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## Addressing border security concerns

RCMP Sgt. Darcy Thiessen addressed a large crowd in Altona Saturday at a town hall meeting about border security. For the full story, see Pg. 3

PHOTO BY LORI PENNER/VOICE

news > sports > opinion > community > people > entertainment > events > classifieds > careers > everything you need to know

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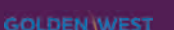
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# Taking the plunge

## 10th annual Polar Plunge raises \$22K for Special Olympics

By Lorne Stelmach

A record number of people braved the cold waters of Lake Minnewasta Saturday for the Polar Plunge in support of the Law Enforcement Torch Run and Special Olympics Manitoba.

There were 52 participants who collectively raised over \$22,500, and lead local organizer Sgt. Scott Edwards was very pleased with the response.

"We've been doing this now, including our two virtual years, for 10 years here in Morden, and that 50 mark has always been our goal," he said. "To have it work out as well as it did, with this being our third time plunging into the lake and getting the numbers that we did, we're very happy with the outcome."

The Morden event is closing in on having raised \$200,000 over the past decade.

The top team this year included police chiefs Brad Neduzak of Morden and Ryan Hunt of Winkler, who jointly brought in \$4,700—with Neduzak just barely edging out Hunt in their personal challenge.

"It was nice to see some new teams, some new faces, and it's also nice to see the familiar faces and familiar teams," noted Edwards. "There's been a lot of people who have done it with us now every year."

"It's kind of doing something uncomfortable but for a great cause ... it's something different but exciting at the same time," he added. "I think we've got big plans as well now for next year."

Daniela Morales was participating for the second time with the Access Credit Union team.

"This year was better. It wasn't too cold ... it was exciting," she said. "We are happy to be here."

"This is crazy ... but it's a good cause," added teammate Marge Friesen, who was plunging for the first time. "Find a group of friends; go with a team. That makes it special."



PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE  
The 10th Polar Plunge in Morden last weekend raised over \$22,500 for Special Olympics, bringing the event's total over the last decade to nearly \$200,000.

Adell Gauthier, director of fund development for Special Olympics Manitoba, was very pleased to see the response and support.

"It's fantastic to see how the city of Morden shows up to support this event," she said. "Celebrating 10 years is no small feat, and seeing how it continues to grow, we are exceptionally grateful."

"The funds are extremely important to create life-changing opportunities

for athletes with intellectual disabilities," Gauthier added, citing the example of how nine Manitobans were on Team Canada in Turin, Italy for the Special Olympics World Winter Games last week.

"Those kinds of opportunities are made possible by events like this and the support of the donors, the sponsors and the plungers. It's a true example of what community is and what a community can do."

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1. To control noxious weeds on road allowances, boulevards, public drains and golf course within the Municipality of Rhineland, The projected dates of application will be from **May 1, 2025, to October 31, 2025**.

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Insecticides to be used may include the following: Aquabac 200G, Decis 5EC, Malathion 85E, Malathion ULF, Pyrate 480EC, Sevin XLR Plus.

3. To control fungus at the golf course. The proposed dates of application for this program will be from **May 1, 2025, to October 31, 2025**.

Fungicides to be used may include the following: Banner Max, Daconil 2787, Trilogy 5C, Vectobac 200G

4. To control rodents. The proposed dates of application for this program will be from **May 1, 2025, to October 31, 2025**.

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# getinformed

## Border security meeting addresses community concerns

By Lori Penner

A packed house at the Altona Senior Centre on March 15 underscored the level of concern among area residents regarding border security.

Organized by Portage-Lisgar MP Branden Leslie, the town hall meeting aimed to address pressing questions about illegal border crossings, the role of the RCMP and Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA), and what individuals should do if they encounter a migrant on their property.

The event featured presentations by Leslie, legislative assistant Drew Ostash, and Sgt. Darcy Thiessen, operations supervisor for the Pembina Valley RCMP.

The discussion focused on clarifying the laws surrounding the Canada-U.S. border and updates on recent policy changes impacting both Canadian and American border enforcement efforts.

The meeting provided an opportunity for residents to voice their concerns, receive factual information, and better understand the complexities of border security, as officials hope to maintain both community safety and a fair approach to immigration.

The number of people walking across the border to claim asylum in Canada spiked in 2017, reaching a peak of 31,519 in 2023. However, a significant decline followed in 2024, with only 1,018 people apprehended nationwide. Manitoba saw 75 border apprehensions in 2023, increasing slightly to 85 by October 2024.

Ostash attributed much of the decline to the expansion of the Safe Third Country Agreement, which now applies across the entire land border, including waterways.

"This means if you cross the border to make an asylum claim and don't meet one of the agreement's excep-

tions, you'll be returned to the U.S.," he explained.

On the flip side, U.S. Customs and Border Protection reported a dramatic increase in migrants moving south, with 19,498 encounters between border posts on their northern border between October 2023 and July 2024.

Sgt. Thiessen acknowledged the concerns of residents living near the border.

"There are a lot of issues, and I totally understand," he said. "My purpose here was to inform people about what's going on and what the RCMP is doing to bolster security along the border."

He emphasized that while media and social media can sometimes paint a chaotic picture, the reality is much different.

"The numbers of individuals crossing the border illegally are much lower than many might think," he said. "We're averaging about 12 people intercepted per month. That's definitely surprising. I live in the area, too, and I didn't know what to expect."

Thiessen also stressed that despite fears of an increase in crime linked to border crossings, there have been no documented incidents of violence from migrants.

"They are genuinely trying to find a better life. Unfortunately, it's through illegal means, and that's not something we can support, but we also need to recognize their humanity."

Thiessen encouraged attendees to reach out to the RCMP with their concerns, promising transparency.

"We work for the people here. If you have questions, we'll do our best to answer them. And if I don't have the answer, I'll try to find it."

Leslie explained that his office has received an increasing number of calls about border security in recent



PHOTO BY LORI PENNER/VOICE

Saturday's town hall meeting at the Altona Senior Centre drew a full house, with many eager to share their experiences and ask questions about border security.

months, prompting the need for the town hall meeting.

"This issue has really ramped up, and it's a very political debate at times. We wanted to give the RCMP an opportunity to provide an update on their work and investments in securing our border."

One of the main concerns raised by residents was what to do if they encounter a migrant on their property. Leslie stressed the importance of handling the situation safely, both for the property owner and the migrant.

"People need to know what to do, how to go about it, and who to contact. I really appreciated the RCMP's recommendations and willingness to answer a wide range of questions."

Acknowledging the growing fear fueled by social media, Leslie urged residents to focus on verified information.

"We watch CNN, we see sensationalized reports, and we succumb to

fear. But the reality is often different."

Leslie also highlighted a recent shift: more individuals are now crossing into the U.S. from Canada due to economic struggles.

"Some people who initially immigrated to Canada are now heading south because they see better job opportunities. The American economy is doing better, and there are more cash jobs. It's shocking to see the number of people illegally walking into the U.S. from Canada."

As the town hall wrapped up, Leslie assured attendees that his office would continue engaging with law enforcement and CBSA to address concerns and push for policies that prioritize both security and economic stability.

"Some of these decisions aren't the RCMP's to make. That's our job as politicians. We need to put the rights of law-abiding citizens ahead of those who break the law."



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# Longtime librarian looks back on a rewarding career

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The South Central Regional Library marks its 60th anniversary this week with a gala trivia night in Morden on Friday.

In the weeks leading up to the celebration, the *Voice* sat down with two very familiar faces to anyone who has ever been a patron at either the Morden or Winkler branches of the regional library network, which got its start in those two communities back in 1965 before expanding to include locations in Altona, Manitou, and Miami.

Esther Penner and Dorothy Martens were both fixtures at SCRL before their retirements, Penner working at the Winkler library from 1985-2013 and Martens in Morden from 1991-2024.

The pair have over six decades of service between the two of them, and had a front-row seat to virtually every technological advancement, facility move, and service improvement that's come down the pike for the two libraries in recent memory.

This week, Penner shares a few

of those memories. Check out next week's *Voice* to hear some of Martens'.

## "I'VE ALWAYS BEEN READING"

For Penner, an avid reader, spotting the newspaper ad in late 1984 for a library clerk seemed a stroke of luck.

"I had been working in the church library for some years, and I loved it. I've always loved books. I've always been reading."

She typed up her application on an old typewriter that had an unreliable key or two on it ("I felt a little bad about that," she laughs) and crossed her fingers.

It took a bit of time before she got a response—so much so that she had all but given up on the idea.

"It had been awhile, and I hadn't told anybody about it," Penner recalls. "Then I got called in for an interview and I was dumbfounded ... and I left it feeling, 'Nah. Never going to happen.' But the next day they called and offered me the job."

The rest, as they say, is history. Pen-

ner went from being a stay-at-home mom to joining the Winkler Library team. Back then, the library was tucked into a corner of the Winkler Civic Centre. It didn't move into its current building across the street until 2006 when a human chain of volunteers moved the collection from the old space to the new by hand.

Penner started out as a clerk and eventually worked her way to branch librarian and then into the cataloguing department, where she closed out her career.

More comfortable behind the scenes than at the front desk, Penner is quick to answer what it was she loved most about the job: "The books. Always the books. Seeing the new ones coming in, that's like Christmas every day.

"It was a dream job. Not something I'd ever aspired to, because I hadn't gone to university or anything like that, but I took an awful lot of courses after I was hired."

Recall, if you will, what libraries were like back in the '80s. Computerized cataloguing was still a decade away—the old card catalogues were how you went about finding any-

thing.

"I don't think people realize in the old days before there were computers how hard reference work could be, how hard it was to find something," Penner says.

Librarians were the guides. On the hunt for a specific author or title? Looking for information about any topic imaginable? Needing a meaningful poem or quote for a speech? You'd ask the librarian for a helping hand or a nudge in the right direction.

"We had books that listed every book ever written, just in case somebody asked," Penner recalls. "You looked it up and it was this wee tiny print."

During her first days on the job, she recalls one little girl coming up to the desk for help in finding "the berry books."

"I took her to the section where you'd learn about berries, growing things. But, no, no, no that wasn't it. I finally had to ask her, 'Could you go ask your teacher to write it down for me so I know what I'm looking for?'"

Turns out, the child was looking for books with the Newbery Medal symbol on them, a prestigious award for children's literature.

"I was new and I was still learning," Penner says, laughing at the memory of being so baffled as to what that girl had been looking for. But she dove into the reference guide and brought herself up to speed on all the Newbery-winning books to date to ensure she could help the next child who came asking.

"I loved doing the digging of finding something that someone would enjoy," she says. "And when you get to know people and you know what kinds of books they like to read—when someone would have a favour-



SUPPLIED PHOTO ABOVE; RIGHT PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

The Winkler Library in its old space in the Winkler Civic Centre, its location when Esther Penner (right) began her nearly 30-year career with the branch.



Continued on page 8

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# “My first thought was this can’t be true”

By Lorne Stelmach

The first feeling for Rob Wiebe upon learning that he would be receiving a King Charles III Coronation Medal recently was disbelief.

“My very first thought was this can’t be true, somebody’s pulling my leg,” he said with a chuckle. “I was pleasantly surprised to find out it was actually happening.

“It catches you a little off guard, I think, at least for me ... I wasn’t prepared for something like this,” said the Winkler resident, who was particularly cited for his efforts in spearheading the Winkler Veterans Association.

“After thinking about it for some time, I guess I found it kind of overwhelming,” he said. “There were a lot of people that I was in the presence of there who I thought man, oh man, I’m standing in a crowd of wonderful people ... it was quite overwhelming.”

Wiebe agreed with the thought that a person doesn’t go looking for recognition when they get involved in the community, but it is nice when you get a pat on the back.

“Absolutely ... sometimes we have a tendency to take ourselves for granted a little bit ... if it’s supposed to get done, let’s just get at it and let’s just do it ... and take it one step at a time and keep working at it.

“All of a sudden, someone notices you’ve been stepping to the front a little bit,” he said. “It’s just wonderful to

think that someone actually noticed that I was stepping up to the front at least a little bit.”

Wiebe’s motivation comes from the firm belief the community must continue to honour the sacrifices that were made by local people and their families. It’s why he’s been so involved in the Remembrance Day ceremonies and other like events through the years.

“I want to make sure it’s remembered and pointed out to people why it needs to be remembered ... why the cenotaph is there in our park,” he said. “These things are so important, and if we don’t keep telling people, they tend to forget.

“It needs to be remembered ... that ordinary people did extraordinary things,” he continued, noting how so many of the people who served in the First and Second World Wars were so very young.

“We call them men and women, but when you’re 18 or 19 years old, those are still more boys than men ... I’m sure those who came home then were men.

“It’s important to me to make sure that others realize too that this was something that was a big deal,” stressed Wiebe, acknowledging that it is perhaps more challenging in Winkler, with its history of fervent Mennonite pacifism. “Those challenges seem to have largely been overcome. A lot of people are supporting us and supporting the idea of remembrance.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Rob Wiebe receives the Kings Charles III Coronation Medal from Portage-Lisgar MP Branden Leslie.

“It confirms that we are doing the right thing,” he added. “People want to support it. People step up and support it. They are happy to donate and to wear a poppy ... show people that you are proud to wear it.”

He now is looking ahead to the local veterans association having more of a presence and involvement in the community.

“We have now formed an official committee for the Winkler Veterans Association, and we are working

hard at trying to put up some banners ... if we get the blessing from the City, which I do believe we will, then we look forward to putting up some banners similar to what other communities have done,” he said. “We’re going to see if we can maybe partner with the Morden [Legion] branch to get things started ... we’ve already had some discussions, and things are looking pretty positive in that direction.”

# GVSD approves \$63M budget

Slight increase in school taxes for the average homeowner

By Ashleigh Viveiros

With its 2025-2026 financial plan, Garden Valley School Division’s board of trustees attempted to find a balance between covering ever-rising expenses while not unduly increasing the financial load on local taxpayers.

“I think we found a good balance in making sure that our children, our children and staff, are still supported while balancing the fiscal responsibility and ensuring that our taxpayer didn’t bear too much of the burden,” board chair Leah Klassen said March 11 as the division unveiled its budget to the public ahead of passing it that same evening.

The \$63 million financial plan is an increase of \$3.73 million from the year before to support the learning needs of just over 4,200 students in 14 schools in the Winkler area.

The bulk of expenses is tied up in

salaries and benefits, which, at \$53M (representing a contracted 6.4 per cent increase in salaries and a 5.7 per cent increase in benefits/allowances) gobbles up 84 per cent of the budget.

Services comes in at \$5M, a \$560,000 or 12.4 per cent increase, followed by supplies/materials/minor equipment purchases at \$3.4M, a one per cent decrease, and then transfers at \$1.54M, a 4.5 per cent increase.

With salaries taking up such a vast amount of the funds each year, it leaves the division with very little wiggle room, unless they begin cutting staffing levels—something they’re loathe to do, Klassen observed.

“When a school division has to cut something, they don’t necessarily want to have to cut part of that 84 per cent of the pie, because that is what

Continued on page 7



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## The public forum



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**REPORTER**  
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I used to be terrified by the prospect of speaking in a public forum. The thought of being vulnerable in front of a group would cause me to shake and find the nearest cave to hide in until the "opportunity" passed, and I could go back to safe anonymity.

That being said, I am also a bit of a fatalist and so way back in the day when I was a journalism student and shockingly learned part of the role was speaking to strangers in public, I essentially sucked it up and did it, fear and all, because there was no other choice.

I learned very quickly that when given a podium, or a microphone, a pad of paper and a pencil or any other form of visible equipment, people let you interview and talk to them without question.

This was wildly confidence building in me. All I needed was some sort of uniform in the form of a visible tool, special clothing, or badge and suddenly I was trusted.

Over time this and practice developed into confidence to speak publicly either one on one or before large groups. Personally, I prefer groups because it is often less intimate—the bigger the better.

As a result of varying things such as my job either as a columnist, a poet

and writer, and a non-profit manager, I sometimes am invited to speak at events and to different groups.

Most recently I was invited to speak to the Wednesday Morning Group in Carman specifically about my recent volume of poetry, *Songs in Blue Minor*.

Interesting. I did a little research and learned a couple of things about the group that encouraged me to accept the offer. For instance, the first speaker they had this year was eminent and well-known scholar and columnist Niigan Sinclair. Not bad company to be in as far as speakers are concerned.

What sealed the deal for me however was the fact that this group has been meeting for 45 years.

What?

We live in a day and age where the average lifespan of any commitment is about 10 minutes and here you have a 45-year-old group that exists to attract speakers on a variety of subjects for the sheer pleasure of learning.

How could I say no? I had to at least go and see if I could learn their secret.

Well, the engagement came and I was met with one of the most engaged and inquisitive groups of people I have ever had the pleasure to present to.

You need to know that the crowd

and its energy directly contribute to the comfort and success of the speaker. There's nothing more demoralizing than an unengaged, disinterested and bored audience. This is why many speakers employ gimmicks to trick themselves (and the audience) into believing they are engaged.

This group is everything a speaker could want in an audience. They were genuinely interested in the topic. They asked insightful and brilliant questions about the process of creativity and writing. Many spoke of their own experiences in the field, which lent a depth to the presentation rare in my experience.

Frankly, it is for all these reasons that I believe the group has lasted for 45 years against all odds in our modern 30-second clip, social media driven culture. If you are looking to understand the secret of building or sustaining a gathering for the long term simply attend the Wednesday Morning Group on, you guessed it, Wednesday mornings at 10 a.m. at the United Church in Carman.

I will be forever grateful for having had the opportunity to speak to them, and should you ever be invited you absolutely must say yes—you will not be disappointed.



**By Peter Cantelon**

### Letter policy

The *Voice* welcomes letters from readers on local and regional issues and concerns.

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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Ashleigh Viveiros Editor  
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Lorne Stelmach Reporter  
204-823-2655 [lstelmach@winklermordenvoice.ca](mailto:lstelmach@winklermordenvoice.ca)

**MAILING ADDRESS:**

**Winkler Morden Voice**  
Box 39, Stonewall, MB R0C 2Z0

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# Letters

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## LET OUR VOICES BE HEARD

For many decades now, both the USA and Canada have partnered with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including religious ones, to bring fast, efficient and effective foreign aid to the most devastated regions of the world.

Many philanthropically-minded people around the world are watching in dismay as Marco Rubio is basically dismantling the USAID program that will result in much suffering and death among the poorest people in the world.

At one time it was thought to be good foreign policy to work with dedicated NGOs to heal wounds around the world; not only did it stave off the worst hunger crises and infectious disease outbreaks, it created a lot of good will toward NGOs and countries involved. Rubio's vision is for government to disengage entirely from humanitarian efforts around the world.

It is true that many NGOs have better skills and

experience working with the world's disadvantaged than does the government, and so it makes sense for governments to channel their foreign aid through them. Governments can bring matching funds to these NGOs to increase their reach and effectiveness.

A few weeks ago, 35 NGO leaders met with Rubio to hear the news that the U.S. government wants to get out of foreign aid. It is interesting to note that while the rest listened in shock and dismay, only The Samaritan's Purse spoke positively of this move. Why?

In Canada, many Christian and humanitarian organizations have come to depend on the Canadian government for matching funds for their programs around the world. The ones that are closest to my heart and many of my Christian friends include Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), Mennonite Economic Development Agency (MEDA), Canadian Food Grains Bank (CFGB), World Vision (WV),

Doctors Without Borders (MSF), among many others. I am pleased to support such agencies prayerfully and financially, knowing that my gifts will be leveraged to bring in government funds to enhance the great charitable work they do.

I am concerned when I hear Pierre Poliviere proudly proclaim that should he become prime minister he would drastically cut foreign aid; Canada first, you know! This kind of rhetoric is borrowed from south of the border where it already has morphed into action, creating massive suffering and devastation around the world.

I am afraid a new conservative government under Pierre Poliviere would copycat Rubio's action. All of us should be concerned, let our voices be heard and make sure this does not happen.

Jack Heppner,  
Altona

## > GVSD, FROM PG. 4

directly supports our students," she said.

For years, the way GVSD has avoided those cuts has been by putting off non-critical maintenance projects. This year they're looking to play catch-up a little bit, setting aside \$373,000 to address the maintenance deficit so it won't come as such a sticker shock in future years.

"We have a huge maintenance deficit across this division," noted secretary-treasurer Kevin Vovchuk. "Some of which will be possibly covered by the provincial government, but a lot of it probably will be on our taxpayers."

This includes a range of projects—sewer upgrades, aging gym floors that are still functional/safe but most definitely nearing the end of their life cycles.

"We have the philosophy of if it breaks we're going to fix it, but we'd like to get past the 'waiting for it to break' part," Vovchuk said. "It's one of those things that unless you make a conscious decision to put the money aside, it's probably never going to get to the top of the list."

Some of the other additional expenditures for the year ahead include a desperately needed new bus (\$260,000), four new staff positions (\$365,000 for two classroom teachers, one occupational therapist, and a human resources associate to bring the division's HR department—which oversees over 700 staff—to two people), and funding for the home school liaison positions (\$110,000).

The occupational therapist position is one GVSD is pleased to be able to fund in order to support the increasing needs of students, superintendent Dan Ward said.

"Last year we brought in an occupational therapist under the umbrella of the school division," he said, explaining they previously contracted that role out to the regional health authority. An in-house staff member "gives us more flexibility ... having our own clinical staff does really help us address issues."

The division has seen an increasing number of children with developmental delays post-pandemic, and the occupational therapist can help them learn to regulate their behaviour and overcome challenges, Ward shared.

"This has addressed a huge need in our school division," he said.

The budget also projects a surplus of about \$900,000, which GVSD will hold in reserve in preparation for the teacher salary harmonization coming into play in the near future.

Previously, school divisions negotiated salaries with local teacher associations themselves, but now the province has taken control of that process to standardize salaries throughout Manitoba. GVSD's salaries are currently slightly less than they will be once the provincial salary rates come into effect, so that will be a major expense increase in the years ahead.

On the other side of the equation, the vast bulk of GVSD's revenue sources—60 per cent—comes from the provincial government, with the remaining 38 per cent coming from municipal taxes, and two per cent from lesser sources.

Funding increases from the province this year varied greatly between school divisions, ranging from just one per cent all the way up to nearly 10 per cent. GVSD's 1.9 per cent increase is just \$729,000 more than the current school year, bringing the total provincial dollars to just over \$38.68 million.

Local school taxes will bring in another \$24.37 million, an increase of \$3.45 million from the year before.

As a result, ratepayers in Garden Valley School Division will see their school taxes go up slightly.

The board is raising the mill rate from the 12.06 mills it is currently to 12.18 mills.

What that means is that for a house valued at \$350,000 in 2024 and valued at about \$393,000 in 2025, school taxes will increase from \$1,899

to \$2,154. But after the provincial school tax rebates and other credits, this homeowner would find themselves paying about \$654 in net school taxes—an increase of \$54 compared to last year.

Meanwhile, farmland valued at \$2M last year and closer to \$2.28M this year will pay, after the various credits and rebates, about \$487 more in school taxes compared to 2024.

The budget planning process is always a long and difficult one, and Klassen thanks the community for its input over the past several months.

"We thank the public for their support and trusting their children into the care of Garden Valley School Division," she said. "We are always grateful for that."

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### Pesticide Control Program

Public Notice is hereby given that the Province of Manitoba intends to conduct the following Pesticide Control Programs during 2025 within the province right of way.

1. To control invasive plants and noxious weeds on Manitoba Provincial right of way.
2. The herbicides include: Dicamba, 2,4-D amine, 2,4-D Choline, 2,4-D Ester, 2,4-D, Mecoprop-p, Dichloroprop-p, Aminopyralid, Metsulfuronmethyl, Diflufenzopyr, Fluroxypyr, Imazapyr, Triclopyr, Picloram, Aminocyclopyrachlor, Chlorsulfuron, Saflufenacil, Iron (as FeHEDTA), Glyphosate, Clopyralid, Bromacil, Acetic Acid, LI 700, Non Ionic Surfactant, Flumioxazin, Indaziflam, Florpyrauxifen, mineral oil, Methyl Ester & Ethyl Ester.
3. The proposed dates of application for this program will be from April 15, 2025 to October 31, 2025.

The public may send written submissions or objections within 15 days of the publication of the notice to the department below.

Manitoba Environment and Climate Change  
Environmental Approvals Branch  
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# Plum Coulee Thrift Shoppe celebrates record-breaking year

By Lori Penner

The Plum Coulee Thrift Shoppe recently held its annual general meeting, highlighting a year of unprecedented success, community engagement, and resilience in the face of challenges.

Board president Ken Reimer proudly announced that 2024 marked the store's most successful year to date, with sales reaching \$84,216—an increase of approximately \$4,500 from the previous year. This financial success enabled the shop to amplify its charitable contributions.

"We gave \$65,000 to different organizations this year, and the year before that, it was \$62,000," Reimer noted. "We have a wide variety of charities we support. All of them are either humanitarian or Christian, or both. There's a growing need everywhere."

Despite the financial achievements, the store faced significant operational expenses due to unforeseen maintenance issues. Reimer detailed the challenges, explaining that damage to the building's roof required repairs, including replacing panels and parts of the trusses. One of the hot water tanks also needed to be replaced.

"Within one week, we replaced the hot water tank and a pump, so that added up to \$2,000 very quickly," he said.

Volunteers remain the heart of the Plum Coulee Thrift Shoppe. Currently, around 30 people give their time to keep the store running. Reimer spoke



PHOTO BY LORI PENNER/VOICE

The Plum Coulee Thrift Shoppe board. Back row, from left: Henry Nickel, Edward Giesbrecht, Ken Reimer. Front row: Betty Nickel, Grace Giesbrecht, Helen Reimer and Moira Porte.

about the importance of encouraging younger generations to get involved.

"We have a few younger ones that come in on a regular basis, some high school-age homeschoolers, and some who simply ask one of our board members, 'Can we volunteer here?' If young people are feeling a lack of purpose, I tell them, 'Take something, do it well, and carry on.'"

He added that he believes the next generation will take up the torch, but it is up to the current volunteers to encourage them.

"Us baby boomers, we need to en-

courage them," he said.

The store's impact extends far beyond Plum Coulee. A significant portion of donated clothing is given to Faith Mission, which sends it to Ukraine.

Guest speaker and Faith Mission executive director Nathan Elias shared a slideshow from his recent trip, where he witnessed firsthand the desperate need in that region.

"It's heartbreaking when you see the devastation to their communities firsthand. So many who are left with nothing. They use all the clothes we

give them," Elias said, emphasizing the vital role the Plum Coulee Thrift Shoppe plays in global relief efforts.

The meeting was not solely focused on financials and operation—those in attendance also enjoyed a musical performance by local musician Selena Pauls, who played several pieces on her cello, adding a special touch to the evening.

Looking ahead, the board has several plans to improve the store. They are hoping to extend the roof toward the back of the building to protect incoming donations from rain. Reimer put out a call to the community, asking if anyone might be able to help with materials or labor for this project.

Another priority is upgrading shelving inside the store. Wider shelves would allow for more efficient organization of donated goods, and Reimer encouraged community members to reach out if they had ideas or could help.

With the arrival of warmer months, the board is also looking for volunteers to assist with lawn mowing and watering flowers around the building.

As the meeting wrapped up, Reimer expressed deep gratitude for everyone who plays a role in the thrift shoppe's ongoing success.

"Without volunteers, we wouldn't be in existence. Thank you to all of you. We accept ideas. That's how we work. It cannot work with just one or a few people alone."

## > SCRL, FROM PG. 4

ite author and we got a new book in, I would phone them and tell them it's here, would you like me to put your name on it?

"I remember in my early years one town councillor thought we were all volunteers and all we did was read and sign out books ... but you'd go home at the end of the day and you're just shaking with tiredness because you've been on your feet all day and lugging heavy books around, helping people find what they were looking for."

In the early 1990s, computerization and the slow demise of the card catalogues marked a major shift in library operations.

"It took us awhile to let go of them. We didn't trust the computers," Penner says, chuckling. "But in the end, it

was time to let them go."

(Though perhaps not entirely—Penner purchased a bank of those old card cabinets. "They're still in my son's garage, full of screws and nuts.")

Computers truly revolutionized everything. "It changed the face of the work," Penner says.

Not just in how people found what they were looking for, but behind the scenes as well—books could be scanned rather than painstakingly stamped in and out, and cataloguing suddenly required a whole lot less paperwork than ever before.

"Computers just made it that much easier when you didn't need all the cards anymore," Penner says, observing that weeding books out from the collection today is a far cry from how it used to be done. "You're getting new books in, you need room—we used to go through the shelves book by book ... you'd look at the card—when was the last time it went out? How old is this book, how useful is this book, is the information current? Book by book. Nowadays you can ask the computer to spit out a report."

Beyond an increased reliance on and embracing of technology, Penner notes community engagement at the library has grown in leaps and bounds as well.

"[Back then] we had the summer reading program, we had story hour," she recalls. "There wasn't much else."

**"IT WAS WONDERFUL TO SEE MORE PEOPLE COMING INTO THE LIBRARY."**

Today your local branch of the SCRL is a hub of educational workshops spanning just about every topic imaginable, public speaking events, book clubs and other community groups, and even Nerf gun battles to get people through the doors.

"It was wonderful to see more people coming into the library," Penner says.

But while the job may have changed to meet modern needs, the dedication of the people who work there has not.

"I'm amazed at all the people who come and work at the library and do such a wonderful job every time," Penner says. "There's so many of them—over the years they've come and gone, and every one brings new ideas. It's just marvelous what all goes on there nowadays."

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# Food and fellowship at Pembina Hills gallery



There was good food and fellowship Friday evening at the Pembina Hills Gallery in Morden as the Pembina Hills Arts Council held its annual chili bowl fundraiser. There were two sittings that attracted close to 40 people and brought in an estimated \$1,300 for the arts council. The event, which also offered some jazz music by Norm Poirier and Derrick Wainio (left), promotes the work of local potters who donate their beautiful bowls (right), with participants getting to take their choice of bowl home with them.



PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

# Tabor Home looking for help in replacing its 31-year-old van

By Lorne Stelmach

Tabor Home is appealing to the community for its support to get the care facility a newer vehicle.

They need to upgrade from the old van which has served the Morden personal care home well but is definitely past its prime.

"Tabor Home has reached an end of an era with the van that our maintenance department uses for picking up materials that they need," explained board secretary Konrad Loewen. "We've had the van for, as far as we know, over 20 years, so you realize this thing has served us well. It's been taken care of by our staff very well, but it just has come to the end of its life.

"It's a '94, so it's even older than

we've had it, so we need to purchase a new or newer vehicle that our maintenance department can use so they can go pick up things that they need, whether that's for repairs inside the facility or the outside in spring, summer, and fall."

Loewen noted the van does make a difference for the care and quality of life for their residents.

"Indirectly, it does have an impact because if the maintenance guys can't get out to purchase and pick up what they need then they can't really do the work that needs to get done."

Board chairperson Helena Goerz noted it is also something that would not be funded by the province.

"The RHA does not fund for things like vehicles," she said. "We kind of asked, 'Do you have an older fleet

vehicle around?' They don't really have anything that we would be able to use, so it's something that we now have to try to find and fundraise."

"Right now, we're making a general appeal to the community," said Loewen. "We're hoping that maybe there's

a business or someone who has a fleet of vehicles, and they maybe have a vehicle that they don't need or they're looking to upgrade a vehicle, so maybe they would be able to donate to Tabor Home.

Continued on page 10



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Tabor Home has gotten decades of service out of this 1994 van, and now they're turning to the community for some help in getting something more modern.

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# SCCR fashion show moving to Winkler

## Tickets go on sale online April 8

By Lorne Stelmach

South Central Cancer Resource (SCCR) is moving down the road to Winkler this spring for one of its major annual fundraisers.

The gala fashion show will be held May 15 at the Meridian Exhibition Centre rather than in Morden, and the change is for a very practical reason.

"We sold 320 tickets last year, and those sold out in 14 minutes, and we had a big demand for more tickets ... so in order to do that, we are moving to the Meridian Exhibition Centre," explained lead organizer Dianne Mestdagh.

"We had a lot of disappointed people last year, so hopefully this will work out much better," she said, emphasizing the increased capacity of the Winkler rec. complex. "It gives us the opportunity to sell a little over another 180 tickets."

That in turn will provide a significant boost in terms of how much will be raised by the event, which had a net income of around \$54,000 last year.

"We've also had awesome response from sponsors as well, so it's looking very positive," noted Mestdagh.

SCCR is a community-based charitable organization that provides education and support to individuals and families dealing with cancer.

Unlike many other cancer services in the province, SCCR is not funded by the government; it relies solely on the support of community donors, volunteers, and fundraisers to continue offering its services and programming to an ever-increasing number of people across the south-central region.

Which makes the funds raised at the annual fashion show so vital, Mestdagh stressed.

"It's a major fundraiser for us. It's the only one that the board actually organizes and runs itself. A lot of community groups have fundraisers for us, but this is the one that we organize."

This year's "Stronger Together" fashion show will feature clothing and accessories from Fashions by Co-op, Knockabouts, Copper and Sparrow, Livienne, Saban & Company, and Focal Point. The evening will also have a rainbow auction and desserts.

A highlight of the evening as always will be the personal stories of the models making their way down the catwalk.

"A number of our models are cancer survivors or family members of people who have gone through cancer, so their stories are heartwarming," Mestdagh said.

Tickets go on sale Tuesday, April 8 at 9 a.m. online at [sccr.mb.ca](http://sccr.mb.ca). No in-person tickets sales will take place this year.



VOICE FILE PHOTO

The SCCR fashion show takes place in Winkler on May 15.

"I would say 95 per cent of people were using the online service already," Mestdagh noted.

The website is also the place to go to make a donation to SCCR or learn more about the supports they offer.

### > TABOR HOME VAN, FROM PG. 9

"There are folks in our community who have supported Tabor Home so very well. Maybe they would

like to donate some money towards the purchase of a vehicle. We're not looking for anything fancy .... a pick-up truck ... it doesn't need to be an extended cab or anything like that."

Goerz said they are uncertain how much they will need to raise at this point.

"We just need something basic to get things locally, to pick up things ... it just needs to be serviceable so that it's reliable for us."

Anyone who wants to help out can contact Tabor Home for more information or to make a donation to the cause.

"We feel that there's always good support from the community," said Goerz, who noted as well that they are also always looking for volunteers to help out at the facility.

"We would love volunteers, either inside chatting with residents, taking them for a walk, playing games with them ... or then in the summer time, maintenance often has some mowing or working in the gardens ... easy things that people could help out with here."

## "We're just getting started"

What started as a dream of community revitalization has become a reality for Charlie's Coffee Co. in Manitou, which celebrated three years in business last month.

Owners Brodie and Charissa Dobson have transformed the former grocery store at 359 Main St. into a vibrant downtown hub.

"We have people having their book clubs here, we've hosted board meetings, we've collaborated with the Manitou Opera House visual arts committee to become a satellite gallery for their shows," shares Charissa Dobson. "We've had all kinds of different things in here that we never would have imagined."

It all began with a desire

to experience a high-quality speciality coffee shop closer to home.

"My husband and I, we like good coffee," Dobson says. "We do a lot of travelling and we like to check out different locally-owned coffee shops rather than chains. We had a longtime dream of bringing that experience to Manitou."

On the menu are a host of beverages and sweet treats.

"We have a broad range of specialty coffee items, teas, hot chocolates," Dobson says, adding their blended drinks and lemonades have also proven to be big hits.

They also offer a host of tasty, locally-sourced baked goods to whet your appetite, including



cookies, scones, cheese-cake, bagels, and more.

In the works for Charlie's Coffee Co. is an expanded patio space this summer and a collaboration with local artists to celebrate the talent in the area.

"We're continuing to grow, and every year it

gets busier than the last," Dobson says, thanking the community for its enthusiastic support. "We hope to continue to see that and to stay on the forefront of what people are looking for in the coffee world."

"We're just getting started."

Advertorial

# Access CU named top employer for 11th year in a row

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Access Credit Union's streak on the Manitoba's Top Employers list continues. The financial institution, which has branches across southern Manitoba, made the cut for the 11th year in a row last week.

The Manitoba Top Employers list

is selected by the editors of *Canada's Top 100 Employers* each year and published in the *Winnipeg Free Press*.

Access has also been selected as one of Canada's best employers for recent grads, featured in *The Career Directory 2025*.

The company is cited for having a supportive work environment and

benefits that include paid training and continuing education, flexible hours and work locations, matched pension plans, tuition subsidies, comprehensive health plans, and opportunities for staff to contribute to their communities.

"Access employees continually demonstrate their ability to adapt to

change, overcome obstacles, and face each day with a positive attitude," says CEO and president Larry Davy. "Combined with a passion for serving the community, our employees contribute to a strong corporate culture that has positioned Access as a top employer in Manitoba for the eleventh year in a row."

## GLOBAL RECYCLING DAY IS MARCH 18, 2025

### Three tips for recycling organic waste

It's common knowledge that reducing waste is essential to preserving the environment — especially considering that landfills are big producers of greenhouse gas emis-

sions. Do your part! Here are three ways to recycle organic waste.

Speed up your composting efforts by cutting kitchen leftovers into tiny pieces before throwing them in the composter.



#### 1. COMPOSTING

Did you know that compost reduces waste by approximately 40 per cent? Dead leaves, stale bread, nutshells and rotten produce are all examples of kitchen and yard waste that can be easily composted. If you don't have enough room for a composter, leave it up to the earthworms: try vermicomposting instead! This method requires little space and efficiently produces odourless, nutrient-rich fertilizer.

#### 2. GRASSCYCLING

Grasscycling, also referred to as herbi-cycling, involves leaving grass clippings behind while mowing the lawn. In addition to creating natural

fertilizer and reducing waste, this method helps the soil retain moisture and improves its resistance to disease. If you don't like the look of grass clippings scattered across your lawn, invest in a mulching lawnmower: not only will the clippings be much less apparent, but they'll also break down faster into the soil.

#### 3. LEAF-CYCLING

Leaf-cycling involves mowing dead leaves instead of raking them to provide the soil with beneficial nutrients that will help it better survive the winter. It's a great (and natural!) way to obtain an overall greener lawn come spring.

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# Creating a roadmap for growth

By Lori Penner

Members of Landmark Planning & Design last week held presentations in Altona and Plum Coulee to update stakeholders on the upcoming revisions to the RPGA Planning District's development plan.

With the provincial government requiring all development plans and zoning by-laws to be reviewed and updated every five years, the RPGA's development plan—now over a decade old—is due for revision. The review process provides an opportunity to establish a new community vision, align with provincial policies, address current issues and key trends, update maps, and improve formatting.

Before work began on the development plan, a comprehensive background study was conducted for the district, which includes the communities of Rosenfeld, Plum Coulee, Gretna, and Altona. This study summarizes existing conditions and trends within the region, including population distribution changes, dwelling types, employment data, agricultural capability, and current land use designations.

Last week's presentations included visioning workshops led by Landmark junior planner Lauren Sheedy and planner/partners Jeff Pratte, and Brendan Salakoh.

The goal was to hear from the community—their priorities, opportunities, challenges, and constraints—so that the planners could gain a strong

local understanding to set the foundation for the development plan.

Altona's two-hour session at the Millennium Exhibition Centre drew a range of community members, business owners, and council members.

Participants were divided into groups and asked to respond to specific questions about Altona's development, such as what makes the RPGA District a great place to live and work, what would make it better, what are some of the district's hidden gems, and what developments they would like to see in the region 20 years from now.

This input will be used by Landmark to help guide objectives, policy directions, and mapping. The team will incorporate the background study, engineering study, and all community feedback to lay the foundation for the new development plan.

"While the development plan cannot directly solve issues, it sets the foundation for community initiatives to take shape," Sheedy explained. "A well-structured plan enables the type of development people want to see."

"Having a comprehensive plan makes it easier to secure funding, as it provides a polished, professional, and data-driven approach that decision-makers look for," she added. "The plan also ensures that infrastructure investments align with long-term goals, helping to keep budgets aligned, infrastructure spending strategic, and policy objectives clear."

Sheedy was impressed with the



PHOTO BY LORI PENNER/VOICE

A small crowd gathered at the Millennium Exhibition Centre in Altona for a visioning workshop for RPGA's new development plan.

level of engagement from attendees, noting that the discussions on vision were especially strong.

"There were diverse opinions, but that diversity helps highlight what needs updating. Several common themes emerged during discussions, including affordable housing, which was a major concern for many attendees, as well as entrepreneurship and business development, education and healthcare, active transportation to improve connectivity between communities, and senior housing, which was frequently mentioned."

The next phase involves finalizing the background studies. Likely within the next month, the team will begin drafting the development plan itself.

They will start at the highest level with vision statements, then move to policy objectives and mapping changes. This process is expected to take one to two months.

Once the draft is prepared, the planning district will review it internally before conducting an informal review with the provincial government, which has final approval authority.

The team will work with the municipalities and the planning district to finalize the draft, then return to the community to present the results and gather final feedback.

The formal approval process will culminate with a public hearing later in the year.

# Red River Valley SD unveils \$41M budget

By Siobhan Maas

After seeking input from the public, parents and students, the Red River Valley School Division (RRVSD) board of trustees used survey results to guide decision-making for the \$41 million 2025-26 school year budget unveiled at a public meeting last week.

The budget prioritizes salary increases for most staff and bus drivers, including the hire of additional support staff, and providing more training days and educational resources.

Increased support was requested for literacy, numeracy, and speech language pathology, among other student supports.

Outgoing superintendent Brad Curtis feels the budget is directly correlated to what the board heard from parents and staff and is a good reflection of what is happening in the school system.

"The budget hits a lot of areas for almost every staff group across the division," he said. "We did a good job listening to survey feedback and can address many of the concerns. Ultimately this is great

for the kids."

The bulk of expenditures for the division come from salaries and equipment for K-12 classrooms, representing 57 per cent of the budget at \$23.4M. Funding is allocated to student support services at \$6.8M, maintenance at \$3.7M, and transportation at \$3.6M, among other expenses. The RRVSD maintains nine schools and two bus garages, and supports four Hutterite colony schools.

Survey results requested increased support to regular instruction, increased capability of Power-School for parents, and additional administrative support.

Budget changes will include the hiring and training of several new staff members, including tech and payroll support and three educational assistants to work directly with students with support from divisional speech language pathologists.

The opportunity for in-person training will be augmented following budget cuts during the pandemic to include additional professional development training and treaty training and allow staff to spend time together and get to know one another

again.

Budget support will be provided to cover instrument rental fees and offer new band programs in Oak Bluff and Starbuck schools. Transportation will see additional bus monitors, hiring of a spare, full-time bus driver, two additional hours of admin work, and a five per cent raise for all bus drivers.

Five per cent salary increases will also be seen for support staff and 3.5 per cent for teacher salaries.

Curtis noted those increases are most welcome.

"They have been hardest hit by inflation. Since coming into my position eight years ago, we've had the difficult decision to cut something every year. I've always insisted there be no cuts from the classroom and so we had to look everywhere else," he said. "We want quality staff. Support staff are not unionized and a salary increase shows the division's commitment to quality."

Revenue for the division comes from three sources: the province, the federal government, and municipal taxes.

# getinformed

## Guest speaker sheds light on treaty artifacts

By Sean Conway

On March 12, 30 people gathered at the Morris Multiplex to listen to a presentation by Dr. Maureen Matthews, the former curator of cultural anthropology at the Manitoba Museum.

Matthews, in collaboration with the Elders Council of the Treaty Relations Commission, developed five exhibits for the Winnipeg museum about treaties.

Her presentation in Morris, organized by the local Truth and Reconciliation Committee, highlighted the importance of Indigenous artifacts as they relate to treaties.

Matthews showed slides of pipes, pipe cases, jackets, and medals that are on display at the Manitoba Museum. She provided detailed information on how the artifacts relate to the numbered treaties, the Indigenous leaders, and representatives that negotiated on behalf of the Crown.

Pipes were significant for Indigenous people, Matthew explained, noting that the Anishinaabe words zagaswe'idiwin agwi'idiwin mean "an agreement made with a pipe."

The government representatives provided gifts

to Indigenous leaders that were signatories to recognize their contribution. These included specially minted medals and formal jackets.

The Manitoba Museum's collection of these artifacts became possible only after the museum established a relationship with the community on how to care for and present the items, Matthews noted.

Matthew's presentation also touched on the life of Alexander Morris, namesake to the town.

Manitoba's government was still in a developing state when Morris became Manitoba's second lieutenant governor, Matthews shared. He was involved in treaty negotiations with several Indigenous groups, aboriginal groups, signing Treaties 3, 4, 5, and 6, and revising Treaties 1 and 2.

Matthew's presentation was well-received by those in attendance, including past Morden Area Foundation chair Del Stevenson.

"I found the presentation informative," he said. "Generations of my family are from this area. I got to understand the political climate my great grandfather would have experienced when he first settled here."



PHOTO BY SEAN CONWAY/VOICE

The Morris Truth and Reconciliation Committee welcomed Dr. Maureen Matthews as a guest speaker last week.

## BLSD balances budget amidst rising costs

By Lori Penner

Border Land School Division (BLSD) has approved a \$40,587,010 operating budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, marking a \$2 million, or 5.4 per cent, increase from the previous year.

The division is proposing a break-even budget, ensuring that their expenditures align with available funding.

"Our approved financial plan includes an operating budget of \$40,587,010, an annual capital expenditure of \$396,400, and \$127,000 designated for capital reserve projects," secretary-treasurer Rachel Geirnaert explained. "We also received \$297,000 specifically for new nutrition programming, while our provincial funding for existing operations saw an increase of \$149,000."

A number of factors influenced this year's budget.

"Salaries and benefits account for 80 per cent of our budget, so those always significantly impact our financial plan," said Geirnaert. "We've also seen rising costs in fuel, bus repairs, and custodial and maintenance supplies, all of which contributed to this year's budget adjustments."

To balance the budget, BLSD will be relying on property tax revenue.

"The funding from the province was not enough to cover our increased costs, so we rely on taxpayers to assist us in operating the school division," Geirnaert said. "Fortunately, BLSD had a surplus at the end of June. The board made the decision to allocate some of the surplus back to taxpayers by applying it directly to the special requirement and by purchasing our next three buses from this surplus."

Geirnaert confirmed that the special levy will

increase by 3.98 per cent, translating to a mill rate increase of 0.33, or 2.78 per cent.

"For a home valued at \$200,000, this means an increase in education taxes of \$29.70 before the province's education property tax credit is applied," she explained.

Meanwhile, a number of projects were completed across the division in 2024.

"We've made improvements in flooring, cabinetry, PA systems, lockers, LED lighting, floor scrubbers, and exterior brick repairs in various schools," shared Geirnaert. "These projects align with our commitment to maintaining and enhancing our facilities to create better learning environments for students."

### > RRVSD, FROM PG. 12

Provincial funding will increase 1.2 per cent over the previous year to \$14.6 million.

The special levy helps balance the budget and will increase by 11.32 per cent following property value assessment increases, an average increase of 18 per cent seen across the division. This levy more than covers expenses, resulting in a decreased mill rate of 5.75 per

cent to 11.3 mills in 2025.

Although the school tax rebate, providing a 50 per cent rebate on school taxes for residential and 10 per cent for commercial properties is being discontinued, the 50 per cent rebate will remain in effect for farm properties. The Education Property Tax Credit is being replaced with the Homeowners Affordability Tax Credit to a maximum of \$1,500.

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# Your FARM



## Farm management specialist: How farmers can find profit in 2025

By Becca Myskiw

As margins are expected to decrease this year for farmers, economic sustainability, innovation, and growth are at risk. So, what can be done to maintain profitability?

Earlier this year, farm management specialist Crystal Berthelette delivered a presentation on finding profit in 2025 at the Central Region Crop Meetings. She addressed the current cost-price squeeze, Manitoba Agriculture's production scenarios for 2025, the importance of farmers identifying their own production costs, cost-cutting strategies that do not compromise yield, and ways to seek out opportunities to ensure profitability.

"Profitability is always important," she said. "But in the 2025 crop year, grain prices are down from the highs of 2022 and 2023; however, crop input prices are not coming down as quickly. Additionally, land and machinery prices are rising continuously. A farmer's margin is anticipated to be decreasing for 2025, which can put farm

economic sustainability, innovation, and growth at risk."

Average crop prices per bushel have been on a steady decline since 2022, which saw historically high prices for virtually all crops. Canola was priced at over \$26 per bushel, wheat at around \$16, soybeans at \$20, and oats at \$10. As of January 2025, canola is at \$14 per bushel, wheat at around

\$8, soybeans at \$12, and oats at just \$4. This represents a significant drop: canola prices have fallen by 46 percent, wheat by 50 percent, soybeans by 40 percent, and oats by 60 percent in less than three years. While prices have decreased, the average cost of production per crop has

risen since 2020. For instance, the cost to produce wheat was just under \$400 per acre in 2020, but it has risen to around \$575 per acre in 2025, which is a decrease from \$620 per acre in 2022. Oats have increased from \$350 per acre to \$510, canola from \$410 to \$625, and soybeans from \$380 to just over \$500 per acre over the same period. When examining production

**"KNOWING THEIR OWN COSTS TO IDENTIFY THEIR BREAK-EVEN YIELD AND PRICE IS ONE MAJOR STEP."**



SUBMITTED PHOTO

What can grain farmers do in 2025 to maintain profitability?

costs, the majority of the expenses are allocated as follows: land accounts for 18%, fertilizer for 16.5 percent, equipment for 15 percent, seed for 12 percent, crop protection and pesticides for 8 percent, and fuel for 5 percent.

"[Farmers] cannot guarantee profitability but knowing their own costs to identify their breakeven yield and price is one major step," said Berthelette. "Maintaining their yield while cutting some costs (efficiencies)

can reduce potential losses."

Cost-cutting strategies that do not compromise yield include:

- Conducting soil tests: guessing can lead to over- or under-application of inputs.
- Reducing fertilizer only if the timing or placement is improved: applying fertilizer in the spring is recommended if possible.
- Timing pesticide applications properly: poor timing can reduce overall yield.
- Investing in proven practices and products: seek out local third-party testing.

- Making informed decisions about equipment and land: excessive capital investment for your farm size can burden your operation.

When it comes to fertilizer, it's important to follow the 4Rs:

- The right source: matching the fertilizer to crop needs.
- The right rate: aligning the amount of fertilizer with crop requirements.
- The right time: ensuring nutrients are available when the crop needs them.
- The right place: keeping nutrients where the crop can effectively use them.

"Farms cannot continue to produce food for Canada and the world when they operate in perpetual losses," said



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Continued on page 16

# Your FARM



## El Niño, La Niña, and the 2025 forecast: what farmers can expect this season

By Lori Penner

Every farmer wishes they had a crystal ball to predict what Manitoba's growing season will bring. Will it be another dry year, or will mud-slicked fields make seeding a challenge? While no one can see the future, there is one global weather phenomenon that offers valuable clues for long-range forecasting—and it's shaping predictions for the 2025 crop season

Scott Kehler, meteorologist and president and chief scientist of Weatherlogics, has spent years analyzing weather patterns and developing forecasting tools to help farmers and industry professionals prepare for whatever Mother Nature has in store.

With a bachelor's and master's degree in meteorology from the University of Manitoba, Kehler specializes in weather research, improving prediction methods, and analyzing past climate events. Despite his focus on research, he remains passionate about day-to-day forecasting, particularly for high-impact weather events.

During his presentation at St. Jean Farm Days earlier this year, Kehler shed light on two significant climate patterns—El Niño and La Niña—and how they consistently shape winter weather trends across North America.

"These events are driven by shifts in sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern Pacific Ocean along the equator," Kehler explained. "El Niño is associated with above-average ocean temperatures, while La Niña brings cooler-than-normal waters. These changes influence global weather patterns, including the likelihood of extreme weather events."

Since 1900, there have been about 30 El Niño events, with the most recent in 2023-24 and the strongest recorded in 2015-16. Likewise, there have been about 30 La Niña events since 1900, with the most recent occurring from 2020-23 and the strongest on record in 1973-74.

### Why do we care about Pacific Ocean temperatures?

"The Pacific Ocean makes up such a massive part of the Earth's surface—about five times the area of Canada," Kehler explained. "These temperatures affect global weather patterns. They influence the jet stream due to the difference in temperature between areas to our south and areas to our north."

The jet stream is a key driver of North American weather. During El Niño, temperature differences tend to be less pronounced, weakening the jet stream and making it more difficult for cold air masses to move south. Conversely, La Niña strengthens the jet stream, increasing temperature differences and allowing Arctic air to push further south, often resulting in colder and snowier conditions.

"Although these patterns don't guarantee extreme weather, they increase the probability of certain conditions developing," Kehler said. "If you look at the past decade, the warmest and coolest years have almost always coincided with an El Niño or La Niña event."

cided with an El Niño or La Niña event."

### What's in store for 2025?

As of December 2024, the Pacific Ocean remained in neutral conditions, meaning neither El Niño nor La Niña was in effect.

"This means the forecast is far more uncertain than usual," Kehler admitted. "When we don't have a strong El Niño or La Niña, that takes away one of the factors we can point to when making our long-range forecast."

However, by May 2025, El Niño is expected to

return and strengthen through the fall.

Here's what Manitoba farmers can expect in 2025:

- Overall, cooler-than-normal summer conditions, particularly in the spring.

"It looks like this winter might be a little slow to leave, and with La Niña in place, there's a chance we'll see more snow," Kehler said. "The snowpack could keep things a little cooler into spring." Summer temperatures will be normal

Continued on page 16

"THE FORECAST IS MORE UNCERTAIN THAN USUAL."

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# Your FARM



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## > FORECAST, FROM PG. 15

to slightly below normal.

- Wetter-than-normal conditions are expected, with a cooler start to spring followed by normal levels of rain and snow. As summer progresses, precipitation is projected to be above normal.

- In 2024, Manitoba saw an active thunderstorm season with few severe events. "2025 will likely be similar," Kehler predicted.

Long-range forecasting remains a challenge, but trends in ocean temperatures, atmospheric oscillations, and solar cycles offer valuable insights.

"Many farmers receive day-to-day forecasts, but long-range forecasts use entirely different methods," Kehler emphasized. "Water temperatures

change very slowly. It takes a lot of energy to alter ocean temperatures, so we rely on these indicators for longer-term predictions."

While the 2025 growing season remains uncertain, the expected transition from neutral conditions to El Niño suggests a wetter-than-normal summer with cooler-than-normal temperatures. For farmers, this means careful planning and flexibility will be key.

"As always, weather remains one of the most unpredictable factors in agriculture, but by understanding patterns like El Niño and La Niña, farmers can better prepare for what lies ahead."

## > PROFITABILITY, FROM PG. 14

Berthelette. "Any normal business might fold in the face of the financial losses many farmers face in a poor year. Farms are often asset rich and cash poor, making capital investments and growth a challenge at times."

Despite farmers doing everything they can to achieve profitability, they face numerous challenges beyond their control.

"Hurdles are weather, unexpected changes in policy, trade, increasing

costs," said Berthelette. "Also, the ability to make sound decisions at opportune times. Major loss factors could

be risking yield with poor agronomic decisions (including fertilizer) or missing opportunities to lock in profitable grain prices."

Berthelette noted that the tactics for farmers remain consistent each year—identifying each farm's profitability and understanding marketing opportunities are key to managing farm finances.

"Farmers should understand their costs to produce and store the crop, plus they need to know the grain price needed make profit," said Berthelette. "Then they would have a marketing plan in place to achieve their goals of selling the grain at breakeven or profit-making prices. With grain prices down and crop input prices remaining high, it just may be harder to achieve as much profit in 2025."

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The **Voice**



# sports & recreation

## Winkler Flyers gearing up to defend their MJHL title

Team finishes regular season at the top of the division and overall league standings

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Winkler Flyers ended the 2024-2025 Manitoba Junior Hockey League regular season last weekend decidedly on top.

Winkler's dominating record of 46 wins, eight losses, three overtime losses, and one shootout loss gave them 96 points, enough to handily take first place in both the MGEU East Division and the league overall, with the Steinbach Pistons (89 points) and the Portage Terriers (81 points) trailing them in second and third place in both cases.

The team wrapped things up with a trio of wins this past week, starting with a 3-0 blanking of the Freeze in Winnipeg March 12 that saw Leif Ekblad make 17 saves and Niklas Gudmundson, Nicholas Mckee, and Jacob Michelson score.

The rematch in Winkler Friday night saw the Freeze manage just a single goal to Winkler's eight, which came courtesy of Will Lyons, Mckee, Brody Beauchemin, Mathys Blanchette, Michelson, Blake Matheson, Jayce Legaarden, and Kam Thomas. Liam Ernst was called to make 15 saves as the Flyers massively outshot the Freeze 87-16.

Saturday's final regular season game against the Selkirk Steelers ended the season on a high note, with Winkler taking it 6-2.

Marcus Hughes, Liam Carlone, Matheson, Jared Grenier, Michelson, and Owen Wallace ran up the score, while Ekblad denied 20 of 22 shots on goal. His teammates fired 38 the other way.

Head coach and general manager Matthew Melo, who joined the team last fall, is feeling good about the



WINKLERFLYERS.COM

The Winkler Flyers made short work of the visiting Selkirk Steelers in their final regular season game of the year Saturday, winning it 6-2.

Flyers' output this season and their chances for successfully defending their MJHL title in the weeks ahead.

"It's been a really incredible first season," he said Monday. "I'm obviously really proud of our group, coming off a championship, the way they just continued to raise the standard and build on what was accomplished last season. They really haven't taken a step back. A large part of the core and staff has been driving that, has returned.

"It could be easy to be complacent, but we have a lot of guys here who understand what it takes to win, who desire to win, and who have done an incredible job leading our group to the success that we've had this season."

Transitioning to a new coach can be a tricky period for a team, even a championship-winning one, Melo observed, and it took a little while for the Flyers to find their feet last fall.

"I think we probably started a little slower than we would have liked to," he said. "But then, after a little bit of time here, I'd say 10, 12 games, we started to find a little bit of a rhythm and have been building ever since.

"I think we feel really good about how our games progressed, but all year long we've talked about how there's certainly areas we've had to continue to grow in and refine and build," Melo shared. "So it hasn't been perfect by any means, but we feel really good with where our group's at right now, heading into the playoffs."

The Flyers will take on the Niverville Nighthawks in the best-of-seven divisional first round. Game one is in

Winkler Friday night.

Niverville finished fourth in the East Division and fifth in the league overall with 35 wins and 23 losses to their names.

Winkler came out ahead all five times the two teams squared off against each other this winter.

"We had some success against them throughout the regular season, but they're a highly skilled, a fast team, well coached, so it should be a really good match up," Melo said.

In the days leading up to the playoffs, Melo says he and his coaching staff aren't looking to mix things up much.

"Our game never really changes ... there's going to be a pretty large focus on what we can control in our game, the things we do really well. So it's just going to be a little bit more of the same in terms of our preparation this week.

"It's going to be talking a lot about who we are, how we play to have success, and how we can establish those things early on in a game or early on in a playoff series ... talking about consistency and steadiness and obviously just getting buy-in from the entire group. It takes everybody."

### FLYERS HONOURED

The MJHL handed out its seasonal awards last week, and three Flyers made the list.

Melo got the Muzz MacPherson Coach of the Year award, netminder Liam Ernst won the Ed Belfour

Continued on page 18

## Thunder third in province



MHSAA PHOTO

The Morden Thunder clinched third at the Provincial AAA Junior Varsity Girls Basketball Championship in Dauphin over the weekend. The ladies kicked things off with a 61-37 win against the Léo-Rémillard Renards but then stumbled against the Dauphin Clippers 53-55 to get knocked out of the running for the title. The Clippers ultimately lost to the Linden Christian Wings in the championship game, while Morden doubled up on the Edward Schreyer Barons 66-33 in the third-place match to bring home the bronze.

## Local coach wins two curling awards

By Lorne Stelmach

Not only has a team of young Morden curlers had success at the national level, but their coach has also received honours as well.

Gord Titchkosky received the provincial coaching award at both the U18 and U20 levels in his role as the coach for the team skipped by Nash Sugden of Morden.

The foursome that also includes Tyler Fehr, Tanner Treichel, and Ryan Thiessen won the U18 provincial title and went on to the national championship, where it went 5-1 in the round robin before bowing out in the first playoff game.

Only a couple days later, the team then went to the U20 provincials and eliminated the Zach Norris team from Morris 11-4 in the semi-final before falling 6-4 to the Jayce Freeman team from Virden in the final. It still earned them the right to be the second Manitoba team to go to the upcoming U20 nationals in Summerside, PEI.

Titchkosky said the coaching honours, which are voted on by all of the coaches at the competitions, are somewhat overwhelming.

"It's certainly humbling being recognized by your peers, but that's

certainly not why I do it," he said. "To me, the real reward is seeing the success of the team that I'm coaching. That's what matters to me."

Titchkosky got into coaching years ago when his son Thomas was first getting into competitive curling.

"There was a lack of certified coaches, so I got into it and got my certification," he said, noting he coached his son's team for a few years.

"I enjoyed it, so I thought I wouldn't mind doing it some more, and at that time the team I'm currently coaching was just coming into high school, and they wanted to follow in the footsteps and do some competitive curling, so I agreed to coach them."

Titchkosky said it has been rewarding for him to see how the team has grown and developed as curlers.

"That's where the satisfaction is for me, to see them grow and improve and achieve their goals. That's the most fun part of it for me."

He still curls a bit himself in the local men's league and in various bonspiels, but he has been enjoying the role of coaching.

"It is quite different ... even before I started doing competitive coaching, I got involved in the high school pro-



FACEBOOK.COM/MORDENCURLINGCLUB

Gord Titchkosky (right) was honoured with provincial coaching awards at the U18 and U20 level for his work with Morden's Team Sugden (left), who are bound for the U20 nationals in PEI.

gram," noted Titchkosky.

"I think for me, a lot of it is I want to make sure that young people are getting into the sport and that we grow the sport at the grassroots level," he said.

"It kind of evolved then into the competitive side of things," he said. "I don't really play competitively anymore, so this keeps me involved in the competitive side of the game as well, which is kind of fun."

"And when they see the results on the ice from the work they are putting in at practice and off ice and with the preparation, you really do see that enthusiasm and excitement."

He is uncertain at this point how and if we will continue as a coach.

"I still do enjoy curling a lot, but it's a huge investment of time and energy," he said. "I'm away from my family and work, so I haven't made that decision yet."

## Morden duo win stick curling silver medals



SUPPLIED PHOTO BY THECURLER.COM

Morden's Warren McKennitt and Daniel Botha with Cody Bergen of the Steinbach Curling Club at the Manitoba 55+ Senior Games, at which McKennitt and Botha won silver.

By Voice staff

A Morden stick curling team brought home the silver medal from the Manitoba 55+ Senior Games in Steinbach earlier this month.

Competing in the eight-team U70 category, Warren McKennitt and Daniel Botha went undefeated in

their three round robin games before defeating a Steinbach team in the semi-final to earn a seat in the final against Stonewall's Ralph Nespor and Rob Lacombe.

The gold-medal match came down to last stone, but it ultimately went Nespor/Lacombe's way 4-3.

### > FLYERS, FROM PG. 17

Top Goaltender honour, and centre Brody Beauchemin won the Frank McKinnon Memorial Trophy for Outstanding Ability & Sportsmanship.

Melo says he's honoured to be recognized in his inaugural season at the head of the Flyers.

"I just felt really, really privileged and grateful for the amazing players that we have here," he said. "And then just for the staff and the people, the good people that I'm surrounded by that have just made it so easy for me to step in here and be myself."

"I could name 15, 20 people who just are so selfless and come together to make this group what it is. The award goes to me, but I've learned very early you can't do anything, you can't have success without really good people surrounding you."

Ernst and Beauchemin's honours were both well-earned, Melo noted.

Ernst got 30 wins in 38 games, making 953 saves and giving up just 63 goals for a 0.934 save percentage.

"We're really proud of him," Melo said, noting the 19-year-old has really stepped up into his role this season. "There are a few different points throughout the year where he elevated his game to another level. All year long he's been steady, dialed-in, focused, and confident. It couldn't have happened to a better

kid to get recognized by the league for top goaltender."

Beauchemin getting singled out for sportsmanship came as no surprise to anyone who's coached or played with him, Melo noted.

"I think he had one penalty all year, and it was a delay of game for flipping the puck out of the glass," he said, chuckling. "He plays with integrity, but back to back years he's finished top four in league scoring as well, and he's probably left points on the table, to be honest, to play a really selfless game, to defend first."

Beauchemin has contributed 68 points this season—26 goals and 42 assists—just one point shy of team leader Jayce Legaarden and fourth in the league overall.

Numerous other Flyers have also had stellar seasons, Melo said.

"We had Isaiah Peters as a first team all-star as a D-man, and he was in the conversation for defenceman of the year. Kam Thomas, the local, was on the rookie all-star team, and then Matt Levoie was also on the rookie all-star team. So we had quite a few names in the mix there for the league awards."

"Again, it's just a by-product of our group collectively and the way we play, the way we desire to have the team's success first and then the obvious by-product is individuals being rewarded as well."

# Petition launched to oppose proposed Morden lagoon in RM of Roland

By Becca Myskiw

A petition is currently available for residents in Roland to sign in opposition to a proposed lagoon by the City of Morden.

Morden's existing lagoon location is insufficient to meet the area's growing needs, prompting the city to explore expansion options. One such option is a 300-acre parcel of land in the Rural Municipality (RM) of Roland, located along Highway 3, one mile north of a local hog barn. The City of Morden has made a conditional offer to purchase this land while awaiting the results of geotechnical testing, as well as the necessary approvals and licenses to proceed. If the project receives the green light, the plan is to construct an aerated multi-cell wastewater and sewage lagoon on the site, which would involve pumping waste via underground pipes.

Ron Bezan, a resident of Roland, is openly against building the proposed lagoon in the community. He noted that Roland residents will have the opportunity to comment on the project once Morden submits its proposal to the Environmental Assessment Board and the review process begins.

"There has been zero discussion from the City of Morden with the citizens of the RM of Roland," he said. "Project and plans are not set in stone, as they have recently only received back the results of geotechnical soil testing. The results of these tests need to be reviewed by project engineers to determine if the lagoon build can go ahead based on soil types."

Bezan pointed out that the City of Morden and the RM of Stanley have cited proper soil conditions as a reason for seeking a site outside their limits. However, he emphasized that their current lagoon in Morden is deficient in capacity rather than structural issues.

"I and many of the residents and ratepayers of the RM of Roland are not only against this proposal but are also offended that a 'neighbour' would even consider asking us to take their sewage and wastewaters," said Bezan.

He expressed concern that if the lagoon is built in the RM of Roland, it could negatively impact the quality of life for local residents due to odors from human waste. Bezan mentioned that the existing lagoon site in Morden releases odors regularly.

"No one likes the smell when entering the east side of Morden," said Bezan. "Why should we in Roland have to have that when outside for BBQs, recreation, school kids at recess, even just leaving house windows open?"

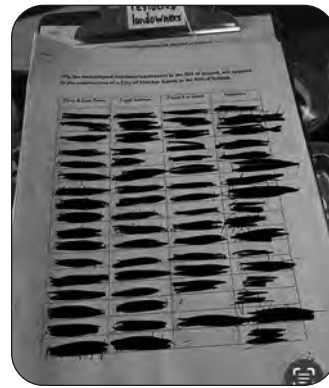
A group of concerned citizens has organized a petition opposing the proposed lagoon. They argue that Morden missed the opportunity to address its wastewater capacity issues and chose not to participate in a regional project several years ago.

"In June 2023 they announced a new plan for a treatment facility," said a spokesperson for the group. "Only when that project came in over budget did they decide to pursue building in the RM of Roland. If they are over budget and can't afford their project that is a City of Morden problem but now they have made it ours."

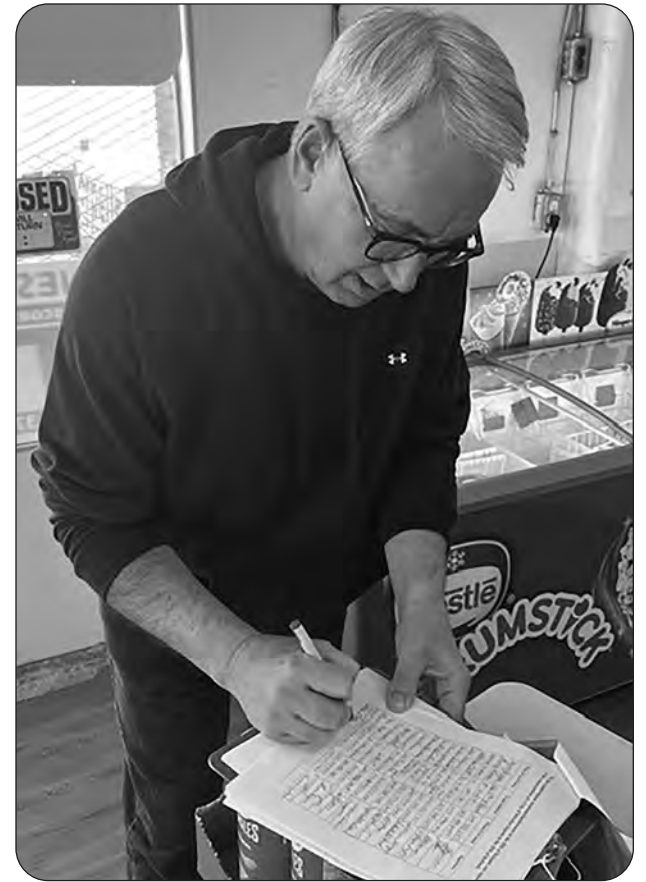
Bezan also raised concerns about declining land values and potential contamination of the Winkler Aquifer, as the proposed land is in the catchment area for that water supply. The City of Morden has stated that they are "very conscious" of the Winkler Aquifer, which is why they are seeking land with adequate clay content.

Another petition is circulating among concerned citizens in the Pembina Valley, focusing specifically on issues related to the aquifer.

"This project takes farmland and its related tax revenue out of our RM coffers and offers us nothing in return," said a spokesperson for the citizens who created the petition. "So basically they want to build a lagoon over a large drinking water aquifer, pipe human waste through our local watershed, remove farmland from our RM (and its tax revenue with no offer of compensation and all the while they would



There are two separate petitions, one for the RM of Roland residents and one for those who reside outside of the municipality.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Ron Bezan is circulating a petition in opposition to a proposed lagoon by the City of Morden in the RM of Roland.

benefit financially), and bring literal human waste and its related smell to their neighbouring RM."

Bezan is uncertain whether the final decision regarding the lagoon will be made at the municipal or provincial level. The project does not currently appear on any Manitoba government webpages or in discussions, but he noted that the province will conduct public hearings on any environmental matters before any decisions are made.

The petition is available for signing at the Roland General Store and will remain there for the next week or so. After that, it will be sent to the provincial government and the local council.

## Keep yourself safe from fraud and scams - March is Fraud Prevention Month

By E Antonio

March is Fraud Prevention Month. Fraud Prevention Month was created in 2004 as an awareness campaign for fraud prevention. The Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (CAFC) is working with organizations across Canada to empower Canadians to engage in fraud prevention.

According to the CAFC, they received nearly 50,000 fraud complaints in 2024, which resulted in a loss of \$639 million from Canadians.

As for Manitoba, RCMP detachments received 2041 complaints. "The complaints include various types of frauds, but most were related to online or telephone-related scams," said Corporal Terry Sundell of the Mani-

toba RCMP Cyber & Financial Crime Unit.

The Morden RCMP Detachment specifically received 17 reports regarding fraudulent activity, while Morris RCMP Detachment specifically received 24 reports.

Corporal Sundell also explained that fraud complaints are heavily under-reported, with the CAFC estimating that only 5 to 10 percent of frauds are reported to authorities. "People that have been victimized may feel embarrassed, not know who to report to, or not bother reporting it because they may feel that nothing can be done."

He shared the importance of making these reports, as they help law enforcement develop disruption tactics, conduct awareness campaigns, and

coordinate investigations with international law enforcement agencies.

The RCMP receives daily reports of fraud claims all around the province. Scammers do not care where you live; they only want you to fall for their tricks. They will also try to scam you at any time of the year, but Corporal Sundell stated that there tends to be an increase in activity during tax and holiday season.

The most common scams that are accounted for in RCMP reports are:

- Grandparent scams: The scammer pretends to be a lawyer or law enforcement and says that your grandchild is in jail and needs money to be bailed out.

- Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) scams: A scammer gets access to your

CRA information and sets up themselves as the direct deposit recipient.

- Work-from-home scams: Scammers will offer you a remote position involving moving money, only to be part of a fraudulent operation.

- Investment scams: People receiving a message to invest in cryptocurrency.

- Romance scams: Scammers build trust and then ask you for personal information such as ID photos or money.

- Computer virus scams: You will get a pop-up saying your computer has a virus, and you click the link to "fix" the virus and enter personal details.

# Classifieds

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

**HOUSE FOR SALE**

Lovely 3 bdrm. 2 bath module home in Crescent Creek Park in Teulon. \$225,000. Low pad rent. Centrally located. Call 1-204-861-8143.

**HELP WANTED**

Two Grooms for 2024 season at Assiniboia Downs. Horse experience helpful. Call Carl 431-335-3049.

**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.

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**EMPLOYMENT**

**BLADE O' GRASS** Accepting job applications  
LAWN CARE SERVICES for the Spring of 2025

Looking for self motivated, dependable conscientious individuals with a strong attendance record that can work with little or no supervision. Must have valid driver's license and be a responsible truck & trailer operator.

**Job Duty:**

- Mowing & weed whacking grass.
- Possible 3 days a week.
- **Semi Retired personnel welcome to apply**

**Also looking for individual to assist in landscaping and irrigation, projects etc. Call 204-325-7469 or email: bladegrass1987@gmail.com with references.**

**FARMLAND TENDER**

**FARM LAND FOR SALE BY TENDER**

Sealed, written tenders for property in the RM of STANLEY described below will be received by:

**HARLEY J. SHEPHERD**  
McCulloch Mooney Johnston Selby LLP  
Box 1670, Carman, MB R0G 0J0  
Or

McCulloch Mooney Johnston Selby LLP  
309 Stephen Street, Morden, MB R6M 1V1

**PROPERTY**

THE S 1/2 OF SECTION 34 AND  
THE SLY 990 FEET OF THE NW 1/4 OF  
SECTION 34-2-6 WPM  
EXCEPTING THEREOUT ALL MINES AND  
MINERALS  
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:  
Ph: 204-745-2546 Fax: 204-745-3963  
email: harley@mmjsslw.com

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
IN THE MATTER of the estate of  
EDWARD CARL YODAN, late  
of the City of Morden, Manitoba,  
Deceased.

ALL CLAIMS against the above Estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be sent to the undersigned at 326 Stephen Street, Morden, Manitoba, R6M 1T5, within four (4) weeks of the date of this publication.

PKF LAWYERS  
Attn: Stéphane Warnock  
Solicitor for the Estate

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

In accordance with  
**S. 41 (5) Trustee Act (R.S.M. 1987)**

IN THE MATTER OF the Estate of Phyllis Doreen Larlee, late of the City of Morden, in Manitoba, deceased.

All claims against the above estate, duly verified by statutory declaration, must be filed with TRADITION LAW LLP, Estates & Trusts, at their offices at 701 - 310 Broadway, Winnipeg, MB R3C 0S6, Attention: D. Andrew Torbiak on or before April 21, 2025.

**DATED** at the City of Winnipeg, in Manitoba, the 20th day of March, 2025.

**TRADITION LAW LLP**  
Estates & Trusts  
Solicitors for the Executor

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

In the matter of the estate of Jacob Wieler, late of the Town of Altona, in Manitoba, deceased:

All claims against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at the Town of Altona, in Manitoba, on or before the 23rd day of April, 2025.

Dated at the Town of Altona, in Manitoba, this 17th day of March, 2025.

COLE AND MACE LAW OFFICE  
Box 2039  
Altona, Manitoba R0G 0B0  
Solicitors for the Executor

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**VOLUNTEER EVENTS**

**Volunteer Awareness Events**



**Learn about programs  
at CNIB and how  
to get involved!**

**Wednesday, March 26th**

South Central Regional Library - Morden Branch  
514 Stephen St, Morden. 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**Thursday, March 27th, 2025**

South Central Regional Library - Winkler Branch  
160 Main St, Winkler. 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Please contact **Ben Neufeld at 204-509-9658**  
or ben.neufeld@cnib.ca.

**For more information on programs  
go to CNIB.ca to get connected.**

**CAREERS**



**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:

- Experience in grain handling, processing, or manufacturing facility
- Experience in industrial equipment maintenance and repair
- Ability to read blueprints and technical documents
- Pressure or structural welding tickets and related experience

This is a regular full time position providing an excellent wage and benefits package. Bunge is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and rewarding workplace for all employees.

Starting Wages:

- Mechanic \$32.70/hour
- Red Seal Millwright: \$38.08/hour

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.

**Bunge Canada is an equal opportunity employer.**

# Classifieds

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The **Winkler Morden**  
**Voice**

## SUDOKU

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

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!

### 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!

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

### Sudoku Answer

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

### Crossword Answer

## CROSSWORD

### CLUES ACROSS

- Take heed
- One's superior
- Prepped meat
- Tighten anew
- Type of textile fiber
- Animalistic
- When you hope to get somewhere
- Offender
- Former NYC mayor Ed
- Type of cryptocurrency
- Mauna \_\_, Hawaiian volcano
- Herring-like fish
- Popular PBS program
- Congressman (abbr.)
- Flightless Australian birds
- Defrosted
- Prior Yankee sensation Kevin
- Nasal mucus
- Some are southern
- A place to construct
- Popular beer brand
- Shouts of farewell
- Network of nerves
- Make a mistake
- Showed old movie
- Body parts
- A divisor
- Congressional investigatory body
- Papers
- Most unnatural
- Judge the worth of something
- Makes sounds while sleeping
- Which
- Hungarian Violinist

	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

### CLUES DOWN

- Pages
- Head pain
- A loud utterance
- Large brown seaweed
- Hulu's chef Carmine
- Greek mountain
- Made final
- Bar
- Tai subgroup
- What you eat
- Teaches again
- Small constellation
- Type of berry
- Cows fattened for meat
- A way to hoof it
- Exaggerated a role
- About two
- Long upholstered seat
- What employees earn
- Fiber from a coconut husk
- Digits
- Polish by rubbing
- Liquid body substances
- Furniture with open shelves
- Edible part of a chicken
- Satisfy
- Tool used to remove
- Icelandic poems
- Swiss village
- Drunks
- Evergreen plant genus
- Light precipitation
- Ribosomal ribonucleic acid
- An informal debt instrument

### HEALTH

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### PUBLIC NOTICE

## PUBLIC NOTICE 2025 PROPOSED PESTICIDE PROGRAM CITY OF MORDEN

Public notice is hereby given that the City of Morden may conduct the following Pesticide Control Programs during 2025. An Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPM) has been developed for the City and will act as a guide for pest prevention, treatment and management. One of the goals of the IPM is to reduce the use of chemical controls by means of using preventative, mechanical, and biological controls. The City will adhere to provincial legislation and regulations pertaining to the use and implementation of a pesticide program.

- For the control of noxious weeds within the City of Morden and in accordance with the Noxious Weed Act, Environment Act and the Non-Essential Pesticide Use Regulations between May 1st and October 31st the following herbicides may be used:
  - Par 3 (mecocorp-p, 2,4-D, dicamba)
  - Round-up (Glyphosate)
- To control larval mosquitoes in stagnant/standing water, within the City of Morden and 1 mile beyond the city boundary on public property, rights-of way, and ditches between May 1st to October 1st 2022 the following biological larvicides may be used include:
  - Aquabac (Bacillus thuringiensis var. israelensis -Bti)
- To control adult mosquitoes along streets and lanes, City parks, golf courses, cemeteries, and rights-of-ways within the City boundaries between May 1st and October 31st, 2023, by way of ultra-low volume mist sprayers the following insecticide may be used: DeltaGard 20EW ULV
- To control Dutch Elm Disease by way of macro injection directly into the root flare of American elm trees, Arbotect 20-S fungicide will be used between June 1st and August 31st.
- To control other insect pests between May 1st and October 31st, 2023, the following may be used:
  - Safer's Trounce Insecticidal Soap (potassium salts)
  - Copper Fungicide Spray
  - Foray 48B (Btk)
- To control noxious weed European Buckthorn in City parks, greenspace, and natural areas between May 1st to October 1st the following product may be used: Garlon RTU Herbicide (triclopyr, present as butoxyethyl ester)

Any person may, within 15 days after this notice is published, send a written submission to Manitoba Conservation regarding the above control program or register with the department their written objection to the use of pesticides next to their property to:

**Pesticide Use Permit Program**  
Environment and Climate Change  
Environmental Approvals Branch  
Box 35, 14 Fultz Boulevard  
Winnipeg MB R3Y 0L6  
T: (204) 945-7107  
F: (204) 945-5229  
E: pesticideusepermit@gov.mb.ca

W: [www.gov.mb.ca/sd/environment\\_and\\_biodiversity/pesticides](http://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/environment_and_biodiversity/pesticides)

Any person who may wish to discuss the control policy may also contact the City of Morden, Parks & Urban Forestry Department by email at [sdias@mymorden.ca](mailto:sdias@mymorden.ca)



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**Online McSherry Auctions**

**Estate & Moving**  
March 26th @ 7:00PM

**Firearms & Ammo**  
March 27th @ 7:00PM

**Estate & Moving**  
April 2nd @ 7:00PM

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mcsherryltd@gmail.com

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**UPCOMING REUNION**

**LOOKING FOR 1975 Altona WC MILLER GRADS**

**Do you know of someone?**

Contact Carol at crempel324@gmail.com  
Class of '75 Reunion Committee



**COMING EVENTS**



Featuring inspirational speaker "Unstoppable Tracy"

*Gateway Resources Gala*

May 8th, 2025

Doors open at 5:30pm, begins at 6pm

at **Buttercup Celebration Hall**

\$700 table of 8 / \$400 table of 4 / \$100 single plate

Tickets available by calling or email 204-325-7304 (Ext 260)

corinne@gatewayresourcesinc.com

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**Todd**  
204-904-9705

**NOSTALGIARAMA**

**Vintage, Collectibles & Antique Sale**  
SAT, Apr 5th 2025  
10AM - 5PM

Manitoba's **Biggest** Indoor Spring Vintage, Collectibles & Antique Sale with over **180** tables.

**Admission: \$5.00**  
12 and under **FREE**

**Assiniboia Downs**  
3975 Portage Ave, Wpg.  
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or 431-374-6925

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**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE CITY OF MORDEN 2025 FINANCIAL PLAN**

Pursuant to Section 162 (2) of The Municipal Act, Council of the City of Morden invites all ratepayers of the City of Morden to a **Public Hearing** in respect to the **2025 Financial Plan** (Budget) for the City of Morden. The purpose of the Public Hearing is to allow any interested persons to make a representation, ask questions or register an objection to the Financial Plan. A presentation of the Financial Plan will be made in **Council Chambers at the City of Morden Civic Center, 100-195 Stephen Street, Morden, Manitoba on Tuesday, April 8, 2025 at 7:00 P.M.** Copies of the Financial Plan will be made available to the public on **April 1, 2025**. Additional information and other documents concerning the matter and the procedures to be followed at the hearing will be available for review at the municipal office at this time.



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**EMPLOYMENT**

**SR SUPER THRIFTY**  
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**Pharmacy Assistant Morris, MB**

Super Thrifty Drugs is seeking a full-time Pharmacy Assistant to join our health care team in Morris, Manitoba.

**Duties & Responsibilities:**

- General tasks associated with a pharmacy technician or assistant
- Preparing compliance packaging
- Prescription order entry
- Responding to phone inquiries as directed
- Inventory management: placing & receiving orders and stock replenishment

**Qualifications:**

- Previous practical experience or formal training in a pharmacy setting
- Superior communication skills
- Organizational and problem solving skills
- Customer service skills
- The ability to work in a team setting
- Previous experience with the Kroll pharmacy software system is an asset.

**We Offer:**

- A competitive salary commensurate to experience
- A comprehensive benefits package
- No evenings or Sundays and a flexible Saturday schedule
- The opportunity to join a team committed to providing customer service excellence

Please send your resume in confidence to:

**Nathan Friesen**  
**nathan.friesen@superthrifty.com**

**SR SUPER THRIFTY**  
LOCALLY OWNED WE CARE... Your Family Drug Store

**Pharmacist - Part-Time (hours negotiable) Morris, MB**

Valley Super Thrifty Pharmacy is looking for a Part-Time Staff Pharmacist to join our team in Morris, Manitoba.

**Qualifications:**

- Licensed to practice as Pharmacist in Manitoba
- Authorized to give injections an asset but not required
- Prescribe for self-limiting conditions and smoking cessation an asset but not required
- OAT training an asset by not required

**Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Practice within federal/provincial, regulatory/legal requirements, provincial Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice, and Policies
- Demonstrate professional integrity and act to uphold a high level of professional standard of practice
- Provide counselling on prescriptions, over the counter/behind the counter products and all health-related issues, including but not limited to indications, contra-indications, adverse effects, drug interactions and dosage
- Ensure accuracy and appropriateness of all prescriptions dispensed
- Strong problem-solving skills including experience formulating and executing action plans
- Superior customer relations skills and a strong sense of professionalism
- Hours: Monday to Friday is 9-6 Saturday 9-5

Please apply in confidence to:

**Nathan Friesen**  
**Valley Super Thrifty**  
**nathan.friesen@superthrifty.com**

# Classifieds Announcements

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## OBITUARY



**Susan Giesbrecht**  
July 28, 1928 – March 7, 2025

Susan Giesbrecht (nee Schroeder), age 96 years, of Altona, Manitoba passed away on Friday, March 7, 2025 at the Boundary Trails Health Centre.

She is survived by her children Sharon (Richard) Funk, Angela (Jim) Harms, Jim (Val) Giesbrecht, Steve (Diane) Giesbrecht, and Harv (Jeannette) Giesbrecht, as well as 14 grandchildren, and 23 great-grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her husband Lawrence Giesbrecht and one grandson.

A celebration of Susan's life was held on Tuesday, March 11, at the Altona EMM Church, with burial at the Altona Cemetery.

Donations in memory of Susan may be made to assist the ongoing development of the La Fortaleza School complex in Santa Cruz, Bolivia" c/o the EMMC Conference, or to MCC Manitoba for the work of MCC Thrift.

Wiebe Funeral Home Altona  
In care of arrangements  
www.wiebefhaltona.com

Cruz, Bolivia" c/o the EMMC Conference, or to MCC Manitoba for the work of MCC Thrift.

## OBITUARY



**In Loving Memory of**  
Geraldine Andrews

It is with profound sadness we announce the passing of Geraldine Ruth Andrews on December 29, 2024. Geraldine was a remarkable woman whose love, laughter, and unwavering dedication to others left an indelible mark on all who knew her. Her life was a testament to kindness, resilience, and joy.

Born on the Prairies of Manitoba, Geraldine was raised on a family farm, where she developed a deep appreciation for hard work and community. Surrounded by the support of a large extended family, she grew up participating in 4-H programs, learning life skills, and fostering a commitment to sharing and perseverance. She excelled in figure skating, curling, and baseball, cultivating her passion for teamwork and the simple pleasures of life.

Geraldine's greatest joy came from raising her two sons, whom she loved dearly and was immensely proud of, with the unwavering support and guidance of her parents, Raymond and Elaine. Their love and encouragement helped her build a nurturing and supportive environment for her family. As her sons grew into remarkable men and became loving fathers, Geraldine cherished watching them raise her beloved grandchildren, who brought endless light and joy into her life.

She encouraged her older son's passion for hockey, attending countless games and practices with unwavering enthusiasm. For her younger son, she supported his love of horseback riding and rodeo events, always cheering him on from the stands. Their achievements, both on and off the field, were a source of immense pride for Geraldine, and she cherished every moment they shared together.

Geraldine was a pillar of love and encouragement for her family. She was a devoted daughter to her parents, a caring sibling, an inspiring mother, a playful, nurturing grandmother and aunt, a compassionate healthcare provider and a loyal friend. Her boundless support and enthusiasm were evident in every role she took on.

Whether cheering for her children, grandchildren and nieces and nephews at hockey games, rodeo events, baseball and soccer fields, or curling sheets, Geraldine was always the loudest and proudest supporter. Her cheers, filled with pride and love, resonated far beyond the sidelines, uplifting everyone around her.

Family time was sacred to Geraldine, and she treasured gathering with her loved ones for board games and card nights. These moments, filled with laughter, friendly competition, and heartfelt connection, became cherished traditions which brought her family closer together. Her knack for making everyone feel special turned these simple activities into lasting memories.

Her compassionate spirit extended beyond her family. As a dedicated healthcare provider, Geraldine devoted many years to caring for patients with the same warmth and dedication she showed her loved ones. Healthcare was more than a career—it was a calling. Her kindness and professionalism earned her the admiration of colleagues and the gratitude of countless patients.

Geraldine's laughter was infectious, and her presence lit up every room she entered. Her positive spirit made everyone feel valued and welcomed. She believed deeply in the power of love and forgiveness, holding onto hopes for family healing and reconciliation.

Even in the face of health challenges, Geraldine's strength and positivity inspired those around her, embodying the resilience she taught her family.

Geraldine's legacy of kindness, encouragement, and selflessness will forever inspire those who knew and loved her. Although she is no longer with us, her spirit lives on in the hearts of her family and friends. Her life was a radiant example of love and devotion, and she will be profoundly missed by all who had the honour of knowing her.

Predeceased by her parents, Raymond and Elaine Pengelly, and her brother Richard Pengelly, and both sets of grandparents.

Geraldine leaves behind a loving family who will forever treasure her memory. Son Jeffrey and Christine (Holden, Lachlan, Kenley) Andrews; son Brett and Michelle (Colton, Chloe, Gabriel, Kaleb) Andrews; sister Helen Pengelly (Michael Deegan); brother Michael Pengelly (Paula), (Kristy and Adam Casson) (Scott and Lashay Pengelly); as well as other numerous nieces and nephews and great nieces and nephews

A celebration of Geraldine's life will be held at a later date, where family and friends will gather to honour her memory and share stories of the wonderful moments she created.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to Kid Sport Manitoba (South and West Chapters) reflecting her lifelong commitment to youth or donations to a Charity which is close to your heart.

## TENDER

# JANITORIAL TENDER

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Access Credit Union Dominion City requires the services of a contractor to provide daily general cleaning duties for the interior and exterior of the building, sidewalk snow clearing and exterior plant care.

### Duties include:

- Vacuum all carpets and mop floors
- Gather and dispose of all garbage and recycling
- Dust and clean offices, staff room and public area
- Clean and sanitize washrooms
- Other cleaning requirements as necessary

Tenders or resumes, accompanied by a minimum of two references, must be received on or before March 31, 2025, before 4:30 p.m.

Tender information can be obtained by emailing vickie.addison@accesscu.ca.

Tenders may be delivered, mailed or emailed to:

Access Credit Union  
PTH #14 Unit 2 - 23111 Stanley Business Centre  
Winkler, MB R6W 4B4  
Email: vickie.addison@accesscu.ca



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**PRESTIGE ROOFING**

# Emergency responders sharpen their media skills

By Lori Penner

On March 12, emergency management teams from Altona, Rhineland, Roland, and Montcalm gathered at the Millennium Exhibition Centre in Altona for a full-day media training session with Napier Emergency Consulting.

The goal was to ensure response teams can provide accurate, timely information to the public across multiple media platforms during emergencies.

The course, "Dealing with the Media," was led by Pat Kaniuga, a former CBC journalist with 25 years of experience. He guided participants through best practices for engaging with the media during crises.

"In teaching this or presenting this session, I try to peel back the curtains a little bit on what a reporter's job really is," Kaniuga explained. "Why they come to your community, why they often ask intrusive questions, and what their purpose is here. Also, what pressures they're under and what they have to do as far as getting information out to people and meeting deadlines."

Rather than seeing the media as an adversary, Kaniuga encourages public officials and emergency responders to view journalists as partners in disseminating crucial information.

"I try not to have it as an 'us versus them' mentality. I try to have it as 'this is their job, and now that you

understand their job, here's how you can work with them to get important messages out to your community."

One highlight of the training was a mock media scrum, where participants faced simulated reporters asking rapid-fire questions about a fictional emergency—a fuel truck overturning near a school, leaking gas into the sewer system. Each team appointed a spokesperson, who was filmed and later critiqued.

"It was a great practice," Kaniuga said. "You have to be prepared to handle media inquiries, get in front of misinformation, and be the authoritative voice people trust in a crisis."

The session also covered press releases, interview techniques, and social media's role in emergency communication.

Social media plays a major role in modern crisis management. While it can be a powerful tool, it also poses risks, Kaniuga noted. He acknowledged that misinformation and online scrutiny can complicate emergency responses.

"There's good, bad, and ugly when it comes to social media. It can be helpful, but it can also be detrimental," Kaniuga said. "A rural municipality needs to establish itself as a trusted source of information. People should be able to go to the town's website or Facebook page and know they're getting up-to-date, accurate information."



PHOTO BY LORI PENNER/VOICE

Municipal emergency coordinator Perry Batchelor (left) being interviewed by workshop facilitator Pat Kaniuga during a mock disaster exercise last week, which walked participants through the ins and outs of emergency communications.

## WORKING UNDER PRESSURE

Napier Emergency Consulting's managing director Shelley Napier explained that the training they provide offers hands-on experiences to prepare participants for real-world emergencies.

"Public information officers—many of whom may have day jobs as teachers or store managers—can be overwhelmed when suddenly thrown into a crisis. Understanding how to craft and deliver accurate messages under pressure is essential."

Altona/Rhineland municipal emergency coordinator Perry Batchelor underscored the value of the training. "As part of my job, it's about train-

ing the team," he said. "And part of that training is media awareness.

"What you saw during this event is that people come from all walks of life, and not everyone is comfortable providing information to the public. This training focused on what's important, how much time you have to deliver time-sensitive information, and how to get it out efficiently."

He noted that media scrutiny—especially on social media—is a growing challenge for emergency teams.

"We see it all the time. Look at the Kelowna fires—emergency teams worked tirelessly to keep people safe yet faced constant criticism online. Social media monitoring and managing public perception is something we'll be discussing at a team level."

## > SCAMS, FROM PG. 19

- E-transfer scams: You receive an email with a link to collect a fake e-transfer, which requires you to enter your banking details.

- Marketplace scams: You send money for an online item to buy online but never receive it.

- Fake invoice scams: The scammer notices a routine payment and sends an invoice requesting payment, making the email look like it came from the original payee.

Emily Olsen, media relations Strategist with Western Canada Lottery Corporation (WCLC), also addresses the rising issue of lottery scams.

Most scammers try to trick players by pretending to be WCLC or another lottery corporation. She expressed the importance of double-checking who is contacting you and not giving out any information.

"If you purchased your lotto ticket in-store, we will never contact you by phone or email to say you've won a prize. You also cannot win a prize if you have not purchased a ticket," said Olsen.

You will only be contacted through phone or email if you purchased your ticket online or have a Play Now or Subscription Spot subscription. Even if you are the lucky winner, WCLC encourages you to check the posted winning ticket numbers online and call their Player's Care line at 1 (800) 665-3313.

"If it is us calling and you want to hang up and call us directly, that is fine, too. We want to make sure everyone feels safe and comfortable when it comes to winning the lottery."

She also explained that scammers will try to pressure you to claim your prize as soon as possible. The WCLC

will never pressure you to collect payment right away, adding that they like to take their time and ensure they are contacting the correct winners.

"Scammers are always trying to catch you off guard, and winning the lottery can bring on a lot of emotions. You must stop and think about who is contacting you, and never give out any personal information, including your address, banking details, or account passwords."

The most important piece of advice WCLC shared is never transferring money. You are not required to pay taxes or fees for prizes. So, if you are being asked to make a payment, you know it is fake.

If you have become a victim of fraud, you are encouraged to submit a report to your local RCMP and to the CAFC and contact your financial institution. The CAFC has many

support and resources available to Canadians who have been victims of fraud, and they can be accessed on the CAFC website.

"It is important for people to understand that investigations into online frauds can be complex and take time, and during that time, a person's money is almost always gone, with no chance of it ever being recovered," said Corporal Sundell.

The best way to keep yourself safe is to take appropriate preventative measures and be aware of any concerns. Corporal Sundell recommends changing your passwords regularly and using multi-factor authentications wherever possible.

For more information on fraud prevention or submitting a fraud report, please visit [www.antifraudcentre.ca](http://www.antifraudcentre.ca) or call 1 (888) 495-8501.