back the next night at home against the Northern Manitoba Blizzard, who are currently in last place in the West Division.

A scoreless opening frame was followed up with an avalanche of goals in the second courtesy of Liam Carlone, Kam Thomas, Tanner George, Rhylan Baxter, and Ethan MacTav-

ish. Sandwiched between Thomas and George's goals was what would prove to be the Blizzard's lone point of the night.

George, Connor Vandal, and William Lyons added three more to the Flyers' tally in the third, giving them the win 8-1.

The Flyers won the shots battle by a wide margin as well—56-11—with Liam Russell making 10 saves in goal.

With that, Winkler remains in fourth place in the East Division with a re-

cord of 22-14-1-2, good for 47 points. They trail the Portage Terriers in third place by five points. Topping the standings are the Niverville Nighthawks in first with 71 points and the Steinbach Pistons in second with 59.

This week the team was in Steinbach Tuesday night and in Winnipeg Saturday to face the Blues. They then kick off February with a game in Portage against the Terriers Sunday.

Female Hawks 2-3 at Headingley tournament

By Lorne Stelmach

The female U18 Pembina Valley Hawks had a break from league play this past week, but they still had more than their share of action as part of the 13th annual Female World Sport

School Challenge tournament at the Hockey For Life Centre in Headingley

The Hawks kicked off the tournament on a winning note Thursday as they doubled up the Interlake Lightning 6-3. Casey O'Brien led the way with a pair of goals as Pembina Valley rebounded from a 2-1 first-period deficit to lead 5-3 after 40 minutes.

Later that day, the Hawks came up empty as they were blanked 5-0 by the Winnipeg Ice, who got a 22-save shutout from Gina Plett while out-

shooting the Hawks 41-22.

In their lone game Friday, the Hawks were outscored 6-4 by the Rink Hockey Academy team of Winnipeg. Claire Boyd had a pair of goals for Pembina Valley, which was outshot 33-29.

The Hawks then rebounded Saturday with a 6-1 win over Pilot Mound. They outshot Pilot Mound 48-33, and O'Brien had a big four-goal game for Pembina Valley while Sophia Cox had a goal and three assists.

They closed out the tournament

Sunday with a 3-1 loss to the Winnipeg Avros in the fifth place consolation game. Leah Klassen scored the lone goal for Pembina Valley, which was outshot 35-23.

The Hawks return to league play with a pair of home games starting with Yellowhead this Saturday and then the Westman Wildcats Sunday.

Their 7-14-0-1 record gives them 15 points in the standings, which leaves them nine ahead of Interlake and two back of Central Plains.

Hawks down Selects, Chiefs, fall to Kings

By Lorne Stelmach

The male U18 Pembina Valley Hawks gained a bit of ground in the standings by winning three of their four games last week.

It started Tuesday with a 3-0 shutout victory over the Eastman Selects, which is a team the Hawks are pursuing in the standings.

After a 5-1 loss Friday to the sec-

ond-place Brandon Wheat Kings, Pembina Valley rebounded to take both ends of a weekend doubleheader with the Yellowhead Chiefs, winning 6-4 Saturday and 9-6 Sunday.

Brody Peters was the hero against Eastman as he earned a massive 56-save shutout while the Hawks were able to capitalize three times on 32 shots. Carson Hiebert, Casey Magarell, and Tyson Pethybridge into an

empty net scored for the Hawks.

Pembina Valley then couldn't recover from giving up three unanswered first period goals against Brandon with the lone Hawks' goal coming from Cole Secord in the dying seconds of the opening frame.

Shots on goal were 44-23 in favour of Brandon. Peters started in net but was

Continued on page 21

The Voice
What's *your* story?
Call 204-325-6888
Do you have a suggestion for our news team?
Is there someone you would like to see recognized in the newspaper for their accomplishments - athletic, academic or community service.

Twisters push Jets to overtime, drop road game in St. James

By Lana Meier

The Pembina Valley Twisters pushed hard on the road Friday night but fell 4-3 in overtime to the Stonewall Jets before dropping a 6-2 decision to the St. James Jr. Canucks on Sunday.

At Stonewall Veterans Memorial Arena, the Twisters battled back from a two-goal deficit to force extra time only to see Stonewall strike 1:07 into overtime.

Stonewall opened the scoring early, with forward Cohen Cheung converting a pass from Peyton Bateman at 1:28 of the first period. Gavin Holod extended the lead to 2-0 on a second-period power-play goal at 1:17.

Pembina Valley answered with two quick strikes. Rylan Keck buried a feed from Lucas Thomas at 8:29 of the second, and Carter Unger cashed in on the power play at 12:27 to level the game at 2. The Jets regained the lead later in the period on a goal by Evan McMurtry, assisted by Gavin Holod and Noah Slobozian at 19:31.

Josh Guilford kept the Twisters in it with a power-play goal at 7:17 of the third to force overtime. Holod completed the scoring 1:07 into extra time, finishing a play set up by Bateman.

Pembina Valley goaltender Rowan Cherkas stopped 38 of 42 shots in the loss. The Twisters were 1-for-5 on the power play.

On Sunday at Ab McDonald Arena, Pembina Valley took an early lead against the Canucks but was overcome by a balanced St. James attack.

Sawyer Leite opened scoring at 11:43 of the first period, and Ethan Wilde scored at 18:18, giving the Twisters a 2-0 lead. St. James responded with four unanswered goals, starting with Tristen Arnason's tally at 7:00 of the first. Gavin Salamacha added a goal later in the frame, and Aidan Wuerfel scored twice — including a power-play goal in the third — to help the Canucks pull ahead. Jayden Ward also scored shorthanded for St. James, and Salamacha capped the scoring with an empty-netter.



Twisters forward Rylan Keck scores in the second period against the Stonewall Jets during a 4-3 overtime loss on Jan. 23

> PEMBINA VALLEY HAWKS, FROM PG. 20

relieved after allowing four goals on 17 shots. Koen Bleznuk then stopped 26 of 27 shots the rest of the way.

Game one against Yellowhead was a wide open affair, with Pembina Valley holding a 57-37 edge in shots on goal and period leads of 2-1 and 4-3.

Pethybridge led the way offensively with a hat trick while other goals came in from Caden McMahon, Ragnar Gillis, and Paxton White.

Game two then offered another game of high powered offence with the Hawks outshooting the Chiefs

58-38 and taking period leads of 3-0 and 6-4.

Pethybridge had a pair of goals and a four point night. Other goals came from Hiebert, McMahon, Seccord, White, Nolan Bravo, Ocean Fehr and Jackson Froese.

Pembina Valley inched up into seventh place at 21-14-1-1 for 44 points, and it has them one ahead of Southwest and one back of Parkland.

A pair of home games this weekend has the Hawks welcoming Brandon Saturday evening and Central Plains Sunday afternoon.



PHOTOS BY LANA MEIER/VOICE

Pembina Valley Twisters goaltender Rowan Cherkas turns aside a penalty shot from Stonewall Jets forward Alex Kaczorowski during MMJHL action on Jan. 23 at Stonewall Veterans Memorial Arena.

Darion Penner stopped 36 of 42 shots for Pembina Valley. The Twisters were blanked on the power play against St. James.

Pembina Valley's record fell to 4-25-1, leaving the club in 10th place in the MMJHL standings with nine points. The Twisters sit behind ninth-place

St. Vital Jr. Victorias (20 points) and trail the Canucks, who have climbed to eighth with 31 points.

Pembina Valley returns home Friday, Jan. 30, to host the St. Vital Jr. Victorias at 8 p.m., then welcomes the Charleswood Hawks on Sunday, Feb. 1 at 7 p.m.

Mudbugs drop weekend games to Swarm, Xtreme

By Annaliese Meier

The Red River Mudbugs ran into two of the Hanover Tache Junior Hockey League's top teams over the weekend, falling 13-1 to the Macdonald Swarm on Friday and 7-2 to the Springfield Xtreme on Saturday.

Macdonald set the tone early Friday night at Sanford Recreation Centre, scoring five times in the first period and adding six more in the second to build an insurmountable lead. The Swarm finished the night 3-for-5 on the power play, while Red River went scoreless on four man-advantage chances.

Gavin Wiens scored the Mudbugs' lone goal midway through the third period, assisted by Ziko Pankratz. Tyler Blanchette stopped 36 shots over the first 40 minutes in goal, while Connor Parago made 21 saves in relief.

Red River rebounded with a more competitive effort Saturday at St. Jean Arena but came up short against

Springfield, which struck twice on the power play in the third period to pull away.

Eli Bergman opened the scoring for the Mudbugs late in the first period, finishing a play set up by Tyson Froese and Caden Krahn. After Springfield regained the lead in the second, Gavin Hildebrandt scored early in the third to briefly pull Red River within one. The Xtreme responded with four unanswered goals to seal the win.

Parago made 20 saves in the loss, while Springfield netminder Tyson Murdock turned aside 24 shots.

With the losses, Red River sits eighth in the HTJHL standings at 8-16, with 16 points through 24 games. The Mudbugs have scored 87 goals this season while allowing 133.

Red River returns home Wednesday, Jan. 28, to host East St. Paul at St. Jean Arena before welcoming Ste. Anne on Friday, Jan. 30. The Mudbugs then visit Ste. Anne on Saturday, Jan. 31, at Maurice Chaput Arena.

Local wrestlers prepare for Carman tournament

By Annaliese Meier

When Brady Hasell steps onto the mat at a wrestling tournament, his mother Marla feels the same surge of adrenaline echoing through the stands.

"It's exciting, lots of adrenaline flowing in the stands too," Hasell said. "It's just the best when your child finds something they enjoy doing."

Brady, 13, will be among the local wrestlers competing when an open wrestling tournament returns to Carman on Saturday, Feb. 7, at Carman Collegiate. The event is expected to draw between 120 and 140 athletes from across Manitoba, competing in divisions ranging from elementary through under-23.

Now in its third year, the tournament is an open event rather than a provincial qualifier, welcoming wrestlers of varying ages and experience levels. Local competitors will be joined by athletes from communities including Morden and Winkler, making the one-day event a showcase of the region's growing wrestling scene.

Since Brady began wrestling, Hasell said she has seen noticeable changes in her son, both on and off the mat.

"He's definitely gotten stronger," she said. "He's becoming more independent, disciplined and resilient."

Wrestling has become a regular part of the Hasell family's routine, with Brady practising two evenings a week at the community hall. Hasell said the training is demanding but positive, helping young athletes build healthy habits early.

"It's an unreal workout and they



Brady Hasell competes during a previous wrestling tournament in Carman. The 13-year-old is among local athletes set to take part in an open wrestling tournament returning to Carman Collegiate on Feb. 7, drawing competitors from across Manitoba.

have lots of fun," she said. "A great habit to get into early."

While competition is optional, Brady typically chooses to compete in several tournaments each season, travelling between November and March to events as far as Kelowna and Weyburn. Hasell said the focus remains on participation and community rather than results.

"He just picks which ones he wants to do, as the community of the club and the bi-weekly commitment to being active is his highlight," she said.

Hasell believes youth wrestling is



PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Members of the Pembina Valley Wrestling Club are pictured ahead of the upcoming open wrestling tournament in Carman. From left are Rose Langill, Asher Becker, Kyle Ballantyne, Isaac Sailer, Tenleigh Nordstrom and Samuel Langill.

sometimes misunderstood as overly aggressive, when in reality it offers a supportive and structured environment.

"It's a tough sport, being on the mat one-on-one, but it's a really supportive and encouraging environment," she said. "The coaches are fantastic, and they train for all the possible scenarios and outcomes, and how to best protect themselves physically and mentally through wins and losses."

For Brady, the upcoming tourna-

ment is another opportunity to challenge himself while competing in front of familiar faces.

"It feels good," he said. "This is the third year that we've hosted a tournament here. It's lots of fun."

Brady said wrestling has taught him lessons that extend beyond competition.

"Never give up," he said. "Wrestling doesn't teach you how to win, but how to lose and come back again."

New basketball league launches in Altona

By Lorne Stelmach

Basketball has become quite a popular sport in Altona, and the town now has a new league which offers an opportunity for adults to play.

The inaugural season of the Altona Inter-Commercial League is underway for players age 16 and up, with teams sponsored by local businesses such as Bunge and Friesens.

"We were already encouraging kids to play basketball here in Altona ... most of this now will be adults," suggested Lai Garcia, who is among the community volunteers behind the program.

"We started a few years ago already [with youth leagues], but this is the first time we have initiated an inter-commercial basketball league ... and there are some small businesses and business owners who sponsor a team."

Garcia believes there is enough interest in basketball in the community to sustain the league, and that is backed up by the numbers: there are six teams and about 90 people taking part this winter.

"It's getting more interest ... it's encouraging," said Garcia, who sug-



SUPPLIED PHOTO BY JOWARD OSIANA

Continued on page 23

> BASKETBALL LEAGUE, FROM PG. 22

gested there is a particular interest in basketball among the Filipino community. "Basketball is our sport, really ... it's the one that we do, so we introduce them to it here ... it's also to invite other people who also like basketball."

Garcia had a few thoughts on the appeal of basketball and what is drawing people to be part of it in Altona.

"This is good for kids and adults to be more healthy during the winter time. It's indoor basketball," he said. "And there is also camaraderie for the community."

"I think aside from it's a good sport ... it's about being a team player," he added. "There are different players that we combine, so sometimes they don't know each other, so they begin to come together and play as a team ... they get to know each other, play as a team, enjoy the basketball, and it's also just being healthy."

The league has games Saturdays from 4:30-9:30 p.m. in the W.C. Miller Collegiate gymnasium. They plan to play until mid-April.



PHOTO BY EDWARD VINCENT ARCENAL/VOICE

The Altona Inter-Commercial Basketball League is up and running.

Snow Goers derby supporting Segue Career Options

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The second annual Border Valley Snow Goers Poker Derby sets off from Plum Coulee next month for a day of snowy fun all across the region.

The club have once again selected Segue Career Options as the recipient of partial proceeds from the day, with the rest going to support the ongoing maintenance of the hundreds of kilometres of snowmobile trails the Snow Goers oversee every winter.

Last year's inaugural derby saw upwards of 80 riders come out, shares club president James Wall, and they're hoping for similar success this time around.

"If it's decent snow conditions and temperatures ... hopefully we'll get a good turnout," he says.

Registration runs from 9 a.m. to noon at the Co-op gas bar in Plum Coulee on Saturday, Feb. 14.

From there, riders will embark on a 120 kilometre route that takes them to the Four Winds in Altona, the South Border Shack, Mr. Mike's in Winkler, and finally back to Plum Coulee at the arena where dinner and a silent auction will take place starting at 6 p.m.

At each stop on the route, participants will get cards to build up their poker hands, which need to be in by

5 p.m.

"The best hand wins," explains Wall, noting there are \$1,500 in prizes up for grabs. Participation is \$10 per hand or three hands for \$25. Tickets to the dinner are \$25 each.

All the snow we've gotten this winter had made for some pretty good trail conditions, though the warm weather a few weeks ago really did a number on them, Wall shares.

"We haven't had a lot of snow since then, but we're hoping for a little bit of snow in the near future—we don't need a lot to bring them back into decent shape."

Volunteers maintain the trail network, and they'll be out in full force in the weeks leading up to the derby.

"We cover from Morden all the way to the Red River and then from the border to the Hwy. 23," Wall says. "We have lots of volunteers for signing all

those trails, a really good bunch of supporters."

Segue, which is a program of Eden Health Care Services, is thrilled to be partnering with the Snow Goers again on this event, says program director Lavonne Kroeker.

The agency helps those with various challenges in their lives overcome them to find meaningful employment.

"We help individuals that are looking for work," Kroeker says. "We support people in all aspects of their job search, particularly those who have some type of employment barrier. That can range from being out of the workforce for a number of years to potentially having a physical disability that maybe makes it more challenging or you need to kind of look longer in order to find an opportunity that's a good fit for you."

"We work one-on-one with folks as

well as have group sessions where people can come and learn together with other people and help them to know that they're not alone in their job search."

Segue will be using their portion of the proceeds from the derby in a few different ways.

"One thing we have been wanting to do for awhile is replace some of our signage outside our building," Kroeker says. "We've had a new logo for awhile and so we want to make sure it all lines up."

Kroeker shares they will also use some of the funds to support ongoing training opportunities for their staff.

"There's always other opportunities ... over and above what we are funded for," she explains. "So with this we can register for some specific training that can be helpful for us in the services that we provide."

> FOCUSED FUNDING GRANT, FROM PG. 17

"We saw tremendous interest from across Manitoba last year and we're proud to once again offer a program that speaks to the specific needs in our communities," said Curt Letkeman, board chair of Access Credit Union. "By focusing on recreation and wellness, we can truly make an impactful

difference, remove barriers, and create lasting opportunities for children to grow and develop."

The grant is open to all K-12 public schools in Manitoba. Applications may be submitted by parent advisory committees, school administrators, teachers or school divisions. Projects

must be pre-approved by the applicable school division and supported by a letter from the school principal or vice-principal.

Grant applications open Feb. 16 and close March 31. Successful schools will be notified in the fall, followed by a public announcement.

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PUBLIC NOTICE



PUBLIC NOTICE Additions to the Voters List and/or Personal Security Protection Requests

In accordance with Section 36 of The Municipal Councils and School Boards Election Act (MCSBEA), the Municipality of Emerson-Franklin Voters List is open for changes or revisions.

- Any person who is eligible to vote in municipal elections in the Local Authority of The Municipality of Emerson-Franklin can have his or her name added to the Voters List, or have any information about the voter on the Voters List corrected.
- Any person can request to have his or her name and address obscured from the Voters List.

A person whose name has been obscured will receive a Personal Security Certificate and identification number. That person may only vote by Sealed Envelope Ballot and cannot vote in person at the regular or advance voting places.

To implement the above, a written request must be submitted to the Senior Election Official, in person, by e-mail, or mail to:

Box 66, 115 Waddell Avenue E, Dominion City Mb R0A 0H0.

E-mail: info@emersonfranklin.com

The next General Election takes place October 28th, 2026.

Tracey French

Senior Election Official

P.O. Box 66, 115 Waddell Ave E, Dominion City, MB ROA OHO

Phone: (204) 427-2557 Fax: (204) 427-2224

Email: info@emersonfranklin.com Website: www.emersonfranklin.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

LIQUOR LICENCE APPLICATION

PUBLIC NOTICE

WOW INDIAN FOOF INC.

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at

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WITH PATIO AREA

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9:00 A.M. to 2:00 A.M.

1:00 P.M. to 2:00 A.M. REMEMBRANCE DAY

Citizen and community input is an important part of the application process.

Please contact the Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Authority of Manitoba at 204-927-5300, If you have questions about this application.

Please contact your municipality if you have questions about zoning by-laws and requirements.

If you want to make a formal objection to this application, please send us your objection in writing by 4:30 p.m.

14 DAYS FOLLOWING THE PUBLICATION OF THIS ADVERTISEMENT.

You can email, mail or fax your objection.

Please include your contact information.

Email: objection@LGCAMB.ca

Mail: LGCA Objections

1055 Milt Stegall Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3G 0Z6

Fax: 204-927-5385

- We respond to all formal objections and will work to resolve objections before issuing a licence.
- A copy of the objection, including the name of the person who submits the objection, will be provided to the licence applicant.
- Each person who submits an objection will be advised in writing of the outcome to the licence application.

EMPLOYMENT



Border Land School Division invites applicants for a

PRINCIPAL FOR SHEVCHENKO SCHOOL IN VITA, MB

This position will commence for the 26/27 school year.

FOR DETAILS VISIT WWW.BLSD.CA

EMPLOYMENT



Border Land School Division invites applicants for a

DIVISIONAL BEHAVIOR SUPPORT TEACHER/ SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

This 0.8 FTE term position will commence April 13, 2026 with the possibility of an extension into the 26/27 school year.

FOR DETAILS VISIT WWW.BLSD.CA

PUBLIC NOTICE



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 person(s) who wish to make them in respect to the following matter:

THE RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF STANLEY
BY-LAW 2-26 Being an AMENDMENT to the R.M. OF
STANLEY ZONING BY-LAW 8-18, AS AMENDED.

HEARING: R.M. of Stanley Council Chambers

LOCATION: 1-23111 PTH 14, SW 7-3-4W

DATE & TIME: February 12, 2026 at 10:05 a.m.

GENERAL INTENT: To amend Appendix 1 Use Table within Zoning By-law 8-18 to allow for the use of "Heavy Equipment Sales, Service, and Rental" as a conditional use in the Agriculture Limited Zone

FOR INFORMATION: Melissa Groening, Planning and Development Officer

CONTACT: Rural Municipality of Stanley

1-23111 PTH 14,

Stanley MB R6P 0B1

Phone: (204) 325-4101

Email: mgroening@rmofstanley.ca

A copy of the above proposal and supporting material may be inspected at the location noted above during normal office hours, Monday to Friday. Copies may be made and extracts taken there from, upon request.

SCRAP METAL

Buyer for all farm-yard scrap, machinery and autos. No item too large! Best prices paid. Phone Alf at 204-461-1649.

WANTED

Firearms wanted. Looking for all unwanted firearms. Fully licensed for both non-restricted and restricted. Anywhere from individual items to estates. Cash buyer, paying top dollar. Please call or text Adam at 204-795-2850.

HEALTH

Are you suffering from joint or arthritic pain? If so, you owe it to yourself to try elk velvet antler capsules. Hundreds have found relief. Benefits humans and pets. EVA is composed of proteins, amino acids, minerals, lipids and water. Key compounds that work to stimulate red blood cell production & cartilage cell regeneration & development. Stonewood Elk Ranch Ltd., 204-467-8884 or e-mail stonewoodelkranch@gmail.com

NOTICES

URGENT PRESS RELEASES - Have a newsworthy item to announce? An exciting change in operations? Though we cannot guarantee publication, MCNA will get the information into the right hands for ONLY \$35 + GST/HST. Call MCNA 204-947-1691 for more information. See www.mcna.com under the "Types of Advertising" tab for more details.

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NOTICE OF APPLICATION
TOWN OF MORRIS
REVISED WATER AND WASTEWATER RATES
MORRIS WATER AND WASTEWATER UTILITY

January 7, 2026

The Town of Morris (Town) has applied to the Public Utilities Board (Board) for revised water and wastewater rates for the Morris Water and Wastewater Utility (Utility) as set out in By-law No. 04/25, read the first time on October 23, 2025. Rates were last approved in 2011 in Board Order No. 120/11, with current rates coming into effect October 1, 2013, except for water rates, which were last revised effective January 1, 2025, as a result of a pass-through increase from the Pembina Valley Water Cooperative (PVWC). There are upcoming pass-through increases planned for January 1, 2026, and 2027, as per By-law No. 01/24.

The current and proposed rates are as follows:

	Current Rates*	Proposed Rates			
		July 1, 2026	Jan 1, 2027	Jan 1, 2028	Jan 1, 2029
Quarterly Service Charge	\$ 9.20	\$ 11.66	\$ 14.12	\$ 16.58	\$ 19.04
Step 1 - Water rate (per 1,000 gallons - first 15,000 gallons/quarter)*	\$ 19.48	\$ 19.91	\$ 20.34	\$ 20.77	\$ 21.20
Step 2 - Water rate (per 1,000 gallons - over 15,000 gallons/quarter)*	\$ 18.05	\$ 18.84	\$ 19.63	\$ 20.42	\$ 21.20
Wastewater rate (per 1,000 gallons)	\$ 0.76	\$ 1.79	\$ 2.82	\$ 3.85	\$ 4.88
Minimum Quarterly Charge**	\$ 69.92	\$ 76.76	\$ 83.60	\$ 90.44	\$ 97.28
Minimum Quarterly Charge - Water Only**	\$ 67.64	\$ 71.39	\$ 75.14	\$ 78.89	\$ 82.64
Minimum Quarterly Charge - Wastewater Only***	\$ 13.76	\$ 27.77	\$ 39.50	\$ 51.23	\$ 62.96
Reconnection Fee	\$ 15.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00
Hydrant Rental Fee	\$ 75.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
Deposit for Water Meter Accuracy Testing****	\$ -	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00

*Current Rates include PVWC Passthrough Increases
**Based on 3,000 gallons
***Based on 6,000 gallons currently, proposed to increase to 9,000 gallons per quarter
****If the meter is found to register in excess of the allowable limit (4% of water flow), the deposit shall be refunded.

Details of the Town's application are available for review at the Town office or the Public Utilities Board's office. Any questions concerning the application for revised rates, or the operation of the Utility, should be sent directly to the Town.

If you have concerns/comments regarding the Town of Morris's application for water and wastewater rates, please go to www.pubmanitoba.ca and provide your comment. Please note all comments will be forwarded to the Town.

Questions or comments should be sent on or before February 22, 2026.

The Public Utilities Board is the provincial regulatory agency that reviews and approves rates for water and wastewater utilities in Manitoba, with the exception of the City of Winnipeg. The Board's review process involves:

- the Utility filing a rate application to the Board,
- a public notification of proposed rate changes,
- the Board's review of the application through a public hearing or paper review process, and
- the issuance of an Order which outlines the Board's decision on the rate application and the rates to be charged.

The Manitoba Ombudsman has privacy guidelines for administrative tribunals. The Board is mindful of its obligations under those guidelines. Its decisions in respect of the application being considered will be sensitive to the guidelines. Personal information will not be disclosed unless it is appropriate and necessary to do so. However, the Board advises participants that these proceedings are public and that as a result, personal information protections are reduced.

The Board will then decide whether any further notice is required and whether to proceed with a public hearing or paper review process. All concerns received by the Board will be considered in the Board's decision on rates to be charged.

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT IN CONSIDERING THIS APPLICATION, THE PUBLIC UTILITIES BOARD MAY OR MAY NOT FIND IT NECESSARY TO DETERMINE RATES DIFFERENT FROM THOSE APPLIED FOR BY THE APPLICANT.

Note: All proceedings will be conducted in accordance with the Board's Rules of Practice and Procedure, which the Board may vary in order to constrain regulatory costs. The Rules are available at www.pubmanitoba.ca.

Jennifer Dubois, CPA, CMA, CTAJ
Associate Secretary
Manitoba Public Utilities Board

J. Dubois

get inspired
> MEAL IDEAS



Greek Dense Bean Salad

Prep time: 15 minutes
Servings: 6-8
Dressing:
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 garlic clove, minced
1 teaspoon dried oregano
salt, to taste
pepper, to taste
Tzatziki Sauce:
1/2 cup plain yogurt
1/4 cucumber, grated, excess water drained
2 teaspoons lemon juice
2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon garlic, minced
2 teaspoons fresh dill, chopped
salt, to taste
pepper, to taste
Salad:
1 can (16 ounces) Bush's Chick Peas, drained and rinsed
1 can (15 1/2 ounces) Bush's Cannel-

lini Beans, drained and rinsed
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
1/2 cup red onion, diced
1 cucumber, seeded and diced
1/2 cup Kalamata olives, pitted and halved
1/2 cup feta cheese, crumbled
1/4cup fresh parsley, chopped
Greek dressing (directions below)
1 cup tzatziki sauce (directions below)
chicken skewers (optional), for serving
To make dressing: In food processor or blender, blend olive oil; red wine vinegar; lemon juice; Dijon mustard; garlic; oregano; and salt and pepper, to taste, until well combined. Set aside.
To make tzatziki sauce: In bowl, stir yogurt; cucumber; lemon juice; olive oil; garlic; dill; and salt and pepper, to taste, until well combined. Set aside.
To make salad: In large bowl, combine chick peas, cannellini beans, cherry tomatoes, red onion, cucumber, olives, feta cheese and parsley; toss with dressing.
Top with tzatziki sauce and serve with chicken skewers, if desired.
Chef's tip: Store leftover tzatziki sauce separate from salad.



Quick Homecooked Chili

Recipe adapted from Allrecipes
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes
Servings: 6
1 pound ground beef
1 onion, chopped
1 can (15 ounces) tomato sauce
1 can (15 ounces) kidney beans
1 can (14 1/2 ounces) stewed tomatoes
1 can (10 ounces) diced tomatoes with green chilies
1 sweet potato, cubed
water (optional)
1 teaspoon chili powder
1 pinch garlic powder

salt, to taste
pepper, to taste
sour cream (optional)
sliced avocado (optional)
In large saucepan over medium heat, cook ground beef and onion until meat is browned and onion is tender, 5-7 minutes.
Stir in tomato sauce, kidney beans, stewed tomatoes with juices, diced tomatoes with green chilies and cubed sweet potato. Add water to reach desired consistency.
Season with chili powder and garlic powder. Add salt and pepper, to taste.
Bring to boil then reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer 15 minutes.
Serve with sour cream and sliced avocado, if desired.
Photo courtesy of Unsplash

CAREERS



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If you are interested in this career opportunity, please email your resume and cover letter with reference to this competition to careers@assiniboine.net. We thank all applicants for their interest; only those selected for further consideration will be contacted.

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

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

REGISTRATION



Western School Division

Kindergarten Registration for September 2026

In order for the schools to prepare for the 2026-2027 school year, it is important that parents register their children for Kindergarten from **January 30 to February 6, 2026**. Additional information is available at www.westernsd.mb.ca.

Registrations may be completed and submitted electronically, or a registration package can be picked-up at the school and returned between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. from January 30 to February 6, 2026. Children born in 2021 or earlier are eligible to enrol. All parents shall include a copy of their child's birth certificate, or another document to identify their birth date with the registration.

Please enrol in the school within whose catchment area your residence is located. For Kindergarten program and registration information, please call the schools directly.

Catchment areas are:

Minnewasta School, 1 Academy Drive, Mr. Geoff Sutton, Principal, 204-822-4580

- English program only. All rural. Within the city, all areas south of South Railway St. as well as the area south of Hwy 3 and west of Mountain St.

Maple Leaf Elementary School, 225 12th Street, Ms. Cindy Dick, Principal, 204-822-4458

- English program only. Within the city, the area north of North Railway St. and east of Mountain St.

École Discovery Trails, 1079 Parkhill Drive, Mr. Samuel Jerema, Principal, 204-822-2292

- All French Immersion - entire division

- English program students residing north of Hwy 3 and west of Mountain St.

Kindergarten Information Session

Western School Division will be holding a Kindergarten Parent Information session on Thursday, January 29, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. at Minnewasta School. We look forward to seeing all the new Kindergarten parents on this evening.

More detailed information is available online at www.westernsd.mb.ca, at the schools, or at Western School Division Office, 204-822-4448.



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The Winkler Morden

Voice

CAREERS



The Morden Corn & Apple Festival is offering an exciting new opportunity for a vibrant, enthusiastic, self-motivated person. If you are passionate about the City of Morden and the Festival, are a strong team player with excellent people skills and computer skills, then you need to apply for this position.

Executive Director

Contract - 1,200 hours approximate

The Executive Director is the primary face and representative of the Morden Corn & Apple Festival to the larger community. The individual is responsible for all day-to-day operations of the Corn & Apple Festival and is responsible to execute the strategic initiatives laid out by the Board of Directors.

Key Responsibilities

- To execute the strategic initiatives of the Corn and Apple Board
- To be financially efficient in the day to day operations of the Corn & Apple Festival
- To provide administrative responsibilities on a day to day basis, including preparing reports, answering phones, etc.
- Coordination of grants, lotteries and other sources of revenues
- Social media execution and website maintenance
- Maintain a positive public image with all levels of stakeholders
- Recruit and supervise Corn & Apple Festival staff
- Responsible for Volunteer relations

Qualifications

- Administrative and/or public relations experience required
- Well-developed leadership skills
- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Ability to build rapport across all generations
- Proven ability to work independently

The Morden Corn & Apple Festival offers a competitive negotiable rate of pay and flexible work life balance.

Please email your resume and cover letter to:
admin@cornandapple.com

This posting remains open until the position has been filled.
We thank all applicants; however only those invited for an interview will be contacted.



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Classifieds Announcements

The **Winkler Morden** Voice

OBITUARY



Peter Fehr

It is with great sadness that the family of Peter Fehr announce his passing on Tuesday, January 6, 2026 at the age of 77. Peter and his twin sister Helen were born on March 1, 1948 to Peter and Helena Fehr in Winkler, MB. The twins, with their younger brother John, grew up near Hochfeld and Osterwick. Peter was baptized in the Winkler Sommerfeld Church on May 24, 1970. He married Helen Schmidt in the Altona Sommerfeld Church on August 13, 1972. Peter and Helen lived in Winkler for the first year of their married life. Then they moved to Blumenfeld, where they raised their three daughters. In 1989 they moved to Winkler. Peter will be lovingly remembered by his wife of 53 years, Helen; children, Debra, Lynda (Bryan), Barbara (Darrell); grandchildren, Larissa, Kaylee (Abram), Alison; siblings, Helen (Frank), John (Alice); and numerous other family members and friends.

Peter was predeceased by his parents, Peter and Helena, and by four grandchildren. Committal took place on Saturday, January 10, at Westridge Memorial Gardens, followed with the funeral service at Morden Sommerfeld Church. Memorial donations in Peter's name may be made to Boundary Trails Health Centre Foundation (palliative care).

Wiebe Funeral Homes, Winkler
in care of arrangements
wiebefuneralhomes.com



OBITUARY



Karen (Leiko) Crane

It is with love and sadness that we announce the passing of our beloved mother, sister, grandmother and friend. Karen (Leiko) Crane, who passed away peacefully on December 11, 2025, following sudden injuries and having lived with dementia for the past four years. She leaves behind extended family members and many dear friends who will truly miss her presence and the memories they shared. The family extends heartfelt thanks to the nurses and caregivers at Tabor Home for their compassionate care and support. Private family service will follow at a later date.

Wiebe Funeral Homes, Winkler
in care of arrangements
wiebefuneralhomes.com



Your memory will live forever Engraved within our hearts

take a break

> GAMES

SUDOKU

	4				7		5	
	3	9			1		6	
	1							
				1	6			2
							4	
5				2			9	
				6				
	9		3		2			7
2			4				1	6

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

9	1	8	6	7	4	8	5	2
7	8	4	2	5	3	6	9	1
5	2	6	8	9	1	4	7	3
1	6	7	4	2	8	3	9	5
8	4	9	5	3	7	1	2	6
2	3	5	9	1	6	7	8	4
6	7	8	3	4	2	5	1	9
4	9	2	1	8	5	6	3	7
3	5	1	7	9	6	2	4	8

Sudoku Answer

R	A	T				S	N	E	S
E	K	O	T			S	O	I	A
D	L	O	S			S	E	H	B
N	V	A	H			S	E	D	A
I	H	O	T			R	O	S	I
K	U	B	E	H	T	S	E	S	V
				T	A	S	E	N	N
				S	E	R	E	I	
				S	I	B	I	G	
				D	R	V	T	S	U
				S	E	E	A	C	
				S	T	V	T	R	O
				T	O	G	R	O	F
				N	A	N	E	F	
				M	E	B			

Crossword Answer



CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Racket sport pros
- 4. Make tea
- 8. City South of Moscow
- 10. Spanish bullfighting term
- 11. Egg-shaped
- 12. Could not remember
- 13. French modernist painter
- 15. Persons
- 16. Painful intestinal obstruction
- 17. Professions
- 18. Is up to the task
- 21. Wood or metal bolt
- 22. Tax collector
- 23. A way to save for the future
- 24. Georgia rockers
- 25. Midway between north and northeast
- 26. High schoolers' test
- 27. Does not accept responsibility
- 34. One who prepares
- 35. Gout-indicative deposits
- 36. Place to play games
- 37. Book of Genesis character
- 38. Cleans oneself
- 39. Unloaded for money
- 40. Genus of flowering plants
- 41. Take a puff
- 42. Congressmen
- 43. God of battle in Scandinavian mythology

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Type of bomb
- 2. South Pacific islands
- 3. Celestial body
- 4. Negotiates

1	2	3					4	5	6	7
8				9				10		
11							12			
13				14			15			
16							17			
18					19	20				
					21			22		
				23				24		
					25			26		
					27				28	
									29	30
									31	32
									33	
									34	
									35	
									36	
									37	
									38	
									39	
									40	
									41	
									42	
									43	

- 5. Consider in a specified way
- 6. Type of group in organic chemistry
- 7. Buddhist monasteries
- 9. Inhabitant of Bering Sea island
- 10. Body part
- 12. Milestone birthday
- 14. Thyroid-stimulating hormone
- 15. More (Spanish)
- 17. Chicago ballplayer
- 19. Leaves a place
- 20. Cannot be found
- 23. One's internal body parts
- 24. Tell on
- 25. North American peoples

- of southwest
- 26. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 27. Extract used for jams and jellies
- 28. Greek goddess of the dawn
- 29. Old English letter
- 30. A way to exaggerate
- 31. Get up and leave
- 32. "Boardwalk Empire" character
- 33. More generous
- 34. Hanging cloth used as a blind
- 36. Ancient Greek sophist

Manitoba Disaster Management Conference returns this week

By E. Antonio

When disaster strikes, being prepared can help communities minimize its impact. Since 1992, the Manitoba Disaster Management Conference has provided valuable information sessions, keynote speakers and hands-on workshops. This year's event is taking places Jan. 28–30 at the Canad Inns Destination Centre Polo Park in Winnipeg.

"There is such a need for disaster management education," said conference chair Shelley Napier. "Manitoba has strict guidelines in place to keep residents safe, and there is so much to learn through shared practices."

More than 20 speakers from across Canada will be featured, including RM of Lac du Bonnet Reeve Loren Schinkel, who will discuss lessons learned from the 2025 wildfires; Brock Happychuk, who will provide an overview of the national public alerting system in Manitoba; and Tyler Smith, a Humboldt Broncos bus tragedy survivor and mental health advocate.

Manitoba is home to the longest-running and largest disaster management conference in the country — a title Napier carries with pride.

"It's Manitoba — we are an amazing province with a lot of knowledge to share," she said.

The conference is expected to draw more than 400 delegates from across the emergency management sector,



Shelley Napier, Manitoba Disaster Management Conference chair.

including coordinators, government officials, business owners and first responders.

"This conference is perfect for anyone whose life has been touched by emergency disasters," Napier said.

She added she is especially excited to announce that the first group of students from the Manitoba Association of Municipal Emergency Coordinators will graduate as certified emergency coordinators during Wednesday's dinner celebration.

Napier said the conference board continually seeks impactful speakers whose insights reflect the past, present and future of emergency management.

"We look at what has happened in the world, what we can learn, and how to ensure every session delivers



PHOTO SSUBMITTED

The Manitoba Disaster Management Conference runs Jan. 28–30 at Canad Inns Destination Centre Polo Park in Winnipeg, bringing together emergency management professionals for education, networking and hands-on training.

key takeaways," she said. "There's a topic for everyone, carefully selected based on current events."

The conference opens with Schinkel presenting leadership lessons from the recent wildfires. He will share his experience navigating the crisis and offer tips on preparing for similar events.

"Manitoba wildfires touched every corner of our province," Napier said. "Whether it was an actual fire in your community or helping evacuees, there are lessons for everyone involved."

In addition to keynote presentations and breakout sessions, participants can choose from four half-day, hands-on workshops designed to actively

engage attendees with industry experts.

Napier said the sessions offer more than classroom-style learning, providing direct, practical experience to help participants respond effectively if disaster strikes.

Feedback from previous conferences has been "overwhelmingly positive," she said, noting many attendees return year after year.

"There's such high energy in the room," Napier said. "You can form partnerships, exchange ideas and expand your outreach. Just attending the conference enhances your ability to connect with others."

get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



Greek Dense Bean Salad

1/2 cup plain yogurt
1/4 cucumber, grated, excess water drained
2 teaspoons lemon juice
2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon garlic, minced
2 teaspoons fresh dill, chopped
salt, to taste
pepper, to taste
Salad:
1 can (16 ounces) Bush's Chick Peas, drained and rinsed
1 can (15 1/2 ounces) Bush's Cannellini Beans, drained and rinsed
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
1/2 cup red onion, diced
1 cucumber, seeded and diced
1/2 cup Kalamata olives, pitted and halved

1/2 cup feta cheese, crumbled
1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped
Greek dressing (directions below)
1 cup tzatziki sauce (directions below)
chicken skewers (optional), for serving
To make dressing: In food processor or blender, blend olive oil; red wine vinegar; lemon juice; Dijon mustard; garlic; oregano; and salt and pepper, to taste, until well combined. Set aside.

To make tzatziki sauce: In bowl, stir yogurt; cucumber; lemon juice; olive oil; garlic; dill; and salt and pepper, to taste, until well combined. Set aside.

To make salad: In large bowl, combine chick peas, cannellini beans, cherry tomatoes, red onion, cucumber, olives, feta cheese and parsley; toss with dressing.

Top with tzatziki sauce and serve with chicken skewers, if desired.

Chef's tip: Store leftover tzatziki sauce separate from salad.

Quick Homecooked Chili

Recipe adapted from Allrecipes
Prep time: 10 minutes Cook time: 20 minutes

Servings: 6
1 pound ground beef
1 onion, chopped
1 can (15 ounces) tomato sauce
1 can (15 ounces) kidney beans
1 can (14 1/2 ounces) stewed tomatoes
1 can (10 ounces) diced tomatoes with green chilies
1 sweet potato, cubed
water (optional)
1 teaspoon chili powder
1 pinch garlic powder
salt, to taste
pepper, to taste
sour cream (optional)
sliced avocado (optional)

In large saucepan over medium heat, cook ground beef and onion until meat is browned and onion is tender, 5-7 minutes.

Stir in tomato sauce, kidney beans, stewed tomatoes with juices, diced tomatoes with green chilies and cubed sweet potato. Add water to reach desired consistency. Season with chili powder and garlic powder. Add salt and pepper, to taste. Bring to boil then reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer 15 minutes.

Serve with sour cream and sliced avocado, if desired.
Photo courtesy of Unsplash