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Posing with Frosty

Altona public works staffers Aaron Schmidt, Jared Friesen, Mark Neufeld, Doug Penner, and Mark Dupuis were the first to try out the town's new Frosty photo display last week. The giant snowman is located at the Civic Centre.
 TOWN OF ALTONA PHOTO

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



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Chamber launches Passport to Christmas

By Lori Penner

'Tis the season to kick off your Christmas shopping.

This year, the Altona and District Chamber of Commerce's holiday promotion is all about supporting the community, and they have launched their Passport to Christmas to do just that.

Economic development officer Stephanie Harris says they want to encourage people to find what they need right here in town when they

purchase their Christmas gifts this year.

The promotion features a passport card which displays a Christmas tree with ornaments. Each ornament represents a different spending amount at each business.

"All you need to do is bring your passport in and you spend the minimum amount," Harris explains. "You will then receive a sticker or stamped initial from the business."

Each participating business provides the passport cards, but they are

Safety Tips for Winter Driving



Keep an emergency kit in your car with warm clothes, a first aid kit, booster cables, a small shovel, and other tools to keep you safe



Adjust your speed for weather conditions and avoid using cruise control on slippery roads



Give yourself extra time to clear and defrost your windows



Drive with your lights on to help other drivers see you in reduced visibility



Keep your gas tank at least half-full in case you get stuck and need to run your car for warmth

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PHOTO BY LORI PENNER/VOICE

Altona EDO Stephanie Harris invites everyone to participate in the Altona and District Chamber of Commerce's Passport to Christmas promotion.

also available at the chamber's office on Centre Ave.

"There's a list of businesses on the back of the passport. Each passport is valued at about \$200," Harris says. "Once the passport is full, you need to drop it off at the chamber office for a chance to win \$500 of Chamber Bucks. So, it's a significant prize this year that would definitely help with your Christmas shopping. But the passport must be full to enter."

The dollar amounts on the passports range from \$10 to \$25.

"The amounts aren't that large, and it's helpful in encouraging everyone to shop local," Harris says.

Harris shares that she and the chamber's events and program coordinator Chloe Driedger have been giving this year's promotion a lot of thought.

"We thought this could be a fun promotion that the Altona chamber has not done for quite some time," she says. "Other chambers have done it in the past, and it's always been success-

ful for them, so it's always nice to see if that promotion can work here for us, too."

Over 25 local businesses are participating, including retail outlets, restaurants, and services.

"There are all kinds of opportunities," says Harris. "You can get gift certificates as well and use the passport to get a stamp."

The promotion runs from Dec. 1 to 15. The winner will be announced on Dec. 18.

On another note, Harris is also encouraging local shoppers to consider purchasing Chamber Bucks as gifts this Christmas.

"These can be purchased or ordered at the Altona Chamber office. They also support local businesses. This is a time of year when they need your support the most and could use that financial boost. If we want to keep our businesses in our community, or attract new businesses, we have to support them."

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Industrial Eats needs community's support to continue reno work

The Bunker is \$280K short of completing the project

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Bunker's latest social enterprise has hit a financial roadblock, but executive director Kevin Hildebrand has faith the community will come through and help them get across the finish line.

The Winkler youth ministry has spent the past several months renovating the former Central Station Community Centre space at 545 Industrial Drive into the new Industrial Eats BBQ & Smokehouse.

The project is much more than just another local eatery. In addition to serving as a way to raise funds to support the drop-in centre's youth programming, the restaurant will also provide employment for marginalized members of the community. The plan is to hire youth and seniors who need a more supportive work environment than might be offered elsewhere, with flexible work shifts and a culture of mentorship and understanding.

Thanks to The Bunker's own savings and the generous support of numerous area businesses, churches, and individuals, phases one and two of the renovation project, which saw the installation of a commercial kitchen and various accessibility upgrades, are on track to be completed early in the new year.

"We're working with WBS Construction and with a lot of the local trades. They're doing everything they can to keep costs as low as possible," Hildebrand said. "There have been a lot of great people helping us get to this point."

However, The Bunker right now is looking at pushing pause on beginning phase three, which includes finishing work on the 80-seat dining room and a secondary kitchen prep area, until additional funds can be secured.

"We had hoped we would have enough money come in during the year that we would just be able to keep right on going into phase three," Hildebrand said, explaining they began work with about 75 per cent of the approximately \$700,000 needed for the entire project, confident the rest could be secured as work got underway. "But there were a lot of grants



The Bunker's Kevin Hildebrand is putting a call out to the community for donations to help the ministry complete renovations on its new Industrial Eats restaurant. VOICE FILE PHOTO

that I applied for that fell through and a lot of different hiccups like that that I hadn't anticipated."

He estimates they're about \$280,000 short of what they need to complete the renovations. They can't move forward until they get the bulk of that funding firmed up.

"The last thing we want to do is leave anybody hanging with tens of thousands of dollars of unpaid invoices," Hildebrand said.

Bunker reps have reached out to numerous businesses and individuals this fall about the project, and now they're hoping a few more who expressed interest in potentially supporting it will consider doing so before year's end so the renovations can continue in 2024 uninterrupted.

"I've gone to a lot of businesses personally and talked to them about this," Hildebrand said, noting most

everyone has been excited by the idea behind the restaurant, but that hasn't necessarily translated into financial support. "So far there have been lots of good intentions, but not a lot of action."

Meanwhile, there are already a lot of youth and seniors who have expressed interest in working at Industrial Eats when it finally opens—teens eager to gain new skills and older adults keen to get back into the workforce as mentors.

It's going to be a place where relationships are built, Hildebrand said, but they need the community's help to make it a reality.

If you'd like to make a donation to support the project, head online to bunkerministry.com or contact Hildebrand at 204-325-9723. You can also follow the project's progress on its Facebook and Instagram pages.

Voice named Best All-Around Newspaper in provincial competition

The Winkler Morden Voice was honoured as the Best All-Around Newspaper for the 2021 publication year at the Better Newspapers Competition over the weekend.

Organized by the Manitoba Community Newspapers Association, the 103rd annual awards ceremony had been delayed due to the pandemic.

Next year's awards will cover both the 2022 and 2023 publication years.

For 2021, the Voice also received first place for Best Editorial Page and Best in Class for newspapers with a circulation of 10,000 or more.


Editor Ashleigh Viveiros received third-place awards for Best Health Story (*People need to know we have lim-*

ited capacity, June 3, 2021) and Best New Story (*It can feel a little bit like a slap in the face*, Sept. 16, 2021).

Reporter Lorne Stelmach also received third-place honours for Best Education Story (*Trustees reeling in wake of planned education changes*, March 25, 2021) and Best Environmental Story (*Shoring Up Dead Horse*

Creek, May 27, 2021).

The Voice is part of the independently and community-owned newspaper chain Big and Colourful Printing and Publishing, which also owns and operates Interlake Graphics, the Stonewall Teulon Tribune, Express Weekly News, Selkirk Record, Altona Rhineland Voice, and Carman Dufferin Standard.





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Region comes through in a big way for Power of PJs campaign

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Genesis House resource development coordinator Sophie Gerbrandt stopped by the Winkler branch of the South Central Regional Library Friday to pick up the dozens of donations that came in for this year's Power of PJs campaign.



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE
These bags were packed full of clothing donations for Genesis House. Donations came from all across the South Central Regional Library network, with the libraries serving as drop-off points for the campaign.

In conjunction with November being Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the regional shelter put a call out to the community for donations of women's and children's pyjamas, warm socks, and comfy pants. SCRL branches in Winkler, Morden, Altona, Miami, and Manitou served as drop-off locations for donations.

"This is more than we what we had last year," said Winkler branch administrator Jess Martens as Gerbrandt loaded up the items, which totalled over 200 pairs of PJs alone. "This year the smaller branches, Miami and Manitou, had probably double what they normally have.

"It's fantastic to see the communities come together and support this."

Gerbrandt noted the donations will provide a great deal of comfort to the women and children who come to the shelter for safe haven.

"Last year we had 64 women and 50 kids come into the shelter, and we gave each one of them a pair of py-

jamas or comfy clothes," she said. "So this is great to see. It's exciting."

Mixed in with the clothing were also several gifts of toys, personal hygiene products, and food that the shelter will also put to good use.

All in all, November proved a successful month for Genesis House in terms of raising both awareness and support for their work with the victims of domestic violence.

"It has really flown by," Gerbrandt said. "We had lots of different opportunities for both fun events and also awareness events across the region, and the response has been encouraging. We've had a lot of good traction."

Among the events was a children's art contest on the theme of peace, the annual "Peace Begins at Home" Flyers hockey game, and a screening of the film *Rustic Oracle*, which highlights the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

Local municipalities receiving project funding

By Voice staff

Three local municipalities were successful in their application to the Manitoba government's Municipal Service Delivery Improvement Program.

In Brandon last week, Municipal and Northern Relations Minister Ian Bushie announced up to \$1.46 million in funding for nine projects in the third intake of

applications for the program.

"Municipal governments provide critical programs and services that meet their communities' needs, and our government is committed to partnering with them to make life better for Manitobans across the province," said Bushie.

Continued on page 7



Our thanks

In December 2019, the new Line 3 replacement pipeline (L3RP) came into commercial service in Canada.

Since then, Enbridge has been making good on our promise to continuously monitor and operate the new pipeline to the highest safety standards and to return the land as it was, or better than it was, prior to construction.

We have now completed all above-ground, project-related field work associated with the L3RP, turning over ongoing maintenance of the pipeline right-of-way to our Prairie Region operations team.

So once again, Enbridge would like to take this opportunity to recognize the support and patience of municipalities, residents and communities across the Prairies both during and after construction of this essential pipeline maintenance project.

Our thanks to all of you, for helping us to make a safe pipeline even safer and ensuring a reliable, cost-effective supply of energy well into the future – to support our everyday lives, heat our homes, drive our vehicles and power industry.

Ping pong night bringing people together

By Lorne Stelmach

A new drop-in ping pong program in Morden is not only proving to be popular but is also helping build community.

The weekly gatherings on Wednesday evenings are open to anyone, but they have been especially welcomed by the Ukrainian community, including many newcomers to the area.

It is providing not only some recreational activity but also some valuable social interaction, organizer Yevgeniya Tatarenko noted last week.

"It's an opportunity to do something together and do some activity, and it's especially good during the long winter in Canada," she said. "I'm happy to see we have different directions here and opportunities to practice and people who are new to ping pong to learn ... it's an opportunity to come together and to socialize and to get happy and healthy."

The idea arose simply from their own interest in ping pong and their search for tables or a place to play.

"I got the suggestion to ask the City of Morden if we could use their tables," Tatarenko said. "We just started to promote this, and we were blown away by the response, that so many people are actually interested in this program ... and it was something new for me to do here in Morden because I like to try different activities."

Tatarenko also noted how popular table tennis is in Ukraine.

"We discovered a lot of people who recently arrived from Ukraine were so into table tennis ... it is something that is very popular in Ukraine," she said, adding that it even extends to offices perhaps having a table for staff during breaks.

"I see a lot of new arrivals from

Ukraine starting to come, and we saw it as an opportunity to teach them ... we also started to communicate with other people, like a ping pong association in Winnipeg.

"So we have some plans ... there are other communities with Ukrainian people arriving, so they may be interested," she said. "There are some people who would like to compete ... there may be opportunities for tournaments and so on, so we'll see what comes.

"And we have not just Ukrainians here. We opened this program to anyone and any age of people," Tatarenko added. "So it's also multicultural."

The weekly gatherings have on average drawn 15 to 20 people who take turns with the six tables available at the Access Event Centre.

They play every Wednesday evening and will do so until the end of May. There is a drop-in fee of \$2 or \$40.50 for the season. Sessions run from 7-9 p.m.

They even have a head coach who is a professional player as well as a few other experienced players mentoring others.

Coach Andrii Tymoshyk only came to Canada in February, so this is a great opportunity for him in many ways.

"As a professional ping pong player, he was really interested, so he jumped at the opportunity," Tatarenko said in helping translate for Tymoshyk.

"When he first came here, we started to chat about different opportunities. He was happy to get involved and to join us as a coach as well. It was an opportunity to share his knowledge and his skills.

"For him, he really loves the chance to communicate with people and to meet more people ... and he loves to



PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

The Access Event Centre is the place to be if you love ping pong. A new drop-in program started up last month, bringing together players every Wednesday night for a few hours of friendly competition.

play ping pong, so for him it's a win win. ed. "He has this passion for it ... we are happy to have him here."

"He's really great," Tatarenko add-

United Way campaign enters its final weeks

By Lorne Stelmach

United Way Pembina Valley was nearly three quarters of the way towards its fundraising goal as of last week, with a month still to go in its 2023 campaign.

The United Way has so far received \$107,100 in donations, and directors are confident they will be able to reach their \$150,000 goal.

"Our thanks to everyone who has made a donation so far," said board president Levi Taylor. "I think we're on a good pace to meet our goal.

"This is typically the time of year when people get into the giving spirit ... we've got a little bit of a ways to go to reach our goal, but we are confident that we're going to be able to do it."

The agency supports a wide variety of organizations, but Taylor observed some people may not be fully aware of the breadth of who all benefits when you make a donation to the United Way.

"I think that flies under the radar a little bit. We try to get the word out as much as possible about the number of organizations or initiatives that we support, but I don't think the

community fully recognizes that," he said, noting last year they were able to issue \$110,000 in grants to 19 local non-profits and also provided \$7,500 in scholarships and bursaries for graduating Morden-Winkler students. The full list of grant recipients is available on the agency's website.

Taylor stressed that their emphasis is on supporting organizations that have a local presence.

"Our objective is to support specifically local programs within the Pembina Valley," he said. "We're very grateful to the Pembina Valley. They generously support us every year and continue to do that so we in turn can support the local organizations."

Donations to the campaign can be made in person at the Access Credit Union branches in Winkler or Morden. Online donations can be made at unitedwaypembinavalley.ca. Cheques can be mailed to United Way, PO Box 758, Morden, MB, R6M 1A7.

You can also learn more about United Way Pembina Valley or make an in-person donation this Sunday, Dec. 10 at their free Skate With Santa at the Winkler Centennial Arena following the Winkler Flyers game.



The **Voice**

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Our commitment to you: we want to help build stronger communities through articles that both inform and entertain you about what's going on throughout the Pembina Valley. This is your community newspaper—let us know what you want to see in it.

OUR SISTER PUBLICATIONS



When I was a kid, I absolutely HATED report card day. Use your imagination to figure out why.

I didn't want to know (because I secretly suspected), and what you don't know can't hurt you, right? Certainly what your mum doesn't know can't hurt you.

Thankfully I grew up and began to understand how ridiculous the idea was. My career in the IT sector helped with this SIGNIFICANTLY.

I started work at an asset management software company where I was taught through trial-by-fire the ins and outs of why every last cent—tangible and intangible—needed to be captured and measured when it came to networked IT infrastructure.

Then, when you were done, guess what? You did it all over again. Why? Because a data set of information is relatively useless if you have nothing to compare it to. Data over time? That's where valuable intelligence comes your way.

Eventually I went to work for an IT research and consulting company called Gartner as a senior research analyst focused on Total Cost of Ownership (TCO). Gartner had a mantra I am going to put here in all caps because I believe in it so strongly:

YOU CANNOT MANAGE WHAT YOU DO NOT MEASURE.

This is particularly useful in finance but also in infrastructure, home bud-

geting, in the gym, dieting, school (report cards), and much, much more.

The point of measurement is simple: how am I doing? Where am I doing well? Where could I improve?

If you are responsible for anything you should be measuring various aspects of that thing at multiple points over time so that you can gain a sense for how you've been doing, where you are at, and what needs to be done in the future to get better.

This is why I have been a huge cheerleader for the Community Foundations of Canada's initiative Vital Signs.

Vital Signs is essentially a community report card. The initiative collects measurable, actionable real data from a community and provides an in-depth report back about all of the critical elements that are working and what perhaps needs improvement.

The report presents info on key attributes of the community like health and wellness, income, work and economy, belonging, housing, standard of living, safety, arts, culture and recreation, and much more.

The data is packaged in an incredibly well laid out, illustrative, and easy to understand report for the whole community to read.

Of the communities in our region,

only Winkler has participated, in 2012 and 2018 (it's time for another one, Winkler). Morden and Altona have never participated.

Such a tool is invaluable in the hands of a city council and its administration. It is one of the few things I can honestly say the cost of not doing it is much larger than the cost of doing it.

I get it: nobody likes being graded. It feels threatening and scary, like you're being judged. But frankly the value of knowing where you are in comparison to where you've been is critical in successfully developing a roadmap to where you want to go (unless you like stumbling about in the dark).

With two new councilors and a new mayor soon to join Morden council, I would urge the city to consider seeking out Vital Signs. I say the same to Altona and I will repeat: **YOU CANNOT MANAGE WHAT YOU DO NOT MEASURE.**

Don't give me any of that "we measure ourselves all the time" because if I wrote my own report cards back in elementary school it would be A+ across the board, with an A- for the sake of humility.

As incredibly diverse, fast-growing communities, this is an initiative that should be a no brainer ... let's make it happen.



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.

Send your letters to us by e-mail at news@winklermordenvoice.ca.

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

Homestead South resident puts her sewing skills to good use

By Lorne Stelmach

When residents of the Homestead South assisted living facility in Mor-den have any kind of sewing or clothing repair needs, they don't have to look any further than within their own walls.

If they are also maybe looking for a quilt, for that matter, Dianne Hutchinson can help them with that as well.

The 76-year-old resident who hails originally from Manitou keeps busy not only doing work for other residents but also for numerous charitable causes in the community.

"I have two or three things a week usually, and in between I'm doing my own sewing and knitting. I quite enjoy it all," Hutchinson shared recently. "It's definitely very satisfying, and to do stuff for Genesis House and Christmas Cheer feels really good."

Hutchinson worked in the home care field, leaving Manitou to train at St. Boniface Hospital in Winnipeg before living in the city and Portage la Prairie before eventually returning to Manitou.

For the past several years she's called Homestead South in Mor-den home. She's one of the facility's youngest residents, and she intends to stay young by keeping busy.

"When I moved in here, I needed a purpose. About a week later, a lady asked me to fix her duvet ... and then it went from there. Somebody else had some things they wanted done.

"I do things like curtains, and I hem

pants ... my price is really high," she joked. "I charge \$2 ... but it keeps me out of mischief. It's doing all sorts of repairs, and some people maybe can't see well. It might even be just sewing on a button.

"I also make things for Genesis House and Christmas Cheer. This year, there were five quilts and about seven pairs of mitts for each one and a little sweater set," she shared. "Yesterday, I found some pieces left over, so I decided I would make another quilt."

It is all something that has come naturally to her from a very young age.

"My mother taught me to knit when I was four ... so I come by it honestly; she made her last quilt when she was 91.

"Over the years, I couldn't quilt them as fast as my mother made crib size quilts ... between the two of us, we did over a

hundred of them one year ... I can't keep up with that."

A packed room of her apartment now has plenty of supplies along with machines and equipment for embroidery, quilting, and sewing.

"A lot of people donate yarn to me," she noted. "I know a friend of the family when she passed away, her son gave me two big garbage bags full of yarn. If I had to pay for the yarn, it would be quite different."

She is just content to be doing the work and doesn't look to be rewarded for it. A fellow Homestead resident

**"WHEN I MOVED IN
HERE, I NEEDED A
PURPOSE ..."**



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Dianne Hutchinson may be retired, but that doesn't mean she's slowed down—the 76-year-old keeps busy sewing and knitting quilts and blankets for local charitable projects and doing repairs for her fellow Homestead South residents.

reached out the *Voice* for this article, wanting to shine a spotlight on how much of help Hutchinson has been to her peers in the facility.

"I'm very happy to be helping them out," Hutchinson said. "Some of them would have to pay handi-transit maybe to take [items] somewhere and pay a fair bit. I'm not in it to make money, but I know they won't let me do it for nothing.

As a bonus, her work has helped her develop a lot of relationships and friendships with other residents.

"I know most of the people by their

first name and their face. It took me a bit ... about eight people moved in the month of September, so it took me a while to sort them out."

She doesn't see herself slowing down any time soon.

"When I'm doing close work, I take my glasses off, so my eyes are quite good at this point. I will continue as long as I can, or when I get tired of doing it, I will just let people know 'sorry, but the shop is closed,'" said Hutchinson. "I don't think that will happen for awhile."

Willard Reaves new deputy leader for MB Liberals

By Voice staff

The Manitoba Liberal Party has a new deputy leader.

Interim party leader Cindy Lamoureux announced last week that Willard Reaves will step into the role.

The former Winnipeg Blue Bomber ran on behalf of the Liberals in the Fort Whyte riding in the 2022 by-election and again in the 2023 general election. The seat was won and then held by Conservative candidate Obby Khan.

Reaves says he's looking forward to the opportunity.

"I appreciate being asked to serve as deputy leader of the Manitoba Liberals. As a past candidate, and a community advocate I will use the experience I've gained to work with Cindy,

our membership and executive to grow a healthier party."

Lamoureux also announced two new co-chairs to serve on the party's election readiness committee: Kevin Lamoureux and David Johnson.

"I believe in being prepared and this

means that if a by-election were to be called at any point in time, we will be ready," she said. "Part of building a healthier provincial Liberal Party means gathering people who can relate to everyday issues that Manitobans face. We've got a tremendously

talented and motivated group of volunteers, past candidates, and MLP board members. Today, I'm excited to share these three new positions that will be integral to the organization of our party."

> MUNICIPAL FUNDING, FROM PG. 4

Service delivery reviews are an important part of the process that municipalities use to ensure funding is used efficiently and effectively by identifying cost savings and streamlining operations, the minister said, noting this allows municipalities to offer improved services without having to raise taxes or reduce front-line services.

Service delivery programs eligible for review include those related to transportation, safety and protection, water and sewer, recreation and culture, waste management, planning, general government administration, and other core services.

Local municipalities receiving funding for their projects include:

- Municipality of Emerson-Frank-

lin: regional planning district evaluation (Mid Canada Trade Corridor);

- RM of Montcalm: recreation district processes, budgeting, expenses and structure review;

- Town of Altona: public works transportation, landfill and public utilities services review.

GVSD hosts pre-budget public consultation meeting

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Garden Valley School Division welcomed the community to a pre-budget discussion last week designed to help guide trustees as they set the priorities for the 2024-2025 financial plan.

It was a change of pace for the school board, which normally hosts a public information session about the new budget just a few weeks before submitting it to the province in spring, following consultations with local parent advisory councils, teachers, and municipal leaders.

This year, GVSD is moving that entire process up to give the community time to really weigh in on the budget.

"In the last little while, we've been getting our funding announcements so very late," said board chair Leah Klassen. The provincial government often announces its public schools funding plan in late January. "It makes it really difficult to have a true consultation process, talking to people in February about a budget that you're going to have to pass in a few weeks.

"We thought doing it earlier might lean more towards transparency to actually receive some valuable feedback that we can act on."

A small group of concerned citizens came out for the consultation meeting held at Northlands Parkway Collegiate on Nov. 28.



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

The community was invited to join GVSD senior admin and trustees at Northlands Parkway Collegiate last week to share their thoughts on priorities for the 2024-2025 financial plan.

Superintendent Dan Ward and secretary-treasurer Kevin Vovchuk walked the group through GVSD's stated strategic goals for the years ahead and the typical annual financial planning process.

Ward noted that the division has some very concrete goals for student learning tied to improving literacy and numeracy skills across all grade levels. Addressing student mental health and creating supportive school environments are also key focuses for the division.

Vovchuk outlined how public

schools funding works, explaining that two-thirds of GVSD's funding comes from the provincial government. The bulk of the rest comes from local tax dollars, which, under the direction of the province, has had to remain static for the last several years.

"It does really limit our ability to generate additional revenue," Vovchuk said, adding that it's uncertain whether the new NDP government will give school boards back some control over taxation rates.

Even though assessment rates have been increasing in GVSD's catchment

area (up 14.45 per cent in 2023), the division hasn't been able to benefit from that growth. Instead, it has had to lower the mill rate in recent years to stay within provincially mandated taxation guidelines.

"It would have been nice to enjoy the 14 per cent organic growth that we had within the catchment," Vovchuk said. "That would have made a big difference to our budget."

The presentation was followed by a time of discussion, where school board members at each table asked participants a series of questions.

"We wanted to know what programs and features that Garden Valley has that you appreciate? What are some things that we would be able to improve on?" Klassen said. "And is there anything that we should think about eliminating?"

The responses trustees got will be compiled and considered as the board moves on with the budgeting process.

Klassen noted the board has already consulted with the Garden Valley Teachers Association about the upcoming budget, and further meetings with both the parent advisory councils and municipal reps are planned as well.

Another public meeting will be held in the new year to share more details of the financial plan once it's further developed.



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Vic Krahn worked his last part-time shift at Canadian Tire last week, wrapping up 16 years with the company one day before his 82nd birthday.

Retirement: take two

By Ashleigh Viveiros

When you truly enjoy working, retirement is, perhaps, more of a gradual process than a firm state of being.

That's certainly been the case for Winkler's Vic Krahn, who, last Thursday, a day before his 82nd birthday, worked his final shift at Canadian Tire.

It's Krahn's second crack at retirement. His first was after leaving his job as a warranty administrator with Janzen Chevrolet Buick GMC, a role he held for 21 years.

"I was 65, but I still wanted to do something," he recalled. "I didn't want to just sit around."

And so he picked up seasonal em-

ployment, driving a pilot truck one summer for Meridian Industries and hauling potatoes for Southern Potato.

"And then I came here," Krahn said as the clock was winding down on his final shift at Canadian Tire. "It was 2007 ... they gave me a job over Christmas. I worked until New Year's and they said, 'If you want to stay, you can.' I've been here ever since."

Krahn went on to work part-time in the store's seasonal department year-round, stocking shelves and helping customers.

It really was the people who kept him coming in to work each week, he said. That, and the chance to stay active and productive.

Continued on page 12

The **Voice**

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What's *Your* story?

Hope Thrift Store gives back

By Lorne Stelmach

The Hope Thrift Store in Morden gave back to three local charitable causes in Morden and Winkler last week.

Receiving donations of \$4,500 each was the Many Hands Resource Centre for its Morden food bank and the Winkler and District Food Cupboard. A donation of \$1,000 was also made to the Morden Christmas Cheer Board.

Hope Thrift Store manager Susie Enns said it feels rewarding to be able to give back to the community and beyond.

"We're really excited that there's so many outlets that we're able to be of help to other people," she said. "Obviously, there are people in need everywhere, so if we can find a way locally to be of help to people, we are here for it."

Hope Thrift Store started up in 2021 with a primary focus on supporting the operational costs for faith-based orphanages in Mexico as well as finding ways to support local projects and programs.

The orphanages supported by Hope Thrift Store are connected through Children of Hope, which is a Canadian organization with a mandate of aiding underprivileged children around the world.

The store is volunteer based, so they have a deep gratitude for people tak-



PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH AND ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE
Hope Thrift Store manager Susie Enns presented donations to Many Hands executive director Mariyam Tsygankova (left), the Winkler and District Food Cupboard's Milt Olfert (above, right), and the Morden Cheer Board's Ron Peters (right) last week.

ing time out of their day to come by to help sort, clean, and repair items all while socializing and having a good time.

"It is amazing to see the community being so supportive. And then to be able to give that support back has been awesome," said Enns. "We thank the customers who support us and the volunteers who take time out to come and help us. We're very grateful."

The three organizations receiving with this year's local grants were obvious and worthy choices, Enns said, as they're all helping to put food on the table for families in need.

"We do know there are people who are maybe struggling this season ... the costs have gone exponentially up," she said. "There's always going to be a need to help people, especially with groceries."

"A huge thank you to Hope Thrift Store. We are really very happy to

start to collaborate with them," said Many Hands executive director Mariyam Tsygankova in accepting the grant.

"All the funds go to the food bank ... it's going to be very helpful," she said. "We always need fresh produce and vegetables and other food ... we have to make sure our people get nutritious food."

"It means a lot to us," said Morden Christmas Cheer board member Ron Peters.

"In the past year, our donations have become less," he noted. "Yet the recipients are increasing in numbers, so everything that we get is appreciated."

Winkler Food Cupboard chair Milt Olfert said the funds will go a long way indeed.

"This will take care of almost a month's worth of groceries for us," he said, noting they help about 150 families a week but last week set a record of 178 households.



None of it would be possible without community support, Olfert stressed.

"The cash donations and the food drives ... it helps keep our budget down and food on the shelves and we're just incredibly grateful for every dollar, every can."

If you're interested in how you can help the Hope Thrift Store, call 204-822-4673, check out their Instagram page, or go to hopethriftstoremorden.org.

Burley tapped to fill new role in Kinew government

By Lorne Stelmach

Former Morden mayor Brandon Burley has a new job with the Manitoba NDP government.

Premier Wab Kinew has announced the government is establishing a new southern Manitoba regional cabinet office based in the Pembina Valley, and Burley has been tapped to fill the role.

It follows Burley having resigned as mayor in early October to take on a role as part of the premier's transition advisory team.

He will now serve as a liaison between the premier's office, cabinet, and stakeholders in the region.

Burley said he was grateful to the

premier for the opportunity to work on behalf of his government in southern Manitoba. He sees it as a chance to play a critical role to help fairly represent the region to the premier's office.

"It's certainly very humbling to be asked to represent a region that is so diverse and so geographically large ... it will be a challenge," said Burley.

"It will be a critical role, I think, to delivering on what the NDP government wants to deliver on in southern Manitoba and rural Manitoba," he added. "It's going to bring significant opportunities and some bridge building, so I'm excited to be part of it."

He sees his position as helping ensure people here can access their government and to help better address

"IT'S CERTAINLY VERY HUMBLING TO BE ASKED TO REPRESENT A REGION THAT IS SO DIVERSE AND GEOGRAPHICALLY LARGE."

the issues and challenges and to help deliver answers and solutions, and it could be especially vital in a region where the NDP have no elected MLAs.

"This type of thing hasn't been done before, where governments go into areas where they don't have any elected representation and go in and try to learn and work as closely as they can

at a very high level with the regions that haven't necessarily supported them," said Burley.

"I think it's an exciting day, that this is a new form of democracy. I hope it sets an example, and the reason that I was interested in it as a transition advisory councillor was that I do hope

Continued on page 10

“Don’t talk to strangers”

RCMP shares online safety tips with kids, parents

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Border Valley School tackled a difficult but important topic with its students last week.

The Reinfeld school gathered its Gr. 6-8 students, along with visiting students from Blumenfeld and Plum Coulee schools, for a presentation Nov. 30 on internet safety from Cst. Izza Mian, an officer with the Manitoba RCMP Internet Child Exploitation (ICE) Unit. Mian was also at Border Valley that evening to make a similar presentation to the community’s parents.

Principal Donovan Giesbrecht noted it’s their first time hosting an information event on this topic, but it’s certainly a timely issue to address with this age group.

“I think it helps kind of punctuate the message that a lot of parents and teachers are trying to communicate to students. The internet, the cellphone world can be great, but it also poses a lot of dangers, and we want our parents and our teachers to be having conversations with kids about safety and setting reasonable boundaries.”

Cst. Mian’s presentation laid out some of the hazards facing youth as they navigate the world of social media and online interactions.

She noted that one of the most common incidences the ICE unit deals

with are cases of extortion, where a youth is convinced to share nude images of themselves that the recipient then threatens to or actually does share with others.

“We usually get two to three a day, roughly about 12 plus a week,” Mian said. “That’s throughout the province of Manitoba.”

The victims of these incidents face severe embarrassment, social isolation, and depression. Mian shared the tragic stories of several Canadian teens who took their own lives after dealing with bullying and embarrassment.

Police are in frequent contact with schools and parents about these situations, working to help get the images removed and dealing with the youth involved.

While youth sharing nude photos of other youth is part of the problem (and charges can be laid against minors in these cases, especially repeat offenders), some of these incidents take an even darker turn, with adults preying on children.

“There are bad people, predators, that are creeping into chat groups or within gaming [messaging] systems, grooming kids, and then extorting them, either for money, for gift cards, for more images,” Mian said. “It’s really a big problem and we’re seeing the numbers on the rise, especially when it comes to young boys.”

“It’s scary out there, it really is,” she said. “There’s a lot of bad people. Even though on the internet there’s a lot of good things, there’s a lot of bad things as well.”



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Cst. Izza Mian was at Border Valley School last week to speak with students and parents about online safety.

Once a nude image is released, it can be hard if not impossible to get it back.

“It’s out there on the internet, the worldwide web,” Mian said. “You can see that it can end up essentially anywhere; different countries, somebody else’s collection ... and it may resurface years and years down the road.”

“So you really have to be careful with who you’re talking to and what you’re sending out there, what you’re making available out there,” she stressed to the students.

Ultimately, Mian had two things she wanted kids to take away from her presentation.

First, “don’t talk to strangers” is a good advice now as it was when they were younger.

“Really think about what you’re doing,” Mian said. “Know who you’re

communicating with.”

Secondly, she urged kids who are being victimized to cut off communication with the person trying to extort them, do not send them any more photos or money, no matter what threats they make, and to tell someone what’s going on.

“Please talk to somebody ... it may seem like it’s the end of the world, but it’s not. Please, please tell somebody,” she said. “We have so many resources that we can help you get through this.”

“If you don’t feel comfortable talking to your parents, talk to a teacher, a friend. Somebody.”

There are a number of websites designed to help both youth and parents with these situations, including need-helpnow.ca, cybertip.ca, safesecure-kids.org, and kidshelpphone.ca.

> BURLEY, FROM PG. 9

it becomes the order of the day for politicians and political parties to reach out.”

He sees there being a bit of a learning curve as they work to establish their office and team of people here in the region.

“There’s many aspects to it, but essentially it’s ensuring that the promise of the premier in the election to be a premier for all Manitobans is delivered on,” said Burley.

“The other part is understanding the temperature in the room, providing perspective on policy and how it will affect southern Manitoba, but also helping to develop solutions to the many challenges we face and deliver potential opportunities for businesses in the region to grow and

expand.

“It will be somewhat of a revolving role as well as we learn how to best deliver to each of the regions of Manitoba,” said Burley. “I will be reaching out in the next weeks to municipalities and organizations and school boards and some businesses and things like that, community leaders, just to let them know what is on offer.”

Winkler Mayor Henry Siemens welcomed the initiative.

“To have direct access to the provincial cabinet, right here in our region, is great news for our community,” said Siemens. “We’re glad to see someone who understands the unique challenges southern communities face is leading this important

initiative and we’re ready to get to work with him.”

“Brandon Burley will be an excellent support to southern Manitoba communities as well as to the Manitoba government, and I look forward to working closely together,” said Municipal and Northern Relations Minister Ian Bushie. “With his experience in municipal government and knowledge of the Pembina Valley region, I am confident this office will create real results for southern Manitoba.”

Kinew cited Burley’s experience in having served as mayor of Morden for five years and also having served as a director with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

“This is an important step in making sure Manitobans in the southern

region have a strong partner in the provincial government,” Kinew said in making the announcement at a recent meeting of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities.

“Our message to Manitobans is clear: no matter what part of the province you are from, we are here to represent you, listen to your needs and work with your communities to improve health care, grow the economy, and make life better for Manitobans.”

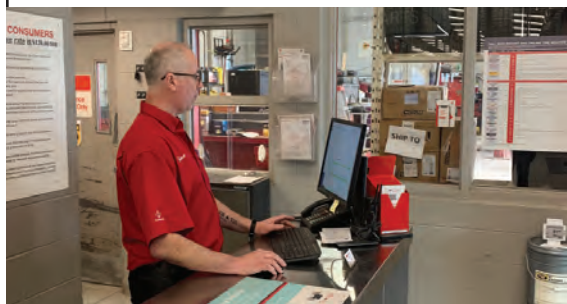
Earlier this month, the Manitoba government also established a westman regional cabinet office to be led by Jason Gobeil, who is a former school trustee with Brandon School Division and board member at Brandon University along with other community experience.

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



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Pembina Valley Astro Club launches ornament fundraiser



[FACEBOOK.COM/WINKLERBRANCH](https://www.facebook.com/winklerbranch)

The Pembina Valley Astro Club has teamed up with Lasered Edge on these Christmas ornaments, with 50 per cent of the proceeds going towards the purchase of astronomy equipment.

By Ashleigh Viveiros

If you're looking for an out of this world Christmas gift for the stargazer in your life, the Pembina Valley Astro Club has got you covered.

The group has teamed up with Lasered Edge in Morden to create a series of space-themed tree ornaments to support the purchase of additional equipment for its public viewing nights.

"Earlier this year I purchased a large computerized telescope specifically for public outreach. My goal is to make astronomy easily accessible to as many people in southern Manitoba as possible," says club founder Kenton Dyck. "To date, I have held over a dozen public viewing events, in four towns, and have had over 500 people come look through the eyepiece."

"There's been a tremendous amount of interest as well as support from all sorts of businesses and people," he says. "It's been a very fulfilling program so far, and we're only three or four months into it."

Dyck has worked closely with the South Central Regional Library on this program, and has held viewing parties in Winkler, Manitou, and Clearwater. He's also got plans in the works to be in Miami and Altona soon.

With so much interest, Dyck hopes to purchase electrical equipment that will make the telescope easier to operate with larger crowds.

"The only source of power that I have now, it has to be external, so I have to run a cord to it, which is

a tripping hazard," he says. "You can buy battery packs that are specifically designed to be nestled inside of the telescope and to be as light as possible."

"The other really big thing that I'm hoping to get is what's called a solar filter," Dyck says, explaining it would allow club members to safely view events like solar flares.

Fifty per cent of the proceeds from the sale of the Christmas ornaments will go to the club for these equipment purchases.

Trish Hunt of Lasered Edge notes they pick a different community cause each year to support with their custom ornaments. Last year they made ones for the Pembina Valley Humane Society and raised \$1,000.

This year, Dyck's work with the Astro Club resonated with Hunt.

"We're just really impressed with what he's doing," she says. "He's taken this hobby that he's really passionate about and it's something he wants to share with as many people as possible."

"So for him to create this program and cover all the costs himself, make it available to multiple communities, we just thought it was worth supporting."

The ornaments are \$12 each or three for \$30 and are available at the South Central Regional Library branches in Winkler, Morden, Altona, Manitou, and Miami.

You can stay on top of Pembina Valley Astro Club viewing events on Instagram by searching for @dyckkenton or follow the SCRL social media accounts.

Darlingford woman launches petition against shock, prong collars

By Lorne Stelmach

A Darlingford resident has spearheaded an online petition that calls for an end to the use of shock and prong collars on dogs.

As of last week, the petition on the change.org website had surpassed 11,700 signatures with the goal of getting at least 15,000.

"I think restricting the ability to access them would be a step in the right direction," said Berlin Reimer, who posted the petition that maintains shock and prong collars are outdated and ineffective tools that can do more harm than good for dogs.

The petition suggests they suppress the underlying behaviour and are a band-aid solution that can backfire and possibly increase fear-based aggression.

Numerous scientific studies and professional organizations have expressed their strong opposition to the use of these collars, highlighting their ineffectiveness, potential for harm, and ethical concerns, Reimer says.

Countries that have banned or at least restricted shock and prong collars include Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Slovenia, Portugal, Wales,

Denmark, Sweden, Norway, some states in Australia, and the province of Quebec.

Reimer said there has been a lot of progress in the understanding of canines and the best ways to coach them to be the best companions they can be, and she maintains it is better to promote and prioritize positive reinforcement-based training methods rather than negative reinforcement.

Her interest in this arises from a personal experience with a dog that she took into her care with a lot of anxiety

and behavioural issues.

She consulted with a local dog trainer and began studying some of the Canine Principles online dog training courses.

"That made me realize a lot of ways that I see society go towards dog training are ways that we should be moving away from," Reimer said.

"There are more positive reinforcement training methods that work much better than negative reinforcement training," she suggested. "I think negative reinforcement can just

damage the relationship between you and your dog.

"The more harmonious we can be with our dogs ... society will be safer, the dogs will be safer."

Reimer is uncertain of what the next step might be for her with the petition. She has reached out to Manitoba's chief veterinary officer, though she hasn't yet received a response.

"I'm hoping to find someone that will be able to take the next steps into implementing this change."

> RETIREMENT, FROM PG. 8

"When I had my first shift, Dave [Dunseath, store owner] says to me, 'So, are you going to be back tomorrow?' I says, 'Yeah, why?' He says 'Well, a lot of guys, they work one shift and say, no, it isn't for me and we never see them again.' So this is 16 years later and I'm still here."

"I've always enjoyed it here. I'd probably keep on working, but I have some back issues and knee issues so I figured 82 was the time to shut 'er down."

His wife is looking forward to hav-

ing Krahn fully retired, though he's quick to point out he will be finding other ways to get out into the community. He'll continue to spend his summers cutting grass at the Pembina Threshermen's Museum, and he's eyeing a few potential ways of giving back in the winter.

"Maybe I'll try working at the MCC for a little bit, or something like that," he said.

"You've got to keep on working as long as you can," Krahn urges those younger than him, especially seniors

inching up on their first retirement. "I know it's not for everybody, but for me it was that way."

"You've got to stay busy."

With Krahn hanging up his red Canadian Tire shirt, store owner David Dunseath notes the next eldest member on staff is a 70-year-old, another retiree who came to work for them after leaving their first career behind.

"I love hiring grey hair," he joked. "They're mature, they work hard. And someone like Krahn, he's been an absolute inspiration to all of us."

Food bank numbers on the rise

By Lori Penner

Ang Stoesz, spokesperson for the Rhineland and Area Food Bank, says if you want to see how the high rate of inflation has impacted Canadians financially, come to the food bank.

"We see the evidence here, where the demand for food hampers increases every week."

She says they hit a record on a recent Monday, with 74 hampers going out.

"That is for single people, for couples, and for some very large families. We're seeing more and more people registering on a weekly basis. The need is only growing, and we don't anticipate that stopping anytime soon."

Many of their clients are employed, but the high cost of living affects everyone.

"Trying to feed a family and pay all the bills at the same time is becoming tougher to juggle," Stoesz says.

Accessing the food bank is simple.

"Just walk in on a Monday evening and one of our volunteers at the door will help you get set up," says Stoesz.

Registration includes taking information such as your address, and how many children you have. Newcomers are also asked to bring one piece of ID that has their address on it. Once that is completed, you are given something they call their menu, which lists the food items that are available every week. Another volunteer will assist you with your food selection.

Stoesz says it's good to give people some variety in their food choices. There are certain staples that clients are guaranteed to find on the shelf every week, such as cereal, oatmeal, rice,

pasta, peanut butter, canned meat, canned vegetables, canned soup, and canned fruit.

"And there are often other options to choose from, as well," Stoesz says. "If possible, they like to offer a weekly special."

For people wanting to make non-monetary donations to the food bank, there are a few guidelines to follow, such as checking "best before" dates. Because of the unique dietary needs of infants, donations of baby food are discouraged.

"We like to encourage people to support us through cash donations, rather than groceries. We have an arrangement with grocery stores, so any money donated to the food bank will go further than if donors do the shopping themselves."

Stoesz says that through the years, the community support for the Rhineland and Area Food Bank has been incredible.

"I can't say enough about the incredible generosity of our community and all the volunteers we have. We could not do what we do without you."

She urges people to keep the food bank in mind when planning their end-of-year giving.

"With our economy and prices the way they are, the need within the community is growing."

Donations can be made by contacting Stoesz, a board member, or leaving a message at the food bank. A staff person is on site Monday morning and evening to accept drop-offs.

Cash donations can be mailed to Rhineland and Area Food Bank, Box 1107, Altona, Manitoba



PHOTO BY LORI PENNER/VOICE

Rhineland Food and Area Bank spokesperson Ang Stoesz stocking some of the shelves, which she says are emptying quicker than ever.

One killed in Hwy. 75 collision

By Voice staff

A Winnipeg woman was killed in a two-vehicle crash on Highway 75 last week.

Emergency crews were called to the collision about one kilometre north of Letellier at 8 a.m. on Thursday, Nov.

30.

Investigators have determined that a southbound vehicle entered the ditch and exited onto the northbound lane, where it collided head-on with a northbound semi-trailer.

Continued on page 14

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Altona town council updates community's Accessibility Plan

By Lori Penner

The Town of Altona has updated its Accessibility Plan for the coming year, and much of the focus will be on information, communication, and signage.

Accessibility officer Sarah Cail said over the last number of years the town has increased accessibility on several fronts, including training staff to reduce attitudinal barriers.

"We've broadened our scope of what

accessibility means. Accessibility is required under Manitoba legislation. We've had an accessibility plan since 2013 and has been updated every couple of years since then. Within this year's plan we're highlighting our achievements under the legislation that are based on standards that have come up so far, and how we intend to meet the next standards."

Accessible customer service is one of the things that have been highlighted by the Equal Access Altona commit-

tee.

"This committee includes people from the community who experience disabilities or support people who experience disabilities, as well as members of our own team internally, so that we can really take a holistic approach in making the town more accessible for everyone."

Cail said, "Our staff are all fully trained in accessible customer service. There is some training we used to do in-house but is now provided by the Accessibility for Manitobans website. We make sure our staff are trained in that to ensure they're aware of how to offer service in different ways to accommodate different individuals who are looking for assistance."

The town website was also redesigned with accessibility as a major focus.

"Our previous website was not very accessible in general via mobile and other tools as well," noted Cail. "Now it's up to date so that we'll be well prepared to be meeting our requirements for accessible communication."

After the Walk and Roll events of recent years, many physical obstacles around the community have been addressed, including the installation of three crosswalks, with the most recent located on 10th Avenue Northwest connecting the large residential development in that corner to the park and the pathway network.

These improvements reflected feedback from the community, Cail noted.

"These exercises enabled a wide cross-section of community members to gain a new perspective on accessibility to amenities around town."

This summer's Walk and Roll focused on the community's recreation areas. One of the most obvious issues that came to light was a lack of truly accessible washroom facilities in the park.

Cail said that addressing that issue may look like one accessible washroom being established so that instead of improving every single washroom, they can make sure that there is one that is truly accessible.

"Something we need to remember is when something becomes more accessible to someone who is experiencing a barrier, it becomes more accessible to everyone. The whole community

benefits from these improvements."

But accessibility involves more than removing physical barriers. Providing accessible services is also vital, she says.

"We have some guidelines from the province, and we have some training internally to work on that. Thankfully, we have a lot of guidance from members of the community who experience disabilities or those who work with those who experience disabilities."

Cail says that type of guidance is a core part of their committee, helping them make informed decisions about improving access for everyone.

Many of the town's new accessibility goals will focus on communication.

"We've done a lot of work on employment and on customer service and now we're doing a lot of work on the way we communicate information. Things around websites, online access, how we share documents, how we share information and what our processes look like internally and things like that. Signage will also be a major focus for the next two years."

Mayor Harv Schroeder notes that we often look past accessibility for people who struggle with even basic things such as entering a bathroom or getting onto a sidewalk.

"I was part of the Walk and Roll last summer, and I think until you actually do something like that, you take things for granted very quickly. I wore a welding helmet and used a cane to find my way around the local recreational facilities. I could see a bit, as someone who is visually impaired, but I realized how tough it can be. So, I think anytime we do a project in town, we want to make sure we can make this as accessible as possible to everybody. This committee has pointed out many areas, where we just look past it."

This not only includes physical barriers, he says, but also access to information.

"Even the new crosswalk on 10th Ave., is verbal. One of the best things the committee has is people who deal with obstacles every day. We have learned that we can do better, and I think that is our key information because they're living it, every day."



VOICE FILE PHOTO

This summer's Walk and Roll helped the Equal Access Altona committee members experience potential accessibility problems in town.

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A Happy New Year*

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> HWY. 75 CRASH, FROM PG. 13

The driver of the southbound vehicle, a 35-year-old woman from Winnipeg, was pronounced dead on the scene.

The driver of the semi-trailer, a 33-year-old man from Springfield,

Oregon, was transported to hospital where he was treated and released.

Emerson RCMP, along with an RCMP Forensic Collision Reconstructionist, continue to investigate.

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Options abound when shopping for wedding reception venues

A wedding ceremony is a joyous occasion couples will remember forever. As couples walk down the aisle after making their union official, the focus then shifts to the reception, where a fun-filled night of food, laughter and dancing awaits.

Nothing can trump the ceremony in terms of meaningful moments, but wedding receptions tend to last far longer. That's why couples devote so much effort to finding the right reception venue. As couples get to work on planning their post-ceremony party, they can consider a wide range of reception venue options.

Banquet hall

Banquet halls are perhaps the most traditional option for hosting wedding receptions. They're also among the most popular, as the The Knot 2022 Real Weddings Study found that one in five couples had their wedding receptions at banquet halls. There's no end to the options available to couples who want to host their receptions at banquet halls, which run the gamut from more intimate venues to larger sites that can host hundreds of guests. Some banquet halls offer various rooms and even different styles of rooms, from traditional to modern, all at one site. Because banquet halls are designed to host special occasions like weddings, couples may find they are an especially planner-friendly option.

Beach venue

Beach reception venues are not limited to coastal communities. Though oceanfront venues are an option for couples who live on a coast or those opting for destination weddings, even landlocked locales have beach venues along rivers and lakes. When considering a beach venue, couples should inquire about contingency locations should Mother Nature not cooperate come the big day.

Boat/yacht

Keeping with a water theme, couples may want to look into celebrating on a boat or yacht. This option can make for an es-

pecially memorable and unique experience, but it's important to keep guests in mind before booking a boat or yacht for your reception. Some guests, such as aging relatives or loved ones with young children (at home or at the reception), may want to attend the reception but not stay for its duration, which is not an option on a boat or yacht. Others may be hesitant due to seasickness or another preexisting medical condition. If no such issues are likely to present, couples may find it hard to beat the ambiance of a reception aboard a boat or yacht.

Campgrounds

The Knot reports a surge in the popularity of campground receptions in recent years. A campground reception can be ideal for couples who love the great outdoors and prefer a less formal and more fun-focused reception. This option may require a little extra coordinating on couples' part, as they will likely need to supply all of the food and beverages and may even need to arrange for guests to safely access the venue.

There's no shortage of locations for couples to host their wedding receptions. Each venue is unique, and couples can undoubtedly find a facility that has what they're looking for.

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get informed

'Staches for STARS sets another record

By Lori Penner

Altona's LD Seeds have once again exceeded their fundraising goal.

Their shop west of town was packed with supporters on Nov. 30 to celebrate the company's annual 'Staches for STARS fundraiser.

Along with a donated smoked BBQ brisket dinner, the roughly 130 guests heard presentations by STARS representatives and a VIP (Very Important Patient).

Every November, participants grow out their mustaches for the event, so special awards were given for a variety of categories including Best Dressed Mustache, The Little Stache That Could, and Most Well-rounded Stache.

The ag company's owner Lloyd Wiebe has invited family, friends, colleagues, and customers to participate in the fundraiser since 2016.

The first year, the event raised \$2,500 for Eden Health Care Services. This year, they exceeded their \$75,000 goal, raising over \$90,000 for STARS.

"STARS is an important service, especially to all of us in rural Manitoba, and we're incredibly grateful to ev-



Richmond Delorme won the Best Dressed Mustache Award.

everyone who contributed and helped us exceed our goal once again," Wiebe said.

Last week's celebration began with the arrival of the STARS helicopter at the yard site, with the Altona Fire Department setting up a landing zone.

Grant Therrien, provincial director of Manitoba operations for STARS, was among the organization's delegation in attendance. He noted that 'Staches for STARS is quite an important event for them.

He said STARS is proud to be the chosen charity for the fundraiser, and he is blown away by how much money has been raised by the company and all their supporters to date.

"It really shows the support that we have in southern Manitoba here in these communities with Lloyd Wiebe as the champion here at LD Seeds, but also all the family and friends and vendors and clients and supporters that are here."

Therrien added that it's because of their many supporters that the non-profit organization can provide the critical care that it does.

"A big part is the foundation that supports our initiatives. The technology, the training, and the ability to have the best equipment on board is because of them, and all the community supporters we have. We've even had kids come in and give us their birthday money.

"Every dollar raised in Manitoba stays in Manitoba. STARS was built for the community by the community. We are so grateful for your support. To us, you are all champions."

The STARS program flies 700 missions a year. In 2023, 14 of those calls were made to the Altona/Rhineland area. Each mission costs roughly \$800 to execute.

"We can't do this alone," Therrien said. "We're just one of the links in the chain of survival, from the time somebody calls 911, to the responders, paramedics, firefighters, police and the helicopter, to the people waiting at the hospital at the other end."

Community engagement officer Tra-



PHOTOS BY LORI PENNER/VOICE

From left: pilot Rob Allen, STARS flight paramedic and provincial director of Manitoba operations Grant Therrien, LD Seeds' Dylan Wiebe, VIP Richard Manay, LD Seeds' Lloyd Wiebe, pilot Andrew Davidson, community engagement officer Tracy Mowdy, and STARS donor relations representative Angele Cuthbertson.

cy Mowdy said fundraisers like this truly display the value of community.

"It's so important for STARS to attend these events and recognize that we are part of the community, we're here for them, and critical care anywhere is important. Being able to access rural communities quicker than an ambulance is important to people and this is how they show it, by holding events like this, raising money, and giving back to us. For coming out and helping family members, friends, relatives, brothers, sisters, parents, and everybody we've helped. Everybody that we've touched. It seems everybody knows somebody who was assisted by STARS."

LD Seeds co-owner Dylan Wiebe was also sporting a moustache at the event, and said it was so special to see the support they get year after year.

"It's just incredible. I haven't seen anything like it before. It really is about community. There are numerous local families that have been helped by STARS. Most of us are either related to or know someone who has used this service. We surpassed

our goal again, and it's just amazing to see.

"Often when we set a goal, I think it's quite lofty. But when the building fills up, and you get to hear a VIP's experience, and you get to talk to the people from STARS, it's heartwarming and comforting to know you have these good people taking care of you."

For Lloyd Wiebe, all the campaigning and preparing for the event is worth the effort.

He says he's deeply grateful to everyone who was a part of it and has supported the

cause through the years.

"Thanks to all the local businesses and farmers, and all the sponsors who made this possible, and everyone who participated and donated. And thanks to STARS for all that they do. It's an honour to work with a group of such dedicated professionals and to help make this fundraiser a success. We look forward to seeing everybody again next year."

"STARS WAS BUILT FOR THE COMMUNITY BY THE COMMUNITY. WE'RE SO GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SUPPORT."

6 ways to stick to a holiday budget

The holidays are an exciting, fun and joyful time of year. And for many people, the holidays also are expensive.

According to the Motley Fool Company, a financial wellness resource, the average person spent \$882.45 on Christmas gifts, food, decorations, travel, and other holiday-related expenses in 2019. Around 56 percent of gift shoppers set a budget for holiday spending, but only 64 percent stuck to it. In addition, 21.5 percent of respondents went into debt due to holiday shopping.

Who doesn't want to have a super holiday with delicious foods on the table and lots of presents to share with family and friends? While that's tempting, such a bounty should never result in financial peril. These six strategies can make it easy to establish and stick to a budget this holiday season.

1. Budget for everything. When working out holiday spending plans, factor in all of the expenses associated with the holidays — not just the most obvious, like gifts. Costs for gas, parking lot fees, greeting cards, postage, travel expenses, and much more should be included in your final number.

2. Determine how much you can spend. Money for gifts and other holiday expenses should ideally come from your disposable income. Look at your finances in advance of the holiday season and figure out how much extra cash you have for the holidays, and use that figure to determine how much you should spend. Find ways to make up any deficit by curtailing expenses like dining out or entertainment extras. Many people plan to use credit cards to pay now and worry about the aftermath later. Only use credit cards if you have the money in the bank and can pay off the entire bill when the balance due is in January.

3. Set a spending limit for individuals. Based on your numbers and how much you plan to spend overall, start allocating money to categories, including gift recipients. Come up with a spending range for each person and stick to it.

4. Pay in cash as much as possible. It's easy to know what you're spending when using cash as opposed to credit. There is some risk



with carrying around cash, but that risk may be offset by the benefit of spending only what you can afford to spend.

5. Track all purchases. Save the receipts and keep a running total of expenditures so you can see how your spending is measuring up to your budget. If necessary, scale back on one category if you've tipped the scales in spending on another.

6. Shop sales and deals. High-end stores may have the impressive tag, but their prices can set you back. Instead, look for comparable gifts at discount stores and other retailers. Also, if you must use a credit card, use one that earns you a cash-back bonus for added savings.

A holiday budget is a must to avoid overspending and finding yourself in debt early next year.



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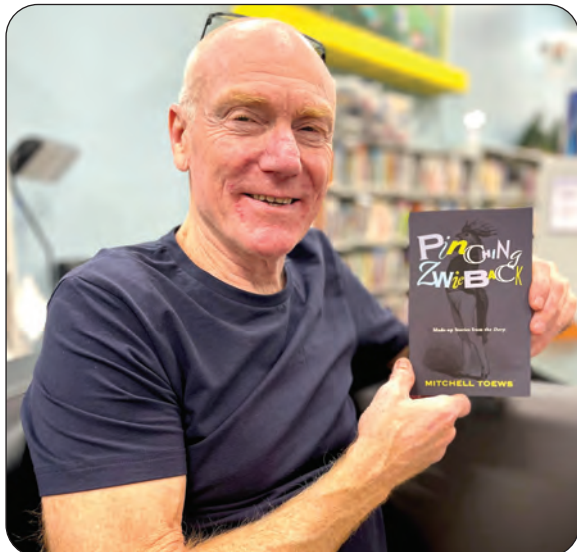
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Author of 'Pinching Zwieback' visits SCRL branches



By Lori Penner

Several branches of the South Central Regional Library (SCRL) recently welcomed a special guest.

Author Mitchell Toews travelled the circuit to the Altona, Winkler, and Morden branches the past two weeks to launch his new book, a collection of short stories called *Pinching Zwieback*.

A small crowd gathered at the Altona branch to hear Mitchell share excerpts from the book and explain his process.

The author said he likes to write about fictional, everyday heroes and gritty situations familiar to most readers: real-life, feelings, characters, and places.

The stories connect readers to Mitchell's own background and experiences. The fictional town of "Hartplatz" is figuratively connected to the town of Steinbach, where he grew up, but there are also settings derived from the Manitoba Red River Valley and the B.C. Fraser Valley.

"I basically grew up in a Steinbach bakery, run by my parents," Mitchell said. "They grew it to the point where it became popular across many provinces."

Hence, the title of the book, *Pinching Zwieback*. Zwieback is a Low German word describing a specific kind of bun.

"It was a big part of Mennonite culture," explains Mitchell. "The name comes from the making of the bun, where you take one blob of dough with another one plopped on top and you push it down with your thumb. There's a whole complicated process to doing this. There's kind of a cultural ethic to it: the baking was done on Saturday so you could have a day of rest on Sunday. Saturday was always our busiest day at the bakery."

The whole process, from the shaping and the rising of the dough to the baking, takes skill and practice, Mitchell said.

"My grandma and my dad would have races to see who could fill the most pans. My dad sold that bakery when I was about 15, but I grew up in that bakery. A lot of my most vivid memories came from my experiences there."

Writing has always been something he's loved. Originally it was for corporate material and business reports. He ultimately took to fiction in 2015 and retired from his day job in 2016 to devote himself to it.

With 120 stories already published in various magazines across Canada, England, and the U.S., Mitchell is currently working on another novel with a Mennonite theme, and another collection of short stories.

"It was a lot of fun putting this book together," he shared, noting it does tackle some heavy issues. "It starts in a light way with the first story, and as the stories progress the issues become more serious."

"There is misogyny from a male point of view—a male author writing female characters undergoing the patriarchy that was so common in much of the history of Mennonites in these small prairie towns. That's a major theme. The male perspective adds a different wrinkle, for good or for bad."

"Interference at its worst is a large part of the religion in Mennonite life, whether it's secular or cultural. That's a theme, too. Strong religious church presence working to put down dissent comes out in some of the stories."

"At the same time, I'm an optimist and I don't like writing about victims. I try to end things on a positive note, and provide hope, even if it's kind of dark."

Mitchell says writing the stories was cathartic.

"I wanted to write about those things without being a victim or blaming anybody. I wanted to use fiction as a bit of a cloak to have entertaining and thoughtful stories that made people think about it, but I didn't want to repeat the past. The characters ultimately know what to do, and that's cleansing in a lot of ways."

PHOTO BY LORI PENNER/VOICE
Mitchell Toews stopped by the SCRL branches to promote his new book, *Pinching Zwieback*.

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K's Little Library aims to inspire local booklovers

By Lorne Stelmach

The latest addition to Morden's collection of little libraries that are spread throughout the community came about as an extra special family project.

The little library now set up at 22 Dubai Bay in the northwest corner of Morden was put together by 10-year-old Kaelyn Harrison and her great-grandfather Barry Nunn, who lives in Treherne.

Kaelyn's mother Amanda Harrison enjoyed seeing the two of them work on it together.

"We had to show him some pictures so he knew what we were talking about ... but the two of them designed it and built it. I really had very little to do with it," she said. "I think it's really special. I really like books. I think reading is super important, and we wanted to share that because we have tons of books here at home.

The Little Free Library movement simply seeks to build community and promote the love of reading by encouraging free book exchanges. It is credited as having started in 2009 in Wisconsin with the premise of "take a book, return a book" with small book shelters, and it has since spread worldwide.

Red Moon Road in Manitou Dec. 15

By Lorne Stelmach

Manitoba folk ensemble Red Moon Road are bringing their unique sounds of Christmas to Manitou.

The Manitou Opera House will be one of the stops on their Christmas tour, with a show set for Friday, Dec. 15 at 7:30 p.m.

The audience will be treated to a tri-lingual evening with classic carols sung in English, German and French, and it will especially feature tunes from their pandemic-recorded holiday album *Simple Kind of Christmas*.

"They started collaborating over Zoom and over the phone and just saying 'hey listen, I'm going to start something, I'll send you a version, can you add to it,'" said organizer Al Thorleifson.

"A number of these new pieces came through that collaboration, and they didn't even see each other. To me, that's one of the coolest things about it," he said. "This is not just new music but new music that was created in

There are a number of them set up in several Pembina Valley communities, ranging from private residential properties to local schools.

The idea first arose amongst the Harrison family a few years ago.

"When I was little, I used to go to Penner's Lane [at the end of 15th Street north of the Morden Park] a lot and get a lot of books, and we would trade books," said Kaelyn. "One day, I went to my grandpa's, and he said, 'I don't have much projects.' I said, 'I have one for you.' I asked him if we could make a library together."

"He does woodworking stuff as a hobby," added Harrison. "She was telling him about these little libraries, so they determined between the two of them that they should build one."

"He kept on asking can you get me this tool, and can you paint this or help me do this," said Kaelyn. "It was actually kind of fun because I got to be his little helper."

"We cut the wood together, and we painted it together. It was fun. I did a lot of the painting ... I like art work."

"She helped paint it and pick out the wood and cut it .. he built it, then it sat in the garage probably for a couple of years. It got sidetracked," said Harrison.

They recently then set out to com-

plete it and install it, which included ensuring they would not be hitting any utilities during installation as well as getting the blessing of the City of Morden.

They turned to area artist Megan Canart "to help us do all the lettering on it," Harrison said. "She made it all pretty for us, and then we had the door installed."

They are now anxious to see people start to make use of the library.

"When the kids are done with them, they can go into the library. People can leave books; people can take books," said Harrison. "And we do have the new school going in just down the street, so hopefully some kids will get to enjoy it."

"I think there's something to the idea that now this is my book, and I get to keep it or then something to share," she said. "We'll see what shows up. I think she's excited to see what kind of books show up that we didn't put in there. She'll have to keep an eye on it."

"I'm really excited to see if there's any books that I might be inspired by, that I might want," added Kaelyn.



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Kaelyn Harrison, 10, and her five-year-old brother Kenton with the little library she built with the help of her great-grandfather, Barry Nunn.

plete it and install it, which included ensuring they would not be hitting any utilities during installation as well as getting the blessing of the City of Morden.

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"When the kids are done with them, they can go into the library. People can leave books; people can take books,"



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Red Moon Road's Christmas tour makes a stop at the Manitou Opera House.

some of Manitoba's finest musicians and musical offerings woven together with stories and sprinkled with family-friendly repartée.

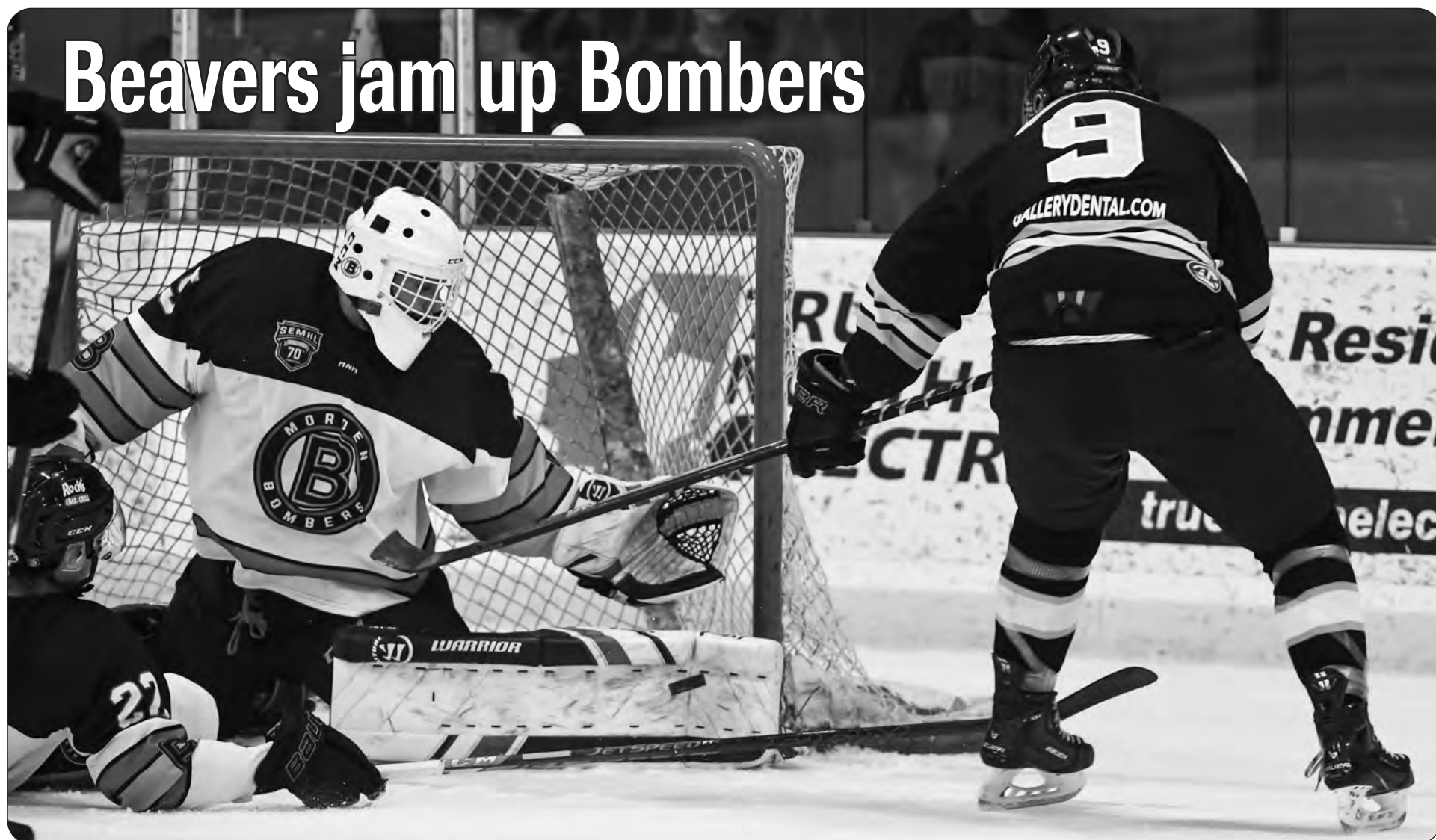
In addition to their signature harmonies, the Red Moon Road regulars that also includes Sheena Rattai and Daniel Péloquin-Hopner will showcase their versatility by alternating between guitars, banjo, mandolin, lap steel and percussion, plus holiday add-ons such as orchestral and jingle bells.

Guest musicians Adam Warner on drums, Logan Picton on guitar, mandolin and violin, and Keiren Playcatka on piano will round out the group.

"All of them are multi-talented, so it's going to be a great concert," said Thorleifson. "The fact that their Winnipeg concert had sold out was already giving some buzz to the local concert here."

Admission is \$25. For reserved seating tickets, call or text 204-242-4287.

sports & recreation



Beavers jam up Bombers

PHOTO BY RICK HIEBERT/VOICE

Morden's Owen Domitruk gets a pad on Carman's Daniel Nychuk close-in scoring attempt last Thursday night in Morden. The Beavers won it 6-1.

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Carman Beavers handed the Morden Bombers a 6-1 loss last week in SEMHL action.

Scoring the lone goal for the home team was Morden's Andrew Clark, who tied the game at 1-1 midway through the first period.

The Beavers went on to score three more unanswered goals in the second and two in the third to earn their second win of the season. Owen Domitruk got the loss in net for Morden, making 33 saves as the Bombers outshot the Beavers 47-39.

The Bombers shook off the loss with an 8-1 win against Portage a few

nights later.

The list of scorers included Evan Weurch, Jaden Townsend, Clark, Karl Fey, Steve Mullin, Cole Penner, Logan Christensen, and Jory Mullin. Reed Peters turned away 40 shots on goal in net. His teammates fired 51 the other way.

Meanwhile, Winkler Royals lost all three of their games for the week, starting off by falling to Ste Anne 6-1 Wednesday night. Mark Hildebrand scored for Winkler. Jayme Janzen made 54 saves in net.

Winkler then dropped a 6-5 shootout decision to Ile des Chenes Saturday (goals included two from Remi Laurencelle and singles from Richard

School and Aaron Lewadniuk; Janzen made 53 saves) and a 7-4 game to Warren Sunday (Keith Grondin had a two-goal night while Marcus Neufeld and Marlin Froese also contributed; Travis Klassen made 34 saves in net for the Royals).

The Altona Maroons fell 5-2 to Portage (goals from Justin Augert and Haydon Friesen; Cole Kehler made 29 saves) but then earned their first win of the season 9-3 against the Notre Dame Hawks.

Braden Hildebrand scored four times for Altona that night. Other goals came courtesy of Adam Henry Colty Bates, and Skylar Klassen while in net Cole Kehler made 32

saves for the Maroons.

And the Red River Wild added another win to their record, downing Carman 4-3. Jonah Wasylak scored twice and Gavin Froese and TJ Matuszewski scored once for the Wild. Carter Lemay made 16 saves in net.

With that, the Wild are 6-1 and in third place behind Ste. Anne and Warren. Morden (3-3-0-2) is in sixth place, Winkler (3-5-0-1) is in seventh, and Altona (1-7) is in tenth and last place.

This week, on Wednesday Red River plays in Portage and on Thursday Altona hosts Winkler and Morden hosts Ste. Anne.

Flyers down Nighthawks, fall to Oil Capitals

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Winkler Flyers followed up a 2-0 win against Niverville with a 5-4

OT loss to Virden last week.

Playing on the road against the Nighthawks Wednesday evening,

Winkler got on the board early in the first period thanks to a goal from Trent Penner. Mike Svenson then made it

2-0 near the end of the second.

Continued on page 22

Glennis Scott to be honoured by Baseball Hall of Fame

By Lorne Stelmach

A second Morden resident is among the list of inductees for the Manitoba Baseball Hall of Fame in 2024.

In addition to Joe Wiwchar receiving an honorary life membership (*Voice*, Nov. 19), the same honour is being bestowed on Glennis Scott.

Like Wiwchar, Scott is adding to an already lengthy list of honours and accomplishments that include him having been initially inducted into the hall in 1998 and having played a pivotal role with the organization over the years.

"I feel a little overwhelmed. Like any organization, such as the baseball hall of fame, I look at it as a team effort including other directors, volunteers and wives," said Scott last week.

"There's a lot of people who put a lot of time into the baseball hall of fame. I was supported by a lot of people," he continued. "It's quite an honour ... but I feel there are other people who are just as deserving ... maybe their time will come too."

It's not surprising that Scott would be honoured in such a way, since dedication to baseball ran in his family. His father Jim is also in the hall as is his brother Gladwyn.

"Gladwyn is really credited with starting the baseball hall of fame in Manitoba," he noted.

Scott's achievements include being selected for Manitoba's all-time dream team in 2016.

Honours came mostly because he was one of the best pitchers the province has ever produced, but he also

became an outstanding coach and clinician.

He competed for Canada in the 1967 Pan Am Games and won two games at Canada Games in Halifax in 1969.

He also pitched two games for Team Canada at Cartagena, Columbia in 1970 and was pitcher-manager in Cali, Columbia in 1971 and was also at world championships in 1972 at Managua, Nicaragua. He also was player-coach for Team Canada at an Intercontinental Cup in Bologna, Italy.

Closer to home, Scott held various offices for Baseball Manitoba and Baseball Canada, and he is now being recognized for his contributions to the hall of fame. He was one of the original directors and banquet chairman for the first 23 years.

Given the family connection to baseball, it is not surprising that Scott very much grew up with the game.

"We grew up on a farm, so there was lots of chores to do, but there was also lots of time to play ball," he recalled.

"My dad was the manager of the baseball team in McConnell for years, and I think it was just natural for us to follow along," Scott continued. "He would spend hours on the farm after the chores were down hitting us fly balls ... I had four sisters too who were probably better ball players than we were."

He also remembers going to a lot of baseball tournaments, perhaps as many as three or four in a week at times.

He looks back fondly on a lot of great experiences including playing



ABOVE PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Glennis Scott is receiving a life membership to the Manitoba Baseball Hall of Fame for his skills in his youth (right) as a pitcher.



at the Pan-Am Games in Winnipeg and going to many international competitions.

"Amateur baseball provided me with a lot of trips I probably would have never had if I wasn't playing ball," said Scott.

"I have a lot of memories with baseball. The good part of it I guess is the people you meet and the friends you make ... that's amateur baseball," said Scott. "Baseball has been good to me."

The annual hall of fame induction banquet is set to take place June 15 at the Access Event Centre in Morden.

Twisters continue in their winning ways in MMJHL action

By Ty Dilello

The Pembina Valley Twisters continue their winning ways, now winning

four of their last five games. With the victories, the Twisters now move into eighth place in the MMJHL's standings with a record of 9-8-2.

On Dec. 1, the Twisters' three-game winning streak was snapped after they fell 4-2 to the River East Royal Knights. Ryan Orchard and Max Col-

let scored Twisters' goals on the evening. Goaltender Logan Enns stopped 29 shots in the loss.

A few nights later, on Dec. 3 in Morris, the Twisters gave the home crowd a treat as they topped the Raiders Jr. Hockey Club by a 5-1 count. The offence was spread around as Riley Goertzen, Brett Bergman, Derek Wiebe, Cody Clark, and Mark Plett scored the Twisters' goals. Enns was fantastic, stopping 24 shots for the win.

"We have confidence that playing the right way and constantly doing the right things contributes to success. And we hope to keep the consistency up going forward," said Pembina Valley Twisters head coach Braeden

Continued on page 22

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PHOTO BY RICK HIEBERT/VOICE

Jessica Anderson of the Pembina Valley Hawks tries to check Interlake's Vayda Rigaux off the puck in Sunday's game in Morden, which Interlake won 3-2.

New coaches for female Hawks amidst losing streak

By Lorne Stelmach

Amidst a losing streak that has now reached 10 games, the female U18 Pembina Valley Hawks have a new coaching staff.

Co-head coaches Jenai Buchanon and Tess Dusik as well as assistant coach Alyssa Alderson have been replaced by new head coach Keith Graham and assistant coaches Hunter Desrochers and Janik Grenier.

Further information on the change was not available at press time.

On the ice, the Hawks came close to ending their downward slide this past weekend but came up just short in falling 3-2 to the Interlake Lightning in a shootout.

Chase Braun and Delaney Darby scored for the Hawks, who outshot Interlake 38-34. Goalie Kasia Rakowski made 31 saves for Pembina Valley.

After overtime settled nothing, Interlake earned the extra point in a shootout that went six rounds before the Lightning connected with the winner.

It leaves the Hawks at 3-9-1 for seven points, which has them four up on last-place Central Plains and two back of sixth-place Interlake.

The Hawks will try again to turn things around this weekend with a visit to Winnipeg to take on the Ice Saturday then to Landmark to face Eastman Sunday.

Flyers have hold on third place, with games in hand

From Pg. 20 d

Malachi Klassen got the shutout in net, making 15 saves. His teammates had 25 shots on goal against the Nighthawks.

Friday night's game in Virden saw the Flyers down 3-0 before Zach Nicolas and Spencer Shugrue scored back-to-back Winkler goals in the middle frame. Virden got one more in before intermission that period.

Nicolas and Shugrue each scored again in the third to tie the game at

> TWISTERS, FROM PG. 21

Beernaerts. "The leadership on and off the ice with this team is great. It's been great from the start of the year, when we've been having trouble scoring. They have really picked us up."

Twisters' sniper Wiebe is currently fourth in the MMJHL's scoring race with 31 points in 19 games, while Enns is presently fifth in the goalie rankings as he boasts a 3.31 goals-against average and a .904 save percentage.

The Twisters are back in action with a home game on Dec. 8 at the Morris Multiplex against the Transcona Railer Express. The puck drops at 8 p.m.

4-4 and force overtime, where the Oil Capitals managed the winning goal.

Klassen made 37 saves in net for Winkler as Virden won the shots battle 42-24.

With a record now of 17-3-1-1, the

Flyers have 36 points for the season thus far, good for third place in the MGEU East Division behind the Steinbach Pistons (41 points) and the Portage Terriers (39 points), with several games in hand over those teams.

This week Winkler plays the Wolverines in Waywayseecappo Wednesday night and then welcomes OCN and Swan Valley to town Friday and Sunday.



PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

The Morden Thunder high school hockey team did its part for the cause once again with its annual Christmas Cheer game Friday. Fans were asked to donate non-perishable food items, and a silent auction and 50/50 draw combined to raise over \$1,400. Coach Doug Schellenberg said credit goes to the parent volunteers who put it all together and made it happen. Members of the Thunder also have usually volunteered to help as well on the Cheerboard's delivery day. As for the game itself, the Thunder came up just short as Morris scored 31 seconds into overtime to win it 3-2.

Thunder give back



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LAND FOR SALE BY TENDER

Land for Sale by Tender

Completed Tenders and a \$10,000.00 deposit of the Tender Price are invited to be received up to 12:00 PM (noon) on January 3rd, 2024 (the "deadline") on the property described below, which Tenders and Deposits shall be received at:

PKF Lawyers,
326 Stephen Street, Morden, Manitoba R6M 1T5
Attn: Stéphane Warnock
Ph: 204-745-2028

Property for sale:
1. NE ¼ 12-2-7 WPM (EXCLUDING LOT 1)
155.44 acres
Issuing from CT #3128454/4 (the "Land")
-Located in the Rural Municipality of Pembina

- Conditions of Tender**
1. Financing must be pre-approved.
 2. Tenders to be in the form prepared by PKF Lawyers. To obtain tender form or more info, contact Jessica Waddingham or Stéphane Warnock @ PKF Lawyers.
 3. Each Tender must be accompanied by a certified cheque, payable to PKF Lawyers (in trust), in the amount of \$10,000.00. Deposits of tenders not accepted will be returned to the tenderers.
 4. Highest Tender or any Tender will not necessarily be accepted.
 5. The Possession date and the due date of the balance of Tender Price shall be within 15 days of Community Planning's issuance of the Certificate of Approval (4.56 acre yardsite being subdivided).
 6. The maker of any Tender relies entirely upon their personal inspection and knowledge of the Land, independent of the representations made by the vendor or the solicitor and agent of the vendor. The Land will be sold "as is" and the bidder is solely responsible to determine the value and condition of the Land, Land quality, Land use, environmental condition and any other information pertaining to the Land.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

LIQUOR LICENCE APPLICATION - PUBLIC NOTICE

6462628 MANITOBA LTD.,
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at **46-6th Street, Altona, Manitoba**
has applied for **GENERAL LIQUOR SERVICE LICENCE**
to serve liquor from: **MONDAY TO SUNDAY 9:00 A.M. TO 2:00 A.M.**
1:00 P.M. TO 2:00 A.M. REMEMBRANCE DAY

Citizen and community input is an important part of the application process. Please contact the Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Authority of Manitoba at 204-927-5300, if you have questions about this application. Please contact your municipality if you have questions about zoning bylaws and requirements. If you want to make a formal objection to this application, please send us your objection in writing by 4:30 p.m.

14 DAYS FOLLOWING THE PUBLICATION OF THIS ADVERTISEMENT

You can email, mail or fax your objection. Please include your contact information.
Email: objection@LGCAmb.ca
Mail: LGCA Objections
1055 Milt Stegall Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3G 0Z6
Fax: (204) 927-5385

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

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.

WATER RATE INCREASE

RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF STANLEY PUBLIC NOTICE

The Rural Municipality of Stanley purchases water from the Pembina Valley Water Cooperative (PVWC) to supply water to portions of the Municipality. The Public Utilities Board approved a rate increase for PVWC for \$1.17/1000 gallons, effective January 1, 2024. This rate increase reflects a "pass through" rate increase of \$1.17/1000 gallons for RM of Stanley consumers on the PVWC water system.


Public notice is hereby given that the water rate increase will be \$1.17/1000 gallons for the March 31, 2024, quarterly billing in the Rural Municipality of Stanley. That being from the present rate of \$13.36/1000 gallons to \$14.53/1000 gallons.

Chad Harder
Finance & Administration Supervisor


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 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!

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

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!

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

Sudoku Answer

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

Crossword Answer

X CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

- Spiritual leaders
- Salt
- Fortified wine
- Edible mollusk
- It begins with them
- A way to compare
- Back parts
- 8th month (abbr.)
- Very willing
- __ ex machina
- Satisfies
- Quebec river
- A doctrine
- Popular pickup truck
- Dekagram
- Naturally occurring solid material
- Company officer
- Villains
- Cricket frogs
- German founder of psychology
- Endured
- A female domestic
- A "place" to avoid
- Cigarette (slang)
- Canadian politician Josephine
- French ballet/acting dynasty
- Employee stock ownership plan
- Belonging to the bottom
- Sound
- Yankees' slugger Judge
- Dickens character
- More wise
- Flash memory card
- Exposing human vice or folly to ridicule
- Atomic #79
- Longtime Braves pitcher Julio
- Humor
- Shawl
- Preliminary assessment of patients

CLUES DOWN

- Animal disease

	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				48	49	50
51						52				53				54		55
56						57				58				59		
60						61				62				63		64
65						66								67		68
						69								70		

2. Commercial
3. Craft supply
4. Storage units
5. Investment vehicle
6. Colorado Heisman winner
7. In a way, sank
8. Post-birth brain damage (abbr.)
9. Lay about
10. Intestinal
11. The opposite of yes
12. Caused to be loved
13. Messianic in Islamic eschatology
15. Showing since conviction
18. Not safe
21. The number above the line in a fraction
24. Yard invader
26. Pouch
27. Swedish krona
30. Start anew

32. While white or yellow flower
35. Fourteen
37. Graphical user interface
38. Up-to-date on the news
39. Campaigns
42. Touch softly
43. "Boardwalk Empire" actress Gretchen
46. Violent seizure of property
47. One who supports the Pope
49. Anxiety
50. Body fluid
52. Phony person
54. Title of respect
55. Chilean city
57. City in central Japan
59. Silk garment
62. Draw from
63. Automobile
66. Man
68. Legal bigwig (abbr.)

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CARD OF THANKS

To Rienold Holenski's family, friends, and acquaintances - thank you for your outpouring of love, kindness, concern, and encouragement after our beloved husband, Dad, grandpa, and GG Papa passed away. Receiving your cards, calls, and messages were overwhelming yet comforting. Not only did we see how much we were loved, but we got to see firsthand how much Rienold was loved and respected by everyone who knew him. He will be deeply missed. We are grateful to be a part of such a supportive community and appreciate you all greatly.

-With thanks and gratitude,
Wendy, Gail, Cathy, Connie,
Diane, and families

IN MEMORIAM



Henry (Terp) Thiesen
March 7, 1930 - December 7, 2022
Remembering Dad

On December 7th, 2022 Henry (Terp) Thiesen joined his Heavenly Father. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather: a humble leader, a gracious friend, and all round awesome "man". Loved and remembered ALL Ways and Always.

-Elma Thiesen and family



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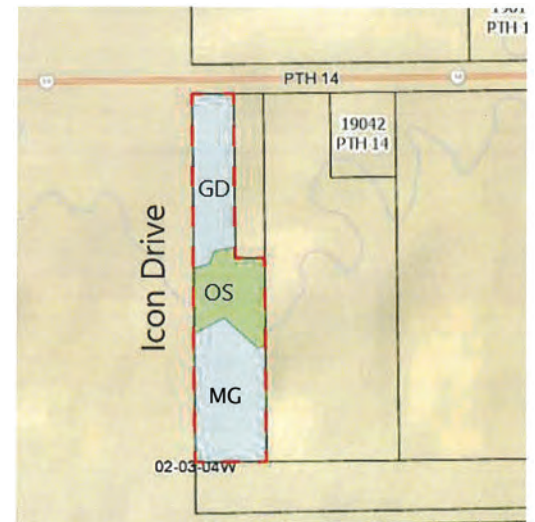


**UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE PLANNING ACT
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

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

THE RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF STANLEY BY-LAW 16-23
Being an AMENDMENT to the R.M. OF STANLEY ZONING BY-LAW 8-18, AS AMENDED.

- HEARING:** R.M. of Stanley Council Chambers
LOCATION: 1-23111 PTH 14, SW 7-3-4W
DATE & TIME: December 21, 2023 at 9:15 a.m.
GENERAL INTENT: To re-zone a parcel of land in the RM of Stanley
- From:** "AL" Agricultural Limited
To: "GD" General Development, "MG" General Industrial and "OS" Recreation and Open Space
AREA: Part NE 2-3-4W



FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Melissa Groening, Planning and Development Officer
Rural Municipality of Stanley
1-23111 PTH 14, Stanley MB R6P 0B1
Phone: (204) 325-4101
Email: mgroening@rmofstanley.ca

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

COMING EVENTS

A Christmas Musical Drama

Celebrate
THE SAVIOUR

Sunday, December 17
at 6:00 PM

PEMBINA VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH
120 Manitoba Road, Winkler, MB

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OBITUARY



Helena Dueck (nee Dyck) 1927 – 2023

Helena Dueck passed away peacefully on Saturday, November 25, 2023 at Salem Home in Winkler, MB.

She was born at Plum Coulee, MB on July 10, 1927 to Herman and Anna (nee Paetkau) Dyck. Her schooling took place at Kleefeld near Plum Coulee. In 1948, she left Canada with her parents and siblings to join the establishment of the new Mennonite colony of Sommerfeld in eastern Paraguay. It was on the trip there on the ship, the Volendam, where she met Johann Dueck and they were married in Paraguay on March 13, 1949. Daughter, Anna was born there. Due to difficulty in making a living, they returned to Canada in November 1953, first staying in the Stephenfield and Graysville areas for the first few months, then settling in Carman, MB, where

daughters, Helen and Eva were born. Her husband died suddenly on the job in March 1958, leaving her a widow with three young daughters. Son, John was born two months later. To be closer to her parents, she moved with her children to Winkler in 1966. In 2018, she moved to Salem Home where she lived until her passing.

She leaves to mourn her passing three daughters and one son and their families: Anna, Helen and her family: Eva (Russel) Brown and Reuben, John (Arlene) and their family: Rachel (Mark Opinga) Dueck, and Jennifer (Jesse) Penner and Owen and Luca, as well as one brother, one sister and many nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her husband, Johann, her parents, Herman and Anna Dyck, six brothers and two sisters.

Memorial service was held Friday, December 1, 2023 at Wiebe Funeral Home Winkler with private family interment prior to the service.

Donations may be made in Helena's memory to the People's Gospel Hour.

Wiebe Funeral Home, Winkler
In care of arrangements
wiebefuneralhomes.com



OBITUARY



Norman John Peters 1962- 2023

Norman John Peters was born January 22, 1962 in the Winkler Bethel Hospital, to Paul J. and Elizabeth Peters. He was a brother to Ray and Eric. We were privileged to have the support of family, village, and the church right from the beginning of our journey with a child with Down's Syndrome.

Norman had some lung issues during his childhood that often landed him in the hospital, but he always recovered. After one such bout with double pneumonia, he came home and announced: "I almost died!" And then with a twinkle in his eye, he added, "But I didn't!" He learned to walk, talk, eat by himself and we rejoiced. At 5 years old he started to attend the ARC School in Winkler. This was a School only for children with mental disabilities, later this class was moved to a separate section of the Winkler Elementary School. He had wonderful, dedicated teachers: Mrs. Janzen, Eleanor Chornoboy, Viola Doell and Ella Neufeld, and we can only say a heartfelt thank you! After graduating, he went to Winnipeg to Optimist House, a group home for young men. Here he learned how to live independently. Skills Unlimited was a place where he was given training for a job. At Kelvin High School he learned about money management. During this time, he attended a church service in Calvary Temple and went forward one evening and accepted Christ as his personal Saviour. He came home the next weekend and said: "I want to be baptized." So Pastor Peter Zacharias baptized him in November, 1982. It was a moving experience. He served in the church as an usher for many years. He was there with a smile and friendly handshake to welcome many people into the service. In 1982, he moved to Winkler and lived in an apartment together with Trevor King, who became his close friend. Norman tried several jobs [in the hospital, at Bible Book Store, etc.] but in 1984 he began his job at Parkside Home Building Supplies. Here he did various jobs. He was involved with making deliveries, he kept the yard clean and helped wherever it was needed. He really enjoyed his time there. The business changed hands several times, but Norman always continued working there. We are deeply grateful to the management and staff for their kindness and consideration in allowing him to work there. He began to have health issues in 2020 and he finally retired on his 59th birthday, January 22, 2021. He had worked there for 36 years and 4 months. He continued to be invited to their monthly Friday pizza lunches even after he quit working there. Special Olympics was very important to him. His coaches, Don and Sharon Dueck, Connie and Jake Driedger and Chris Sumner taught him so much more than only the sport. I remember them teaching him how to lose gracefully. This was tough for Norman to accept. We are so thankful for the time, effort, love and dedication that all the coaches had for Norman. Norman attended the Blumenort Mennonite Church in Rosetown and was an integral part of the Sunday School class. One of his classmates, said: "Norman is a peculiar mix of child and adult, but I can never have an encounter with Norman without coming away from it feeling a little happier and wearing a smile." He possessed a child-like faith and displayed a confidence in his salvation. He had an awareness that one day he would be in Heaven with Jesus. He touched the lives of his family, many people in his church and the community he was a part of. Norman moved into "Our Home" in April 2022. He truly enjoyed his time there and we are so thankful to the staff who were always caring and compassionate. Norman suffered a stroke on Thursday, November 23, 2023. He was taken to the Boundary Trails Health Centre where he passed away the following day on Friday, November 24, 2023. He is with His Lord whom he loved.

He is survived by his parents, Paul J. and Elizabeth Peters, his brother, Ray and Corinne Peters, Paul and Carianne Peters, Simon and Miles, Jordan and Kailey Peters, Oliver, Shanley and Trevor Siemens, Owen, and his brother, Eric and Elvina Peters, Jason and Lisa Peters, Zachary, Callie and Lucas, Kristen and Steve Buse, Jayden and Zoe, Mitchell and Kristina Peters, Nathan.

Memorial service was held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 2, 2023 at the Winkler Berghaler Mennonite Church with interment prior at the Gnadenthal Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Norman's memory to Special Olympics Manitoba.

Wiebe Funeral Home, Winkler
In care of arrangements
wiebefuneralhomes.com



OBITUARY



Edwin Carl Aune 1946 -2023

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Edwin Carl Aune on Wednesday, November 29, 2023 at the age of 77.

He will be greatly missed by his wife of 56 years, Denise (Marcoux); children, Michelle Hutlet (Roland), Ginette Major (Dwayne), Sean (Melanie); grandchildren: Jillian and Jenna Hutlet, Breyanne (Mike) Major, Stephanie (Chad) Allen, Brooklyn and Sydney Major, Tyler and Kamryn Aune; great-grandchildren: Madeline, Gisley, Rylan, Ryane, Gunnar, Magnus, and Maesyn. He also leaves to mourn his sister, Marlyn Woods and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

Ed was born March 19, 1946 in Winnipeg, Manitoba and grew up in Dufresne where his parents owned the A & C Snack Bar. While attending high school in St. Anne, MB he met his future wife, Denise. He left Manitoba to pursue his lifelong dream of becoming a member of the RCMP. Although his career was short lived, he returned home to marry his sweetheart. Their family started in St. Boniface where Michelle and Ginette were born. His career took him to Portage la Prairie where Sean soon followed. Two and a half years later an opportunity came to open a new claims centre for Manitoba Public Insurance in Winkler. Morden became home while he continued to work for MPI for over 30 years and retired in 2006. Summers were spent in the camper and travelling to visit family in California. Some of our best memories happened around the campfire, in the lake, and on long road trips. Retirement led to more travel which included the Maritimes, Australia, Hawaii, Alaska and countless Canadian and U.S. destinations. Crib, cards, and crosswords as well as spending time with his growing family were some of his favorite past times. He enjoyed following his grandchildren then some of his great-grandchildren in all their sports endeavours. Pépère embraced technology to keep up with his grandkids. His texting skills and emoji usage was on point.

As per his wishes, cremation has taken place and a Celebration of Life was held at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, December 4, 2023 at Wiebe Funeral Chapel Reception Hall, Morden.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Ed's memory to Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF), a charity close to his heart.

Wiebe Funeral Chapel, Morden
In care of arrangements
wiebefuneralhomes.com



OBITUARY



Denise Madeline Steedsman (nee Scheirlinck) 1931 – 2023

On Thursday, November 30, 2023 at Tabor Home, Denise Steedsman, 92 of Morden, MB passed away.

She is survived by two daughters, Sandra and Ed Friesen, Lori and Jim Timmer, her son, James Steedsman and their families.

She was predeceased by her husband, Jack in 2010.

Funeral service will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 7, 2023 at the St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church, 2 Academy Drive in Morden with interment to follow at Chapel Cemetery, Morden.

If friends so desire, donations may be made in Denise's memory to the Alzheimer Society of Canada.

Wiebe Funeral Chapel, Morden
In care of arrangements
wiebefuneralhomes.com



**Remember Your Loved Ones
with an Announcement in the**

Call 204-467-5836 or
ads@winklermordenvoice.ca

The *Winkler Morden* Voice

Discovery Nature Sanctuary thanks supporters

By Voice staff

The Discovery Nature Sanctuary is sending a big thank-you out to local businesses who supported improvements at the site this summer.

MacMor Industries Ltd. stepped up with new pedestrian fencing for the sanctuary's accessibility trail.

DNS committee chair Paul Goossen explains the fencing rope was originally donated by Centennial Supply Ltd., but parts of the fence was vandalized and required replacement. Macmor donated 315 feet of rope for the repairs.

"We were grateful for the original donation by Centennial Supply Ltd. and very much appreciate the rope donation by MacMor Industries Ltd. this fall," says Goossen. "Having the pedestrian fencing back in shape helps finish off its look."

The DNS dock is another feature that is well-used, allowing visitors to view the waterfowl and fish that call the sanctuary's wetlands home.

Its construction was made possible



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Above: Committee members Art Wiebe (far left) and Tanya Chateaufeuf with Access CU's Joel Billings on the dock. Right: DNS committee chair with MacMor Industries' Warren Gerbrandt and the new rope for the trail fences.



thanks to a financial donation from Access Credit Union.

Goossen notes there have been about 20 local businesses that have

donated services or funds toward the development of the sanctuary since its creation six years ago.

"Community support for the DNS

has been substantial, and for this the DNS committee is grateful."

Learn more about the sanctuary online at discoverynaturesanctuary.ca

LeGall commits to Bemidji State University

By Ty Dilello

Niverville Nighthawks star goaltender Raiden LeGall has committed to Bemidji State University, a prestigious NCAA Division I university in Michigan, USA.

The 17-year-old from Morden has excelled with the Nighthawks after dominating the provincial U18 league with the Pembina Valley Hawks over the past two seasons.

Legall has a 6-4-1 record with a 2.35 goals-against average and a .935 save percentage in Niverville this season. He had a couple of schools interested in offering him a scholarship before settling on Bemidji State in northern Minnesota.

"I had a few schools I was talking to but eventually decided on Bemidji," said LeGall. "I got a chance to go down there for a visit, and the way things were run and the personnel were all great, and just a really nice city and school; As well the rink and facilities were unreal. Another plus was that it's so close to home, and I would be able to have family and friends come down to visit and watch games."

Niverville was fortunate that Legall had settled on staying in the MJHL this season as he was strongly being pursued by the Everett Silvertips of the Western Hockey League (WHL).

"It was obviously a difficult decision when Everett wanted me to sign with them. Another very well-run program down there," said LeGall. "I mean,

it was always my dream to play in the Western Hockey League growing up, but the biggest thing that persuaded me to play in Niverville was just how much everyone here cares about you. Especially within the organization but also the support throughout the community. Playing a game in the city on a Saturday night and seeing our fans come out and fill the rink there as well has been super cool and a great example of just how much support we get from the community here in Niverville."

Nighthawks head coach and general manager Kelvin Cech is very proud of Legall for earning the scholarship to Bemidji State. He was delighted that he would play in Niverville with his club this season.

"This is the highest achievement for a Junior A hockey player in Canada or the United States and is no surprise considering the lengths the Western Hockey League's Everett Silvertips went to a few months ago in an effort to sway Raiden to the major junior route," said Cech.

"Raiden and I spoke while he was in Everett in September, and he was faced with a choice. This happens eventually with elite players, and if you have choices in life, you're probably doing something right. Fortunately, our conversation went well, and Raiden chose to play here in Niverville. And now he's got a scholarship waiting for him when he graduates from junior hockey."

LeGall plans to play another year of junior hockey



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Morden's Raiden LeGall has committed to play college hockey at Bemidji State University after a strong start to the 2023-24 campaign with the MJHL's Niverville Nighthawks.

after this season so that he can continue developing and make sure he's ready before he joins the college hockey ranks. He will then head to Bemidji State for the 2025-26 season.

get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



Baked Brie with Pecans and Cranberry Orange Chutney

cone baking mat.

In medium saucepan over medium-high heat, bring cranberries (reserving some for garnish), 1/2 cup maple syrup and water to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook, stirring occasionally, until cranberries pop and mixture thickens, 8-10 minutes.

Remove cranberry mixture from heat and stir in orange zest, orange juice, 1 teaspoon thyme, rosemary and bourbon, if desired.

Place brie on parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake 5-7 minutes, or until inside of cheese softens while outside remains intact.

Transfer brie to serving platter and top with chutney and toasted pecans. Drizzle remaining maple syrup over brie and garnish with remaining fresh thyme and reserved cranberries. Serve with crackers, toasted bread and apple slices.

Recipe courtesy of the American Pecan Promotion Board
 Cook time: 24 minutes
 Servings: 8
 1 bag (12 ounces) fresh cranberries
 1/2 cup maple syrup, plus 1 teaspoon for garnish, divided
 1/2 cup water
 1 orange, zest and juice only
 1 teaspoon freshly chopped thyme, plus additional for garnish, divided
 1 teaspoon freshly chopped rosemary
 1 tablespoon bourbon (optional)
 1 round brie (13.4 ounces)
 1/2 cup roasted pecan pieces
 crackers
 toasted bread
 apple slices
 Preheat oven to 350 F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper or sili-



Pecan Snack Mix with Cranberries and Chocolate

add butter, brown sugar, maple syrup, salt and nutmeg. Microwave butter mixture 1-2 minutes until melted then pour over dry mix. Toss well to combine.

Microwave snack mix in 45-second intervals, about 4-5 intervals total, until mix is fragrant, golden and toasty.

Cool mix completely then stir in cranberries and dark chocolate chips.

Recipe courtesy of Jess Larson and the American Pecan Promotion Board

Prep time: 10 minutes
 Cook time: 5 minutes, plus 10 minutes cooling time
 1 cup pecan halves
 1 cup rice squares cereal (wheat or cinnamon)
 1/2 cup pretzels
 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
 1 tablespoon brown sugar
 1 1/2 tablespoons pure maple syrup
 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
 1/2 cup dried cranberries
 1/2 cup dark chocolate chips
 In large, microwave-safe bowl, add pecans, rice squares cereal and pretzels. In small, microwave-safe bowl,

Jingle Balls



Yield: 12 cups
 Nonstick cooking spray
 12 cups popped popcorn
 6 tablespoons butter or margarine
 3 cups mini marshmallows
 1/2 teaspoon peppermint extract

Expert patient here to help!



Susie Schwartz

By Susie Schwartz

It's Christmastime! If you're healthy and happy, it means jingle bells and gingerbread smells (Sorry, Batman. Not this time.) and singing all the way.

But if you're sick or in pain, it might mean missed gatherings, food you can't eat, and decorations seen only at your doctor's office.

I get it. With all the hype around this season, it can be more than disappointing to be in bed often, cancel plans, and keep up with appointments.

On a practical level, I can give tips on using technology to get the most from Christmas: video calls with friends and family, ordering gifts online, and sending e-cards. But you probably know these tricks already.

As far as your (Christmas) spirit, I have a few other suggestions: re-watch all your favourite Christmas movies (And no shame if they're cheesy!); blast the Pogues, Maria Carey, and Suschwa tunes (Shameless plug, there, ha!). Don't worry if

your neighbours are home. Spread the joy; buy yourself the softest, cuddliest bathrobe as a present. (Or another puppy. Chihuahuas are soft and cuddly. Just sayin'.)

I know Christmas can be hard when we're sick. We need to do everything we can to make it memorable... if you want it to be special. Some folks in a hard spot prefer to skip the month of December altogether. That's okay, too. (But take the gifts, ha!)

Here's my wish(es): First, as you read this, that you and yours are healthy. And if you are, please don't forget about those who aren't this season. Second, if you don't have your health, I hope you can find joy in a simpler Christmas, like a desk-sized Christmas tree, eating a mandarin orange first thing, or waking up in a new pair of pjs you bought for yourself.

And if you just can't stomach Christmas this year, may you feel a liberating freedom to just rest at home. It's okay if you watch 'A Star is Born', which has nothing to do with Christmas even though the title might suggest otherwise. Listen to yacht rock or Brian Adams and forget Jingle Bells. I hope you can find peace from your symptoms to gain strength for the next hard thing.

Christmas wishes. These are mine for you.

Less health stress, yes?

A published author and musician, Susie currently lives in the UK. Find her on Instagram @medicalmiss_stress, and at www.lesshealthstress.com Sign up there for her writer's substack. Her book, 'Help the Doctor Help You' is available on Amazon.

assorted colored sugars
 Lightly spray large mixing bowl with nonstick cooking spray. Add popcorn.

Spread plastic wrap on cookie sheet; set aside.

In medium saucepan, melt butter and marshmallows; stir until mixture is smooth. Stir in peppermint extract. Pour over popcorn, mixing until well coated. Let cool 2 minutes.

Spray hands with cooking spray and form popcorn mixture into 3-inch balls. Gently press colored sugar onto balls. Let sit on prepared cookie sheet until cool and set.

White Chocolate Peppermint Popcorn Bark

Yield: 1 pound
 5 cups popped popcorn
 12 ounces white chocolate baking chips, chopped white chocolate or white candy coating
 1 cup crushed hard candy peppermints



Cover baking pan with foil or wax paper; set aside. Place popcorn in large bowl; set aside.

In double boiler over barely simmering water, melt chocolate, stirring until smooth, or melt according to package directions. Stir in crushed peppermints.

Pour chocolate mixture over popcorn mixture and stir to coat. Spread onto prepared pan; cool completely.

When chocolate is cooled and set, break into chunks for serving.

Store in airtight container at room temperature.