



Merry The
Christmas

& HAPPY NEW YEAR
VOLUME 2 EDITION 51
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2023

Altona Rhineland

Voice

LOCALLY OWNED HISTORY BOOK FOR THE COMMUNITY altonavoice.ca

Canadian Tire Auto Service in Winkler

LOOKING FOR GIFT IDEAS?

Give us a call about our **REMOTE STARTS** - available for most vehicles and a great gift for our cold winter months to keep your loved ones warm! Call Canadian Tire & get a quote today!
204-325-0641

OPEN MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY.
CALL TODAY TO SEE HOW WE CAN TAKE CARE OF YOU.
204-325-0641



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

NOW THE LARGEST MANITOBA-OWNED BROKERAGE!

As of November 2023, BSI Insurance Brokers Ltd. and ONE Insurance Group have joined forces!

ONE
INSURANCE
your broker, wherever you are

Empty Stocking Fund helps 220 families

By Lori Penner

The Rhineland Empty Stocking Fund committee is grateful for all the volunteers who showed up on their delivery day last Saturday.

Chair Ang Dueck says 220 families received grocery gift cards and presents for the children in their households.

"We had boys and girls of all ages, with families and individuals all across the municipality, including Altona, Gretna, Rosenfeld, and Plum Coulee, including rural homes."

She says there was a definite increase in need this year.

"Last year we had about 190 families. It makes sense—our population has increased, and we're going through hard times. Prices are so much higher, and people are struggling."

Committee member Ken Bergman concurs, saying they were just barely able to financially manage the demand this year.

"Referrals were up quite a bit, so it will be tighter next year."

He says using gift cards for the groceries made the whole process a lot easier.

"We need fewer volunteers for delivery this way. It also allows the recipients to pick what they want, so they can choose exactly what they need in their cupboards."

"COVID changed a lot of things for us. When we changed to the gift card system we're using right now, we also realized it's easier on our volunteers and our committee. We do miss the interaction with the public that we had on our annual packing and wrapping day, but now we can put that energy into raising funds for next year. It's been a good move for us."

This is Dueck's first year working with the fund. She says it's been a fun and eye-opening experience seeing how much care and effort goes into the process, and the ongoing support from the community.



PHOTO BY LORI PENNER/VOICE

Members of the Rhineland Empty Stocking Fund committee with the final stacks of boxes, ready for delivery on Saturday. From left: Carissa Hildebrand, Ang Dueck, Liz and Ben Hildebrand, and Ken and Ruth Bergman. Missing from the photo are Tina Schmidt, Linda Loewen, and Brenda Thiesen.

"It's incredibly rewarding to give something back. Especially during the Christmas season."

Financially, she says they could still use a lot of donations.

"With the increase of families this year, it did make a big dent. We need more donations for sure. We go into preparation for next year's Empty Stocking campaign almost immediately."

She adds they're very pleased with the number of volunteers who showed up with cars and trucks, eager to help deliver the boxes filled

with wrapped gifts.

"We're grateful to the Altona Mall for allowing us to use some of their space to store and wrap presents."

Dueck thanks everyone who supported the fund this year.

"It was great being a part of this and learning the process of how this fund works. I just want to encourage everybody to continue to support the Empty Stocking Fund."

Donations can be sent to the Rhineland Empty Stocking Fund, Box 2255, Altona, MB, R0G 0B0.

MERRY CHRISTMAS
FROM YOUR LOCAL MUNICIPAL COUNCILS

Altona RHINELAND Municipality

OUR OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED
December 22nd, 2023 - January 1st, 2024
Opening January 2nd, 2024

There will be NO newspaper printed December 28th, but we will continue to distribute our flyers, so please watch for them in your mail and distribution boxes.

Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year

The **Voice** Altona Rhineland

If you have a news tip or are interested in advertising please contact
News Tips: news@winklermordenvoice.ca
Advertising: ads@winklermordenvoice.ca

Morden Cheer Board delivers 360 hampers

Donations fall short of costs—but it's not too late to give

By Lorne Stelmach

The holiday season has become a challenging one for the Morden Christmas Cheer Board.

It faced a substantially higher number of hamper requests as the packing and delivery days took place this week, but the financial support has so far not kept pace.

"Our hampers are up, and the money is not keeping up ... so it's not an ideal combination," board member Ron Peters said Monday as work began on filling the hampers. "We're going to be short ... last year we were about \$16,000 short, and it was heading that way again."

"Even after Christmas, people can still be making donations," stressed chairperson Carolyn Schellenberg.

The Cheer Board had anticipated there would be a significant need that would at least match 2022's numbers,

which reached just over 300 hampers.

The final 2023 tally came in at 360 hampers, which represents a 20 per cent increase.

"So that is significant," Schellenberg said. "All of a sudden, it went up like crazy with our applications."

There were a number of opportunities for people to support the Christmas Cheer campaign this year.

Dairy Queen had the Angel Tree set up to collect new or unused toys, and volunteers were at the Morden tree lighting celebration to collect donations of toys, books and cash.

Tim Hortons sold Holiday Smile Cookies one week in November, with partial proceeds going to the Cheer Board, and the Morden Thunder collected donations at its annual Christmas Cheer game.

"People still like to give food," noted Schellenberg. "For a couple years we did just gift cards ... this year and last year we've done some food again as well."

In addition to grocery gift cards and some non-perishable food items, hampers also include presents for the children in the recipient households.

Schellenberg said it is always heart-warming to see all of the different ways that individuals and groups support their efforts.

"Some people were bringing mitts or scarves they had knit themselves or they bought," she said. "We had a colony donate baby booties ... that kind of thing has been great to see."

She was also thankful for the volunteer crew, who were again largely an

experienced group "who have been doing this for years. We do need some younger volunteers ... but we've got a great bunch of volunteers."

"It's a hectic three days, but we still have fun doing it," Schellenberg added.

You can make a donation to Morden Christmas Cheer by heading to their website, mordenchristmascheer.com, or via e-transfer to mordencheer@gmail.com.

"EVEN AFTER CHRISTMAS, PEOPLE CAN STILL BE MAKING DONATIONS."



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

A sea of empty boxes were ready to get filled with non-perishable food items and gifts as the Morden Christmas Cheer Board prepared to send out its hampers earlier this week.

GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFTS!

DURANGO WESTERN BOOTS FOR ALL AGES !!



25% OFF

Joy hope Love PEACE Christmas



MUCK BOGS DRYSHOD INSULATED CSA & NONE FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!



25% OFF

GREAT GIFTS - FRAMES, LAMPS, CLOCKS, CANDLES



20% OFF

WINTER INSULATED SHOES



25% OFF

BLUNDSTONES FOR ALL OCCASIONS!!



MEN'S CLARKS GROVE STEP \$100.00



BOXING DAY CLEARANCE SALE



\$100.00



HOURS: Monday to Friday 9:30 am to 5:30 pm Saturday 9:30 am to 4:00 pm • 325 Kimberly Rd. - East of Canadian Tire

K.C.'s

Shoe Repair

YOUR FAMILY FOOTWEAR STORE

204.325.5538







WORK & WESTERN WEARHOUSE



SuperThrift

Adult & Teen Challenge

HOURS OF OPERATION:

Monday - Friday
9:00 am - 5:30 pm

Saturday
9:00 am - 5:00 pm



SHOP AND DONATE

NEW ITEMS GOING OUT DAILY

324 CARGILL ROAD, WINKLER

Like Us On 



Celebrating the holidays with community meals

By Lorne Stelmach

Two organizations in Morden and Winkler brought people together in fellowship for a holiday meal this past week.

Many Hands Resource Centre in Morden hosted its community meal last Tuesday, and Central Station Community Centre in Winkler welcomed people on Monday.

Central Station had been preparing for at least 300, if not more, while Many Hands had 215 registered for their supper, which was held at the Morden Alliance Church.

"It's a very heartwarming place to be," said Central Station's Leane Funk. "I've been involved with Central Station for a little while now, and I had seen one Monday

night dinner and it was very sweet. People from all walks of life come by, and we really encourage everyone in the community to come by ... it's more about meeting your neighbours."

Mariyam Tsygankova, executive director of Many Hands Resource Centre, agreed these community meals are not just about feeding people.

"It's in the spirit of fostering community and spreading the joy. That is why we organized this event," she said. "Our idea was to create a warm and very inclusive space where people could come together and share the festive spirit and create cherished memories."

Central Station served a traditional Christmas supper that included meatballs, potatoes, stuffing, and more.

"It's the traditional Monday night meal that the station offers to the community but just a more festive version of it," said Funk.

"All of the food was donated, and we had volunteers working in the kitchen for a few days leading up to it," she added. "It is a challenge, and without the volunteers it definitely would not happen, but Marian Hildebrand, who is the lead in the kitchen, is very organized, and ev-

erything had been prepped ahead of time."

Funk observed that it is heartwarming to see people coming together to support and connect with others at a time of increasing need, as she noted food bank use in general across the country has increased substantially.

"And watching the volunteers around here is pretty mind blowing ... the dedication is incredible."

Tsygankova shared that their turnout was quite a bit more than last year, and she also was grateful for the community support.

"There are many volunteers. We had a very dedicated planning committee," she said. "We have 75 volunteers in our database, and half of them for sure were involved in the process of preparing this event."

Generous donations from numerous corporate sponsors also made it possible.

"We are very appreciative of their help," Tsygankova said. "Without them, it wouldn't happen."

"Another thing with this initiative was it is a way to express our gratitude to the incredible

PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Left: Monday night's Christmas dinner at Central Station in Winkler. Above: Many Hands Resource Centre hosted Morden's holiday meal last week Tuesday.

Continued on page 4

O Night Divine!

Wishing you a Christmas season guided by love and blessed with the precious gifts of friendship, faith, peace, joy and contentment.

BEND-IT
 QUALITY. EXPERIENCE. INNOVATION.
 www.bendit.ca 204-331-4179
 Laser Welding • Fiber Laser Cutting
 CNC Router Work



Volunteers are always integral to making the weekly community meal happen at the Central Station Community Centre, and this week's holiday supper was no exception.

PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

> CHRISTMAS MEALS, FROM PG. 4

support we get from the community throughout the year," she added. "This is a way of us giving back and celebrating the strength and togetherness that defines this wonderful community."

She shared that there were a lot of newcomers at the table, but plenty of longtime Mordenites as well.

"This event was open to everyone

... from previous experience, I know people who were sitting at the same table but they didn't know each other at all. Some don't really speak English, but they still communicated," said Tsygankova. "I was able to see them smiling and joking ... they find a way ... and some of them have found new friends."

Winkler student calls for council to connect more with youth

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Garden Valley Collegiate Gr. 12 student Brock Becker appeared before Winkler City Council last week to share his concerns about drug use in the community and a lack of connection between city leaders and youth.

"In our city, roughly 30 per cent of our population is students," Becker said, referring to the most recent census data. "With that 30 per cent, there isn't really a whole lot of representation for kids my age when it comes to trying to talk to you as a council or the City as a whole."

Becker encouraged council to look at ways to reach out to Winkler youth and give them the opportunity to voice their opinions on what's going on in the community.

One major issue Becker identified was the number of teens that are using drugs and alcohol.

"There's a lot of kids where you wouldn't really expect it: they have high grades and they're doing really well socially, but they've smoked weed or pot or they've drunk alcohol," Becker said. "And they actually have a lot of access to it, whether it be through older friends or older people they know."

He noted that more needs to be done to reach students to make them aware of the local resources that are available to help them overcome their addictions.

"Just getting groups ... in schools, doing presentations," he stressed as a need, noting it can be hard for youth to track down resources on their own. "For kids who aren't pushing themselves to really find it and are kind of just going on a whim, it's a lot more difficult for them to find that kind of resources and get the help they need."

Mayor Henry Siemens thanked Becker for his thoughts and noted council will discuss potentially meeting with the student councils of both GVC and Northlands Parkway Collegiate on a regular basis to hear youth viewpoints.

He also encouraged Becker to reach out to the Garden Valley School Division board of trustees with his concerns about substance abuse resources in schools, noting that issue falls firmly under their purview, though the City would be happy to play a role if asked to by the division.

In an interview after the meeting, Siemens noted council is very keen to connect with student leaders.

"I think for the rest of this year, at minimum, we're going to be reaching out," he said. "When we have somebody like Brock coming and presenting to us, that certainly opens that door ... frankly, I'm extremely encouraged when we have young people come and present like that."

"It tells us that we have a really good group of people who care passionately about our community and are prepared to engage."

A few other items of interest from last week's council meeting:

- Council approved rezoning and variation requests that open the way for a two-story, nine-unit apartment building to be built by Glenberg Design Builders on Victoria Street.

The applications received no formal opposition from the surrounding community, though one neighbour, Lou Males, did step up to address council.

These multi-family developments in what was once a neighbourhood of single-family units are clearly the wave of the future, Males said, noting he is not opposed to the project, though he does have related concerns.

"I know we can't stop it. What I'd like to address, though, is the lack of maintenance on our street with the increased traffic. Not just from these condos, but now that there's a U-turn on First ... people are using our street a lot more frequently."

Males said the road is in disrepair and the speed of snow clearing also leaves a lot to be desired.

"If you're making extra income from

Continued on page 7



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Over 200 people came out to enjoy a meal together at the Many Hands Resource Centre's holiday supper in Morden last week.

Our mistake

The Dec. 14 edition of the *Voice* included an error in the cutline for the photo of one of the artists involved in the Winkler Arts and Culture and South Central Regional Library Book & Art Sale (Pg. 9).

That artist's name is Marge Fehr, not Mary Fehr. We're so sorry for the mix-up.

If you'd like to check out Fehr's work, you can reach her via email to margefehr@hotmail.com.

The Voice What's *Your* story? Call 204-325-6888

ARCHWAY
DAIRY SOLUTIONS

20% OFF
SELECTED NAT'S
CLOTHING DEC 14-24

VISIT US THIS HOLIDAY SEASON FOR YOUR BOOTS, BELTS, HATS, MEN, WOMEN & KIDS CLOTHING, TOYS, JEWELRY & MUCH MORE!

ROPER WEAR THE WEST, ARIAT, DURAY, TOUGH DUCK, TWISTED X, NAT'S, Wrangler, REDBACK, CANADA BEST BOOTS &

WESTERN & WORK WEAR
260 MAIN ST. N. CARMAN 204.745.3400

The **Voice**

getheard

EDITORIAL > VIEWPOINTS > LETTERS



PUBLISHER
Lana Meier



MARKETING & PROMOTIONS
Brett Mitchell



EDITOR
Ashleigh Viveiros



REPORTER
Lorne Stelmach



REPORTER
Lori Penner



COLUMNIST
Peter Cantelon



SALES
Gwen Dyck



PRODUCTION
Nicole Kapusta



PRODUCTION
Tara Gionet



DISTRIBUTION
Christy Brown

The newspaper is supported by advertising dollars. If you enjoy the paper and would like to see it grow and prosper, visit any of the advertisers and businesses in our rural communities. Keep your dollars working at home and shop local.

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



• FAITH FOCUS

God's gift for us

In my memories of Christmas past I remember the childlike wonder of trees and lights, and special presents under a tree in our home.

I remember church services with candle light and the singing of carols. I enjoyed the gathering of extended family, with time to visit my cousins, and always looked forward to a great meal together.

I can also remember one memorable occasion when the roads were heavy with snow and my father arranged to borrow a team of horses and a sleigh from his uncle. We drove as far as we could by car and then walked a short distance to my great uncle's farm. The team of horses was harnessed and hitched, complete with bells, the family bundled up, and we arrived at our grandparent's farmhouse on a horse drawn sleigh. The giant cookstove was warm and inviting.

When it was time to go home the horses were hitched up again, we bundled up, then made the return trip to Uncle Ernie's farm and back to our car and snowy roads for the drive home. What a privilege it was and can be to spend time with others.

As I listen to and read of the news in our world today, I wonder what images people have of this season we

might call Christmas. If we become consumed by the drive to shop until we drop and spend beyond our means we will lose sight of what happened in the small town of Bethlehem so many years ago.

Bethlehem was a community like many others where the people were striving to earn a living while living with the tensions of political life under Roman rule. It was a political decision that brought many extra people to their community to register for tax purposes. In the midst of the normal routines and unwanted inconveniences, God was at work.

The prophet Micah had recorded the prophecy "...But you Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

Christians believe that Jesus Christ was and is the ruler whose origins were from ancient times who came to live among us on this earth with an eternal purpose. His birth in Bethlehem was not his beginning but it was

the beginning of his presence in human form to bring the message of reconciliation with God and extend the invitation to each one of us to discover who he is, accept his assessment of our sinful nature and begin a journey of new life.

The carol "O Little Town of Bethlehem" eloquently expresses the timeless beauty of what God was doing when Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

"O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by; Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting Light; The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight."

God invites us to come to him through Jesus with our hopes and our fears, personal, societal, and universal. Through faith in Christ Jesus, God wants to give all of us the gift of personal hope, forgiveness, courage, and renewal.

Randy Smart has been a pastor in Southern Manitoba since 1979.



By Randy Smart

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.

All columns and letters published on our Get Heard pages are the personal opinions of the submitting writers. They are not objective news articles, nor are they necessarily the viewpoint of the Voice.

GET IN TOUCH WITH US

GENERAL INQUIRIES:
204-325-6888

ADVERTISING:
Gwen Dyck 204-823-0535
gdyck@winklermordenvoice.ca

Advertising Deadline: Monday at 4 p.m.

NEWS DESK:

Ashleigh Viveiros Editor
204-332-3456 news@winklermordenvoice.ca

Lorne Stelmach Reporter
204-823-2655 lstelmach@winklermordenvoice.ca

MAILING ADDRESS:

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

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

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

The (Maybe) Great Awakening

I am writing to you from the past (spooky noises play in background).

Actually, I always write to you from the past—this is the nature of column writing—but I mention it this time because by now you know the results of the recent Morden by-election.

Even if you are from Altona or Winkler, you should be paying attention because a by-election midway through a term is a great way to sense where people are at these days (particularly if you are on council).

I have ideas on who may or may not get elected, regardless of qualifications, but I will not speak them because I have come to learn this is foolish. Most elections, even the most



By Peter Cantelon

predictable, are generally impossible to determine until at least an hour after the results come out.

In the meantime, let's time travel even further back in time to the All-Candidates Meeting on the eve of Dec. 4 at the Morden Friendship & Activity Centre. You will find your faithful columnist and his wife sitting in the very back of the coat room at the back of the centre's main room.

Why, you ask. Well, aside from the fact that it is an excellent location to avoid being accosted and to make a quick escape at the end, the main room is estimated to have had more than 350 people packed into it.

It was stuffed to rafters with not a seat to be found and every square inch of space taken up as standing room only.

Never in my 18 years of having attending all-candidates meetings in Morden for all levels of government has there ever been a crowd this large.

What does this tell me?

People are VERY interested in this election. People absolutely want to

have a say about how council changes and the future of Morden.

It tells me people are paying close attention these days to their local politicians and what is going on.

Most importantly, it tells me that people may be waking up after a long, somewhat apathetic rest.

The last time an election held this much interest was when His Previous Worship the former Mayor of Morden Doug Wilson won against the incumbent, an even more Previous His Worship John Wiens.

(ASIDE: No one could/can communicate quite like Doug Wilson. I challenge anyone to find someone else with even a fraction of the intense passion Wilson could bring to bear in his role (and literally everything else he did). In some ways his intensity and passion scared his fellow councilors who were, to be frank, often dismissive of him and eventually sought to relegate him to the back benches of decision making because he did not approach leadership in a standard, "normal" way. But I digress.)

Why so many people? People do not come out in hordes from a place of apathy. People mobilize when they are concerned about something. When I went to vote for the merger of Access Credit Union with Assiniboine Credit Union and I saw a lineup snaking around the parking lot, I knew it my gut it was going to be defeated.

People do not line up or pack meeting rooms from a place of complacency, apathy, and contentment; they do it when they want to see change.

Well, by the time you read this, change has happened in Morden. There's a new mayor and two new councilors. That's almost half of council.

People will be watching and waiting. The next municipal election is less than three years away and I suspect residents are looking for concrete, measurable action from council on numerous items, too many to go into here.

Who knows ... perhaps something that has been asleep in the Pembina Valley is waking up. Time will tell.

Winkler Family Resource Centre hosting New Year's Eve bash

By Ashleigh Viveiros

If you're looking for a family-friendly way of ringing in 2024, the Winkler Family Resource Centre has got you covered.

The centre is once again hosting a New Year's Eve Party in its programming space at 750 15th St. (inside the Emmanuel Mennonite Church) from 5-7 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 31.

"We're going to be offering a whole bunch of activities for the children," says executive director Christian Horn, noting they'll be aimed at pre-schoolers but older children are also welcome. "There will be some crafts, there will be games, face painting—just a variety of activities to keep them busy.

"And then we want to offer something for the parents as well," he adds. "We'll probably be doing non-alcoholic cocktails and maybe also a baking activity, soft pretzels or something like that, just so that while the kids are doing their activities, the parents can hang out and chat and have a good time as well."

The evening will wrap up with a New Year's Eve countdown complete

with balloons dropping from the ceiling.

It's a great way for young kids to be a part of the festivities without having to stay up too late, Horn notes.

"They'll get celebrate and then the parents can still celebrate the actual new year at midnight," he says.

Tickets are \$30 per family and can be booked via email to winklerfrc@

gmail.com or calling 204-332-9418.

Horn also invites any businesses interested in donating a door prize or sponsoring the event to get in touch with him.

> WINKLER COUNCIL, FROM PG. 5

these developments, there should be a little bit of room to try and make the street a little better," he said.

Mayor Siemens noted in a later interview that the city is aware of these concerns.

"We continue to look at each one of our streets and our staff brings forward a list of recommendations every year in terms of which ones need the most attention," he said. "[Victoria] is on our staff's radar and they're certainly reviewing it and looking at it.

"Similar to any other road in our community, it's something we have to stay on top of."

- Council approved a revised application to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Community Buildings Retrofit Capital Projects program for funding for

renovations to the Winkler Centennial Arena.

Winkler's original application, passed by council last January, requested up to \$1.25 million in grant funding and up to \$3.75 million in loan contributions towards upgrades at the aging rink.

City staff have been in communication with FCM over the past year and got the go-ahead to revise the application to now request up to \$2.5 million in grant funding and up to \$7.5 million in loan contributions.

"As we continue to make those final plans to be ready to go at the end of the Winkler Flyers' season ... this piece is very good planning on our staff's part to try to get ahead of this, to try to get us the maximum grants that we can," Siemens said.

The city already has just over \$11

million in funding from the federal and provincial governments for this project.

"If there's an opportunity to add somewhat more to this as we look to put the budget together for that project, that would be extremely helpful," the mayor said.

- The Southern Emergency Response Committee presented its updated emergency plan to city council for approval. It has also submitted the plan to its other municipal partners across the region.

Coordinator Kathy Bueckert noted the lengthy document was revised to include new emergency shelter venues like the Meridian Exhibition Centre in Winkler and updated contact information for municipal leaders. A searchable e-version of the document was also formatted for ease of use.

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



PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Many Hands Resource Centre received a \$10,000 grant from the Morden Area Foundation towards the purchase of a new van.



Morden Legion executive Jason Evert and Tammy Petkau with Colleen Lyne, whose donation to the Morden Area Foundation created the new Royal Canadian Legion Morden Branch 11 Fund.

Thomas Sill Fdn. presents Morden fdn. with \$1.1M

By Lorne Stelmach

A leading charitable foundation in Manitoba is coming to an end, but not before bestowing major gifts on community foundations across the province.

As the Thomas Sill Foundation shuts down, it is distributing funds among the 56 foundations province-wide. The Morden Area Foundation announced at its annual meeting last Wednesday that it is receiving \$1,188,000.

"It's absolutely huge for us ... I can't put it into words. It's beyond words for me," said Morden Area Foundation president Sue Nelson.

"It's really a lot of fun to give away money," noted Sam Andrew, who not only made the presentation on behalf of the Thomas Sill Founda-

tion but was also one of the founding members of the Morden community foundation 30 years ago.

The gift of over \$1 million will establish a Thomas Sill Fund, which the Morden foundation expects will translate into them being able to grant out an additional \$50,000 annually.

"It is huge for us," said Nelson. "It basically doubles what we can grant out ... it will have a lasting impact."

Andrew noted that the Thomas Sill Foundation started about 35 years ago with Sill having left an estate of about \$18.5 million. He had the vision to help set up community foundations across the province by offering a fundraising matching challenge.

Continued on page 9

Morden Area Foundation '23 grants total over \$107K

By Lorne Stelmach

The Morden Area Foundation used the occasion of its annual meeting last Wednesday to also be the bearer of good news.

The foundation presented nine grants that totalled \$57,000 as well as a \$25,000 matching grant in support of the École Discovery Trails school track and field project.

When combined with \$14,700 in scholarships and another \$11,000 in Power of the Purse donations, it means the foundation handed out \$107,700 in total grants this past year.

One of the recipients was the Many Hands Resource Centre, which received \$10,000 towards the purchase of a new van.

"Without a functioning vehicle, our ability to serve the community was severely compromised," said executive director Mariyam Tsygankova, who added this goes a long way towards "ensuring that we can continue our essential services without disruption.

"The foundation support not only provided to replace our broken down van but also demonstrate a commitment to the well being of the community."

Other grant recipients last week included:

- 1-6 Community Club - \$10,000 to help convert the facility from fossil fuels to electric heating.
- École Morden Middle School - \$10,000 towards new playground structures.
- Morden Activity Centre - \$8,174.59 for a floor washing machine.
- Minnewasta Golf and Country

Club - \$7,500 towards a golf simulator to help make the facility a year-round draw.

- Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba - \$4,000 in support of the Chance 2 Camp program.

- Boundary Trails Health Centre Foundation - \$3,822 for a new crash cart for the hospital.

- Pembina Valley Humane Society - \$2,000 for a snowblower for clearing the outdoor kennels at the animal shelter in Morden.

- South Central Regional Library - \$1,500 for a new circulation desk at the Morden branch.

The foundation also announced the introduction of two more dedicated endowment funds.

One is called the Learn and Return Health Care Bursary Fund, which will provide a means of support for training health care workers with a commitment to work in the community for a minimum of one year.

It is being established as a fund of \$100,000 that will provide a bursary of \$5,000 annually. Recipients will be chosen by a committee including representatives from Boundary Trails Health Centre and Menzies Medical Centre.

Also introduced was a Royal Canadian Legion Morden Branch 11 Fund thanks to the support of Colleen Lyne in memory of her husband William, who was a member of the Legion.

"It's an honour for us," said Legion rep Tammy Petkau, who also presented a donation from the Legion to the Learn and Return Health Care Bursary Fund.



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

The 1-6 Community Club received \$10,000 to convert its facility to electric heating.

Morden Police Board reaches out for community feedback

By Lorne Stelmach

The Morden Police Board is having consultations with various community stakeholders as part of its strategic planning process.

The board acts as a conduit between the public and the police department, so what they are calling “Conversations with the Community” could provide some vital direction.

“We hope that these conversations and the questions will solicit ideas as to how our police can better partner with other organizations and stakeholders to achieve our goal—that of being Manitoba’s safest community,” said police board chairperson Lee Bassett.

“Our statistics tell us that we are a fairly safe community ... however, are there some organizations or stakeholders out there that feel maybe there are certain areas in our community that aren’t safe?”

The conversations represent part of an ongoing process that stemmed from a community survey that was done on policing in Morden, Bassett explained.

“Is there anything that didn’t come

out of the survey that we’re not aware of?” she said. “Are we bang on with our values? Our values are respect, professionalism, integrity and accountability ... is there a value that isn’t included?”

Bassett said they feel they have a number of good things happening such as the Citizens on Patrol Program as well as the community resource officer who goes into schools and meets with students and staff

“That initiative is a good example of how we want to partner with other organizations to keep the community safe,” she noted. “Those are great partnerships and initiatives, but maybe there’s some other ideas that our organizations or community members have that we haven’t thought of yet.”

The community conversations were being done in a roundtable format, and the conversation topics included four key questions:

1. What is the biggest challenge facing your community/neighborhood when it comes to public safety?
2. What are the policing values you would like to see strengthened in our community?
3. Is there a value that should be a core value of the Morden Police Service?
4. How can your organization contribute to a safe environment and help prevent crime in Morden?



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

The Morden Police Board has hosted a series of community conversations designed to get feedback on the work of the Morden Police Service.

The discussions were being led by Ted Fransen, a longtime resident of southern Manitoba and retired school superintendent and CEO with a 40-year career in education.

Each session is attended by a member of the police board and the Morden Police Service. A session Dec. 11 included representatives ranging from Western School Division to Genesis House to Regional Connections

Immigrant Services. The next session took place this past Monday.

The process will eventually lead to all the information being taken to the police service for further consultation, and they will do some planning exercises to help set out priorities.

“During the community conversations, there was a lot of talk about myths and facts, and I think these community conversations will help us identify what’s a myth and what’s a fact,” said Bassett. “The attendees and participants were really enthused, and I think that’s important that community members and organizations feel valued.”

Other significant funds include the Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre museum sustainability (\$1.5 million), the Morden Area Foundation support fund (\$334,000), Power of the Purse fund (\$134,000), recreation and sport fund (\$131,000), Manitoba Baseball Hall of Fame Fund (\$109,000), William and Colleen Lyne scholarship (\$108,625), Morden Area Foundation managed fund (\$92,000), City of Morden Fund (\$83,000), and CFDC heritage fund (\$80,000)

Nelson noted with this being the 30th anniversary of the foundation, it is amazing to have now surpassed \$4 million in overall endowment funds.

► THOMAS SILL FOUNDATION, FROM PG. 8

There were only four such foundations back then, Andrew said, but now there are 56 across the province with assets in excess of \$200 million.

“Over the years, it has, I believe, distributed in excess of \$40 million,” he said of the Thomas Sill Foundation. “At disbursement, it was in the vicinity of \$38 million, so that money is now being turned over to various foundations.”

He reflected on coming full circle,

having been a founding member of the Morden foundation.

“When I think back, it was seven of us on that original board, and it was a challenge. I mean, the thing that really started this was the challenge grants that the Thomas Sill Foundation set up for community foundations at that time. I think it was a two for one matching thing ... we were the first foundation to do that with Sill Foundation back in 1993.



Announcing the Thomas Sill Foundation gift of over \$1.1 million to the Morden Area Foundation were Sam Andrew and Ron Westfall.

PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

“To see it’s grown to \$4.1 million is pretty amazing,” Andrew said. “It’s obviously a very great honour for me to be able to come back and do that and represent the Thomas Sill Foundation.”

Nelson also paid tribute to the founding members of the Morden Area Foundation.

“It’s just kudos to them for having the vision to have started it,” she said. “The Thomas Sill Foundation is known throughout Manitoba as being the cornerstone for supporting communities in their projects ... this has enabled us to make a further step towards supporting more people and more groups in our community. So let’s get some great projects going for Morden and area.”

Nelson also reflected on the past year having been one of growth for the foundation after having felt some impact from the downturn in the market.

The net assets of the organization increased from \$3,937,137 as of year-end 2022 to \$4,210,940 as of year-end 2023.

The foundation included 38 different endowment funds, with the general endowment fund now at over \$899,000.

“We’re able to grant out more and more now every year,” she said. “We try to get a whole range of different areas of the community to grant money.”

They had received over a dozen requests for grants totalling more than \$100,000, she added.

“We can’t give out that whole amount ... it is a challenge, but it’s great to be able to offer that support year after year,” she said. “It can have a huge impact on the community. There’s lots of small charities that rely on the small grants that we can give out.”

getinformed

Countdown is on to 2024 Scotties Tournament of Hearts

By Lorne Stelmach

There is just one month to go before top female curlers from across Manitoba arrive in Morden to compete for the provincial championship.

The 2024 Morden Scotties Tournament of Hearts takes place Jan. 23-28, and chairperson Ernie Epp is very appreciative of how the community has stepped up to make it happen.

"It's been really good. We've had lots of positive things happen," Epp said last week. "I think we're really close to about 200 volunteers for the event. We put out the request for volunteers and it was only a few short weeks and we had to cut it off because the response was that great ... it was super easy.

"The response is not just individuals who are volunteering. The response from the business community and sponsorships has also been phenomenal," he added, noting it was more than they had anticipated but "that's a wonderful challenge to have, and it's great to see that too."

Epp started initial meetings with CurlManitoba a year ago. The local committee then started organizing back before summer to put a team together. There is an executive committee with five chairs overseeing dif-

ferent areas of responsibility and 16 sub-committees overall.

Morden has a great track record of coming through for major events like this, noted Epp.

"I've seen that firsthand with my role, so it's humbling to see the number of people who are willing to give of their time to see something like this be successful."

He noted the last time Morden hosted was in 2002 when Jennifer Jones won. Jones unfortunately won't be here this year, as she earned a wild card for nationals, while Kerri Einarson won nationals last year so has a bye as the defending champions.

"But we've still got a lot of other good teams coming," Epp said, citing the examples of the teams skipped by Kaitlyn Lawes, Kate Cameron, and Beth Peterson. "Those three teams themselves are high up in the national ratings."

There is also a local team to cheer for with the young Carman foursome skipped by Shaela Hayward having qualified to compete.

"I'm expecting that there's going to be a number of people from the Carman area who are family and friends and supporters in general who are going to be helping to fill the stands here," said Epp. "It speaks volumes



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

The 2024 Morden Scotties chair Ernie Epp (centre) purchased his elimination draw ticket from Jim Mutcheson and Shirley Sagert recently. The draw serves as a fundraiser for the local curling club. More information on that as well as the Scotties overall can be found at Morden2024.ca.

to the calibre of curling in Manitoba, not just today but into the future because there's lots of good programs out there."

Teams arrive Jan. 23, with curling going Jan. 24-28. Twelve teams will be playing in the round robin Wednesday to Friday, with three draws daily. The elimination playoffs then take place on the Saturday and Sunday.

More information can be found online at morden2024.ca, where you can also purchase tickets for specific draws, certain days, or the entire event.

"Tickets have already been going really well. Curling Manitoba has told us it's a really good response," said Epp.

Another feature will be a fundrais-

ing elimination draw with just 400 tickets. During the event, numbers are pulled out of a pail and removed from the board. There will be prizes as it goes along, but the big prize is \$8,000 for the last number remaining.

"It's intended to be a fundraiser for our curling club, and those tickets were already half sold," Enns noted. "So they're going fast."

As the event draws closer, Enns looks forward to the excitement the Scotties will offer for everyone.

"The more teams that I saw, the more excited I got that this is going to be a lot of fun ... and we want it to be fun for the community, so we're having a social event on the Saturday evening."



Holiday Smile Cookies for the Cheer Boards

The Morden Christmas Cheer Board got a big financial boost last Friday with a donation from Tim Hortons. The recent Holiday Smile Cookie campaign brought in \$8,589, to be split evenly between the Cheer Board and Tim Horton's Foundation's camps. "We were surprised actually at how well it went and how much money we were able to raise in a short period of time," said co-owner Linda Doerksen. "This community always is so supportive of these campaigns." Cheer Board chairperson Carolyn Schellenberg called it a big help. "We were expecting about 300 hampers, and our applications are over 360, so there's a big difference that we have to find money to cover for the hampers." Winkler's Tim Hortons also took part in the Holiday Cookie campaign, raising a total of \$5,634, half of which was presented to the Winkler and District Christmas Cheer Board on Wednesday.

PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Minds in Motion sessions in Altona, Carman in new year

By Lori Penner

Living with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia can often be a lonely and frustrating journey, but there is a program designed to lighten the path.

Minds in Motion will soon be launching their winter session. Designed by the Alzheimer's Society of Manitoba, these unique weekly sessions connect people living with early to moderate signs of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia and their care partners through fitness, fun, and friendship.

Regional coordinator Rebecca Atkinson says not only is it a great way to learn new techniques for managing the disease, but it also creates positive connections.

During each two-hour session, participants take part in a gentle exercise class followed by socially engaging activity and conversation.

"There are lots of laughs during these sessions," Atkinson says, adding there are many benefits to the program.

While developing social skills, each activity is also intended to stimulate memory. Music, for example, is a powerful way to engage those with dementia.

"We have a songbook, and we do a lot of singing," says Atkinson. "There's a strong connection between music, entertainment and memory."

Storytelling is another highlight of each session.

"We're using verbal and visual cues. We want to ask questions to lead their brains to tell stories about what they saw, or how they felt. There's lots of reminiscing and using the senses to

get more out of their stories and pull more of their memories together."

And there's a secondary benefit of attending. By care partners being there, they're seeing how the facilitator is engaged and interacting with their person with dementia.

"They're learning techniques that they can take home with them," Atkinson said.

While the program has a practical purpose, Atkinson stresses Minds in Motion is focused on fun.

"We're getting out of the house. We're filling our time with things that are stimulating our minds, and exercising our bodies, we're socializing, and forming a sense of community."

More than 22,000 Manitobans have Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia. This number is expected to nearly double to more than 40,000 in the next 20 years. These conditions take their toll on those who battle them, as well as their families.

While there is no cure for Alzheimer's or dementia, and those affected will see symptoms gradually worsen. The Alzheimer Society of Manitoba says physical activity combined with mental and social stimulation, like the activities done in Minds in Motion, can help slow the disease's progress.

"They're not just trying to recall memories, they're also creating new ones with their care partner. Positive memories," says Atkinson. "There is a lot of fun and engagement we can still have with someone with dementia. And this program creates a very inclusive environment to have a good time."

The sessions, she adds, can also provide a weekly respite for the care



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Minds in Motion is a program for people living with Alzheimer's disease or another dementia and their caregivers. The next local sessions are in Altona and Carman starting next month.

partner where they can also have some fun while their loved one engages with others.

"It's a change of routine, where you can watch your loved one smile and laugh in a forgiving environment where everyone understands."

The biggest goal is helping people see that dementia is common, and that people with dementia can continue to be an active part of our lives.

"This person that you used to know isn't the way they used to be. We have all those feelings, but if we engage them, there's skills that work with people with dementia," says Atkinson. "All those skills of reminiscing and remembering are all things we want to encourage people to do with people who have dementia. It's important for care partners to see that not all their days have to feel like there's nothing going on or there's nothing inside. They can use this pro-

gram to see some life coming back and see some joy and engagement."

In Altona, Minds in Motion will take place at Gardens on Tenth on Mondays from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Jan. 8-Feb. 26. Register with Deandra at 204-324-8945.

Sessions will also be held at the Carman Active Living Centre on Fridays from January 12 (skipping January 26) until March 8. Register with Linda at 204-745-2356 or carmanalc@gmail.com.

Come for the first session for free to see if you like it. Then it's \$65/pair for the eight-week program.

Minds in Motion offers both in-person and online options. Dates, times, and registration information for all current Minds in Motion sessions can be found at alzheimer.mb.ca/mindsinmotion.

You can also reach Atkinson at 204-325-5634.

Celebrate the 12 Days of Christmas with Habitat for Humanity

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Habitat for Humanity Morden-Winkler chapter's annual 12 Days of Christmas fundraiser is back this year with a much more varied array of prizes.

After a few years of offering bottles of wine as prizes, this year organizers have reached out to local businesses for donations of gift cards and other goodies.

"Our prizes this year are really awesome," shares Habitat's Christina Falk. "They're all donated prizes—we didn't spend anything, which is great because we usually do spend some money on this."

By broadening the scope of prizes to gift cards to a huge list of local businesses—from Fruit 'N More, Sheer Bliss, and Morden Nurseries to Coffee Culture, Domino's Pizza, and Frank & Olive, to name just a few—Falk says they hope to appeal to more supporters than ever.

"[Wine] doesn't necessarily include everyone who would want to participate, so we decided to change it up and see if local businesses wanted to take part, and we just got so much response," she says. "The prizes are higher in value than we've ever had."

All in, the total value of prizes this year is \$1,875, the daily prizes steady-

ly growing in value all the way up to the top two prize packs.

The second-place prize package, which will be drawn for on Day 11, includes gift cards to Flavours of Mexico, My Boba Lab, and a one-night stay at Best Western Plus Winkler.

The first-place prize package for Day 12 features a 42" television from Canadian Tire, \$100 cash from Gallery Wealth Management, and a Valley Bakery gift card.

You can track down the full prize list through the chapter's pages on Facebook or Instagram.

The way the 12 Days of Christmas works is, starting on Christmas Day,

organizers will draw one winner and also randomly eliminate 25 other players ("They're kicked off the island, Survivor style," Falk explains), bettering the odds for those who remain.

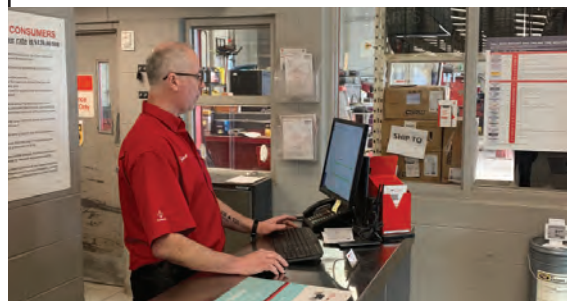
A new winner and a group of additional eliminated participants will be announced every day until just a handful are left for the final days. Eventually just two grand prize winners will be left standing for the last ticket draw on Jan. 5.

Tickets are \$25 each and are available by emailing fundraising@wm.habitat.mb.ca to arrange for payment.

Continued on page 13



Not too late for great deals on winter tires!



We have a great selection of brands, ranging from the budget conscious tire to the top name brands like **Bridgestone Blizzak** and **Michelin Xice Snow**, and many in between. And we are an MPIC winter tire program dealer, which allows you to finance your winter or all weather tire purchase for 1-4 years.



But we do so much more than just tires!

For those of you that hate climbing into a cold car in our frigid Manitoba winters, we sell and install remote starters for many makes and models!!



Call today and get a quote so that you don't have to freeze inside your car while it warms up!



- Brakes • Steering and suspension repairs
- Wheel alignments • Provincial safety inspections
- Diagnostic scans • Drive train service & repairs, including transmission and differentials
- Battery and charging systems tests
- Heating and cooling system checks and repairs
- Oil changes, and other fluid services



On behalf of Shane and the staff at Canadian Tire Auto Service, we want to thank all of you for your business in 2023 and we look forward to seeing you in 2024.

From all of us to all of you, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Open Monday through Saturday. Call today to see how we can take care of you 204-325-0641

Reaching out to Tabor residents



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

A Ukrainian-based educational program in Morden did its part recently to help spread some Christmas spirit. Throughout December, the students of the LEADER cultural and educational center were involved in a special initiative where they became Secret Santas, spreading kindness and Christmas cheer to the residents of Tabor Home. "The students were delighted to receive cards from several ladies along with pictures and some lovely crafts such as wreaths and origami," shared Galina Churikova. "The joy on the children's faces was heartwarming."



> HABITAT, FROM PG. 11

Only 200 tickets are available and they're going fast.

"We've sold over 100 so far," Falk said last week, noting sales will continue until Saturday, Dec. 23. Past years have sold out completely.

If it's another sold-out year for the fundraiser, it stands to bring in \$5,000 for the chapter.

"With all the prizes being donated, it's just pure fundraising for us, which is really great," Falk says, explaining that the money will be used to help build a home in Win-

kler for Congolese immigrants Binwa and Idolo (last name withheld at the request of Habitat) and their three children. The family have already gotten started on the sweat equity required of Habitat families by volunteering in the community.

Falk estimates they still have about \$125,000 to raise before they can get to work on what will be the sixth build in Morden-Winkler. They hope to get shovels in the ground sometime in 2024.

A Special Note from Bill Klassen Auctions

First of all, we would like to thank this incredible community to which we have belonged to for so many years. Your support over the last 55 years is appreciated beyond words. Over the last few months your prayers, thoughts and continued support have carried us through this very difficult time.

It is with heavy hearts, that we announce the closing of Bill Klassen Auctions.

Bill was the founder, pulse and voice of this company. Without him, Bill Klassen Auctions is simply not Bill Klassen Auctions.

So now, as Bill would so often say at the close of an auction, "That's it! That's all! Thank you all for coming out today and have a safe trip home!"

We would like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year.

- Karen Klassen, the Klassen Family, Kayla Elias and the Bill Klassen Auctions Team.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6



Manitoba's 123rd Christmas Bird Count is underway around the province

By Raegan Hedley

Instead of counting the number of holiday parties you're going to, what if you counted birds instead? From Dec. 14 to Jan. 5, the Christmas Bird Count (CBC), North America's longest-running citizen science project, takes place, and anyone interested can participate.

The CBC was created in 1900 by conservationists to encourage the public to count birds instead of hunting them. According to the official rules, each count is done in a circle with a 24-kilometre diameter. Each circle has a compiler who selects a count day, coordinates with the volunteers and divides everyone up to cover the circle depending on how many people are participating, and if they are solo or going out in groups.

Pending weather disruptions, 21 counts will occur across Manitoba this year.

Volunteer birders receive checklists, signs that say "Christmas Bird Count In Progress" (if they are driving) and maps outlining their allocated area. They then travel by foot, ski, snowshoe or vehicle to look, listen and record the number and types of birds

they see. Volunteers can also watch their feeders and count from indoors, or use a combination of methods to count the birds in their area. Often, at the end of the count day, everyone gathers to enjoy refreshments and discuss what they saw.

"I like the comradeship," said Bonnie Chartier, the organizer for the Gimli count. "It's a small community, and it's fun to catch up with people."

In addition to organizing the Gimli count on Dec. 19, she helps count in other circles since she's an experienced birder. However, you don't need to be an experienced birder to participate in the CBC.

"With new people, you make sure to put them with someone who's an experienced birder so they can learn the differences between a northern hawk owl and a great gray owl, for example," says Charlier.

The information volunteers document through the CBC is important for assessing long-term trends in the bird populations of North America. Gerald Machnee, the organizer for the Selkirk CBC, says that some birds are not observed every year, while a few have been observed only a few times in 30 years.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Bird watchers are invited to take part in the annual Christmas bird count starting Dec. 23. Christmas bird counters are hoping to see the pair of Northern Cardinals that have been frequenting the southeast portion of Carman.

"There have been a few birds that should not be here for the CBC, espe-

Continued on page 19

V.I.P. LUBE

DRIVE THRU OIL CHANGE

- NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED
- WARRANTY APPROVED

25% OFF

ANY OIL CHANGE UNTIL JANUARY 31, 2024

Mobil 1

HAVE COMPANY VEHICLES SIGN UP FOR A FLEET ACCOUNT TODAY (SAVE TIME AND MONEY)

We are an approved oil, filter, container & antifreeze drop-off recycling location!

611 Main St., Winkler (next to Co-op Car Wash)

204.325.8100 www.viplube.ca

Store Hours: Monday to Saturday is 9am-6pm Closed Sunday

Parkside School presents "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever"

By Lori Penner

Before the Christmas break, students and staff at École Parkside School decided to leave on a festive note by presenting the play *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* on Dec. 18.

Based on the book by Barbara Robinson, this classic features a couple struggling to put on a church Christmas pageant when they are faced with casting the Herdman kids—probably the most inventively awful kids in history.

There is lots of confusion, mayhem, and fun when the Herdmans collide head-on with the story of Christmas, but ultimately it's the Herdmans who open their eyes to the true meaning of the story.

The Parkside production was directed by teachers Sarah Friesen-Maguet and Courtenay Yeo-Thiessen.

Friesen-Maguet said the simple, yet meaningful show was intended to give the newer drama students a chance to perform for a live audience.

"We have 40 kids in drama this year and knowing we weren't going to do a big production right away, we thought we'd do something a little simpler so they could get some acting experience."

Students were involved in everything from props and costumes to set design and performing.

Now that they know they have a group of talented youngsters willing and able to perform, Friesen-Maguet says they are bouncing around ideas for a larger production next year.

"We have a lot of kids who are really excited about drama



PHOTOS BY LORI PENNER/VOICE

Above: The cast of École Parkside School's performance of *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*. Left: Sean Funk and Callie Schroeder.

Check out the Voice online at altonavoice.ca

now, so we want to give them an opportunity to learn and really get involved."

RRC POLYTECH
Winkler Campus

Happy Holidays!

DISCOVER CAREER TRAINING CLOSE TO HOME

rrc.ca/winkler

Have a Blessed **CHRISTMAS**

BRANDEN LESLIE MP
PORTAGE—LISGAR

BRANDEN.LESLIE@PARL.GC.CA • 204-822-7440
E-886 THORNHILL STREET, MORDEN, MB R6M 2E1



Read more at friesens.com



PHOTOS BY LORI PENNER/VOICE

There were delicious snacks (left) and fun crafts (above) at the Altona and Area Family Resource Centre's Celebrate the Season party last week.

AAFRC celebrates the season

By Lori Penner

A crowd of 100 moms, dads, and little ones filled the Altona United Church basement last Saturday for the Altona and Area Family Resource Centre (AAFRC) Celebrate the Season bash.

Coordinator Nina Edbom-Kehler says she was absolutely thrilled with the turnout.

"The snacks were fabulous. We had a singalong for the first time, and that was great. Santa was amazing. Families were happy. Smiling kids. Babies to hold. All the good things in life were there, and it was fabulous."

Kids were kept engaged with tables filled with colouring pages, puzzles, and crafts.

"Families were hopping from table to table, meeting other families, and we really liked to see that," says Edbom-Kehler.

The event drew families and facilitators from each of the communities where AAFRC programs for pre-schoolers are held, including Altona, Gretna, and Rosenfeld.

"It was so good for all the parents to get together," Edbom-Kehler says. "Now they have a familiar face from a group in a different community if they decide to join that group as well."

"ALL THE GOOD THINGS IN LIFE WERE THERE, AND IT WAS FABULOUS."

"We also had Healthy Baby join us at the party this year too. That organization supports expectant moms and babies up to one year old. This event happened to be their day to get together, so we invited them to join us. So those families got to meet us and get to know who we are, so that also gave us a bit more exposure for the future."

Since many of their programs take place in local schools, the AAFRC will be taking a break over the holidays, with sessions resuming on Jan. 8.

"We have one more take-home kit for the families to take home this week," Edbom-Kehler says. "We'll start off the new year with our weekly Stay and Play program in Altona, Rosenfeld, and Gretna. We're also starting gym nights in Altona and Gretna."

They're also planning for another Puzzle Palooza fundraiser next month.



The best present one can hope for this year is to spend time together.
MERRY CHRISTMAS!

May the message of Christmas fill your life with joy and peace.
Best wishes to you and your family!



42 Center Ave
East Altona, MB
204-324-6923
www.redriverglass.ca

CUSTOMER SERVICE SINCE 1977

LEO'S
SALES & SERVICE, LTD.

Thanking our customers for their valued support for over 83 years of continuous service

www.leoscasaih.com
Toll Free: 1 866-694-4978
North Perimeter and Sturgeon Road, Winnipeg, Manitoba



Dear valued readers and advertisers,

We would like to express our sincerest gratitude for your unwavering support over the past year. Our community newspaper wouldn't be possible without you. Thank you!

Moving forward, we'll continue to publish stories that have a direct impact on our community. You can continue to trust us to provide verified and timely coverage of the issues that matter most to you.

As we head into the holiday season, we want you to know that your support is our most treasured gift. We feel fortunate to have you on our side, and we hope you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Happy holidays, and best wishes for 2024!



Thank you to our dedicated team: Administrative, Editorial, Sales & Marketing, Graphic Design and Distribution

Allana Sawatzky
Ashleigh Viveiros
Autumn Fehr
Becca Myskiw
Brett Mitchell
Brian Bowman
Brittany Hiebert
Christy Brown
Corrie Sargent
Dan Anderson
Debbie Strauss
Dennis Young
Donna Gislason
Edward Arcenal
Emma McGill
Gloria Thomas
Gwen Dyck
Jennifer McFee
Jo-Anne Procter
John Podworniuk
Kaitlin Vitt
Kaitlyn Foy

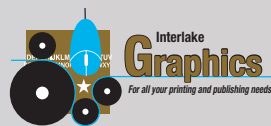
Katelyn Boulanger
Lana Meier
Lori Penner
Lorne Stelmach
Lorraine Stevenson
Lucy Kowalchuk
Mari Bilerm
Nicole Kapusta
Patricia Barrett
Peter Cantelon
Rayme Thomson
Rick Hiebert
Sandra Barnes
Tara Gionet
Ty Dilello
Collators
Alizon Escueta
Alma Hernandez
Alma Panay
Candace MacMillan
Emma Gisti
Glen Weaver
Gwen Ross
Haley Cvar
Janice Carriere
Joan Kalupar
Jonathon Farmer
Kathy Walmuth
Lorne Chalus
Lorne Ross

Matthieu Meier
Michelle Bukoske
Mila Tangcalagan
Mollie Meier
Rick Roy
Rita Mueller
Sam Reimer
Sheila Escueta
Wayde Carriere
Yannic Freitag
Door to Door carriers
Maiia Hadaieva
Danylo Tykhenko
Alayna Daniels
Carri Kroeker
Steve Kroeker
Aidan Kroeker
Emma Rempel
Scarlett Kraecker
Joshua Kunz
David Kunz
Eileen Kunz
Katy Kunz
Lucas Goodine-Nield
Tamara Peters
Graydon Funk
Dylan Peters
Dyane Wiens
Natalie Wiens

Oliver Wiens
Laila Barbarona
Denis Bortok
Jonah Blatz
Luka Kushnir
Jennifer Klassen
Matvey Martynov
Joshua Klassen
Katie Dominguez-Laskowski
Michelle Laskowski
Gateway Resources
David Klassen
Leona Hildebrand
Luke Reimer
Levi Driedger
Trepp Fehr
Aiden Berg
Lisa Sawatzky
Milo Hildebrand
Annelore White
Mary Wall
Joshua Siemens
Sebastian Siemens
Judy Harder
Austin Krahn
Nora Loewen
Bentley Loewen
Elyse Penner
Ella Penner

Quinn Friesen
Kevin Kort
Celina Kort
Daylan Kort
Slava Pak
Nikita Pak
Viola Pak
Alia Overton
Jaidynn Overton
Rylan Klassen
Camryn Harder
Monica Harder
Zachary Harder
Gabriel Harder
Rahab Harder
Bektur Kuchkachov
Richard Dyck
Kiera Dyck
Mark Bochkov
Andrea Hiebert
Vladyslav Zadorozhnyi
Elias Kandt
Arianna Hiebert
Lucas Boger
Jason Boger
Grace Whitman
Emily Whitman

the staff of.....



Call Today 204-467-5836



get informed

> AAFRC, FROM PG. 17

"Last year was very successful, so we're excited to see how many participants we get this time," says Edbom-Kehler.

Looking back on 2023, it's been a

busy year, coming back from the pandemic.

"I think we're finally getting there," says Edbom-Kehler. "I find some families are still struggling with com-

mitting to programs, but they are still coming to check them out.

"Many of our families have graduated from the program, but we're slowly getting more and more in-

volvement. Going forward, we'll be looking at adding more registered programs and some intergenerational stuff. It's been a good year, and we anticipate 2024 to be even better."

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

From all of us at...
RHINELAND CAR CO. LTD.
 60 Main St., Altona • 204-324-6474
 rhinelandcar.com



PHOTOS BY LORI PENNER/VOICE

Above: Rachael Friesen of the Altona Library reads Christmas stories to kids and their families at the AAFRC Celebrate the Season party last week. Right: Kim Sawatzky and her daughter, five-year-old Raiyah, who was full of smiles throughout the whole event.



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

COLE & MACE LAW OFFICE
 Barristers, Solicitors & Notaries
 204-324-6451 www.colemacelaw.com

MERRY CHRISTMAS

GJ Chemical Co. LTD.
growing together

Seed Sales & Treatment / Agronomics / Fertilizer / Custom App Air & Ground
 Altona - 324-8090 / Arnaud - 427-2337 / www.gjchemical.ca

Merry Christmas from Joey's Septic

Thanks for your support in 2023,
 Joey & Agatha, Riley & Sierra Wiebe

> BIRD COUNT, FROM PG. 14

cially the yellow-rumped warbler that was counted in 2015," says Machnee. "They will not survive once the temperature goes below about -20 C."

Manitoba's collective CBC data results from hundreds of hours of observation and thousands of kilometres covered by volunteers. Last year, the house sparrow counted the most (21,213 times) followed by the common redpoll (6546 times), then snow buntings (5824 times).

James Duncan is the creator of Discover Owls, a retired conservation zoologist, and the organizer for the Balmoral CBC for almost 30 years. Duncan says that doing and publishing scientific research plays an essential role. Still, unless you get the public invested and involved by making nature a part of their lives, the research alone lacks the "conservation punch" needed to drive change.

"It's reasonably easy for the general public to participate in, and it provides people with an opportunity to have fun with family and friends while having these experiences counting birds...[and] making valuable contributions to our knowledge of bird populations," said Duncan. "Most importantly, they become stronger advocates against things that may impact birds...because they've been getting up close and personal counting them."

Chartier has been birding for almost 30 years. She remembers wondering what made birding so interesting until she saw a common redpoll through binoculars for the first time.

"I've been birding since I was a young person in Churchill. It started because I was just curious what all these ladies in goofy hats were looking at. I spotted a small brown bird

with a red cap and a red chest. After that, I wanted to see what they all look like up close. When you see them through binoculars, it's so different."

If you are interested in participating in the Morden Christmas Bird Count on Dec. 23, contact Ben Ginter at

68144ben@gmail.com.

In addition to the Manitoba CBCs, there are also opportunities for kids to learn how to count birds through a program called CBC 4 Kids. You can find the nearest CBC 4 Kids through the Birds Canada website.

Wishing You and yours a
MERRY CHRISTMAS

THIS YEAR MAKE YOUR DOLLAR GO FURTHER WITH SOME OF THE MOST COMPETITIVE SAVINGS RATES AROUND.

RCU
Rosenort Credit Union

The **Voice**

What's *Your* story? Call 204-325-6888

BEST GIFT EVER!
Scenic Flight Tour
Show them the world from 5000ft!

SPECIAL BIRTHDAYS

\$149 3 PASSENGERS AND THE PILOT ALL FOR ONE LOW COST
Book Today!

LS Airways Flight Academy | 311 Anson St, Gimli, MB | 204-651-1402

STOCKING STUFFER

TICKETS AVAILABLE ONLINE @
curlmanitoba.org/viterra-championship
and can be picked up at the

TOWN OF STONEWALL OFFICE
293 MAIN STREET

or at the

STONEWALL CURLING CLUB BAR
500 MAIN STREET

February 7-11 2024

FULL EVENT TICKET



What's *Your* Christmas Story?

We received so many creative entries for our writing contest this year! Here are our winners, along with a few other favourites.

GRAND PRIZE, KINDERGARTEN TO GR. 4: JENEBA RICHARD-TURAY, GR. 3, WINKLER

SANTA'S LITTLE HELPERS

"Come on," Sue said, "Go caroling with us. It will be fun!"

"But what if I mess up?" said Teresa. "You've been practicing for a month already!" replied Sue.

"Why do I have to come?" Teresa whined.

"Because you can't stay home alone. Only I can stay home alone because I am older than you. And I want to go caroling!" Sue retorted. "Even your friends Laura and Emily are coming. And we're caroling all the way until 12:00 am and we'll probably get a treat when we get home," Sue said convincingly.

"Ok, I changed my mind. I want to come" Teresa said quickly.

"Good. Now go get your caroling book before the others get here," Sue instructed.

Ding! dong!

"They're here Teresa!" Sue said loudly. Sue opened the door.

"Where's Teresa?" said Laura.

"She will be here in a second. She is upstairs getting her caroling book," Sue answered.

"Laura! Emily! You're here!" Teresa exclaimed.

"Oh great, can we go now?" complained Sue.

"Okay Sue" Teresa said.

They went outside and to their neighbor's house. Then they sang one song and their neighbors, Mrs. Hill and Mr. Hill, let them in for hot chocolate. Mr. and Mrs. Hill let them stay all the way until 12:00 am.

When they got home their parents were not there!

"Where are our parents?" Teresa said worriedly.

"Go check if the car is in the garage," Sue instructed.

"The car's not here," Teresa replied.

"Let's go to bed now," yawned Sue.

"Okay," Teresa said sleepily.

They woke up 30 minutes later after they came home. They woke up to a surprise to see their mom and dad dressed in elf costumes with Santa. Santa quickly disappeared into thin air before the girls saw him.

"Mom! Dad!" Sue and Teresa said with surprise, "What are you doing in those elf costumes?"

"Girls, it is time we tell you we are two of Santa's helpers, with Laura's mom and Emily's mom and dad," Dad answered.

"Can we tell Laura and Emily?" the girls said.

"No! It's a secret. Do not tell anybody."

That night Sue heard a noise coming from the roof. Sue woke up Teresa and headed outside and they saw

that Santa had left his sleigh with his reindeer on the roof. They got a ladder from the shed and put it against the house.

Sue said, "Come on, climb up the ladder."

"Wait, we're actually going to climb up there?" Teresa said worriedly.

Sue hopped right into the sleigh. Then Teresa said, "Are you doing what I think you're going to do?"

"Yup," answered Sue.

"Wait, wait, wait – stop! Why are you flying the sleigh? You don't know how to control it!"

A second later, they were up in the air above their house.

"Wheeeee!" Sue screamed.

"What are you doing?" Teresa yelled. "Ahhhhhh!"

Sue thought the whole neighborhood could hear Teresa screaming.

Continued on page 21

GRAND PRIZE, GRADE 5-8: ELLA THIESSEN, GR. 6, PLUM COULEE SCHOOL

THE SLEDDING

CATASTROPHE

"Come on," Sue begged, "Go with caroling with us. It will be fun!"

"NO!" I said for fifth time. "I know your plan."

"What plan?" Sue snorted.

"What was that meeting about last month?" I asked sarcastically. "Oh yeah, how you were planning to go caroling at the NORTH POLE!" I exclaimed.

"Come on Lacey! It will be an amazing adventure!" Sue said, trying to persuade me.

"Okay fine I'll—"

"You'll do it!" Sue squealed, interrupting me.

I took a deep breath and calmly said, "I'll think about it."

"Fine," Sue grumbled.

Sue was in my room staying for a sleepover, but I think her real intent was to persuade me to go caroling at the North Pole.

"Come on let's go sledding," I announced

We quickly put on our snowsuits, raced outside and grabbed the two-person sled. We walked to the giant snow hill by the woods. When

Sue and I got there we climbed up the hill. When we reached the top, I got into the sled first and Sue got on second.

"THREE, TWO, ONE...GO!" we yelled in unison. We took off at the speed of lightning. Before I knew what was happening, we hit a bump and went off track into the woods! Suddenly, I was swept away. I was being tossed and turned all over the place.

After what seemed like forever I plopped into a snowbank! I sat in the snow, dazed by what had just happened. I was still sitting there when I heard screaming. I glanced up and saw Sue plummeting through the sky towards me!

"Ahhhhhhh!" I screamed as I scrambled out of the way just in time as Sue landed with a thud behind me.

She glanced around and simply said, "Cool."

I stood up and helped her to her feet. "Where are we?" I asked.

Sue's eyes went wide as she looked at something behind me. She opened her mouth in a silent "Oh" as I felt a hard tap on my shoulder. I turned around to see a reindeer towering over me, his red, glowing nose in my

face.

"Eh kid, ya from around here?" he said in a loud voice.

I jumped back into my friend, who was still gawking at the big creature.

"Lacey, it's a reindeer that can talk!" Sue squealed.

"Rudolph is the name," he said proudly. "I'm sure you've heard about me leading Santa's sleigh last year."

"Umm ... does that mean we're at the North Pole?" Sue questioned Rudolph.

"Are we at the North Pole?" he repeated sarcastically. "Where else would we be?" Rudolph snickered.

I noticed that Sue was shivering. Apparently, Rudolph noticed that too and he asked if we wanted to visit Mrs. Claus to warm up with some hot cocoa and a candy cane. We got a ride on his back, and we stopped at a little cottage that had a warm glow coming from inside. As we knocked on the door, a pleasant old lady answered.

"Hello there," she said kindly and invited us inside. "Are you here for the race?" Mrs. Claus questioned.

Sue perked up and asked with excitement, "What race?"

"Well," said Mrs. Claus, "the cele-

bration that Santa throws for his elves for finishing up the presents in the workshop in time for Christmas. Do you know how to ride reindeer?" she asked.

"Riding a reindeer can't be that hard," mumbled Sue,

"Sure! We'll do it!" I quickly exclaimed before Mrs. Claus changed her mind about us joining.

At the racetrack there was a buzz of excitement in the air, elves were leading their favourite reindeer to the starting line. Sue and I hopped on to Rudolph and suddenly Santa yelled, "On your mark, get set, GO!"

We took off at top speed down the track with Blitzen on our heels, "Faster!" I encouraged Rudolph.

As we were rounding the last turn we were pulling ahead of Dasher. The finish line was in sight. The second we crossed the finish line Santa said, "Rudolph wins!" I was so excited, but then I realized we were flying!

"Bye! Thanks for everything," I yelled as I waved to Santa. Rudolph flew us home just in time to join the caroling group, and guess what the first song was? Yup, Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer!

It was the best Christmas ever!

WHAT SANTA WANTS FOR CHRISTMAS

It was almost Christmas. Mrs. Claus sneaked into Santa's room to find his Christmas list that he hid in his room. Once she found his list in a trap door, she looked at it.

This is his list:

1. Shiny red paint, in case I need to paint my sleigh.
2. New reindeer, in case my others get old.
3. A soft cat to make me feel warm inside.
4. New socks 'cause our dog named Fluffy broke my other ones.

Mrs. Claus went to the store to buy the things that Santa wanted for Christmas.

At the store she found some red paint. It was not shiny red paint but she bought it anyway. She put a check by it.

She looked in the pet store but there was no reindeer there so she bought a bear and put antlers on it and said, "I do not think Santa would notice"

After Mrs. Claus was done shopping she went home. At home she wrapped the presents but wasn't sure how to wrap up the bear. So she put the bear outside by the garage.

A few days passed by and Christmas was in two days. Santa was hoping that he would get what he wanted.

It was finally Christmas Eve. Santa went outside for some fresh air. When he got outside he saw a BEAR. Santa was so terrified.

He went inside and told Mrs. Claus about the bear. She just told him to wait for it to go away, but it never did.

It was finally Christmas and Santa was excited to get presents. First he had a nap. He was awake all night bringing presents to the children.

After a two-hour nap Santa went to the living room to open presents. When Santa got there he only saw three presents for him so he asked Mrs. Claus if she had a fourth present for him. She didn't say anything about it.

After opening up the red paint, red socks and a cat, Mrs. Claus took him outside and showed the bear and told him that there was no reindeer.

Santa laughed until they almost fainted.

> LITTLE HELPERS, FROM PG. 20

Soon enough they landed smoothly back on their rooftop. Teresa quickly jumped out of the sleigh.

"Hoo-wee! I'm out!" Teresa said in relief.

"That was crazy fun!" Sue exclaimed.

"No! That wasn't!" Teresa retorted.

The girls ran inside to the fireplace and then they thought that they heard jingle bells coming from the roof.

"Come on, let's check the roof again," Sue instructed.

"Nope! There's no way I'm going up there again," Teresa answered.

"You're going if I'm going."

"Fine," Teresa said as she rolled her eyes.

They climbed up the ladder and they saw Santa. He was trying to start his sleigh.

"What's the problem, Santa?" Teresa said.

"Hmmm...my sleigh is not flying. It needs the right person."

"Can we try starting it?" Sue asked.

"Sure!" replied Santa.

Suddenly the reindeer started floating up, and then the sleigh did as well. They all quickly hopped in before it floated off into the winter sky. Soon they landed on Emily's house. They snuck through the chimney.

"How do you do this every year?" Teresa wondered.

"It's all in the Christmas magic!" answered Santa.

Right after they left Emily's house, Santa dropped them off on their roof.

Teresa said, "Bye-bye Santa!" just before he disappeared into the snowy sky.

Santa finally said, "I could use just this one bear to guide the sleigh and it would be strong enough."

Santa tried riding his sleigh with the bear guiding it. Santa had a blast.

—Jayda Funk, Gr. 4, Winkler

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT WINTER!

I like to skate with my friends, and drink hot chocolate so that we stay warm.

I like Christmas, because Jesus was born, and I like the presents.

I like sledding, because it is fun going down the hill.

I like building snowmen, because I like to take snow.

I like to walk in snow because the snow is so soft, but not always.

I like to slide down hills when it's slippery.

I like to do snow angels because I like to look at the snow angels.

—Kaylee Scheling, 9, Blumenfeld School

CALEB'S BEST CHRISTMAS

"Is Dad coming this Christmas, Mom?!" whined Caleb. Caleb was 12 years old and hadn't seen his dad since he was four.

"I'm not sure," replied his mother.

"But he has to come. It's Christmas Eve!" said Caleb in a sad voice.

"I'm sorry, Caleb, I really don't know," replied his mother, worried about how disappointed Caleb may be this Christmas.

That night Caleb dreamed not of dancing sugar plums but of the person he loved most: his dad.

On Christmas morning Caleb ran straight downstairs and went to the front door and waited and waited and waited until the doorbell rang.

"HE'S HERE! HE'S FINALLY HERE!" screamed Caleb as he swung open the door to see ... the postman.

"I've got a special letter from your dad," said the postman.

Caleb ripped the letter from the postman's hands slammed the door and ran to the couch and read the letter ...

Dear Caleb,

I can't make it home for Christmas this year. Sorry champ.

Love, Dad

After Caleb read the letter, he stormed to his room and slammed the door.

An hour or so later the doorbell rang again, and Caleb couldn't keep himself from seeing who it was. He opened his bedroom door just a crack and standing there in the front doorway was his dad.

"DAD!" yelled Caleb as he ran down the stairs and gave his dad a big bear hug.

"I thought you couldn't make it," said Caleb.

"Let's say, plans change," replied Caleb's dad, and then he turned around and waved to a man riding in a red sleigh pulled by reindeer.

And at that moment Caleb knew that Santa had read his letter and had got him exactly what he wanted for Christmas.

"Dad, I am so glad you are home!" said Caleb with a huge smile on his face.

"Me too, son. Me too. Merry Christmas," said Caleb's father as they stood together for the

first time in eight years.

—Wyatt Penner, Gr. 6, Plum Coulee School

SANTA'S WISH LIST:

Nice girls and boys because it makes him smile to be kind.

A star to help his sleigh fly.

Hammer to hammer bolts in toys.

Toque with light on it to read books.

Candy canes to eat.

—Kenton Harrison, Kindergarten, Morden

THE SPARKLING SCROLL

One fine snowy evening, a girl named Sally was begging her parents if she could go look at lights around the neighborhood.

Sally's parents were okay with it as long as she got back by 10, which was the perfect amount of time for Sally.

So Sally set off on her little twinkle walk. Sally was excited. She had never gone to look at lights by herself before.

The first house Sally went to was Mrs. Crosby's house. It was always decorated so beautifully. Sally loved going there. She loved the twinkling mini lights that hang upon the HUGE Christmas tree in her front yard.

Now, as Sally was on her way to the next house, something strange happened. Sally heard bells ringing, but she just thought it was carolers jingling their bells they brought. But, as Sally was about to roll her eyes, she looked up into the star-filled sky and in the midst of the clouds she thought she could almost see Santa riding his reindeer through the crisp night, over the moon and across the stars.

Sally stopped to think why Santa would cross the sky before at least 12. But then she realized that, sometimes, Santa probably just wanted to be early. So she keeps on with her walk and enjoys whatever lights there were.

Soon Sally seems to be coming up on her house.

"Well, I guess this is it for the year", Sally says to herself, a little sad. But before Sally could say it was for sure it for the year, a paper came floating down with the snow, just like a snowflake.

It was crumpled and torn, it looked like it had been tossed around, but Sally grabbed it out of the air with a slight tug.

"A scroll," she said as she unfolded it. "I wonder if it says anything. I'll just take a little peek."

So Sally looked at the paper. She read the top and realized that SHE, Sally Winters, was holding THE original "Santa's Wish List." She could NOT believe her eyes. The wish list read:

Santa's Wish List

- New sleigh
- Improvement on workshop
- More girl elves, less boys
- Lose some weight
- Baby reindeer
- Huge wreath
- Card from each child
- Child of our own
- Cat named Jolly
- Huge Christmas tree

—Kaydence Wiebe, 9, Blumenfeld School

What's *Your* Christmas Story?

From Pg. 21

BEST PARTS OF WINTER

My favorite part about winter is playing hockey on the smooth ice because I am a good hockey player.

ONE of my other favorite parts about winter is making massive dirty snow balls.

I love playing in the snow because I love making cool snow angels.

I love winter because we can make snow forts.

I love snow because I get to go ice fishing with my family.

One of my favorite things to do is having snow fights with my brother.

I love going to the Morden Park with my friend because we can build a slide.

I love playing snow soccer in the wintertime because it is very slippery outside.

One of my favorite things about winter is Christmas! I love Christmas because you get to set up the Christmas tree and you get lots of presents and candy.

One other thing I love about Christmas is you can have family gatherings. My favorite thing to do at family gatherings is eating desserts. My favorite dessert out of them all is vanilla ice cream with chocolate chips.

—Nash Toews,
Gr. 4, Morden

THE CHRISTMAS FUN

In the winter I like having presents because I like to see what is in them.

My other thing is making a snow fort because it is so nice and cozy with some creamy hot chocolate. With a snowy chair drinking my creamy hot chocolate.

In winter I love the light because I see beautiful changing coloured lights everywhere I go. My eyes glow so much that I feel like I am going blind.

This is my favorite thing to see: smiles on people's faces. It brings joy to me. Even babies bring joy to me.

I also like curling because all I want is to win, but my sister gives us a point and I get so excited that I feel awesome.

One amazing thing that I like to do is paint because I like to paint Christmas things like Santa, a snowman, or even trees with snow. It makes me feel calm.

I like going skating because I can go around, but it is slippery and sometimes it starts to melt. I don't like

falling down because it hurts really bad and I scream so loud because I am scared to fall down. I try not to scream.

—Malak Yagoub,
Gr. 3, Altona

SANTA'S UNEXPECTED WISH LIST

Have you ever wondered what SANTA wants for Christmas? Here is what I think Santa wants for Christmas:

1. Beard grooming kit. This would be helpful because Santa needs a nice fluffy beard to keep his chin warm when he is delivering presents! The beard grooming kit would include: shiny white beard wash, a comb, and a mirror with reindeer antlers.

2. Three first-class tickets to a tropical island. Santa is done flying himself in a sleigh! He is ready for a vacation and he is going to take Mrs. Claus and Rudolph along. This vacation gift pack should also include: elf shades, a special Santa-sized surfboard, and swim trunks with a cookie pattern.

3. A fingerprint locking safe. Santa collects all of the best cookies from his trip and saves them for midnight snacks. He needs a special safe that will only unlock with his fingerprint. But he needs to make sure that Mrs. Claus, the elves, and the reindeer don't find a way into the safe.

Now that Santa knows what he wants, he wonders WHERE to mail his Christmas wish list!

—Raquel Vallotton,
Gr. 5, Stanley

HOME IN A YEAR

Robin was a little girl. She could run before she could walk. She lived in the country where you can be wild and free.

She loved it there but what she loved even more was her Dad. She loved playing tag with him, playing hide and seek with him, or just even running around with him. It filled her with joy, but one day when Robin was only four years old tragedy befell her.

Her father had said these words: "Robin we're not making enough money. I have to work somewhere far away."

Hit by those words, Robin ran outside and slammed the door behind her, tears tumbling down her cheeks, her always smiley face turned into a frown, her once lit-up happy eyes turned dark.

Everything's gonna be different, she thought.

Her dad came running after her. He sat down holding his pinky out in front of her.

"I promise I'll be back by Christmas," he said, knowing that Robin loved the snowy holiday.

Robin did a little smirk looking at her dad, wrapping her finger around his as they walked to their house.

Her mom was making stew for supper. As soon as Robin's food was on the table she stuffed it in her. Then she washed the dishes and went to bed.

As soon as she woke up she drew a picture for her dad. She darkened down again, scared of what it would be like without him. She ran downstairs just in time. As her father was leaving, she handed it to him, gave him a big hug, and waved as he left. It was hard to handle. She felt as if she wanted to run to him and squeeze him as hard as she could, but she couldn't.

A few days passed and it was May, but to Robin it felt like months. She would peer through the window every day and hope her father would magically appear.

"Soon it will be your birthday," her mother said, but that made her even sadder. The thought of celebrating her birthday without her father was terrible.

Her birthday passed and she got toys, but the toys made her even sadder because her dad couldn't even see her open them.

A few months passed and it was December. Robin was happy. She had never been this happy since her dad had gone away.

December first, December second, December third ... the days passed quicker and quicker.

Soon Robin got a letter. She asked her mom to read it. It was from her dad and it said "See you on Christmas Eve!" Robin was jumping with joy.

The day before Christmas Eve she put a Christmas card on the table for her father. Then she fell asleep. When she woke up she heard the door open and she ran downstairs and saw her father standing there, holding his arms open as Robin hugged him with all her might.

—Laila, Gr. 4, Morden

WINTER FUN

The best thing about winter is the snow!!!

You know why ... you can play on snow hills, and make snowmen, and create snow angels!

The second best thing about winter is Christmas because ... you get presents and you get to spend time with friends and family!

Have a nice winter!

—Loralie Fehr,
Gr. 3, Winkler

THE SNOW STORM

Fourteen-year-old Nancy Wieb is so excited to come home from boarding school this week for the holidays.

Nancy has not been home for half a year. Nancy was going to see her mom and dad and her little brother Charley.

Continued on page 23



What's *Your* Christmas Story?

From Pg. 22

Nacy was in bed about to drift off to sleep when she heard grown-ups talking. She put her ear on the door and she gasped.

She ran to her bed in tears. She hid under her covers and started sobbing. All of her roommates were curious about what had happened.

She told them that they had said, "Hey, there's a snow storm coming. I don't know if the plane will make it. I think we need to keep them here for the holidays."

The next day the pilot called Nacy's boarding school saying that the plane had crashed. Nacy had remembered that her dad was an engineer and she worked with him in the garage, so she ran out of the boarding school.

She stood in front of the school and whispered, "I'll never make it in time." But then she remembered how she used to go on jogs with her mom. So she jogged the rest of the way, but when she came to the airport there was a bunch of stairs. She remembered how she would jump on the couch, so she used her ability to jump up the stairs and soon she came across the broke-down jet.

She fixed the jet and made it go really fast. Then they went for a test drive. Nacy made the jet soooooo fast that they could speed to California and back in a flash.

Then they brought all of the kids on the plane and they then drove to California before the storm came.

And when they came across their houses they ran in and hugged their family. And when you look out the window you can see the footprints in the snow.

And they lived happily ever after.

—Aviva James-Decker,
Gr. 3, Winkler

WHAT I LIKE MOST ABOUT WINTER

What I like most about winter is Christmas and to go to Winnipeg on Christmas with my family. And to go skating on Christmas with my family.

I like playing in snow, making snowmen, and throwing snowballs. I also like having a pizza party for supper.

On Christmas morning we open presents and invite friends to our house. We eat pizza with our friends. Sometimes at Christmas we also go to the movies.

Christmas is my favourite part of winter.

—Willy Reimer Gr. 4,
Emerado Centennial School

WHAT DO I LIKE MOST ABOUT WINTER?

Winter is not my favourite season, because it is extremely cold in Canada during winter. However, there are quite a few things happening in winter that make the cold season feel a bit warmer and happy.

First of all, it is Christmas. I love Christmas because I love decorating our house with the ornaments and Christmas decorations.

My parents let me decorate the Christmas tree the way I like. I put the ornaments, the ribbons and the flowers on the tree. There are a few ornaments that I like a lot and I hang those at



the front. My parents put the lights on and also the angel on the top of the tree. Under the tree we put a furry tree skirt and that our cat's favourite spot during the winter. He likes to hang out under the Christmas tree.

We also decorate the window sills with some artificial trees, snowmen and gnomes. I cut our paper snowflakes and stick them on every window in our house. They look very pretty.

My mom bakes cookies and cakes and I am always there to help her in the kitchen. Of course, since I love to decorate, my job is cutting out the cookies and decorate them with sprinkles, icing and chocolate. We sometimes melt hard candy in the center of the cookies to make them look like colourful glass. I save the best ones for Santa. On the Christmas Eve I put them on the table with a glass of milk. I also leave some candy canes near the plate.

The Christmas morning is the most exciting of all. There are countless presents under the Christmas tree for everyone in the family: for me, for my brother, for mom and dad, and even for our furry family member Lucky. Lucky gets lots of toys for Christmas, but he likes the boxes and the wrapping paper the most. He tries almost all of the boxes, even the smallest ones. He chooses the most comfortable one and sleeps in it.

Also, during winter we build snow forts in the school yard and then play with our friends. I make a snowman every winter and use a carrot for his nose and walnuts for his eyes.

On warmer days we go skating or sleighing. Sometimes my friend and his dad take me for a ride on their fancy snowmobiles. That is so cool!

There are so many fun things we can do during winter. So, it is hard to say what I like most about winter. I like it all!!!

—Viktor Kovtan, Grade 6,
École Morden Middle School

THE WISH LIST OF A HOLIDAY HERO

On a beautiful day at the North Pole, where the snow was lightly falling and the elves were busily working, everything seemed perfect except for one thing ... Mr. and Mrs. Claus (Santa Claus and Sandra Claus) were bickering. They had been at each other since morning.

"Now, Santa, what do you want for Christmas?" Mrs. Claus asked.

"Oh, I don't know. Just get me anything," answered Santa.

"No. You'll tell me what you want," replied Mrs. Claus.

This went on and on until Santa finally gave in hours later.

"Fine! I give up. I'll tell you five things I want. But ONLY five," said Santa loudly.

"Aw, thank you, my poinsettia," said Mrs. Claus sweetly.

Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus went and sat down on the red and gold, sparkly couch and then Santa started to tell his first thing.

"Number one ... hmmm, well, I've always wanted one of those little bags of play dough cutters. Y'know, those ones that are red and green and shaped like little reindeer and elves? When I was a kid that was my dream present. I've put it on my Christmas list since I was two. I've even stocked up on play dough waiting for the day that I would unwrap those precious little things."

"Okay, go on," persuaded Mrs. Claus.

"Fine, number two," said Santa. "I want one of those bouncy balls that you can sit and bounce around on. I also want it styled so it looks like my face."

"Well, I guess it could help you lose some weight," said Mrs. Claus.

"Oh Sandra, I'm not that much overweight," Santa replied back.

"You've gained 20 pounds over the last week. You're overweight by a lot," stated Mrs. Claus.

"Oh, fine. I'm overweight. Let's just get this over with," Santa agreed.

"Third," Santa said and then paused to think. "I guess I do need a new suit. My old one has soot stains and is starting to lose it's magic. But ..." Santa stopped and let a smirk crawl across his face.

"But what, Sugar?" Mrs. Claus asked, hoping he wouldn't ask her to sew little green flowers onto it again.

"I want it to be navy blue and shiny, with a gold belt that says, 'Santa rocks,'" Santa said dreamily.

"You know you're never going to get that," said Mrs. Claus, clearly annoyed.

"I know," said Santa. "But it's worth a try."

"Just move on," said Mrs. Claus.

"Come on Santa, you can do it, just two more," Santa said to himself. "Okay. I've always wanted to dress up as an elf to see if they'd recognize me. So I want a elf costume exactly like the elves have," Santa said.

"Okay," said Mrs. Claus.

"Last but not least, this is the one I want the most: a new reindeer. Those old reindeer are getting boring. I want a fresh one, with a orange saddle and blue bells," Santa said.

"Well, I won't be able to make that, but I guess I could get an elf to go to a zoo to buy one. I heard the Assiniboine Zoo has a couple extra babies. Thank you Santa for letting me do this for you," said Mrs. Claus

Continued on page 24

What's *Your* Christmas Story?

From Pg. 23

gratefully.

"No problem, Sandra, thank you," Santa replied.

A couple days later, on Christmas, Santa got his present. Mrs. Claus had got him a reindeer with a orange saddle and blue bells, just like he wanted. Santa named him Flopper the Hopper, for short, Floto.

So, maybe, if you look into the sky today you might see Santa riding his new reindeer in the distance, wishing you a merry Christmas and a happy new year! Happy holidays!

—Aliya Fehr,
Gr. 6, Winkler

AMANDA'S CHRISTMAS

"Come on," Sue said. "Go caroling with us, it will be fun!"

Amanda thought for a second. She knew she was a good singer, but her mother asked her to stay and help decorate the house for Christmas.

"Maybe later," she replied. "I have some work to do right now."

"Okay," Sue sighed. A mischievous grin spread on her face. "See you later!"

A few minutes later, the work was finished.

"Why don't we go skating?" Amanda's mother asked. "

"Sure!" Amanda exclaimed.

When they got to the local skating rink, Amanda saw something. She couldn't believe her eyes!

"SUE!!!" Amanda screamed in astonishment. Sue had a colossal bag of marbles and was about to dump them on the ice! Startled, Sue dropped the bag and all the marbles rolled onto the ice. Then she swiftly reached back and dumped another bag onto the rink, then she ran. Nobody moved, as they didn't want to slip on the marbles. Nobody spoke, until finally, Amanda broke the silence.

"Let's get these marbles off of the ice." She instructed the other children and everyone helped scoop up the marbles from the ice surface. Luckily, no one was hurt. When the marbles were back in the bag and tied up, Amanda headed home with her mom.

The next day it was Christmas, and Amanda found lots of amazing gifts in her stocking and under the family Christmas tree.

Suddenly, the phone rang. It was Sue! She cried, "I can't believe this, Amanda! I only got coal in my stockings! I didn't get any presents!"

Then Amanda calmly explained, "Maybe that is because you chose to be naughty this year! Try to be nicer next year!" And with that, she hung up.

Thinking to herself, "I'm glad I didn't go caroling with Sue. I didn't know she was planning to prank everyone at the rink and I would have been with her! Sometimes things work out for the best. I guess Santa does know if we have been naughty or nice!"

—Anya Martens,
Gr. 6, Plum Coulee
School



SANTA'S WISH LIST

TOP SECRET

1. Santa wants a vacation to Florida. Why, you think. Well, the answer is the North Pole is cold and Santa gets colds

very fast.

2. No late nights ever because Santa wants to surprise everyone in the world.

3. No cookies. They disgusted Santa. Every Christmas he eats them and over the years he would rather eat donuts every Christmas night.

4. Santa wants to be in the television with his sled and Rudolf the red nose reindeer to be even more famous.

5. Santa wants to take over Canada and go to every hockey game with his sled because he wants to chill out a little bit.

6. Santa wants a break from delivering presents. Santa is super tired after.

7. A brand-new gingerbread house. Santa loves the taste of gingerbread.

8. I want every kid to behave so that every kid can have lots of presents.

9. Santa wants a brand-new Santa suit because Mrs. Claus' baking is so fantastic.

10. Santa needs some new PJs because Santa went on too many deliveries on Christmas Day.

— Simeon Derr, Gr. 7, Reinfeld

MIRACULOUS MAY

"Come on," Sue said. "Come caroling with us. It will be fun."

Sue is a 10-year-old girl and very energetic. People would describe her as a firecracker, but her best friend May is the complete opposite. She is quiet and very shy. It's almost like she never talks unless she is around people she knows.

It's one week before Christmas and the two best friends are trying to find something to do. Sue loves to go caroling at Christmas so she tries to convince May to go caroling, but May is too shy and scared.

Sue spots some kids sledding on a hill close by and that gives her the idea to go sledding. May goes and grabs a big red sled from her house to share with Sue. They go to the nearest hill to go sledding. The hill is not that tall but very steep. They brought the sled up the hill, climbed in, and then Sue pushed it down.

"Ahhh, stop it, stop it!" May screamed. Sue managed to stop the sled with her foot.

Sue and May decided to take a break from sledding and went to make a fort in the snow.

When they were done they went in and started to tell secrets to each other. Sue went first.

"Whenever my mom makes cupcakes I always take a spoonful of icing from the bowl," Sue whispers, licking her lips.

It was May's turn to tell a secret.

"I'm really nervous about the Christmas concert tomorrow," May sighed, sounding miserable. The reason why she was nervous is because she has stage fright.

After their fun time in the snow, May and Sue had to go home.

That night, May couldn't fall asleep because she kept worrying about the concert.

When she gets to school everybody is squealing with excitement. It's all very exciting but the squealing makes May even more nervous.

It's five minutes before the concert and May is sweating like crazy. It's her classroom's turn to go on stage and sing a carol, but all of a sudden May heard crying behind her. She looked around and saw a little girl crying in the corner of the room.

May walked over to the girl and asked her what was wrong.

"I'm really scared to go on stage," the little girl whispered. May soon found out that the girl's name was Olivia. May came up with the idea to make a deal with Olivia.

"If I go on stage and sing with my class, will you sing with your class?"

It took a little work, but finally Olivia agreed.

It was now May's turn to go up on stage. She took one step, then one more. Now there was no going back.

All of a sudden, they started to sing, and before May knew what she was doing she started to sing too. It was over before she knew it and it wasn't as bad as she expected.

She watched Olivia sing and it's almost like she learned the same lesson as May did.

After the concert, May was a little less shy and more adventurous, but everything else stayed the same. She even made some new friends like Sam and Lucy. Sam is the sister of Olivia and Lucy is a friend from the bus, but Sue was still her best friend.

—Rose Langill, Gr. 5, Winkler

WINTER ACTIVITIES

In winter I love to skate because I play hockey. I play on the Gretna Stars. It is fun because we got to go on a ginormous bus for a tournament. It was sooo fun!

I also LOVE decorating our home. I love doing the trees. We have two big trees. The one downstairs is mine and my brother's and the one upstairs is the family's. We have so many decorations. We have at least 100 decorations!

I love to go sledding because I can go so fast on my sled. One time I did a front flip because I went on a really big ramp.

I also love making snowmen. My family won the snow contest. We gave our snowman a mohawk!!

—Logan Friesen, Gr. 3, Altona

sports & recreation

Hawks put an end to losing streak

By Lorne Stelmach

A 13-game losing streak came to an end last weekend for the female U18 Pembina Valley Hawks.

The Hawks gained five of a possible six points on a busy three-game weekend that started with a 2-1 shootout loss to the Yellowhead Chiefs Friday.

Saturday then saw Pembina Valley end the streak with a 7-4 win over the Central Plains Capitals followed by a 2-1 victory against the Winnipeg Avros Sunday.

Kasia Rakowski had a solid game in net for the Hawks against Yellowhead with 42 saves, but Abigail Brigg was the only Pembina Valley player able to score in regulation. The Hawks managed 37 shots on goal.

Jessica Anderson had a hat trick against Central Plains as the Hawks had their biggest offensive output of the season with period leads of 3-2 and 6-3.

Sophie Armit contributed a pair while the other goals were scored by Brigg and Casey O'Brien. Shots on goal were even at 43 apiece, with Vayha Willis getting the win in net on



PHOTO BY RICK HIEBERT/VOICE

Ava Dalebozik of the Pembina Valley Hawks tries to get away from the check of a Yellowstone player in last Friday's 2-1 shootout loss. The Hawks bounced back with wins against Central Plains and the Winnipeg Avros over the weekend.

39 saves.

All of the scoring in the Winnipeg game came in the third period, with the Hawks getting markers from Brigg and Naomi Scharf. Rakowski

made 40 saves as the shots on goal were 41-32 in favour of the Avros.

It gives the Hawks a good boost as they now enjoy a break until their next game in the new year on Jan. 7

against the Eastman Selects.

With the wins, the Hawks inched up into sixth place at 5-11-2 for 12 points, which is one ahead of Interlake and seven behind Westman.

Flyers post pair of narrow losses, one decisive win

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Winkler Flyers were 1-2 in MJHL action this past week.

Last Tuesday, Dec. 12, they found themselves on the losing end of a shootout against the visiting OCN Blizzard.

The score was 2-2 after 60 regulation minutes thanks to Winkler goals from Trent Penner and Dalton Andrew.

After a scoreless overtime, the shootout saw Brody Beauchemin, Andrew, and Jakob Jones all miss

the mark. OCN's Riley See got the game-winner.

Malachi Klassen made 27 saves in net for the Flyers. Winkler outshot OCN 40-29.

Friday night's game against the Nighthawks in Niverville was another close one.

All the scoring this game was in the first period, with Mike Svenson drawing first blood for Winkler five minutes in only to have one of the Nighthawks tie things up a few minutes later.

Niverville then scored four minutes into overtime to take it 2-1.

Klassen made 27 saves off 29 shots on goal this game. His teammates sent 34 shots the other way.

The Flyers shook off the close losses to earn a decisive 7-4 win against the visiting Dauphin Kings Saturday night.

Goals from Mike Svenson and Tanner George had the home team up 2-0 after 20 minutes.

The tables turned in the second, with Dauphin scoring three times to

take the lead before Dalton Andrew and Brady Craik righted the ship for Winkler.

Andrew contributed two more goals in the third period. That, combined with a goal from Blake Matheson, kept the Flyers in the lead to the final buzzer.

The Kings won the shots battle 38-29. Liam Ernst made 34 saves for the Flyers in net.

With that, Winkler is in third place

Continued on page 26

Royals struggle in games against Warren, Red River

By Ashleigh Viveiros

It was a challenging week for the SEMHL's Winkler Royals, who dropped two games.

Wednesday saw the Royals fall 9-3 to the visiting Warren Mercs.

Stephen Grahn got the home team up on the board in the first period, which saw the Mercs take a 5-1 lead.

In the final handful of minutes of the second, Aaron Lewadniuk sandwiched Warren's lone goal of the period to make it 5-2 and then 6-3, but then Warren did the only scoring in the final frame to get the win.

Jayne Janzen was in net for the home team and made 56 saves as the Mercs outshot the Royals 65-45.

It was a much closer affair a few nights later as the Royals travelled to play the Red River Wild.

A flurry of goals in the first period had the Wild up 4-2. Scoring for Red River was Marc Sabourin, Daniel Taillefer, Drayden Kurbatoff, and Wyatt Sabourin, while both Winkler's goals came courtesy of Remi Laurencelle.

After a scoreless second period, Laurencelle made it a hat-trick with the final goal of the night 15:42 into the third. The Wild won it 4-3.

The Royals had the edge on shots in goal this game, 47-32. Janzen made 28 saves in net for Winkler while across the rink Mark Friesen stopped 44 for



Winkler's Chad Unrau tries to defend against Warren's Chase Faulkner in last Wednesday's match on the Royals' home turf.

PHOTO BY RICK HIEBERT/VOICE

the Wild.

Meanwhile, the Morden Bombers were 1-1 in their games for the week, crushing Carman 14-6 Thursday and then falling to Warren 11-6 Sunday.

The lengthy list of scorers in the Carman game includes Cole Penner (with two), Jory Mullin (with two), Mike Rey (with three), Jay Fehr (with three), Jessi Freund, Jaden Townsend (with two), and Andrew Clark. Reed Peters made 37 saves between the posts for Morden.

Sunday night, Clark had a hat-trick while Andrew Perrault, Tyler Peers, and Fehr contributed singles against the Mercs. Brady Klassen (43 saves, seven goals in 49 minutes) and Peters (seven saves, four goals in 11 minutes) were in net for the Bombers.

Finally, the Altona Maroons fell to the Ste. Anne Aces 7-3 in their lone game of the week.

Scoring for the Maroons was Justin Augert (with two) and Tristen Dueck. Cole Kehler made 46 saves in net.

With that, the top three spots in the standings belong to the Mercs (20 points), the Aces (18 points), and the Wild (14 points).

The Morden Bombers are in sixth place (10 points), Winkler is in eight (eight points), and Altona is in 10th and last place (four points).

This weekend the Wild host the Bombers Friday and the Royals host the Maroons Saturday.

Hawks split doubleheader with Parkland Rangers

By Lorne Stelmach

The male U18 Pembina Valley Hawks earned a split of their weekend doubleheader with the Parkland Rangers in Dauphin.

The Hawks were edged 4-3 in game one Saturday but rebounded well in a 7-2 romp over the Rangers Sunday.

It was an even game through 40 minutes Saturday, with the score deadlocked at 1-1 after 20 minutes and 3-3 at the second intermission.

> FLYERS, FROM PG. 25

in the MGEU East Division with a record of 20-3-2-2 for 44 points. They have a few games in hand over the first-place Pistons (23-4-3, 49 points) and the second-place Portage Terriers (21-7-3-2, 47 points).

The Flyers close out 2023 with a road game in Virden this Tuesday and a home game against Steinbach Wednesday night.

Kam Thomas scored a pair for the Hawks, who capitalized on two powerplays. Sam Delaquis contributed the other goal, while Bryson Yaschyshyn made 28 saves in net. Pembina Valley held a 37-32 edge in shots on goal.

The Hawks took control of game two with period leads of 3-0 and 5-1 and again connected for two powerplay markers.

Scoring for Pembina Valley were Liam Goertzen with two along with singles from Thomas, Charlie Hill, Brett Lesage, Acoyen Fehr, and Haiden Friesen.

Shots on goal were even at just 23 apiece. Ryler Gates got the win in net with 21 saves.

The Hawks are in seventh place at 9-10-2-3 for 23 points, which has them

three back of the Winnipeg Thrashers and just one ahead of Norman and Eastman.

This week the Hawks host the Winnipeg Wild Wednesday and then head to Brandon to play the Wheat Kings Thursday before getting a break for the holidays.

They return to action in the new year Jan. 3 against the Winnipeg Bruins.

The **Voice**
What's *Your* story?
Call 204-325-6888

Do you have a suggestion for our news team?
Is there someone you would like to see recognized in the newspaper for their accomplishments - athletic, academic or community service.

Twisters double MMJHL first-place team, on five-game win streak

By Ty Dilello

The Pembina Valley Twisters have been on fire in the Manitoba Major Junior Hockey League (MMJHL), securing their fifth consecutive win. With the victories, the Twisters have moved into fourth place in the MMJHL's standings with a record of 13-8-2.

The Twisters emerged victorious at home against the Stonewall Jets on Dec. 15 with a final score of 6-2. Leading the charge for Pembina Valley was Ryan Orchard, who scored two goals. Other Twisters players who contributed to the win were Derek Wiebe, Mark Plett, Zander Carels and Josh Guilford. Logan Enns made an impressive performance in net, making 19 saves to secure the win.

A few nights later at home on Dec. 17, the Twisters doubled up the St. James Jr. Canucks by a 6-3 count. After falling behind 3-0 in the game, the Twisters would score six unanswered goals throughout the final half of the game to earn the victory.

Riley Goertzen notched a pair of goals, while his teammates Brett Bergman, Carels, Orchard, and Mike Hepner also found the back of the net for the Twisters. Enns once again put on an impressive performance between the pipes, making 29 saves to secure

the win.

"We've been playing hungry hockey as of late, as the last few games, we have had flat starts and ended up down 2-0, 3-0, but we never quit, and climbed back to take both games," said Pembina Valley Twisters head coach Braeden Beernaerts. "We've gained a lot of traction since the start of the year knowing that if we play our game, we always have a chance."

Twisters' sniper Derek Wiebe holds third place in the MMJHL's scoring race, tallying 38 points in 23 games. Teammate Merek Degraeve sits at eighth with 34 points in the same number of games. Enns also stands out, securing fourth place in the goalie rankings with an impressive 3.14 goals-against average and a .909 save percentage.

The Twisters were back in action with a road game Tuesday against the St. Vital Victorias. They also host the Charleswood Hawks on Friday.

"Our goals do not change, nor do expectations as we want to keep the consistency and work ethic up, giving us the best chance to win every night," said Beernaerts. "The playoffs are a long way down the road, so we take the season game by game, knowing that we can't overlook any team in this league."



PHOTOS BY LANA MEIER/VOICE

The Twisters' Ryan Orchard had two goals in the 6-2 win over Stonewall Friday. Below: Derek Wiebe (14) continues to lead the team with 12 goals and 26 assists.



Optimism abound as Mud Bugs celebrate strong start to hockey season

Head coach says team is hungry for a provincial championship

By Ty Dilello

The Red River Mud Bugs of the Hanover Tache Junior Hockey League (HTJHL) have their sights set on provincial glory, after a strong start to the season.

The HTJHL operates exclusively in the southeastern part of the province and is the only Junior C league in Manitoba, and as such, league champions are also named provincial Junior C champions.

The Mud Bugs have won the league title twice so far in the team's existence, back in 2018 and 2019.

"This team was formed around 15 years ago with the purpose of giving boys who can't commit to Junior A, Junior B, etcetera, as they are either in university or working and want a place to play junior hockey," said head coach Bill Dowswell. "The HTJHL is an eight-team league and is very competitive every single game."

Although they play out of St. Jean-Baptiste, the Mud Bugs are made

up of players primarily from the Altona area.

"The bulk of our team is from Altona, and they keep the team alive," Dowswell said. "We also have local guys from St. Jean and Morris, and a few from Winkler and Portage."

Through the midway point of the season, the Mud Bugs are in first place in the HTJHL standings with a record of 10-3-2.

"Our season is going pretty good so far. We had a slow start with a couple of overtime losses, but we have recently reeled off eight straight wins. We have a very tight group, and after losing in the league finals last year, the boys are hungry."

The Mud Bugs are led by Altona's Bryson Loewen and Andrew Dyck, who are both leading the league in scoring. Loewen has 36 points in 30 games, while Dyck has 30 points in 15 games.

"I can't say enough about those two players as they've been in the top 10



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Red River Mud Bugs of the Hanover Tache Junior Hockey League (HTJHL) are currently in first place in the league's standings at the halfway point of the 2023-24 season.

of league scoring for the past three seasons. And it's not just scoring, they play offence and defense, too, whether it be winning draws or blocking shots. Cole Martens of Altona also compliments those two very well and is also top ten in the league's scoring race."

Dowswell is confident of his team's

chances at bringing home the first HTJHL championship back to St. Jean-Baptiste for the first time since 2019.

"We still have over half of the season to go, but if we keep our heads and play hard, hopefully we can finish the regular season strong and carry that into the playoffs," he said.

Classifieds The Winkler Morden Voice

Book Your Classified Ad Today - Call 325-6888 or Email ads@winklermordenvoice.ca

FLIGHT ACADEMY

Want to learn how to fly? Interested in a career as a commercial pilot? LS Airways Flight Academy is the most affordable in Canada. We have students from all over the world. We offer flight training & ground school (air law, navigation, meteorology, aeronautics general knowledge. Call 204-651-1402.

HELP WANTED

The Winkler Morden
Voice

Looking for someone to work part time on Tuesdays and Wednesdays to help Deliver the Winkler Morden Voice and flyers each week.

Applicant must have own vehicle and valid drivers license. Please call 204-467-5836 after January 2nd for more info and to apply.

CAREERS

BUNGE

MAINTENANCE MECHANIC/MILLWRIGHT

Bunge Altona has an opening for a Maintenance Mechanic/Millwright. Work involves process equipment installation, maintenance and repair, lubrication, steel fabrication and welding. Preference will be given to those candidates holding a valid provincial Millwright or Industrial Mechanic ticket. Candidates who do not hold a valid ticket will be expected to enrol in the apprenticeship program to obtain their ticket as soon as possible. Overtime and on-call duties are required. The successful applicant will possess excellent written and verbal communication skills, trouble shooting skills, and be a team player.

The following would be considered an asset for this position:

- 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.

SCRAP METAL

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

PETS

PUREBRED BORDER COLLIE PUPS. Born Nov. 13th - 4 males & 2 females. \$500 each. Call 204-448-2317.



FIND THE RIGHT PERSON FOR THE POSITION with an **EMPLOYMENT/CAREERS AD** in *The Winkler Morden* **Voice** **467-5836**

NOTICES

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

NOTICES

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM MCNA! The 31 Member Newspapers which are seen in over 368,000+ homes, the Publishers, Editors, Journalists, Photographers, Graphic artists and All Staff thank you for your support during 2023. We wish you all the blessings of health, happiness and prosperity in the coming year. If you would like to book your ads for January, February or March, please call 204-467-5836 or MCNA at 204-947-1691 for more details or to book ads. MCNA - Manitoba Community Newspapers Association. www.mcna.com

McSherry Auctions
12 Patterson Dr., Stonewall, MB
Online Timed Auctions @ iCollector.com

Estate & Moving
Featuring: J.D MC Cawler, 40s Ford 1/2 Ton, Grain Wagon, Tractors, 39 Pontiac Coupe + Doll Collection
Wed., January 10 @ 7:00PM

Estate & Moving
Featuring Coins
Wed., January 17 @ 7:00PM
204-467-1858 or 204-886-7027
All The Best Wishes and Happy New Year!



Manitoba Beef Producers is returning to Brandon for our 45th AGM, Feb 8 & 9, 2024.

The AGM will feature breakout sessions, panel discussions, resolutions debate, a trade show, and beef banquet. Join us and interact with fellow beef producers, members of the value chain, and government officials.

Advance registration required via www.mbbeef.ca/news

WANTED

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

HEALTH

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

CITY OF WINKLER
DREAM. BUILD. LIVE.

CORPORATE SERVICES
Finance and Administration

PUBLIC NOTICE
REGARDING SPECIAL SERVICE PROPOSAL NO. 44 - BY-LAW NO. 2304-23 TO PROMOTE AND IMPROVE HEALTH CARE FOR THE CITY OF WINKLER AND THE SURROUNDING REGION.

The Council of the City of Winkler has scheduled a public hearing at Winkler City Hall, 185 Main Street, Winkler, MB on the 9th day of January, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. to present the following special service proposal:

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SPECIAL SERVICES PLAN NO. 44
The City of Winkler proposes to support the Funding request received from the Boundary Trails Health Centre Foundation and the ALG Professional Centre (Clinic). The Special Service is intended to promote and improve health care for the City of Winkler and the surrounding region. Improved health care in the region is expected to increase population growth and attract businesses. This improvement is a joint effort with the RM of Stanley and the City of Morden. The City of Winkler will contribute a total of \$2,122,000.00.

The Special Service Tax to be levied under this proposal will be all rateable properties within the City of Winkler.

The estimated cost of the Special Service plan for the next four years is as follows:

2024	\$530,500.00	2026	\$530,500.00
2025	\$530,500.00	2027	\$530,500.00

The special service tax will be levied annually, from 2024 to 2027, inclusive on a per parcel basis against all rateable properties, including otherwise exempt properties, within the City of Winkler.

The cost of the service will be as follows:
All rates are based on an annual basis:
All rateable properties: \$91.00 per parcel (assessment roll number) in each of the years 2024 to 2027.

A written objection may be filed with the City Manager, at 185 Main Street, Winkler, Manitoba, prior to the commencement of the hearing. At the hearing, Council will hear any potential ratepayer who wishes to make a presentation, ask questions or register an objection to the special service proposal.

All objections, written or verbal, must be filed prior to the adjournment of the hearing and must include the name, address and property description of the person filing the objection and the grounds of their objection.

Copies of the Special Services Plan No. 44 are available at the City of Winkler office at 185 Main Street, Winkler, MB, and on the municipal website at www.cityofwinkler.ca.

Dated at the City of Winkler this 5th day of December, 2023, and issued pursuant to Section 318 of The Municipal Act.

Jody Penner
City Manager
City of Winkler
204-325-9524

SENIOR RENTALS

OAK WEST ESTATES IN MORDEN HAS SUITES AVAILABLE.

All are one bedroom with a den. From 963 sq ft and up. Some facing east onto the creek. Everything is on one level, heated garage parking available. All suites come with fridge, stove and dishwasher, a laundry room with hook ups for your own washer and dryer, a walk in pantry, a patio and more. Call Cindy at 204-362-7151, or email to cindy@jacobmanagement.com

Classifieds Announcements

The *Winkler Morden* Voice

Book Your Classified Ad Today - Call 467-5836 or Email ads@winklermordenvoice.ca

BATTERIES FOR EVERYTHING! 50,000 BATTERIES IN STOCK

- *Auto *Farm *Truck
- *Construction *ATV
- *Motorcycle *Golf Carts
- *Rechargeables *Tools
- *Computers *Medical
- *All phones *Chargers
- *Marine *RV & more

Shipping/Delivery avail.
THE BATTERY MAN
1390 St. James St.
Winnipeg
TF 1-877-775-8271
www.batteryman.ca

ReVolution Trailers

RVs Reimagined

- Custom Renovations
- Renovated RV Sales
- Service & Repair
- Parts
- Storage

1480 Springfield Rd
Winnipeg, MB
www.revolutiontrailers.ca

Call Now:
204-955-7377

WANTED

Gold, Silver & Platinum!!



Cash Paid For Coins, Coin Collections, Bullion, 999 bars, Ingots, Rounds, Jewelry, Watches, Nuggets, Scrap, Gold Dust, Sterling Silver, Sterling Silverware plus anything Gold, Silver or Platinum.

Also purchasing Old Money, Royal Canadian Mint Coins, Franklin Mint, Coin Sets, etc.
Wanted: USA, Canada and World Coin Collections, coin sets & old money. Buying Entire Collections!

Todd The Coin Guy
250-864-3521

take a break > GAME



Power Builder Advertising WORKS!

- GET SEEN by over 360,000 Manitoba Homes!
- Use your LOGO!
- Create instant top of mind awareness
- Showcase your info, business, product, job, announcements or event
- We format it, to make it look great!
- Starting at \$339.00 (includes 45 lines of space)
- The ads blanket the province and run in MCNA's 31 Manitoba community newspapers
- Very cost effective means of getting your message out to the widest possible audience

Contact this newspaper NOW or MCNA at 204.947.1691 or email classified@mcna.com

www.mcna.com

SUDOKU

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

Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

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

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!

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.

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

Sudoku Answer

Call 467-5836

Counselling services
Call anytime.
Phone Dorothy Hill
204-712-0250

PUBLIC NOTICE



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF STANLEY PUBLIC NOTICE

REGARDING SPECIAL SERVICE PLAN 15/23 SPECIAL SERVICES BY-LAW NO. 15-23

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to Subsection 318(4) of The Municipal Act that the Council of the Rural Municipality of Stanley has scheduled a public hearing in the Council Chambers of the RM of Stanley Municipal Office located at 1-23111 PTH 14 in the RM of Stanley on the 11th day of January, 2024 at 9:05 a.m. to present the following special service proposal:

Special Service Plan 15/23 to establish a Special Service to promote and improve health care for the Rural Municipality and the surrounding region. This improvement is a joint effort with the City of Winkler, and the City of Morden. The special service tax will be levied on all taxable, grant-in-lieu, and otherwise exempt properties within The Municipality. The Rural Municipality of Stanley will contribute a total of \$1,680,000.00 over a four-year period (\$420,000.00 annually). The Special Service is proposed to be levied for the years 2024 to 2027 inclusive.

2024 = \$420,000
2025 = \$420,000
2026 = \$420,000
2027 = \$420,000

The special service tax will be calculated on the portioned value of assessable property. Based on the 2023 assessment of \$813,977.940 a mill rate of 0.516 mills would be required. Calculated on a property with a market value of \$250,000 (and portioned value of \$112,500) a Health Service levy of \$58.05 would be levied.

A written objection may be filed with the Chief Administrative Officer, at 1-23111 PTH 14 in the RM of Stanley prior to the commencement of the hearing. All objections, written or verbal, must be filed prior to the adjournment of the hearing and must include the name, address and property description of the person filing the objection and the grounds of their objection. At the hearing, the Council will hear any potential taxpayer who wishes to make a presentation, ask questions, or register an objection to the by-law.

You are welcome to attend the public hearing to make representations on the matter to be considered, however, you are not required to attend. If you are unable to attend but would like to make a representation, you may file a written submission in person, through regular mail, or by email (vmartens@rmofstanley.ca) with the RM prior to the public hearing. If you wish to participate in the hearing electronically, please contact vmartens@rmofstanley.ca or call (204) 325-4101 a minimum of 2 business days prior to the hearing. We ask any member of the public wanting to attend a council meeting to also confirm with our office a minimum of 2 business days in advance of the meeting date so that we can ensure adequate seating is available. Please call the Administration office at (204) 325-4101.

Copies of the Special Service Plan No. 15/23 are available at the municipal office at 1-23111 PTH 14 during regular office hours of the R.M. of Stanley.

Dated at the RM of Stanley this 21st day of December, 2023.

Terry Penner
Chief Administrative Officer
Rural Municipality of Stanley

IN MEMORIAM



Ruth Gall (nee Link)
1928 - 1990

In Memory

It broke our hearts to lose you,
But you did not go alone;
A part of us went with you,
The day God took you home.
If tears could build a stairway,
And heartaches make a lane;
We'd walk our way to heaven,
And bring you back again.
In life we loved you dearly,
In death we love you still;
In our hearts you hold a place,
No one could ever fill.

-Dearly missed by your family

Classifieds Announcements

Book Your Classified Ad Today - Call 467-5836 or Email ads@winklermordenvoice.ca

IN MEMORIAM



John P. Friesen
March 8, 1952 - December 22, 2018

So unexpected, so sudden did our world turn upside-down;
For we had no way of knowing how unresponsive he'd be found.
All human efforts to revive him were to no avail,
But we trust God's plans are flawless, and He will never fail.
To hold us close when the way is dark as night;
It's then we walk by faith and not by sight.
Time does not erase the memories, nor even ease the pain,
For not a day goes by, but that we need to talk to him again.

Precious memories, how they linger!

-Anne and family

OBITUARY



Sandra Rust (Fehr)
March 14, 1945 -
December 5, 2023

We are reminded how short life really is and how we are just passing through. A life so beautifully lived deserves to be beautifully remembered.

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Sandra Rust at the age of 78 after a courageous battle with cancer at The Boundary Trails Health Centre. She will be forever missed and remembered by her daughter, Juliana, her granddaughters Ashley (Mitch) and Suzanne (Peter). Her great-grandsons Tayden Adam Don, Lukas Adam and Nolan Parker. She was also so close to meeting her first great-granddaughter. Her sisters Betty, Anne, Chris (Bill), brother Jack (Shirley), sister-in-law Anne. She was predeceased by her brothers Henry and Peter in infancy. She will also be missed by Jurgen and family in Germany. We can't forget about her precious girls, Gloria and Abby, her beautiful shaded silver Persian cats that she loved and adored.

She was born in Winkler, Manitoba to Helena and Henry E Fehr. She grew up on a farm and was raised in a Christian home where there was strong faith and love for the Lord. Working on a farm, her parents had strong work ethics which she followed and carried through her whole life. She took pride in a job well done in everything she did. From gardening, decorating her home (especially at Christmas), cooking/baking, painting and so much more. She was a one woman show!

Sandra met Adam and got married on October 23, 1964. They then moved to Thompson where they spent over 50 years. Adam worked for Inco and Sandra worked at Canada Post for a total of 48 years. Her dream home in Morden went up for sale and she was driving down ASAP to make all the arrangements to buy it. She got transferred with Canada Post and worked part time in Morden and Winkler, finally retiring in 2020.

She was always the life of the party. She loved to laugh and it was very contagious. She enjoyed sitting on her veranda drinking coffee scrolling on her iPad, going for rides with Adam, puttering around the house, cleaning, finding new projects to work on, taking pictures of the sunrises and her home, anything that was the color white and trying to stay in touch with everyone who knew her. She had a special talent for antiques and beautiful things. Her last piece was a China cabinet that she had to pick up in Winnipeg with all the treasures still inside. She said this is the last one, and it was truly a beautiful find. She always had such an eye for these things.

Most importantly, she loved her family and she showed it in everything she said and did. She felt so blessed to have her daughter and even more so when Juliana gave her two granddaughters to love, spoil and spend so much time with throughout their lives, she never let them down. Then having her great-grandchildren and watching them grow for as long as she did was an added blessing that she was so fortunate to have and she knew that. She woke up every morning blessed to see another sunrise and she was at peace for when angels would come take her to heaven. We really hope it was Adam, in his handsome tuxedo and his chauffeur hat, white gloves, and all. We are positive it would have been.

When Adam passed away two years ago, it was a big hit to our family, but now .. knowing she is in eternal life and we will not get to see her smile, touch her hand and hug her tightly, stings.. but, in Sandra fashion, we are going to smile, laugh, be humble, work hard, and stay strong because that is all the things she has shown and taught us to do. She would want us to think of all the good times and try not to stay sad for too long.

We would like to thank all the palliative care doctors, nurses and health care aides at Boundary Trails Health Centre, Larry Reimer the Chaplin, Juliana and Betty for all the long days and nights at the hospital, working split shifts making sure she never had to be alone. Thank you to all her family and friends for reaching out to the family during this difficult time.

Cremation has taken place and as per Sandra's wishes, there will be no formal service. A celebration of life to follow at a later date.

If you wish to honor me in your life,
Look to every sunrise with gratitude.
Take nothing for granted.
When you think of me, smile
Never lose your sense of wonder.
Make a wish upon a star.
See all the places,
Taste the food,
Go barefoot,
Dance,
Do it all.
Your happiness celebrates me.
Your joy reaches the heavens,
I will hear you

S Cummings



OBITUARY



Thelma Eileen Passmore
(nee Wiebe)

March 28, 1927 - November 20, 2023

Surrounded by family, Thelma died quietly and peacefully at Orchard View retirement community in Almonte at the age of 96. She was predeceased by her husband, Russell Passmore, and her daughter, Audrey Vansickle (Don).

She is survived by her son, Gillis Harp (Barbara); grandchildren, Michael Vansickle (Kim), Sarah MacFarlane (Bob), Caroline Harp, Anna Hergenroeder (A.J.), and Eleanor Conley (James); plus great-grandchildren, Sam, Riley, Joey, Charlotte, Sophia, and Lucy Rose.

Thelma grew up among Mennonites in Winkler, Manitoba. She attended the University of Manitoba and graduated in 1948 with a

B.A. in Child Development.

Her Christian faith informed everything she thought and did. She was a long-time member of Parkwood Presbyterian (Nepean), serving for over 10 years as coordinator of their pastoral care team.

Outside of her duties serving the church and fulfilling her duties as a devoted wife, mother, and grandmother, she pursued life-long learning, always expanding her knowledge of classical music and her appreciation of 20th century Canadian art. She also enjoyed perfecting her techniques as a skilled artisan, creating and selling her own handmade pottery for many years.

Funeral Service to be held on Wednesday, December 27th, 2023 at Parkwood Presbyterian Church at 11a.m. Burial to follow at Hillcrest Cemetery, Smiths Falls.

"Her children rise up and call her blessed" (Proverbs 31:28)

In lieu of flowers, contributions to the Mennonite Central Committee are welcome. Condolences, tributes and donations may be made at www.tubmanfuneralhomes.com

Remember Your Loved Ones
with an Announcement in the

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

The *Winkler Morden*
Voice

Mateychuk gets the Christmas gift he's longed for

By Voice staff

It was a year ago when the only gift on Denton Mateychuk's Christmas wish list never came.

The Dominion City product was enjoying a stellar campaign on the blue line with the Moose Jaw Warriors in the Western Hockey League and looked primed to represent Canada at the U20 World Junior Championships on home soil. But when it was announced who would don the Maple Leaf at the annual holiday tournament, Mateychuk's name wasn't on the list.

Mateychuk wouldn't be denied this time around. Earlier this month, Mateychuk, along with Straithclair product Conor Geekie, were told they'd be among the 23 players to wear the Red and White at the 2024 World Junior Championships in Gothenburg, Sweden from Dec. 26 to Jan. 5.

Canada, the two-time reigning champions, opens its tournament against Finland on Boxing Day.

"It's obviously an awesome honour to be on this team and it's always awesome to put on the maple leaf," said Mateychuk, who represented Canada at the U18 World Junior Championships in 2020. "I think it started last year, not making the team, and it kind of sets you back a little bit, because you want to be able to represent your country.

"I just used it as motivation and then you get into the summer and it helps with the training and everything and I've been playing my best hockey so I think that's all the reasons that went into making this team."

Mateychuk, the first-round pick of the Columbus Blue Jackets in 2022, is on pace for a career year with Moose Jaw, tallying six goals and 29 assists in 24 contests. His 35 points are the fourth-most among defencemen in the league, despite missing the first 10 games while at Blue Jackets' training camp.

"I've felt good on the ice," he said. "I had a good (training) camp in Columbus and then come back to Moose Jaw and bring back those pro habits that you see every day there and use that in the WHL and I think I've done a pretty good job of that and it's shown on the ice, I think."

Indeed, the 19-year-old is carrying himself with a different swagger than the one who came up short a year ago, and Warriors head coach Mark O'Leary has taken notice of his captain.

"The big thing is his patience with not forcing things that are not there. What I mean by that is in early parts when he started, it was all offence all the time," O'Leary said.

"Now he's learned to trust his ability to check it, to let the plays develop, be sound defensively, and when he does that he's able to be in possession and pick his spots to create offence."

The Warriors (18-14-0-2) are third in the Eastern Conference at the holiday reprieve. The club will be without Mateychuk for a handful of contests out of the break, but O'Leary will manage as they cheer on their fearless leader from 6,700 kilometres away.

"Just being able to watch how far Denton's come as a young 15 year old when he first started playing games with us— how hard he's worked to develop into the player he is now, whether that's the off-ice work that he's done, the attention that he puts to detail, the video work, just working on his skating," O'Leary said.

"He's our captain for a reason. He does everything like a professional and to see a guy like that be rewarded with this opportunity is very special."

Mateychuk's priority is defending Canada's title for a second time, but he would be remiss to not soak up the number of learning opportunities that await in the international competition. Perhaps another gift this holiday season came in the form of



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Dominion City's Denton Mateychuk will be representing Canada at the U20 World Junior Championships in Sweden from Dec. 26 to Jan. 5.

former NHL defenceman Brent Seabrook, who is a part of this year's management team.

Mateychuk said he's already getting tips from the three-time Stanley Cup champion and Olympic gold medallist, and that he's sure more are to come. "I'm sure there's gonna be lots of those moments," Mateychuk said. "I'm not too sure exactly what it'll be but I'm know I'm going to learn a lot though the next couple of weeks.

"I think there will definitely be some nerves but that's why you play the game," he continued. "It's for these moments that are to come and I'm just really excited right now about it."

Canada begins its title defence with two pre-tournament games on Dec. 19 against a U-25 team from Denmark and then tests against fellow WJHC participants Switzerland and United States on Dec. 22 and 23. Canada's tournament schedule begins on Boxing Day in a game against Finland at 7:30 a.m. central. All games can be viewed live on TSN.

Schwaller and Horgan capture titles at DEKALB Superspiel

By Ty Dilello

The DEKALB Superspiel, Manitoba's biggest World Curling Tour event of the season, was played earlier this month at the Morris Curling Club.

From Dec. 1-4, 24 women's teams and 16 men's teams gave local curling fans quite the show as players came to Morris from across Canada, the United States, Switzerland and South Korea.

On the women's side of the event, Switzerland's Xenia Schwaller defeated Alberta's Serena Gray-Withers 6-5 in an extra end in the championship final. Schwaller earned \$10,500 for the victory.

Seven Manitoba teams competed in the women's event, but none reached the playoff round.

Tanner Horgan of northern Ontario took home the men's title in Morris with a 4-2 victory in the final over Winnipeg's Braden Calvert. In addition to Calvert, two other Manitoba



teams reached the playoff in Winnipeg's Ryan Wiebe and Jordon McDonald. Both got to the semi-finals before losing out to Horgan and Calvert.

The men's event also boasted a celebrity appearance from Jared Allen, a former NFL star and Hall of Fame nominee with the Minnesota Vikings. The former football player, who has begun curling in his retirement, has



PHOTO BY TY DILELLO

Switzerland's Xenia Schwaller was victorious at the 2023 DEKALB Superspiel in Morris with a dramatic 6-5 extra end win over Alberta's Serena Gray-Withers. Left: Altona curler Anna Ginters got a picture with Jared Allen, a former all-star NFL player with the Minnesota Vikings who was competing at the event.

his sights set on representing the United States in curling at the 2026 Winter Olympics in Italy.

Allen, who was curling for Team

Rich Ruohonen out of Minnesota, reached the playoff round before losing to Jordon McDonald in the quarterfinals.

Altona IGA welcomes Mark Cooke as new store manager



Mark Cooke, Altona IGA's new store manager, says he is excited to be a part of the team.

"Since my first day, I've been impressed by the well-managed and maintained space, the knowledgeable and supportive staff, and all the warm and wonderful people I've met here in this community.

Cooke stepped into the role in November, and says he already feels at home.

"Everyone is friendly. They're knowledgeable and supportive. Many of them have been here for decades. The store itself is well-organized and efficient. I'm still kind of getting my feet wet. The people in charge of their departments are good at what they do. I've been here training and it's all going really well."

Cooke was born and raised in Winnipeg and has been involved in retail management roles for most of his career. His most recent position was managing the Safeway store in Brandon.

"I've always loved working in retail, working with people, and I also enjoy training others," he shares.

With a tight-knit family with Irish roots, Cooke says he learned the value of hard work and commitment. He also loves a good game of hockey, a day at the golf course, and spending time with family and friends.

While city life is what he knows, Cooke has recently fallen in love with rural living.

"I don't miss the rush of an urban centre. From the minute I first came to Altona, I realized what a friendly place it is, and the staff here are fantastic. They're hardworking and they really care about what they do. It reminds me of the way grocery stores used to be when I was growing up. I also love to look around small towns and you find treasures that locals sometimes take for granted. At this stage of life, I want to be surrounded with a more relaxed pace where I can appreciate my surrounding. It's so different from urban life."

He says the option of a career in Altona came up about a year ago.

"I gave it some good thought. I was already moving to St. Adolphe. I'm assisting my parents in Winnipeg, so this will be a good halfway point between my work and my family for now. Now I can launch into another role and cherish my family at the same time."

In the future, he says he absolutely plans to move to Altona.

"That's my ultimate goal."

One of his goals for the store is to bring more locally sourced products to the shelves.

"We already carry locally produced items such as Spent pizzas, farmer sausage and baked good from Winkler. I'll

be on the lookout for more items like that."

Meanwhile, Altona IGA already boasts a wide variety of offerings in every department, from hot foods and a wide selection of meal options in their deli, fresh poultry and pork, AAA grade beef, store-made sausages, and seafood in their meat department, to the expansive selection in their grocery and bakery departments.

"We're happy to offer our customers with so much variety," Cooke says, adding that quality is also important.

After extensive training in food safety, Cooke says that customer safety is a top priority.

"Sobeys' standards of food quality are very high."

Going forward, he says he wants to ensure that local customers have access to a variety of healthy food options.

"It's good to provide different options. You need a good mix, especially during seasonal events. Treats have their place, but we want to provide a wide variety of products, including sugar and gluten free products, as well as new produce and dairy options."

And while the selection is already impressive, Cooke says they're always open to suggestions.

"If you're looking for a specific product, I'm receptive to bringing it in. Let us know what you're looking for. Customers deserve the best service and the best products. We can bring in new products, if it's seasonal, we'll try to have them at a specific time of year. Altona is a multicultural community so there will be a variety of requests. It's something we would do. As long as we can get it, we want you to be happy. This is your town, and this is your store. And it's important to support local."

Supporting the community by giving something back is also vital at Altona IGA, and Cooke is eager to support local organizations.

"We want to support local businesses, so the Chamber Bucks program is genius. We take part in keeping the money in the community; if you invest in our town, your town will do well."

It's also about being community-minded and supporting the people who support you, he says.

"I was a big part of the We Care Campaign at the Brandon Safeway, raising money for local charities. Now I'd like to reach out to organizations in Altona."

Altona IGA recently donated \$1,000 to the Altona Family Resource Centre, which supports literacy and learning for local families with preschoolers. They also donate food to the Rhineland & Area Food Bank, and encourage their customers to do so as well.

"Sobeys has always been eager to help local food banks," Cooke says.



Mark Cooke (right) is the new manager of the Altona IGA. He's been enjoying getting to know the community and his staff.

"We want to make sure every individual and family has access to healthy food."

Along with great selection and good prices, Sobeys also prides itself on friendly service.

"That's what really builds your trust with your customers," says Cooke. "Treating them well and helping them find what they need."

"Providing services and gaining trust with a community is fantastic because there's some neat stuff that comes out, and a lot of healthier options that some people may not even know about. If you want to

offer a new product, it's important to gain trust and information through your conversations with your customers."

At the end of the day, Cooke says he wants customers who enter Altona IGA to get that hometown feeling.

"I want them to leave the store feeling happy and satisfied that they got a quality product at a good price. I want to help them realize they don't have to drive to another community to find that product; they can get it right here at their hometown IGA."

Paid Advertorial