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Bottoms up

Dustin McCaughan and Scott Sawatzky of the Trans Canada Brewing Company with some of the grains used in the production of their beer, during a beer tasting event at the Neubergthal Commons Barn on March 6.

PHOTO BY LORI PENNER/VOICE

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Altona At Your Service 2025 Directory

We will be publishing this directory soon.

If you want your business on this list, please call Gwen Dyck at 204-823-0535 or email gdyck@winklermordenvoice.ca

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get informed

Blue Bomber pays GVC a visit to promote financial literacy

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Garden Valley Collegiate students got a crash course in financial literacy last week.

The Winkler school was selected to host one of Access Credit Union's "Tackle Your Finances Like a Pro" workshops featuring Winnipeg Blue Bomber Nic Demski.

Financial literacy specialist Emily Suderman says they've been to several schools throughout Access CU's service area since launching this program in partnership with the CFL team last fall. The Winkler stop was the first one for 2025.

"This is our fourth workshop with the Bombers. It's been super exciting," she said, noting they'd previously been at schools in Winnipeg, Oak Bank, and Morris and have several

stops planned for the weeks ahead.

"We're trying to teach practical money management tips for students," Suderman explained. "They're in high school, they're getting ready to think about post-secondary education and moving on to the next chapter in their lives and we want to set them up with some good advice to help make sure it's a smooth transition for them into the adult world."

Bringing a Bomber along certainly helps to keep the students' interest, Suderman noted.

"It really makes talking about financial literacy cool," she said. "And Nic has been wonderful. He gives lots of great advice and tips to the students as well, so we've been lucky to have him along for the journey."

Teacher Rhonda Kezema was the one who applied for GVC to host the



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Winnipeg Blue Bombers wide receiver Nic Demski with Access Credit Union financial literacy specialist Emily Suderman at GVC last week.

workshop for students in the school's essential math, personal finance, and accounting courses.

"We want them to leave high school with an understanding of financial literacy," she said. "It's a life skill and something I am very passionate about."

The workshop began with Access CU's Tamara Friesen and Lea Tissen going over the different types of accounts the financial institution offers, responsible debit and credit card use, what a credit score is and how one builds it up, and setting and achieving financial goals.

Things then wrapped up with a Q&A with Demski. The Winnipeg native was a sixth overall CFL draft pick in 2015, starting his career playing for the Saskatchewan Roughriders for three seasons before signing with Winnipeg in 2018. The wide receiver is a two-time Grey Cup champion and four-time CFL West All-Star.

Demski shared memories of his childhood football aspirations and what it was like to make it as a professional football player.

"I came to the CFL when I was about 21 years old, so I was kind of a cocky kid until I got humbled," he recalled, noting he had a host of personal goals that first season—wanting to get the most yards and win Rookie of the Year, for example. He still strives for personal growth, but his perspective has widened. "The more years that I played, you kind of see the bigger picture. Now all I think about is just winning the Grey Cup and getting there."

Off the field, Demski shared the importance of learning to spend his

money wisely.

"I've definitely made my fair share of financial mistakes," he admitted. "I was pretty young [to be] making good money."

The first thing he did with his rookie signing bonus was buy a vehicle.

"Probably some people think that's a good investment," Demski observed. "I'm here to tell you it's not."

"Save some of that," he stressed. "Put a little bit down on a car and then save the rest and invest and get your money back somewhere else."

"Of course, you want to spend on some stuff, on what makes you happy. But at the end of the day, you want to save," Demski said. "I've definitely tilted my priorities nowadays. I'm a lot older, I've got a family and all that. So I live a pretty low-key life in the off-season."

The key is to splurge only occasionally and to consistently focus on saving, he emphasized.

"Save a little bit more than you spend," he encouraged the students.

Bigger picture, he reminded the youth to believe in themselves, wherever their path in life takes them.

"Always dream big, but make sure you put in the work," he said. "I've always dreamed about being a professional football player, and here I am 10 years later, so nothing is too far to reach—just believe in yourself and work hard and you'll be able to do it."

The Tackle Your Finances Like a Pro program will soon be accepting applications from teachers for the next round of workshops. For more information, head to community.accesscu.ca/bombers.

DID YOU KNOW?

Are you planning a block party or other community event?

The Town of Altona encourages community building events, and have made it easier to apply for a temporary street closure with the newly updated Temporary Street Closure policy.

Visit altona.ca/p/request-a-street-closure for more information, or to submit your request.



Luncheon marks International Women's Day

By Lorne Stelmach

Three local women who have succeeded in male-dominated fields were fitting choices to speak at an International Women's Day luncheon last Friday in Morden.

The Morden Chamber of Commerce event heard from Morden Police Cst. Pam Goertzen, paramedic and volunteer firefighter Taylor Rankin, and Dr. Leanne Nause.

"We are proving that women not only belong in these spaces but that we can thrive," said Goertzen, who started as a special constable with the Morden Police Service in 1997 and then became a constable in 1999. She was the first woman to be hired by the department and its first special constable.

"In any career, but especially a male-dominated one, woman often face pressure of proving themselves," Goertzen said. "We must work harder, speak louder and sometimes even assert our worth more forcefully than our counterparts ... but here's the thing: we can do it. In fact, many of us have already done it in big ways and small."

Goertzen noted that she grew up with strong female role models and was always encouraged to pursue any career. She had a cousin who worked as a loss prevention officer, and Goertzen worked in that role for the Hudson's Bay Company for a time before gaining experience with the RCMP ahead of joining the Morden department.

She noted the statistics in 1997 were that only 11 per cent of officers in Canada were female. The most recent stats show that number has climbed to 23 per cent.

Morden now has two special constables and one female constable, and Goertzen noted there are now a number of other women with police services across the region.

"It also has practical and positive outcomes," she said. "They tend to excel in communication, de-escalation and conflict resolution, which are invaluable skills in the complex and often tense situations that law enforcement officers face daily."

"Females are still under-represented in this career as a whole," Goertzen added, noting though that there have been positive steps forward for law enforcement overall. "We must continue to work towards a future where all officers, regardless of gender, have equal opportunity to succeed and make a meaningful impact in the communities they serve."

A full-time paramedic at Boundary Trails Health Centre as well as a volunteer firefighter in Morden, Rankin also recalled being encouraged by her parents.

"I was fortunate to grow up in a small town and be raised by parents who allowed me to pursue my passions from a young age."

As a female paramedic, she noted it is still a male-dominated field, but she suggested it is making great strides towards gender equality, estimating BTHC paramedics are now at about a 60-40 split between male and female.

"I've never felt out of place," Rankin said. "Being a female can be an advantage ... especially when it comes to treating and comforting vulnerable female patients."

"It's inspiring to see more and more women in these roles ... I also do my part to encourage anyone, especially females, interested in this exciting field of work," she continued. "Gone are the days when paramedics were seen as a man's job ... today when you see an ambulance driving by or a paramedic in the hospital hallway, there's a good chance that person who's helping a patient is a woman."

She also reflected on joining the fire department in 2023 and being the only female member at that time.

"During my training, I felt pressure and motivation to push myself to be the best I could be," Rankin noted. "I may be one of the first, but I know I won't be the last."

Nause shared that how approaching this talk gave her the chance to reflect on where she came from, and she emphasized the mantra that she believed that she could, so she did.

She recalled having a fierce independence at an early age and having the full encouragement of her parents. As an avid reader, she was inspired by stories about such pioneering women such as Amelia Earhart, Helen Keller, and Nellie McClung.

"I used to dream about being that brave," said Nause, whose medical role has grown and expanded to include emergency care and obstetrics in addition to general family medicine.

She remembered when she was about to work her first emergency shift at BTHC and was the lone doctor there on the weekend of the Corn and Apple Festival. She also recalled she graduated in a class that was 70 per cent male.

"I recognized that much of the ground had been broken by women before me ... the many women in medicine who paved the way for myself and my female colleagues," said Nause, who noted many fields of medicine are still very much male-dominated.



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

From left: Taylor Rankin, Cst. Pam Goertzen, and Dr. Leanne Nause shared their stories at the Morden chamber's International Women's Day luncheon last week.

She cited the importance of qualities like determination, strength, and resilience.

"Although I know I'm not going to change the world, I do hope to

inspire someone who will," Nause concluded. "My advice is that we challenge ourselves, tell ourselves we can do it and tell each other we can do it."

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Western School Division passes \$33M budget

By Lorne Stelmach

Western School Division has introduced a budget for the 2025-26 school year that increases by a little over seven per cent to just over \$33 million.

Boosted by a nine per cent increase in provincial funding, the financial plan was able to see the mill rate decline slightly while still accomplishing what the school trustees see as vital to meet the needs of a growing division.

"I think the main focus of every budget that we do is kids," board chair Darcy Wolfe said at public budget forum last Tuesday at École Discovery Trails school.

"We're living in a time right now where teaching kids in our school system not just the math, the English, the sciences, which obviously are the most important, but teaching them to



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE
Western School Division board chair Darcy Wolfe lays out the financial plan.

be kind, teaching them to be honest, and teaching them the value of hard work and perseverance is more important than ever," he said. "I think our community wants us to fund programs that will produce good citizens and good leaders for the future."

The bottom line on the tax bills for ratepayers will vary, but the budget presentation offered a few examples:

- An house assessed at \$375,000 will see a decrease from \$2,340.56 to \$2,306.81, a decrease of \$33.75 in school tax; \$13.47 less after the new tax rebate.

- A \$1 million quarter section of farmland in the RM of Stanley will see a \$52 decrease from \$3,606.20 to \$3,554.20.

- A \$350,000 business in downtown Morden will see school taxes drop from \$5,004.55 to \$4,959.05, a decrease of \$45.50.

Several other factors also have come into play though with this budget and how it might impact tax bills, including the province-wide staffing increase negotiated by the government.

"That increase is definitely affecting our budget and the numbers that we're working with," Wolfe said.

Another factor is how the homeowners tax credit changed from what has been done in previous years where taxpayers were getting back 50 per cent of their total tax bill.

"This year the province has capped that at a maximum of \$1,500," noted Wolfe. "If your taxes were, let's say, \$3,000, you would still be getting that 50 per cent back ... if it was above that, then you're getting a little bit less back this year."

In addition, it was a reassessment year, so increases in the value of a

property will have an impact.

"We're actually lowering the mill rate, so the per cent that we're taking off each thousand value of your property is going down ... but if your house increases by 14 per cent or 10 per cent, that offsets that," Wolfe explained.

The base operating support from the province for WSD increased 9.8 per cent or \$1.6 million to just over \$15.5 million. Other provincial support including targeted funding for specific programs comes in at just over \$9 million, which represents a 64 per cent increase. The total tax revenue from the special requirement decreases by 23 per cent to just over \$8 million.

The largest portion of expenditures as always is salaries and benefits, which represent 83.75 per cent of the budget. Salary costs increase by 6.6 per cent to \$25.6 million, while benefits rise by three per cent to just over \$2 million.

Instructional support comes in next at 7.24 per cent followed by transportation and operations at 6.43 per cent. Other minor areas include administrative costs and adult and community education.

A few of the specific significant categories include the following:

- Operations and maintenance - a 17 per cent increase to \$1.7 million.

- Regular instruction - a 21 per cent increase to \$1.5 million.

- Transportation - almost unchanged at \$551,000.

- Instructional and pupil support - an 11.6 per cent increase to \$413,000.

- Division administration - a 2.6 per cent increase to \$237,000.

- Student support services - an 18.2 per cent increase to \$141,000.

- Adult learning centre - a 1.5 per cent increase to \$107,000.

Wolfe acknowledged the division was in a fortunate situation as a result of getting the 9.8 per cent increase in provincial funding.

"That's definitely much better than a lot of divisions got in the province. I think it speaks to the fact that we're a rapidly growing division," he said.

"Our student population continues to grow really quickly, so we need those percentage increases to be able to deal with increasing staff needs, increasing needs in general, infrastructure needs and things like that which need to happen in our schools," he added. "Without that increase, our budget wouldn't look the way it looks right now."

"One of the things that happens is ... what we run into in school divisions is we are a people business," observed Wolfe. "So a lot of the money, that increase, is taken up by staffing increases, increases in EA time and teacher time, and that takes a chunk of it."

"Then we have a small little bit that we can manoeuvre with ... one of the things that we talked about as a board that we are looking to do this year with this budget is to upgrade the MCI human ecology space ... that's a space I think looks the same as it did when I was going to high school there."

"With the building of a new school, we're trying to find some money to upgrade other schools as well and do something for them," he finally noted. "Another thing that we heard was an upgrade of our website ... we're hoping to make that a little bit more accessible."

Local companies bracing for potential impacts of ongoing trade war with the U.S.

By Lorne Stelmach

The impact of a trade war with the United States could be significant for many industries and manufacturers in the region.

Companies here are watching developments closely and hoping that cooler heads prevail sooner than later before it takes too much of a toll on them.

"Even six months to a year is already millions of dollars for us ... it is very significant," said Wayne Rempel, CEO at Kroeker Farms Limited in Winkler.

Rempel said the tariffs are going to have quite an impact on their business because so much of their product

goes across the border.

"It's pretty painful for us because that's a lot of dollars ... it comes off the bottom line," he said.

"It's frustrating for one that we have a very unstable U.S. situation, but that's something we don't have any control of ... it's frustrating that he's [President Donald Trump] picking on something like food and agriculture products. It's almost inconceivable," Rempel continued.

"On the other hand, our government

has been very slow in responding. It's always at the eleventh hour ... something could have been done sooner, so I'm a little frustrated with our government," he said. "We kind of have a lame duck prime minister. Mind you, I think he's done better in the last month than his whole term almost. He's been late coming to the party and being proactive."

Rempel said they are working hard to keep in contact and communicate with their U.S. customers.

"We have lots of great customers in the U.S. We grow some of our potatoes specifically for those customers, and we've spent years developing these relationships," he said. "We are in no way planning to let those go. We have to maintain the customers. They're extremely valuable."

"So it means we have to ship at whatever it costs us ... I'm hoping some of that pain gets spread around a little bit. We're asking those customers to consider giving us a little extra money, or as much as they can."

"I'm also lobbying U.S. growers because we have lots of good connections there," Rempel said. "The only

"EVEN SIX MONTHS TO A YEAR IS ALREADY MILLIONS OF DOLLARS [LOST] FOR US ..."

“How far we have come”

PVHS reflects on the last year—and its past 20 years of service

By Lorne Stelmach

The past year was one of increased need for the services of the Pembina Valley Humane Society, yet the organization was able to meet that demand and even show a surplus.

That level of success was celebrated last Tuesday at the humane society’s annual meeting, where board chairperson Audrey Wiebe also noted the organization was marking 20 years.

“How far we have come,” said Wiebe, who recalled its start in 2005 in a small donated space in an incubator mall, where it was run solely by volunteers. Today, since moving to their new building in 2010, the agency employs three full-time staff and has

multiple community outreach programs.

“This past year has been one of significant progress in our mission to create a more humane community for animals, particularly through our continued focus on proactive measures,” said Wiebe. “The overpopulation crisis is one that we need to take seriously ... we firmly believe that prevention is the most effective way to address animal overpopulation and reduce the suffering of countless animals.”

She highlighted the success of its pilot trap-neuter-return (TNR) program last fall where the goal was to trap and sterilize 10 community/stray cats.

“We were blown away with trap-

ping and sterilizing 41 cats,” Wiebe noted. “We returned 18 and rehomed 23 cats in total, preventing the birth of countless kittens and improving the lives of those already living on the streets.”

She also noted the annual low-cost spay and neuter program and annual spay day also saw an increase of 40 per cent more surgeries.

“We recognize the financial burden that unplanned litters can place on families, and we are committed to our partnership with the Morden and Winkler vet clinics to support these families to do their part in the pet overpopulation crisis,” Wiebe said.

“Looking ahead, we are committed to expanding our TNR efforts, increasing access to low-cost spay/neuter services and strengthening our community outreach programs,” she added. “We will continue to prioritize proactive solutions that address the root causes of animal overpopulation and promote responsible pet ownership.”

Last year saw animal intakes soar to 275, which represented a 72 per cent increase.

“If you were to see our waiting list



VOICE FILE PHOTO

Pembina Valley Humane Society volunteers walking in the Morden Corn and Apple parade last summer.

right now and compare it to ... this time last year, it is so much better because we are able to take in and help so many more animals. It’s been amazing,” noted shelter manager Jennifer Young.

In 2024, the humane society successfully placed 251 animals into new homes, which represented a 56 per cent increase from 161 adoptions in 2023.

Continued on page 7

Altona reconciliation group hosting giant map exercise

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Altona’s Steps Toward Reconciliation (STR) group is hosting an Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada exercise designed to get people thinking about this land as viewed through the lens of its original inhabitants.

A giant floor map will be set up at the Millennium Exhibition Centre on Saturday, March 22 for a workshop that will run from 10 a.m. to noon, with an optional sharing circle to follow.

STR is borrowing the map from Border Land School Division, and educators Kerri Keffer and Mick Friesen will be coming along to lead participants through an interactive workshop that invites them to walk on the map as they learn about Canada before colonization.

“This is something new for us, but we are fortunate to have a partnership with Border Land School Division,” says STR’s Dorothy Braun. “They use the map for student education, so it’s on loan from them, and we really appreciate that because it gives us the chance to let members of the community experience this resource as well. And it’s quite a resource.”

The map shows the locations of Indigenous communities, residential schools, and historic and modern treaties. Rather than showing political borders, it breaks Canada up into Indigenous language groups.

“It gives you a picture of Canada, what became Canada and somewhat into the United States, going back and showing you the Indigenous map, pre-European,” Braun explains. “You wander around this map following the questions and guidelines from the facilitators.”

Topics range from Indigenous migration and trade routes to governance to the original names given to certain areas or landmarks.

“It kind of gives you a picture of what was here,” Braun says, noting the immersive nature of the exercise serves as a great educational tool. “It’s not just words, it’s experience.”

The workshops also discuss the process of colonization and its impacts on Indigenous people, where reserves were set up, Métis communities, and more.

“It’s a really neat way to learn about historical events,” Braun says, noting that Keffer, a teacher at Ross L. Gray School in Sprague, brings a Métis perspective to the exercise.

All are welcome to this free event, though space is limited. Participants will need to remove their footwear to walk on the map. To register, email stepsaltona@gmail.com.

This is just the first of two STR events this spring. The group is also planning a pow wow demonstration, also at the exhibition centre, on Saturday, May 3 at 10 a.m.

Continued on page 7

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> TARIFFS, FROM PG. 4

way for us to ease the pain is for the price to go up. It's also an opportunity for them to capitalize and get a higher price too, though."

The tariffs will hurt them all in the long run, Rempel said, noting even with input costs being impacted as well.

"I was expecting the exchange rate to maybe soften the blow a little bit," he said. "I fully expect or hope that the reciprocal tariffs that we charge them don't just get stuffed into the government's pockets but get redistributed to those who are feeling the pain."

He was encouraged that there has been some movement happening with the tariffs being delayed last week and the U.S. making the decision to give a break to the auto industry, for example.

"I'm hoping there is something for agriculture as well. And I hope we get to the negotiating table and work something out."

FRIESENS GRATEFUL TO FALL UNDER EXEMPTIONS

For Friesen's Corporation in Altona, the tariffs would potentially have a very major impact if they were to be applied to them.

"We are one of very few manufacturers in Canada that is probably going to fare okay with the tariffs ... there's an exemption," noted president and CEO Chad Friesen, explaining it comes under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act which outlines exemptions for informational materials including publications. "So our products, books, fall under that exemption. Everything's been very unpredictable over the last while, but we believe that exemption will hold. It has held."

That said, "just because we're going to avoid the tariffs, we're going to face some struggles," Friesen noted. "Obviously there are ramifications for the overall economy, and southern Manitoba is going to feel very significant pain. Most of the businesses in southern Manitoba are exporters."

There is a ripple effect when one considers the overall impact on communities with the resulting economic

struggles and perhaps job losses in those businesses hardest hit by tariffs.

"That can have an immediate affect on whole families and whole communities," Friesen observed.

"We'll know more once more shipments go across into the United States ... about 60 to 70 per cent of the products we produce are exported to the U.S.," noted Friesen, who added they are in a different situation as well in being an employee-owned company. "We've set aside some cash reserves that allow us to navigate through difficult times and not have a knee jerk reaction to things like a drop in share price."

DECOR TAKING A STRATEGIC APPROACH

The trade war will also have an impact on Decor Cabinets in Morden, which ships a significant amount to the U.S. When reached for comment on the issue, the company released a statement:

"At Decor, we monitor the evolving trade situation daily and its potential impact on our industry. Like many manufacturers, tariffs create additional cost pressures on materials and distribution. Still, our priority remains the same: protecting our staff's jobs and delivering high-quality products while supporting our dealer and design partners with stability and transparency.

"Rather than reacting impulsively, we are taking a strategic approach to minimize disruptions," the company said. "This includes optimizing our pricing structure, adjusting our supply chain where possible, and providing our dealers with clear, proactive communication.

"These steps ensure that we remain

adaptable while continuing to provide the craftsmanship and reliability our customers expect."

The statement added that it is at times like these that their company culture keeps them strong, and it relayed a recent message which an employee, Craig Geake, recently shared with the customer solutions team:

"As hard as this current situation is on all of us, we have to remember that we can only focus on things that are within our control. We cannot control what another person decides to do.

"But there are things that are within our control: the attitude we bring to work each day and the quality we put into our work. More than ever, we need to adjust our mindset to one where we take the time necessary on each job or quote to make sure we do it correctly the first time. If we strive to do that, then we can make Décor a better place."

This sentiment embodies the way they approach every challenge as an opportunity to focus on what truly matters and keep moving forward, the company said.

"We will navigate this together through resilience, craftsmanship, and strong partnerships, ensuring that Decor remains a steady and reliable presence for our dealers, designers, and customers."

"WE WILL NAVIGATE THIS TOGETHER THROUGH RESILIENCE ..."

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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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Eva Unger honoured for ministry volunteerism

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Eva Unger has been working behind the scenes with Sixteen13 Ministry for nearly six years now, and last month she was honoured for her unwavering volunteerism with the King Charles III Coronation Medal.

The honour comes as quite a surprise to the Reinfeld resident, who got involved with the ministry after it reached out a helping hand to her and children.

"I don't know if I deserve it," she says. "But I am glad ... it means my job, what I'm doing, somebody appreciates it."

Unger has been with the Christian ministry since its start; she and her three daughters are always willing to lend a hand wherever it's needed.

Much of her time is spent in the food program, helping to sort and prepare care hampers for families in need.

It's a need she herself can empathize with, Unger says in sharing how she got her start with Sixteen13.

"That was just barely before COVID started in 2019," she recalls. "My hus-

band left me and my kids and we had nothing. We had nothing to eat. We had no money.

"Somebody—I don't know who—told Harold [Espinosa, ministry founder] about it and he showed up at my yard with groceries."

The ministry walked alongside Unger to help her put food on the table and keep a roof over her kids' heads, and she felt called to return the favour.

"I see how many more people are struggling. That it's not just me," Unger says. "Then that keeps you going."

"I appreciate everything that the ministry did for me so I didn't have to be on the street or whatever, and I keep working there because I appreciate what they have done and what they're still doing."

Braun also volunteers on occasion with the Hope Thrift Store in Morden, but Sixteen13 is her main focus.

She encourages others to get involved in their community however they can to help lighten the load on those who are struggling.

"Everybody needs help sometimes,"



Eva Unger, shown here at work volunteering with Sixteen13's food program, was honoured recently with the King Charles III Coronation Medal.

VOICE FILE PHOTO

she says. "If you help people, for me, that's a big thing ... it is a good thing that you can do in your community. A really good thing."

"Or even just be there, listen to other people about what they're going through," she adds. "It's not easy what people are going through. For the longest time, I thought I was the only one that's going through a hard

time. But I have talked to so many people through the ministry.

"I'm glad that the ministry is there for me to walk with me and pray for me ... it's the most important thing."

Braun wasn't able to make the presentation ceremony hosted by MP Branden Leslie Feb. 15, but hopes to have her medal in hand soon.

MAF Power of the Purse brunch set for April 5

By Lorne Stelmach

An annual initiative that aims to engage women in community philanthropy returns next month.

The Morden Area Foundation's Power of the Purse fundraising brunch is set for Saturday, April 5 at St. Paul's United Church.

The event helps build visibility for Morden's charitable sector while bringing women together

to learn about the needs of the community and to support local non-profits through donor-directed grants.

It started 10 years ago as the Women's Giving Circle with the goal to raise and grant out \$10,000—\$100 from each of the 100 women who took part that first year.

This year they're going to be doing something special to mark the anniversary milestone, shares foundation chair Sue Nelson.

"Usually we have three groups that the money is divided among," she said. "This year we will have four groups. So four local charities are going to make their presentations, and the ladies will decide how they want their money to be distributed."

"Plus, the foundation is going to add an extra \$10,000 to that."

The brunch also assists with building the Power of the Purse Endowment Fund, which is being built to generate enough income to continue to make annual grants to local charities already at work in the community and to encourage the birth and growth of new initiatives that especially target the needs of women and children.

Continued on page 9

> PVHS, FROM PG. 5

Cat adoptions increased by 67 per cent from 84 in 2023 to 140 in 2024, while dog adoptions rose by 44 per cent from 77 in 2023 to 111 in 2024.

And Young further noted the foster program had also been a success with a total of 215 animals fostered for a period of time among 143 dedicated individuals and families. And even better is that they had 70 "foster fails" where the foster homes decided they couldn't let the animal go.

"I think that is a very good number for everybody to know ... we know they are getting a good home," said Young.

Financially, the humane society had revenue of \$348,329 and expenses of \$325,458, so the organization was left with a surplus of \$22,871.

Treasurer Tyler Froebe noted total revenue was boosted by record setting numbers from

> RECONCILIATION, FROM PG. 5

"We have the Joe Creek Drummers and dancers from Roseau River First Nation coming to provide us with a pow wow demonstration," Braun explains. "That one is also a free event, but you don't have to register for it be-

fundraisers.

"It was a record year in a number of ways ... our revenue out performed our budget by 27 per cent, so that's a huge number there. Our fundraisers were a big part of that," he noted.

"We added a lot of new revenue streams this year ... so there's a lot diversity in our revenue stream, which is good for us over the long term."

Wiebe expressed appreciation for all of their staff, volunteers, and supporters as well as the financial support that comes from a number of area municipalities.

"RM funding and city funding, be it from Morden or Winkler, are very very important to us," she said. "I know we're also looking for additional RM funding or additional funding for a potential spay clinic that would be open to the public."

cause we think we'll be able to accommodate lots of people.

"But save the date, because it's going to be a very interesting presentation."

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PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

The new Winners store at the Southland Mall in Winkler cut the ribbon Monday morning to welcome in a large crowd of shoppers.

Cutting the ribbon on Winkler's new Winners store

By Lorne Stelmach

Shoppers were lined up Monday morning for the opening of the new Winners store in Winkler.

A brief ribbon cutting marked the grand opening at the Southland Mall as staff applauded and welcomed the first customers.

The location offers 22,537 square feet of designer and brand name apparel, footwear, accessories, and more.

"We're thrilled to open a new store at the Southland Mall in Winkler. We can't wait to connect with the Winklerites and offer them a unique shopping experience," said Natalie Zaremba, a spokesperson for the company. "With premier fashion, footwear, beauty and accessories arriving daily, you can always find fabulous for less."

Since opening its first store in 1982, the Winners brand has become synonymous with off-price

shopping, utilizing its buying power and vendor relationships to stock the shelves with high-quality, ever-changing merchandise.

The store is part of the TJX Companies, which operates 4,900 stores, including TJ Maxx, Marshalls, HomeGoods, HomeSense and Sierra in the U.S and Winners, HomeSense, and Marshalls in Canada.

Winkler's Winners will be open daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.



Seedy Saturday



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

The first annual Seedy Saturday event at the Winkler library was a hit last weekend, drawing scores of gardeners eager to swap seed packs and learn about everything from the importance of bees as pollinators to winter sowing, no-till gardening, and natural dyeing methods. Organizer Yolanda Friesen of Prairie Harvest

Flowers says she plans to make this an annual event, though they will be looking to hold the next one in a bigger space to provide more room for vendors/education booths and gardeners alike.



Prairie Singers take the stage Sat., March 22

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Prairie Singers choir will raise their 44 voices in song next week at their annual season-ending concert.

The regional choir presents *Echoes* at the Emmanuel Mennonite Church (750 15th St., Winkler) on Saturday, March 22 at 2:30 p.m. and again at 7:30 p.m. Rick Heppner-Mueller will conduct while Marilyn Houser Hamm accompanies on piano.

Prairie Singers is an auditioned choir that has brought together choralsists from across southern Manitoba for decades.

The upcoming concerts are the culmination of three months of rehearsals, shares Heppner-Mueller.

"We start in January, rehearsing once a week, and then now, in the next couple of weeks, we'll be up to two

rehearsals a week as we gear up for the concert," he says. "It's an intensive experience. If we would do this all year round I don't think it would be sustainable, but I think people can really guard these three months and really commit, so we go hard."

This year's choir is, as always, a varied group of singers.

"We've got a diverse group in terms of age, and geographically as well," Heppner-Mueller notes. "From as far east as Altona, for sure, and then Winkler and Morden and a lot of the surrounding communities."

It's an opportunity for vocalists to hone and share their craft while getting to know other like-minded people.

"It's really a community," observes Heppner-Mueller. "There's a musical component, but it really adds to the



SUPPLIED PHOTO

The Prairie Singers' 44 members perform their season-ending concert next week at the Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Winkler.

experience that you get to know new people in this musical environment."

This year's concert has the choir playing around with the *Echoes* theme.

"In many ways, it's like things that reverberate over time," says Heppner-Mueller "So there's a number of songs that are specifically about echoes where you get kind of this call and response back and forth. And there's a variety of sections—echoes of the past, echoes of the Earth, echoes of wonder, of hope, of peace. Really, it's exploring all the ways that things come back to us throughout history, and how, even though we live in the

present, our past impacts our current reality and the future. We're exploring that through music."

Song selections run the gamut from classical pieces to modern-day songs, transcending genres.

"As always, there'll be a wide variety of music," Heppner-Mueller says. "All sorts of different genres ... we're also doing some lighter music and some music that's a little more thought-provoking."

Admission is \$15 for adults, \$5 for students. Tickets are available at the door or from choir members.

> POWER OF THE PURSE, FROM PG. 7

The event takes place from 9-11:30 a.m. and will feature brunch and also presentations from the participating charities, whose names are kept under wraps until that day.

"Power of the Purse is aimed at groups that address local needs ... local charities that are doing some kind of work with women, children and families," Nelson explained. "Projects that are in the \$3,000 to \$5,000 range are typically what we are looking for, and novel projects too."

Last year, 126 women came together to donate \$12,600 to the Learn and Return health care bursary, Youth for Christ Morden for its garden project, and the Morden Family Resource Centre for its lending library.

If you'd like to take part in this year's Power of the Purse, contact the Morden Area Foundation at 431-349-1138 or via email to info@mordenfoundation.ca by March 28.

Nelson said they very much look forward to having a full house again for the event.

"There's certainly a core group of ladies who come out every year and enjoy it and for a number of reasons. Not only are they supporting local organizations and local charities and things that are impactful in the community, it's also an opportunity to get together and have a nice time."



VOICE FILE PHOTO

The 10th annual Power of the Purse will support four local non-profits this year. Last year's event raised \$12,600.



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getinformed

Altona chamber reflects on challenges and opportunities

By Lori Penner

At last week's Altona & District Chamber of Commerce annual general meeting, chamber president Cal Smith painted a picture of 2024 as a year filled with challenges, but also significant progress.

Addressing a room full of business leaders, municipal representatives, and community members, Smith emphasized the chamber's ongoing efforts to connect and support local businesses and navigate economic uncertainties.

He also highlighted the organization's commitment to building connections through various events and initiatives, including Lunch and Learns, networking gatherings, and formal business programs.

"Our focus has been about getting people together," he said. "Programming to support local businesses and the continued success of the Chamber Bucks program have all produced positive results and helped to ensure our membership is moving forward."

The Chamber Bucks initiative, which encourages local spending by offering a gift certificate program redeemable at participating businesses, has been a particularly successful tool, Smith said.

Beyond networking and economic initiatives, Smith pointed out that both the business sector and municipal organizations have experienced some growth this year.

He acknowledged the role of local development agencies in driving this expansion, specifically noting the re-branding of SEED (Supporting Entrepreneurs through Economic Development) as ARED (Altona Rhineland Economic Development).

"I'd be remiss if I didn't highlight their continued support," he said.

Despite these positive developments, Smith did not shy away from addressing the concerns weighing on the minds of business owners.

"Uncertainty seems to be the word of the day," he acknowledged. "Busi-

nesses are wondering what's happening and what they can do to keep things moving forward. There are constant issues that keep business owners and managers awake at night, whether it's new markets, supporting local programs, interest rates, tariffs, and the various costs that keep rising. Will this ever end? We really

don't know."

He urged business owners to remain proactive and adaptable, emphasizing that a forward-thinking approach would be key to overcoming these hurdles.

"You just can't focus on the problems," he said. "We want to be proactive and keep vigilant on how we can improve. It's an opportunity to sit back and figure out how to make things better for us and the business community."

Smith stressed that the chamber plays a vital role in helping businesses navigate these uncertain times.

"OUR FOCUS HAS BEEN ABOUT GETTING PEOPLE TOGETHER."



PHOTO BY LORI PENNER/VOICE

From left: Stephanie Harris, economic officer with ARED, president and CEO of the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce Chuck Davidson, Altona and District Chamber of Commerce president Cal Smith, and events and programs coordinator Chloe Driedger at the chamber's AGM last week.

"That's what the chamber is here for. To listen to your concerns. To see how we can assist and explore how the local network can support our business community."

Financially, the chamber closed 2024 with \$275,439 in revenue, though it faced a deficit of \$5,158. While this shortfall was acknowledged, Smith assured members that strategic efforts were underway to strengthen financial sustainability in the coming year.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER ADDRESSES CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

The event's keynote speaker, Chuck Davidson, president and CEO of the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, delivered an insightful address on the pressing challenges facing local businesses.

"We know businesses are facing real

struggles right now, and our job is to listen, advocate, and find solutions," he said.

Davidson presented findings from recent surveys, identifying workforce shortages, inflationary pressures, and the impact of tariffs as top concerns for business owners.

"Businesses are telling us they need help finding workers, managing rising costs, and navigating trade challenges. These aren't just numbers on a report—they're real issues affecting people's livelihoods."

One of the most pressing issues discussed was the labour shortage, particularly the difficulty in attracting and retaining skilled workers. Davidson stressed the need for workforce strategies that align with the needs of local businesses.

"We need to ensure our workforce

Continued on page 11

RM of Morris council approves \$9.1M budget

By Siobhan Maas

The RM of Morris council presented their 2025 financial plan and capital budget on Feb. 26.

Overall operating budget is estimated at \$9.1 million, an increase of almost \$920,000, or 11.7 per cent, from

last year.

Tax revenue will increase in 2025 by almost \$500,000 to \$6.13 million. Various provincial and federal monies contribute \$1.6 million to the budget. A further \$697,500 and \$430,000 will be transferred from general reserves

and borrowing and brought in by waste management, respectively, to help balance the financial plan.

Major projects planned for 2025 include the renovation of the Lowe Farm fire hall, purchase of a skid steer, bridge repair, leachate pond,

and fixes along road 2E for a total of \$1.3 million.

The current budget year operated with a deficit of \$51,000.

Reeve Scott Siemens did not make himself available for comment on the financial plan.

A fresh badge of honour

By Lori Penner

The Altona Police Service is sporting a fresh new look with an updated design for its crests.

The change was prompted by the need to restock shoulder insignia, giving Chief Dan Defer and his team the perfect opportunity to refresh the badge and introduce a more distinct design.

“We had to reorder badges anyway, so we figured now was the time to make a change,” Defer explains.

One of the most notable features of the new design is the inclusion of the King’s Crown, symbolizing the shift from the Queen’s Crown following the change in monarchy. Additionally, a sheath of wheat represents Altona’s agricultural roots, while the provincial flag and the year the department was incorporated—1919—are displayed at the bottom.

The new insignia also departs from the squared shape that had become common in many Manitoba police

departments during a trend toward uniformity in recent years.

“It was time to bring back something unique to Altona,” says Defer. “The new crest is a return to a shape and design reminiscent of our past, something that stands out and says, ‘This is us.’”

The redesign process initially saw the department given two options to pick from, but neither fully captured Defer’s vision. So he worked with the graphics team to merge elements from both, crafting a crest that balances traditional and modern elements.

The result is a badge that symbolizes the town’s history while also offering a fresh, visually striking look.

The updated design will soon be featured on new uniforms, with officers expected to begin wearing them in the coming weeks. The department’s metal badges will likely follow in the near future. Additionally, the new crest will be displayed on the upcoming police cruiser due to arrive this summer, with plans to update the

Altona Police unveil new crest design

other cruisers’ decals at that time.

Defer notes that the decision to overhaul the insignia was not just about aesthetics but also pride.

“It’s important for us to have something that represents Altona and our unique identity, something that sets us apart from other departments.”

While other departments in the region have yet to follow suit, Defer is hopeful that distinctive local designs will gain traction.

“We’re happy to have brought this back, and I hope it serves as a reminder of who we are and where we come from. It’s not just a new look. It’s a reflection of Altona’s history, our community, and the pride we take in serving it. This is more than a badge—it’s a symbol of who we are.”

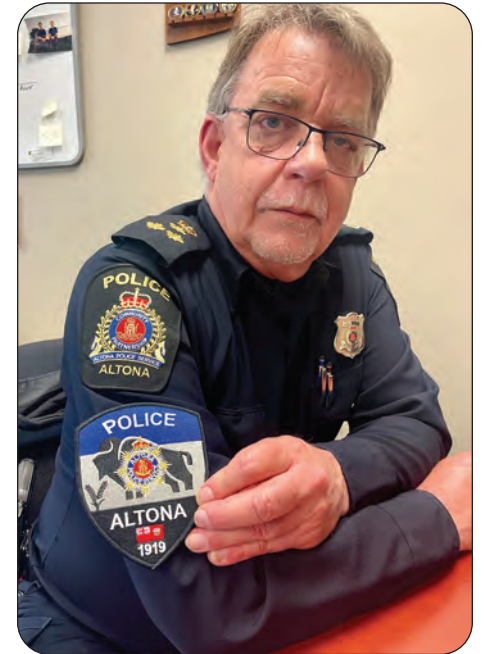


PHOTO BY LORI PENNER/VOICE
Altona Police Chief Dan Defer holding the newly designed badge that will soon be featured on all the department’s uniforms.

> ALTONA CHAMBER, FROM PG. 10

strategies align with the needs of our employers so that businesses can grow and thrive,” he said.

He also underscored the importance of policies that encourage workforce participation and targeted immigration programs that bring in the right talent.

“If we can bring in the right talent and keep them here, everyone benefits.”

Addressing inflation, Davidson acknowledged the financial strain businesses face due to rising operational costs and supply chain disruptions.

“The reality is, businesses are feeling the squeeze from every direction,” he said.

Davidson outlined several initiatives they’re pursuing to provide financial planning resources and lobby for policies that support small and medium-sized enterprises.

“We are working to ensure decision-makers understand the impact of these rising costs and take action to provide some relief.”

The impact of tariffs on manufacturing and agriculture was another major topic of discussion. Davidson emphasized that the provincial organization is actively engaged in ongoing dialogues with policymakers to address inter-provincial trade barriers and push for fairer agreements.

“We continue to advocate for more predictable trade policies that allow our businesses to remain competitive on the global stage,” he noted. He reinforced the importance of maintaining strong relationships with both provincial and federal governments to ensure that business concerns are heard and acted upon. “We need policies that make it easier, not harder, for our businesses to succeed.”

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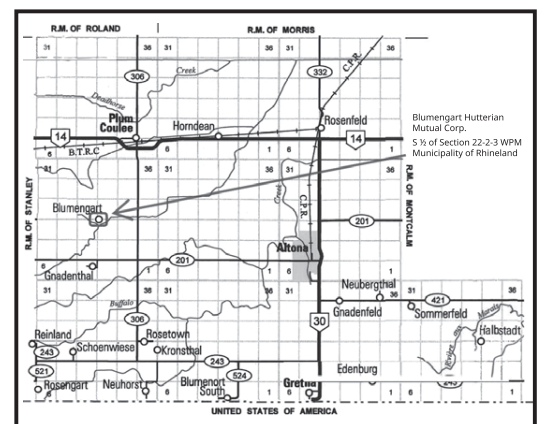
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Attention Residents of the Municipality of Rhineland

Share Your Views

concerning the proposed expansion of a mixed livestock operation – Blumengart Hutterian Mutual Corp. (TRC 12-109)

The Municipality of Rhineland has received a conditional use application from Blumengart Hutterian Mutual Corp. to expand a livestock operation at S ½ of Section 22-2-3 WPM from 600 sows – farrow to partial finish to 1250 sows – farrow to finish and by adding 2000 broiler chickens (1,877 to 2,591 Animal Units in total). This application has been sent to the Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations for review, pursuant on Section 112 of The Planning Act.



If you would like to share your views concerning this proposal, you are invited to contact the Manitoba government by letter or email (TRC@gov.mb.ca) no later than **April 13, 2025**. After this date, the Livestock Technical Review Committee will complete its assessment of the application. Your letter or email must include your name and reference **TRC 12-109**.

All submissions in response to this proposal are considered public information and will be made available to the proponent and placed on the public registry with identifying details removed.

For more information:

Please visit http://www.gov.mb.ca/mr/livestock/public_registries.html or the Municipality of Rhineland office at 109-3rd Avenue NE, Box 270, Altona, MB, R0G 0B0.

Technical Review Co-ordination Unit

Municipal and Northern Relations
604-800 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0N4
Fax: (204) 948-4042



Liberal Party of Canada announces Mark Carney as leader



By Annaliese Meier

The Liberal Party of Canada announced on Sunday that Registered Liberals across the country have elected Mark Carney as the next leader of the party.

“Mark Carney and the Liberal team are ready to deliver a strong plan that will grow our economy, stand up to Donald Trump, and build a better fu-

LIBERAL.CA

Mark Carney won the Liberal Party of Canada leadership race by landslide with 86 per cent of the votes.

ture for all Canadians,” said Sachit Merha, president of the Liberal Party of Canada. “After years of following Donald Trump’s playbook and calling Canada ‘broken,’ Pierre Poilievre is the wrong choice at the wrong time – and only Mark Carney will defend and protect our country.”

Protecting the integrity of the democratic process is a top priority for the party. They designed a secure Leadership race, ensuring it was free from foreign interference by permitting only Canadian citizens and permanent residents to vote. A verification

process was also established to confirm voters’ identities.

A total of 151,899 Registered Liberals participated in the 2025 Leadership race out of the 163,836 who verified their identity to vote—surpassing the turnout in the 2013 Leadership race. Mark Carney received 131,674 votes, resulting in 29,457 points on the first ballot, leading him to win the leadership of the Liberal Party of Canada and become the next Prime Minister. You can find the full results here: <https://chefferie2025leadership.liberal.ca/results/>

Mya Pearce leading the way for Assiniboine College women’s hockey team



By Annaliese Meier

The Assiniboine College Cougars women’s ice hockey team has been dominating the competition this season with an impressive record of 22 wins, 2 ties, and 2 losses. A key player in the team’s success is Manitou’s Mya Pearce, a standout athlete who excels on the ice while balancing an academic schedule as a second-year student in the Early Childhood Education program.

Pearce’s hockey journey began in her hometown of Manitou, where she started playing minor hockey at the age of four. She was one of the few girls competing alongside boys until she turned 12. Pearce also played with several girls’ teams, including the Holland Rockets and Morden Hawks. Her time with the Pembina Valley Hawks in U15 and U18 leagues helped prepare her for the next chapter of her hockey career— Assiniboine College hockey in Brandon.

With 14 points, 5 goals and 9 assists in her debut season with the Cougars, Pearce has been a key contributor to the team’s success.

“I owe everything to my parents,” Pearce said. “They’ve pushed me since I began playing to focus on the basics, like stick handling and shooting in the garage every day. Without their support and constant encouragement, I wouldn’t be where I am today.” She also credits the team for pushing her to

be her best, noting that their tight-knit bond off the ice translates to strong on-ice performance.

Transitioning to college-level hockey hasn’t been without its challenges. For Pearce, the most significant adjustment has been the season’s travel demands. Balancing academics and athletics can be tough with only eight home games and a schedule that sees the team travelling anywhere between two and 10 hours for away games.

“We miss a lot of school, but thankfully our teachers are very understanding and help us stay on track,” Pearce explained.

Despite these challenges, the Cougars have thrived this season, with Pearce and her teammates growing stronger with each game.

“We’ve really come together as a team,” said Pearce. “We work hard in practice and workouts, and we’re always prepared for whatever comes our way. The two losses we’ve had this season have been important for us to learn and grow.”

Notably, the Cougars have even triumphed over two Division I teams, proving their strength despite being in a lower division.

One of the highlights for Pearce this season came when the Cougars defeated Sault St. Marie, a team they faced in the finals at Nationals. “Beating Sault St. Marie always feels great—they’re a huge rival, and they push us to play our best hockey every

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Mya Pearce of Manitou and her teammates on the Assiniboine College women’s hockey team head to Nationals on March 16.



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Continued on page 16

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sports & recreation



PHOTO BY RICK HIEBERT/VOICE

Pembina Valley's Parker Henderson checks Winnipeg's Karsten Woloshen, keeping him from getting a shot on netminder Ryler Gates in last week's game two of the playoff series. The Bruins, who won game one 5-2, took this match 4-1 and then ended the Hawks' season with a 4-1 last Wednesday.

End of the line for Pembina Valley Hawks men's team

By Lorne Stelmach

The male U18 Pembina Valley Hawks couldn't find the answer to overcome the Winnipeg Bruins in their best-of-five quarter-final series.

The Hawks bowed out in three games in the matchup that ended last Wednesday with a 3-1 loss in Winnipeg.

Coach Jeff Andrews was still pleased with the effort and liked how his team strived to improve throughout the season.

"The coaching staff is real proud of

how much growth we witnessed from our young team," he said. "There were lots of growing pains throughout the season, but we learned a lot and secured the sixth seed for the playoffs.

"And we learned lots more in our series with the Bruins," Andrews added. "I think the biggest thing was now our 14 rookies have some playoff experience.

"Things are harder in the playoffs, and everything you do has to be elevated if you're going to beat these teams. We know that now, and unfor-

tunately we have to wait for our next opportunity to show what we have learned."

The series began with the Hawks dropping the opener 5-2 in Winnipeg and then falling 4-1 in game two in Morden.

In game three, Pembina Valley opened the scoring with a power-play goal by Carter Unger, but they couldn't build momentum from there.

The Bruins got stronger as the game went on and got more shots on goal in the second and third periods. They scored twice later in the second and

put it away with another one in the third.

Karsen Dyck made 34 saves as the Bruins held a 37-34 edge in shots on goal.

Andrews expressed his thanks for the dedication and commitment of the players all through the season.

"We would like to thank all the players for their hard work, and we would like to wish our graduating players all the best as they head on to their next hockey journey. We know they will all be successful because they are all quality young men."

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

Twisters, RCMP square off to support HEART

By Siobhan Maas

Last Thursday night brought together the Pembina Valley Twisters and the RCMP Horsemen to raise funds for the Hutterian Emergency Aquatic Response Team (HEART), a group specializing in underwater search and recovery.

The evening comprised of a friendly small-town hockey game with local band Uncorked playing prior to and during intermissions, all in support of HEART.

"It was a great time," said event organizer RCMP Constable Gilles Gravelle. "Hockey brings us together. We can't change the world outside, but we can bring a community together for one night to support a great cause."

Gravelle is happy to support the working relationship between Oak Bluff Colony and the Morris RCMP detachment. The colony, using a pilot plane, found a missing local couple in 2021, alive.

Founded in 2016 by Manuel and Paul Maendel, two brothers from the colony east of Morris, HEART aids in the recovery of individuals lost to drowning.

With scuba diving training support over the years from Brent Stoesz of Steinbach and the introduction of remote operating vehicles (ROVs) in the last several years, the response unit is currently building a facility on-site to house equipment, have permanent office space, and grow their ability to train other recovery teams.

Since its inception, the team has taken part in 68 call-outs, some as far away as Baker Lake, Nunavut, west

to British Columbia, and east to Lake Erie.

Although the group hasn't been as active recently, they launch a few awareness campaigns and functions each year.

Paul Maendel is enthusiastic about what robotics means for the team.

"We operate in dangerous diving conditions and searching in dark, murky water can be tedious," he explained. "Many bodies go unrecovered because conditions become too dangerous. We need the right equipment and the right people. With ROVs, we rarely need to dive."

Diving is occasionally still required if entrapment is an issue, but there is much less stress on the diver due to sonar equipment providing precise information taking place beneath the water or ice surface.

"Families are able to get resolution in a timely manner," Maendel said.

HEART is excited to be partnering with First Nations communities, most recently in Sagkeeng last November, helping Indigenous teams train on robotics usage and scuba diving.

"They have so much tech and resources that searching for their lost people will be enormous for them," said Maendel. "Many communities have years of tantalizing clues for where missing people might be. Can you imagine the closure after all these years? If we can be their trainers, empower them, share our passion, expertise, and knowledge, they can provide their own equipment and people."

The Horsemen are a mixture of RCMP officers and colony players ranging from 28-60 years of age, making up a Thursday night recreational



PHOTOS BY SIOBHAN MAAS/VOICE

The Pembina Valley Twisters and the RCMP Horsemen played a charity game last week in support of the Hutterian Emergency Aquatic Response Team. Below: Uncorked played before the game, and during intermission.

league that plays at the Morris Multiplex.

"Playing against the young Twisters players, we had to push ourselves," Cst. Gravelle laughs. "I'm no spring chicken. We were all exhausted, but I still have a huge smile on my face."

The Horsemen beat the Twisters 10-8.

Gravelle is already planning for double the turnout at next year's hockey fundraiser.

For more information about HEART, visit hearteam.ca.



Pembina Valley Twisters end MMJHL regular season in last place

By Ty Dilello

The Pembina Valley Twisters' historically challenging season has come to a close after losing their final regular season game, resulting in 27 consecutive losses.

The Morris-based MMJHL team finished the season with a record of 3 wins, 40 losses, and 2 overtime losses,

placing them at the bottom of the league standings.

On March 4, the Twisters lost 11-2 on the road to the Charleswood Hawks in a game where they were never truly competitive. Dominic Rooney and Ty Sadowski scored the only goals for Pembina Valley, while Hayden Janzen recorded 46 saves in goal during the loss.

"Despite the rough season that we've had, there's still lots of positives to take from this going forward," said Twisters' head coach Braeden Beer-naerts. "We knew it would be tough this year, but we're a younger team and they got a lot of experience to hopefully come back stronger for next season and contend again."

Austin Spicer led the Twisters in

scoring this season, accumulating 27 points in 39 games, while Josh Guilford followed with 18 points in 44 games.

The MMJHL playoffs begin this week, featuring eight teams competing for the league championship.

The **Voice**

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What's *Your* story?

Winkler Flyers down Blues, fall to Terriers

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Winkler Flyers suffered a rare loss over the weekend, but it barely makes a dent in their record for the season as it nears its end.

The weekend started off on a high note with a 9-2 rout of the Blues in Winnipeg Friday night.

Winkler's offensive lines dominated, firing 56 shots on goal to the Blues' feeble 17.

Jayce Legaarden and Brody Beauchemin made it 2-0 after 20 minutes. Then, in the second period, goals from Nicholas Mckee, Blake Matheson, Andrew Morton, Beauchemin, and Isaiah Peters had the Flyers up 7-1 heading into the final frame.

There, Morton and Liam Carlone sandwiched two more Winkler goals around Winnipeg's second of the night to seal the deal.

Leif Ekblad got the win in net, stopping 15 shots.

Sunday's game in front of a hometown crowd against the third-ranked

Portage Terriers was a much closer affair, one that didn't go Winkler's way.

Despite outshooting their opponents 37-14, the Flyers struggled to find the mark, with only Niklas Gudmundson scoring late in the second period. Portage, meanwhile, had bookended the first period with goals. It was enough to give them the win 2-1.

Liam Ernst was between the posts this game, making 12 saves. Portage goalie Ryan Velan had a 36-save night.

The Flyers have three more games to go, including two against the Winnipeg Freeze (the first in Winnipeg Wednesday and then back in Winkler Friday night) and a home game against the Selkirk Steelers Saturday night.

The team sits comfortably in first place in the MJHL's East Division and the league overall with a record of 43-8-3-1 and 90 points, a full six points ahead of the Steinbach Pistons in second and nine up on the Terriers in third.



My Bobalab wins inaugural Winkler Basketball League title

The Winkler Basketball League wrapped up its inaugural season last week with My Bobalab defeating the Electric Blues 83-58 to win the championship title. Isaiah Friesen led the way for Bobalab as the game's MVP. In the third-place game, the Magics downed the Firebirds 100-79. The season's MVP award went to Garth Rempel. The winter league returns in fall. If you'd like to get involved, connect with organizers via email to winklerbasketballleague@gmail.com.

SUBMITTED PHOTO



Morden Minor Hockey hosts U13 championships, local teams medal

By Voice staff

Local teams once again brought home the hardware from provincial hockey competitions last weekend.

Morden Minor Hockey hosted the 2025 U13 AA and A1 Cargill Hockey Manitoba Provincials, and the local teams won silver in both.

In the U13 event, the home team posted a flawless

3-0 record to earn a seat in the championship game against Macdonald, losing 3-2 in overtime to clinch second place.

In the A1 event, Viriden beat out Morden 3-2 in the final game. The home team had two ties and two wins to their names heading into the final.

Meanwhile, Morden's team at the U13 Rural A2 event in Ste. Anne won gold after a weekend that

saw them start things off with a tie and then follow it up with three wins, including the 5-4 victory against Mitchell in the final.

And Altona Minor Hockey's U18 team won bronze at the Rural B event in Ste. Agathe, downing Springfield 6-3 in the third-place game after going 1-2 in the round robin.



FACEBOOK.COM/ALTONAMINORHOCKEY

ABOVE PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE Morden hosted the Hockey Manitoba U13 AA and A provincial championships last weekend, and the local Morden teams had strong showings. At the AA level, Morden faced MacDonald in the final and took the game to overtime before having to settle for second place. The A team also advanced to the gold medal game against Viriden, but also ended up with silver. Right: Altona won bronze at the U18 championships.

That's a wrap for Winkler Junior Curling program

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Winkler Curling Club's junior program wrapped up a hugely successful season last week with its

championships Thursday night and then a windup funspiel on Saturday. Organizer Ross Derksen shares that the program has made steady progress over the last three years.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Above, from left: Madison Hanan, Isabelle Peters, Hudson Hildebrand, and Liam Peters took home the trophy in the Winkler Curling Club's junior program last week Thursday. Below: The program followed playoffs with a funspiel windup Saturday.



"It almost felt like we were starting from scratch after losing two seasons during the pandemic," he said, noting those lost seasons saw a number of coaches and players move on from the sport, and it's taken some time to get the program back to its previous heights. "The majority of kids were beginners, so it took a lot of work ... we started slow, one day a week the first two years, and then this year we went to two days a week—one practice, one game day every week.

The 2024-2025 program saw 32 youth in Gr. 5-8 come out Mondays and Thursdays from November to March.

"We filled it right up," Derksen said, adding that an increasing number of Winkler youth players have begun venturing to competitions outside the community as well.

"We've had a great season," he said. "This year's been very rewarding."

The Little Rockers program, which ran for five Saturdays in January and February, was also filled with 29 Gr. 1-4 students eager to start learning the sport.

The enthusiasm for curling continues to grow, Derksen observed.

"Our kids seem very passionate about it," he said, adding the dedication of the coaches has also helped the program to thrive. "We have so many willing coaches. For Mondays, for example, we'll have up to 10 coaches there.

"They're all great people so they're good mentors for our kids. It's a really good environment."

Winning the junior program title last week was Madison Hanan, Isabelle Peters, Hudson Hildebrand, and Liam Peters, beating out Eliana Klassen, Danika Peters, Bramwell Friesen, and Ellen Wieler in the final.

> PEARCE, FROM PG. 12

time," said Pearce. Another highlight came after a tough 5-1 loss to the Jamestown Jimmies when the Cougars responded with a dominating 3-0 win in the very next game. "The team was ecstatic after that win. It was a big moment for us," Pearce added.

As the Cougars head into the playoffs, Pearce looks forward to competing in high-stakes tournaments and putting everything the team has worked toward into action.

"We just need to focus on playing Cougars hockey," she said. "If we

stay at our level, we'll stay on top and continue to play our game."

The Cougars are set to compete in the National Tournament. They enter as the top-ranked team in the West Region with an impressive record at the end of regular conference play. The team will face off against Michigan State University, ranked fourth in the Central Region, on Thursday, March 16, at 11:30 a.m. CST.

With the playoffs and Nationals in St. Louis from March 21-25, on the horizon, Pearce and her teammates are eager to take their success to the next level.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Friesens Corporation's employee-owners have been making the rounds recently to present local non-profits and community causes with donations from the Employee-Directed Giving program, including Special O (above) and the Rhineland and Area Food Bank (left).



Friesens Corp. gives back

By Voice staff

Friesens Corporation's employee-owners have been making the rounds recently distributing \$60,000 to community organizations and projects through the company's Employee-Directed Giving Campaign.

The program "enables every employee to vote for a local organization they feel would benefit the most from Friesens charitable giving," the Altona company explained in announcing the recipients. "The number of votes directly affects the donation amount received by the organization."

Recipients include the Boundary

Trails Foundation, Rhineland and Area Food Bank, STARS Air Ambulance, Genesis House, Blue Sky Opportunities, Kiddie Sunshine Centre, Forever Friends, The Community Exchange, Winkler Bible Camp, YFC Altona, and Special Olympics/Altona Panthers.

"Friesens has been in business in Altona for over 118 years, and we are happy to be a part of these donation and sponsorship programs, giving back to the community so that our employee-owners, local businesses and families can all grow and thrive together," the company said in a statement.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

**R.M. OF STANLEY
PUBLIC NOTICE
REGARDING THE 2025
FINANCIAL PLAN**

Public Notice is hereby given pursuant to Subsection 162(2) of The Municipal Act that the Council of the R.M. of Stanley intends to present its Financial Plan for the fiscal year 2025 at a Public Hearing in the Council Chambers of the Municipality on Thursday, March 20, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. Council will hear any person who wishes to make a representation, ask questions, or register an objection to the Financial Plan, as provided. Copies of the 2025 Financial Plan will be available for review prior to the Hearing at the Municipal Office at 1-23111 PTH 14W in the Rural Municipality of Stanley.

PUBLIC NOTICE

**PUBLIC HEARING
2025 Financial Plan**

Public notice is hereby given pursuant to subsection 162(2) of The Municipal Act that the Council of the City of Winkler will present its 2025 Financial Plan at a public hearing to be held on:

March 25, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.
**City of Winkler Council Chambers,
185 Main Street, Winkler, MB**

Council will hear any person who wishes to make a representation, ask questions, or register an objection to the financial plan. Anyone wishing to get a copy of the City's 2025 Financial Plan can contact City Hall by phone at 204-325-9524 or admin@cityofwinkler.ca during regular office hours.

PUBLIC NOTICE

**You are invited to attend
The Town of Altona
2025 Financial Plan Hearing
Tuesday, March 25, 2025
6:00 pm
Council Chambers of
the Altona Civic Centre**

In accordance with subsection 162(2) of The Municipal Act, the Council will present the proposed 2025 Financial Plan for the Town of Altona at 6:00 pm on Tuesday, March 25, 2025 in the Council Chambers of the Altona Civic Centre. The presentation will include the 2025 operating costs, the 2025 capital budget and a five-year capital expenditure program. The presentation will be followed by a forum for questions and comments from the public. The purpose of the hearing is to allow any interested person to make a representation, ask questions or register an objection.

Copies of the proposed Financial Plan will be available after March 20, 2025 on our website at www.altona.ca or upon request at the Town of Altona Administration Office, 111 Centre Avenue during regular business hours. Questions and remarks may be directed by letter or email to our Manager of Finance or through our email address at info@altona.ca.

Terry Fehr, CMMA
Manager of Finance
Town of Altona
terry.ferh@altona.ca
Box 1630
Altona MB R0G 0B0
February 25, 2025

CAREERS

BUNGE

MAINTENANCE MECHANIC/MILLWRIGHT

Bunge Altona has an opening for a Maintenance Mechanic/Millwright. Work involves process equipment installation, maintenance and repair, lubrication, steel fabrication and welding.

Preference will be given to those candidates holding a valid provincial Millwright or Industrial Mechanic ticket. Candidates who do not hold a valid ticket will be expected to enrol in the apprenticeship program to obtain their ticket as soon as possible. Overtime and on-call duties are required. The successful applicant will possess excellent written and verbal communication skills, trouble shooting skills, and be a team player.

The following would be considered an asset for this position:

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A job description for this position can be found online on the Bunge website: <https://obs.bunge.com/>. enter "Altona" in the field "Search by Location". Click on "Maintenance Mechanic/Millwright" to read the description. Applications should be made online with an attached resume.

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FARMLAND TENDER

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McCulloch Mooney Johnston Selby LLP
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PROPERTY THE S ½ OF SECTION 34 AND THE SLY 990 FEET OF THE NW ¼ OF SECTION 34-2-6 WPM being approx. 380 acres

CONDITIONS OF TENDER

1. Interested parties must rely on their own inspection and knowledge of the property.
2. Tenders must be received on or before 2:30 p.m. on March 24th, 2025.
3. Tenders must be accompanied by a \$10,000.00 cheque payable to MMJS LLP in Trust as a deposit. Deposit cheques accompanying unacceptable bids will be returned.
4. Highest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SALE

1. The bidder whose tender is accepted will be required to complete an agreement covering terms and conditions of sale.
2. In addition to the deposit, the balance of the accepted tender must be paid on or before the date of closing which shall be April 11, 2025, or evidence provided that the purchase funds will be available under conditions acceptable to the Vendor. If the balance of the accepted tender is not paid within the set time limit the deposit may be forfeited as liquidated damages and not as a penalty.
3. Possession is not authorized until acceptable arrangements for full payment are made following acceptance of tender.
4. Successful bidder will be responsible for real property taxes commencing January 1, 2025.
5. The purchaser shall be responsible for payment of GST or shall self-assess for GST.

For further information contact Harley J. Shepherd at:
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Fax: 204-745-3963
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PUBLIC NOTICE



The Public Water System Annual Report 2024 is now available online at www.cityofwinkler.ca.

Paper Copies of the report are available, free of charge, at: City Hall, 185 Main Street, Winkler, Manitoba, R6W 1B4

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> GAMES

SUDOKU

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

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!

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

Sudoku Answer

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

Crossword Answer

CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

1. Unsheared sheep
5. Rock TV channel
8. Streetcar
12. Concerning
14. Expression of recognition
15. Greek goddess of youth
16. An iPad is one
18. Adult beverage
19. Manning and Wallach are two
20. Makes a petty verbal attack
21. Tyrion Lannister's nickname
22. Pointed ends of pens
23. Wristwatches
26. Body part
30. Made a mistake
31. Adjusted
32. Turkish honorific title
33. Yell
34. Historic Alabama city
39. Cub
42. Type of sea bass dish
44. To call (archaic)
46. Unfortunate
47. Separate oneself from others
49. Hero sandwiches
50. Former OSS
51. Open spaces in a forest
56. Innermost brain membranes
57. Fortune
58. Hunting expedition
59. Doomed queen Boleyn
60. Peyton's little brother
61. Type of wrap
62. Scottish tax
63. Soviet Socialist Republic
64. An increase in price or value

CLUES DOWN

1. Works of body art
2. Abba __, Israeli politician
3. A desert in Asia
4. Eat greedily

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						
					44	45			46						
				47				48							
49									50		51	52	53	54	55
56									57		58				
59											60				
62									63						
											64				

5. Doomed French queen
6. Beat
7. One who survives on blood
8. As a consequence
9. Counted on
10. Acquired Brain Injury Behavior Science
11. Unclean
13. One who does not drink
17. Wild ox of the Malay Archipelago
24. __ student, learns healing
25. Bacterial skin infection
26. Expresses surprise
27. What one says on a wedding day
28. Crony
29. Where you entered the world (abbr.)
35. Unit of length

36. Side that is sheltered from the wind
37. More (Spanish)
38. Autonomic nervous system
40. Violent troublemakers, originally in Paris
41. Statements that something is untrue
42. Greek alphabet letter
43. Suspends from above
44. Popular types of cigars
45. Girls
47. U.S. philosopher and logician
48. Nocturnal hoofed animal
49. Relaxing spaces
52. From a distance
53. Form of Persian
54. Amounts of time
55. Trigonometric function

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PUBLIC NOTICE

CITY OF MORDEN PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that the audited Financial Report of the City of Morden for the year ending December 31st, 2023, together with the related financial statements have been deposited in the office of the Director of Finance & Administration and are available for inspection by any person or his/her agent during regular business hours of Monday to Friday 9:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., and that any person or his/her agent at their own expense may make a copy thereof or extracts therefrom.

Nicole Reidle, CMMA
City Manager
City of Morden



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Class of '75 Reunion Committee



PUBLIC NOTICE

MORDEN COMMUNITY HANDI-VAN CLUB 300 LGA Winners 2024

MAR 29/24		
25	Marilyn Sandercock	\$150.00
245	Helen Bergmann	\$150.00
80	Howard Pauls	\$500.00
APR 26/24		
285	Dr. Brian Duff	\$150.00
67	Jacqueline Stark	\$150.00
69	Chris Meilun	\$500.00
MAY 31/24		
227	John Elias	\$150.00
75	Leigh Grenier	\$150.00
73	Scott Beattie	\$500.00
JUN 28/24		
9	Dawn Rigaux	\$150.00
148	Jessica Lautenschlager	\$150.00
143	Glen Thiessen	\$500.00
JUL 26/24		
20	Ken Freund	\$150.00
103	Little Morden Service	\$150.00
258	Gail Maxwell	\$500.00
AUG 30/24		
258	Gail Maxwell	\$150.00
151	Tio Bellisario	\$150.00
14	Morden Green Leaves	\$500.00
SEP 27/24		
153	Jeff Hildebrand	\$150.00
270	Doug Lone/Janet Nedohin	\$150.00
62	Giant Tiger	\$500.00
OCT 25/24		
70	Shirley Shore	\$150.00
237	John Hiebert	\$150.00
297	Dale Jamieson	\$500.00
NOV 29/24		
217	Jim Giesbrecht	\$150.00
148	Jessica Lautenschlager	\$150.00
169	Louise Gardiner	\$500.00
DEC 27/24		
12	Kyle Loutchan	\$150.00
148	Jessica Lautenschlager	\$150.00
52	MMJS Law	\$500.00
JAN 31/25		
234	Harry Hildebrand	\$150.00
120	Valley Concrete	\$150.00
208	Sher-Lynn Duncan	\$500.00
FEB 28/25		
45	Sandra Wiebe	\$150.00
111	Jessica Lautenschlager	\$150.00
291	Al Sloan	\$500.00

Thank you for supporting the Morden Community Handi-van through the purchase of a Raffle Ticket. Tickets are on sale now. Please continue your support by purchasing a Raffle Ticket.

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57th Annual LUNDAR BULL SALE
"Where the good bulls come"

April 5, 2025 1:00 P.M. Lundar Agri-Ed Centre - Auctioneer - Tyler Slawinski

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
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| 4 - 2 year Herefords | 2 - 1 year Limousin |
| 3 - 1 year Angus | 1 - 1 year Lim Flex |
| 13 - 1 year Simmental | 2 - 1 year Speckle Park |
| 1 - 2 year Simmental | 1 - Hereford Heifers |
| 1 - 1 year Simmental Percentage | 2 - Speckle Park Heifers |
| 4 - 1 year Charolais | 1 - Simmental Heifer |
| 1 - 2 year Shorthorn | |

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EMPLOYMENT



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Qualifications:

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- OAT training an asset by not required

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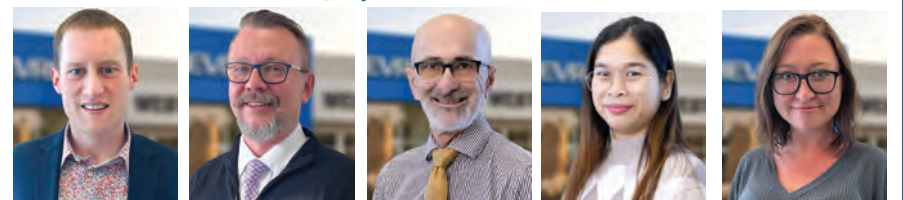
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