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Matt



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THE EXPRESS

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WEEKLY NEWS

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Lighting up



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Kim Giesbrecht, owner of Inn on Centre, won the Best Overall award in the Holiday Lights Decorating Contest hosted by the Central Interlake Chamber of Commerce and the Gimli Chamber of Commerce. Giesbrecht turned her boutique hotel into a festive, heart- and hand-warming centrepiece in downtown Gimli. Full story inside.

> everything you need to know in your locally owned and operated community newspaper

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Chambers of Commerce Holiday Lights Decorating Contest winners

By Patricia Barrett

The winners of the Holiday Lights Decorating Contest were announced before Christmas, with seven Gimli and Arborg businesses winning a prize for getting into the festive spirit.

The winners took home cash and had a donation made in their name to their favourite local charity. The Central Interlake Chamber of Commerce teamed up with the Gimli Chamber of Commerce to host the lighting and decorating contest, bringing some cheer to the holiday season.

Best Overall: Inn on Centre (Gimli): Kim Giesbrecht, owner of the boutique hotel Inn on Centre in Gimli and virtual real estate brokerage Right Choice Realty Ltd., picked up the Best Overall award for her bonanza of festive lights and decorations that included a brightly lit star in a second-storey window. She also had a bonfire to keep passersby warm.

"I created a country-style Christmas that tapped into the senses. I had a fire pit to give people the aroma of burning wood and the sound of it snapping and crackling," said Giesbrecht, who grew up in Gimli and has worked in the real estate industry for about 16 years. "I also had a Christmas tree on the verandah with wrapped presents under it, lights strung along my picket fence, twinkling lights above the win-



Stefan Borgfjord of The Stebee, east of Arborg, decorated a couple of tractors and an old truck to light up the Arborg night and cheer drivers on Highway 68.

dows, lights along the verandah and music."

Reminiscent of a Victorian dwelling, the inn offers two spacious and tastefully decorated guest suites with private bathrooms that include either a walk-in shower or a tub.

"My intention was to create guest rooms that have a touch of luxury so that you feel pampered but are not overly done up that they make guests feel uncomfortable," said Giesbrecht.

Guests can enjoy their morning cof-



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Julia Penner created a rustic-style wintery scene at HL Ministries Thrift Store in Arborg.



From left: Emma Spring, Jenna Stansell, Tanya Grimolfson (on sofa), Desarae Bilinski, Melanie Johannesson of Gimli's Powder Princess Spa & Boutique.

fee or sunset libation in one of the cozy seating areas on the inn's covered verandahs. The inn is popular with couples and wedding parties, and ideal for family get-togethers and

girls' getaways. Local residents also book a room when they have company coming to town. The inn is lo-

Continued on page 9



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As the Holiday season is upon us, we take joy in extending a sincere 'THANK YOU' to those who have helped to shape our business in a most significant way. We value our relationship with you and look forward to working with you in the year to come. We wish you a safe and Happy Holiday season along with a New Year filled with peace and prosperity.

Season's Greetings

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St. Laurent showcased in CBC travelling film

By Nicole Brownlee

This was a turbulent year for communities across the Interlake but was also a year where the RM of St. Laurent shined. The community not only hit a few milestones in 2021 but it was also highlighted by a national program that will premiere in 2022.

CBC travelling show *Still Standing* highlights small towns across Canada and gives viewers an intimate view of the communities. The show was filmed in St. Laurent in early December.

"St. Laurent is appreciative of the show and highlighting our community," said Cheryl Smith, reeve of the municipality.

"It can only help us to showcase what we have here in St. Laurent. It is the biggest Métis community in Canada, and people are excited to share their stories, our cultures, traditions and language."

The episode was premiered at the local community hall on Dec. 10. All community members included in the show could invite up to 20 fully vaccinated guests to watch the episode.

Around 120 people gathered to watch the episode at the hall with the crew and host of *Still Standing*, comedian Jonny Harris.

"Harris mentioned how they really loved their time in our community and learning about the Michif language and the Métis traditions," said Smith.

"Jonny said the language and the fishing reminded him a lot of Newfoundland where he's from."

The community talked about the experience for days after the premiere and said they felt good about the show, said Smith.

Their *Still Standing* episode will be broadcast between January to March 2022.

The community hired a bylaw officer in May 2021 to review all bylaws in the municipality.

"That was a very long time coming and something that was definitely a priority," said Smith.

The Twin Lakes Beach Association got the ball rolling on the process of

hiring a bylaw officer a few years ago, said the reeve.

"There's been a lot of changes that have been made to existing bylaws. A lot of them have been updated, and there's still a lot to go."

One pilot project that the municipality unveiled in the summer of 2021 was charging non-residents to enter one of the beach parks.

"We've noticed, over time, and especially during COVID, we were inundated with tourists that would come and access our beaches," said Smith.

The council wanted to see how much revenue could be generated from charging a \$5 admission to Big Tree Park in the hopes of keeping taxes and the local mill rate down.

"(We) wanted to see what kind of revenue could be generated that we could then turn around and use that revenue and keep our parks going," said Smith.

The municipality wants to encourage tourism, but they also need to maintain the park and address environmental concerns.

"There was an increase in garbage. There was a large increase in sewage for the lagoon, so we had to try and balance that."

The municipality conducted a survey following the pilot project, and around 85 per cent of residents supported the project and want to see it expanded to other beach parks, said Smith.

The council will review the revenue collected from the project in early 2022.

In 2022, the Manitoba Métis Federation will continue building a clubhouse at the local golf course and 200 sites for RV rentals. Smith said they estimate the project will be completed by spring.

The council will also continue working on developing their broadband and cell service contracts in the community in the new year.

"One of the high hopes for everybody is that we can get rid of this pandemic and that our lives become more normal," said Smith.



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Host Jonny Harris joined the municipality staff, reeve and council on Dec. 10 at the St. Laurent premiere of their *Still Standing* episode.

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Wishing You A Happy & Healthy New Year

IERHA briefing and other health updates

By Patricia Barrett

- The Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority is distributing COVID rapid tests (antigen tests) to symptomatic vaccinated people who present at testing sites. Schools are also distributing kits to parents, said an IERHA spokesperson last week. Businesses may get a supply of rapid tests.

"The province is working to supply businesses with rapid tests through the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce," she said. "Some pharmacies and online retailers are offering rapid tests for purchase by the general public as well."

- The provincial government's mandatory patient transfer protocol continues for patients who do not require acute care but who occupy an acute care hospital bed. Patients in IERHA hospitals are being sent to hospitals in other health regions such as Southern, Northern and the Prairie Mountain health regions where capacity exists. As of Dec. 17, the IERHA had transferred 25 patients.

IERHA acute care beds are required for COVID patients, surgical patients and people needing emergency care for events such as heart attacks or vehicle collisions.

"I laid out clearly why we can't afford to stop these transfers," said IERHA chief executive officer Dr. David Matear during a Dec. 17 briefing for municipal officials. "We must ensure capacity exists in our hospitals. Every CEO of a regional health authority in Manitoba is committed to continuing to align care with people's health needs. The minister of Health and Seniors Care as well has endorsed the transfer protocol and is holding each region accountable for ensuring these transfers occur in a timely manner."

- Intensive care unit beds remain a going concern as they are the most intensely staffed beds in the health-care system, said Matear. Medical staff are being pulled from other units to staff ICU beds. Each patient in an ICU bed has a patient-to-nurse ratio of either one to one or one to two, whereas in other medicine units the ratio would be one to three or one to four. It is staff that are the "most limiting re-

source" in terms of ability to respond to health-care needs.

"To open a new ICU bed, the health system has to move staff from elsewhere in the system," said Matear. "The staff members with the expertise and experience are typically those working in medicine, surgery or cardiac units. That's the primary reason why COVID has created a surgical backlog. Our staff can't be in two places at one time. And COVID care is being prioritized."

- The surgical and diagnostic test backlog is currently 152,116, according to Doctors Manitoba's dashboard (viewed Jan. 1).

- The IERHA forwarded a request from provincial Shared Health to IERHA nursing staff to consider filling positions in ICUs.

"These units are located in Winnipeg ... at St. Boniface, Health Sciences [Centre] and at the Brandon Regional Health Centre, and on COVID red units, which are units with COVID-active patients in hospitals across the province," said Matear. "If we see nurses from our region redeployed to ICUs, we may find ourselves in a position where we need to suspend more beds in our hospitals."

An IERHA spokesperson said one staff member (as of Dec. 31) has been deployed to work in Winnipeg. She added that the region, as in other jurisdictions, has seen nursing resignations.

"Staff may have chosen to resign from their position in our region to take positions in Winnipeg," she said.

- Acute care bed suspensions (because of staff shortages) in IERHA hospitals as of Dec. 31 are as follows: Stonewall hospital has suspended five of its 15 acute care beds; Gimli hospital has suspended 11 of its 26 beds; Beausejour has suspended 10 of its 30 beds; Powerview-Pine Falls has suspended six of its 23 beds.

- The province logged over 2,600 new COVID infections during the last two days of 2021, but that is not a true reflection of actual case numbers because of laboratory PCR test backlogs and some people getting access to rapid tests.

heater cord with a corroded plug, can result in an electrical failure, which can quickly spark a fire. The majority of these fires take place in winter as temperatures drop.

Safety tips for extension cords/block heater plugs:

- Don't drive over your extension

How do we prepare for what lies ahead?

We continue preparing for increased demand for hospital beds

To date we have transferred 25 individuals to more appropriate care out of region.

These people are returning to the region as soon as a bed in their preferred appropriate facility becomes available to them.

EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

As of Dec. 17, the IERHA had transferred 25 patients to other health regions to create acute care bed capacity.

The province's chief public health officer Dr. Brent Roussin reported on Dec. 29 that 10,700 PCR tests had yet to be processed.

There were 1,123 new COVID infections on Dec. 30 and 1,494 on Dec. 31. The IERHA recorded 279 new infections over those two days, the third highest across all five health regions.

Eight deaths were also reported over those two days — five in the Winnipeg health region, two in Southern Health and one in Northern Health, according to the province's COVID-19 Bulletin #549. The total number of COVID deaths in Manitoba as of Dec. 31 was 1,392. The five-day provincial test positivity rate continued to climb, hitting a high of 30.7 per cent. In the Winnipeg health region, the rate is higher with every 32 people out of 100 infected. Again, that's an underestimate of the true infection rate.

- The provincial government ruled out a COVID circuit-breaker over the Christmas holidays and New Year, allowing households and up to 10 vaccinated guests or households and up to five unvaccinated guests to gather indoors, as well as letting provincial casinos hold New Year's Eve parties. The government introduced capacity restrictions in public venues such as gyms, bars and theatres.

In response those restrictions, internal medicine specialist Dr. Jillian Horton said she felt as though she were on a "ghost ship."

"If we look at the last several months,

we've had a slow move towards the edge of the cliff," said Horton Dec. 27 in a CBC television interview. "Many of us have been raising the alarm for months and months repeatedly ... about limited hospital capacity if there's suddenly an increase in numbers beyond where we're at right now."

Horton and nine other doctors in specialties such as infectious diseases, critical care and respirology had called on the PC government a few weeks before Christmas to "demonstrate actual concern for its citizens" by restricting holiday gatherings. They also warned that Manitoba's ICU capacity cannot be expanded to the level it reached in a previous COVID wave because medical staff are either burnt out or have resigned.

"As we enter the second holiday season since Covid emerged, it seems that all reason and accountability has been abandoned by those in authority," wrote the doctors in a joint letter. "Our fourth Health Minister [Audrey Gordon] since the onset of the pandemic continues this government's legacy of denial and downplaying of the absolute desperation in our hospitals and the impact of poorly vaccinated communities."

On Dec. 24 the province shortened the wait time for a third dose of COVID vaccine from six months to five months for people 50 and older.

Prevent an auto fire: Check your extension and block-heater cords

Submitted by MPI

On average, about 1,000 vehicle fire claims are opened with Manitoba Public Insurance yearly. Of that total, about 10 per cent of those fire claims are related to faulty extension or block-heater cords.

A cracked extension cord, or block

cord. This can cause cracking/breaking during bitterly cold weather.

- Cover your block heater plug-in with its protective cover.

- Unplug your block heater by using the hard, rubber end. Pulling on the electrical cord can cause breakage and potential electrical issues.

- Have your block heater cord inspected each fall by a qualified mechanic.

- With personal safety in mind, people are advised not to plug in their vehicles within a garage or any other enclosed structure.

Lakeshore School Division thrives amid pandemic pressure

By Nicole Brownlee

After a year of adapting to six-foot distances between desks, crinkled eyes indicating smiles behind masks and sanitizing hands after each task, staff and students have proven their resilience and dedication to learning, said Lakeshore School Division.

"Without a doubt, this has been an unusual and challenging year," said Don Nikkel, superintendent of human resources, policy and public relations.

"But it's also been a really positive year."

Staff pulled together to create a cohesive school year, despite disruptions like learning from home, splitting up classrooms and acknowledging the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students' learning styles.

"Our teachers are continuing to meet the kids where they're at, and we've seen a lot of headway in literacy and numeracy," said Nikkel.

In January 2021, the province mandated a remote learning period for two weeks across Manitoba to try and

stem the spread of COVID-19 cases following the holidays.

January's two-week interruption was the only time the division had to transition their schools to online learning.

"Thankfully, up until this point, we've managed to have very few cases of COVID related to our schools, and we've had no transmission in our school buildings."

Students were encouraged to stay home if they felt sick, which led to more student absences but reduced the spread of the virus.

"That created additional challenges in the classroom because you'd have students coming back, and the teacher needs to adapt the lessons to get them caught up," said Nikkel.

The division collects several assessments throughout the school year to measure the literacy and numeracy rates of students. This habit helped the division ensure that students who missed class or were academically struggling had support.

The COVID-19 pandemic also urged the school division to review the skills

students graduate with.

"In the midst of the pandemic, we've seen the importance of things like determination and perseverance and being a community-minded individual," said Nikkel.

Teachers and teaching assistants are considering how to integrate these characteristics into their lessons.

"One of the things that, I think, a lot of people were fearful of in the pandemic was that we were going to see a lot of learning loss with students," said Nikkel.

"Through the work that our staff has done, we've really been able to keep learning moving forward."

The division added a computer numerical control (CNC) router, which is a computer-controlled cutting machine, at Lundar School and a plasma cutter, which slices sheets of metal, at Fisher Branch Collegiate to integrate metal and woodworking with computer technology.

New programs and additions to the division for 2022 are Indigenous language programs at Alf Cuthbert and



Don Nikkel, superintendent of human resources, policy and public relations.

Ashern Central School, a sawmill at Lundar School and developing classroom technology.

"We need to look forward with optimism in terms of what the future holds," said Nikkel.

"What we're doing today in our schools is really what tomorrow is going to look like."

Omicron continues to drive COVID-19 cases up

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Manitoba saw thousands of new COVID-19 cases reported over the weekend, bringing the number of active cases to 15,318 — way up from the 9,924 reported on Friday.

Public health officials were expected to release an official post-holiday report on Tuesday, but the updated online dashboard at press time showed the trend of increasing daily case counts continues, with Monday alone seeing 1,721.

A total of 228 people were hospitalized due to COVID-19 at the start of the week (up 36 from the number reported in the last news release on Friday), including 32 in intensive care (up two over the weekend).

The weekend also saw six more deaths due to the virus, bringing the total to 1,398.

Manitoba's test positivity rate has hit 37.9 per cent. With the more contagious omicron variant of the virus taking hold in Manitoba, officials took a number of steps last week to try and stem the tide and protect the health-care system.

The province's public health orders were updated Dec. 28 to further reduce gathering sizes and limit the potential for community transmission.

While the previous orders had already put capacity limits on gatherings that included unvaccinated individuals, the new updates further limit gatherings of fully immunized

individuals and those under the age of 12 to 50 per cent of a space's usual capacity or 250 people, whichever is less. This also applies for outdoor gatherings in public spaces.

Restaurants, fitness centres, museums and galleries, sporting and performing arts events, movie theatres, and religious gatherings are also all limited to the 50 per cent capacity/250 person limit.

Liquor sales have also been curtailed to end at 10 p.m. daily.

The revised orders are in effect until Jan. 11.

The province last week also made some changes to the self-isolation rules for those with COVID-19.

The changes include:

- requiring all people who have tested positive for COVID-19 to isolate, including those who completed a rapid antigen test;
- changing isolation requirements to five days from 10 days since the date of the test for fully vaccinated people who are not showing symptoms;
- changing isolation requirements to five days from 10 days since the date symptoms started appearing or the date of the test, whichever is later, for fully vaccinated people as long as their symptoms are improving and they do not have a fever;
- requiring individuals who have only isolated for five days due to the changes above to wear medical-grade mask while in a public setting for the

five days immediately following their self-isolation; and

- requiring isolation for people who have tested positive who are not fully vaccinated for 10 days after the date of their test as long as their symptoms are improving and they do not have a fever.

Public health officials also advise that people leaving isolation must avoid any non-essential visits to high-risk settings or non-essential contact with individuals at high risk for severe disease for an additional five days.

Close contacts who are not exempt from self-isolation requirements still need to self-isolate for 10 days.

"We need to ensure we take steps

to protect our health-care system and other critical services during this surge of COVID-19 cases, many linked to the omicron variant," said Health Minister Audrey Gordon in a statement on Friday. "These changes will help ensure everyone who should self-isolate does, regardless of how they tested, and will reduce the strain on the health-system workforce as well as other key sectors as more workers report they have contracted COVID-19."

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Province changes self-isolation public health order

Changes being made to help protect health-care system, other critical services

Submitted by Manitoba government

The Manitoba government is following the advice of public health officials and making changes to the self-isolation public health order to adapt to the prevalence of rapid antigen tests and to help address the surge in COVID-19 cases caused by the omicron variant, Health and Seniors Care Minister Audrey Gordon announced last Friday.

"We need to ensure we take steps to protect our health-care system and other critical services during this surge of COVID-19 cases, many linked to the omicron variant," said Gordon. "These changes will help ensure everyone who should self-isolate does, regardless of how they tested, and will reduce the strain on the health-system workforce as well as other key sectors as more workers report they have contracted COVID-19."

The changes include:

- requiring all people who have tested positive for COVID-19 to isolate including those who completed a rapid antigen test;
- changing isolation requirements to five days from 10 days since the date of the test for fully vaccinated people who are not showing symptoms;
- changing isolation requirements

to five days from 10 days since the date symptoms started appearing or the date of the test, whichever is later, for fully vaccinated people as long as their symptoms are improving and they do not have a fever;

- requiring individuals who have only isolated for five days due to the changes above to wear medical-grade mask while in a public setting for the five days immediately following their self-isolation; and

- requiring isolation for people who have tested positive who are not fully vaccinated for 10 days after the date of their test as long as their symptoms are improving and they do not have a fever.

The public health orders will come into effect at 12:01 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 1, 2022. Public health documents and online guidance for stakeholders and the public is being updated and will be finalized in the days ahead.

Public health officials also advise that people leaving isolation must avoid any non-essential visits to high-risk settings or non-essential contact with individuals at high risk for severe disease for an additional five days.

Consistent with previous orders, the order continues to include:

- requiring close contacts who are

not exempt from self-isolation requirements to self-isolate for 10 days; and

- requiring people to provide information about locations where people have been in the previous 10 days for contact tracing purposes as required.

Public health officials also ask all household close contacts who are exempt from self-isolation to be particularly cautious while the case is isolating and avoid any non-essential visits to high-risk settings or non-essential contact with individuals at high risk for severe disease.

"We have looked at data from Manitoba and other jurisdictions, and feel these changes will balance reducing the spread of COVID-19 while ensuring critical services can continue to operate," said Dr. Brent Roussin, chief provincial public health officer.

"I ask all Manitobans to get immunized as soon as possible, including a third dose when eligible to reduce the number of close contacts they have, and to stay home as much as possible to reduce the risk of severe illness and reduce the spread of COVID-19."

Roussin also reminded Manitobans to follow the fundamentals, including wearing a well-fitting mask, washing their hands frequently and covering their cough.

For more information on COVID-19 in Manitoba, visit www.manitoba.ca/covid19.

Manitoba Public Insurance to issue third rebate in less than two years

Submitted by MPI

Manitoba Public Insurance customers can expect a rebate cheque in mid-February 2022.

This rebate of \$312 million will result in about \$328 rebated to an average private passenger policy. It's estimated about 578,000 cheques will be

issued. Customers planning a change of address should notify MPI no later

Continued on page 7

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EXPRESS SELFIE BY NADIA RITCHIE

Nadia Ritchie, right, and her mom Kerris were all frosted up last Saturday when they were out walking one-year-old Sven, Nadia's golden doodle. The Weather Network recorded a temperature of -31.8 degrees with a windchill of -43 degrees. Help the *Express* record the weather of the week and send in your photos of friends or family enjoying the great outdoors. Email: weather@expressweeklynews.ca.

> MPI REBATE, FROM PG. 6

than Jan. 12, 2022, to ensure they receive their rebate cheque. Rebate amounts of \$10 or less will be credited to the customer's account.

This is the third MPI COVID-19 rebate in less than two years. In total, MPI will have provided rebates of nearly \$500 million to its policy holders — \$110 million in May 2020 and \$69 million in December 2020.

This latest rebate was made possible due to a combination of fewer claims during the COVID-19 period and continued strong financial results. The rebate is calculated on the Basic Autopac premiums paid between Nov. 22, 2020, and Dec. 9, 2021, and is expected to be about 27 per cent of the customer's annual Basic Autopac premium.

Province looking for public feedback on provincial park improvements

Submitted by Manitoba government

As a key part of its commitment to improve the quality and sustainability of provincial parks, the Manitoba government is inviting citizens to share their opinions about needed improvements and priority areas in an online survey, Conservation and Climate Minister Sarah Guillemard announced last week.

"Earlier this year, our government announced the creation of the \$20-million Provincial Parks Endowment Fund to support projects that enhance the ecological integrity and or public experiences at Manitoba provincial parks," said Guillemard. "In support of the funds, we are seeking citizen and stakeholder input to help identify priority project areas or themes for funding through the endowment."

The minister noted the annual public survey will help identify broad priority categories under which specific projects will receive funds as part of the endowment's grant process.

These categories, formally established under an endowment fund agreement with The Winnipeg Foundation, include:

- development and maintenance of trails, boardwalks and associated infrastructure;
- public-use facilities such as amphitheaters, shelters, day-use sites,

playground equipment, docks and launches;

- park road maintenance;
- habitat restoration and enhancement;
- historical assets and cultural sites; campground enhancements; and
- interpretive infrastructure to support programming.

The engagement plan seeks input from all provincial park visitors and users, including day-use visitors, overnight campers, cottagers and commercial businesses operating within provincial parks, the minister said. The public will have the opportunity to provide suggestions on specific park projects they would like to see funded.

In addition, the province plans to host annual meetings beginning in January with park stakeholder groups to seek their input. All public engagement results will help guide park modernization and improvement activities, while user satisfaction over time will be monitored via the annual survey.

"With feedback from Manitobans, we can better identify priority areas for improvements so we can make the best use of the endowment fund and ensure our provincial parks continue to be enjoyed by residents and visitors for generations to come," said Guillemard.

The public engagement questionnaire on provincial park improve-

ment priorities is available at <https://engagemb.ca/>.



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Lower hospitalization risk doesn't mean no risk with omicron

By Patricia Barrett

Initial results from an English study into the severity of disease posed by the COVID-19 omicron variant shows a decreased risk of hospitalization but no substantial evidence yet the variant is less virulent than other strains.

People infected with omicron sought out hospital care, according to the findings, suggesting the variant may not be milder for some people and will still exert pressure on health-care resources.

The study titled "Report 50: hospitalization risk for Omicron cases in England" was published online Dec. 22, 2021, and has yet to be peer-reviewed.

Researchers with Imperial College London's COVID-19 response team evaluated the virulence (how severe or harmful a disease is in its effects) of omicron in England by looking at the differences in hospitalization risk over a 14-day period among those who tested positive for omicron and those who tested positive for the delta variant.

They found a reduced risk of hospitalization and hospital stay for those with omicron.

"Overall, we find evidence of a reduction in the risk of hospitalization for Omicron relative to Delta infections, averaging over all cases in the study period," wrote the researchers. "The extent of reduction is sensitive to the inclusion criteria used for cases and hospitalization, being in the range 20-25% when using any attendance at hospital as the endpoint, and 40-45% when using hospitalization lasting 1 day or longer or hospitalizations with the ECDS [emergency care documentation system] discharge field recorded as 'admitted' as the endpoint"

Last month, a Chinese study found omicron can multiply 70 times faster than delta in human bronchial tubes, allowing it to spread at lightning speed between people. In spite of its impressive ability to evade frontline antibodies and cause infection, omicron is thought to come up short against other immune defences — whether induced by vaccination or by a previous natural infection — which can provide a degree of protection from hospitalization

and death.

The study's researchers said although vaccinated people are susceptible to infection or reinfection (defined in the study as 90 or more days apart) with omicron, their estimates "suggest that individuals who have received at least 2 vaccine doses remain substantially protected against hospitalization, even if protection against infection has been largely lost against the Omicron variant."

However, they warn that their findings should be balanced against the much larger risk of infection with Omicron, due to reduction in protection acquired from both vaccination and natural infection. The findings don't show a reduction in the severity of disease.

The data (PCR test results) they analyzed from Dec. 1 to 14 show how fast omicron was able to overtake delta as the dominant strain in England and the concomitant inching up of hospitalizations for those infected with omicron.

The average age of omicron and delta cases attending a hospital were 31 and 38 years of age, respectively. Hospitalization was defined as "attendance" at hospital, including at accident and emergency departments, which occurred up to 14 days after a positive COVID PCR test and where a length of stay was at least one day.

The researchers acknowledge there are limitations to their study and they "caution about over-interpreting these trends [i.e., a reduction in hospitalization risk]."

Limitations include a restricted sample size, no data on how omicron might affect older adults or children, a short follow-up period to see whether infected subjects did, in fact, have a lower burden of disease compared to delta and a statistical assumption that omicron follows a similar disease progression as delta.

"There was limited power to examine more severe outcomes than hospital attendance," the researchers wrote, and that "this analysis will be updated to include a wider range of outcomes as data accumulate."

Last PCR test specimen date (December 2021)	All cases (pillars 1 and 2)			
	Delta cases	Omicron Cases	Delta hospitalisations	Omicron hospitalisations
1	25098	164	586	≤5
2	23212	226	493	≤5
3	21111	252	449	7
4	17235	303	372	≤5
5	16164	434	337	20
6	20745	977	397	14
7	21058	1916	395	24
8	20551	2956	353	25
9	21639	4047	316	29
10	21869	5214	255	33
11	15581	4807	177	30
12	13746	6550	123	40
13	17489	11933	109	26
14	13819	15804	52	36

EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

While there were fewer hospitalizations with omicron compared to delta, people infected with omicron were still admitted to hospital. There is no substantial evidence yet that omicron is a milder or less virulent COVID strain.

The update will include an examination of ICU admissions and death to estimate immune protection against severe omicron infections.

The preliminary findings, however, are useful for estimating potential health-care demands associated with the highly transmissible variant. As more and more people are infected with it, hospitalization rates will increase.

Manitoba Conservation officer service enforcement update

Submitted by Manitoba government

Manitoba Agriculture and Resource Development advises that conservation officers are continuing enforcement to protect Manitoba's natural resources, including compliance checks for fisheries, addressing illegal and unsafe hunting, and enhancing the presence of officers in the field.

On Dec. 14, conservation officers from Riverton compliance area were conducting a big game compliance patrol

for winter elk season near Fisher Branch. Officers saw two hunters dragging a whitetail fawn off a privately owned field to the roadway. During a compliance inspection, it was determined the fawn was shot and killed on private property and the shot was made from a municipal roadway. The hunters were charged with retrieving on private land without permission and illegal possession, receiving fines totalling \$3,500 and restitution of \$1,500 for the whitetail deer. The deer was seized as well as two rifles. The deer meat was donated to a food bank.

A number of night hunting incidents were investigated. On Oct. 26, conservation officers from the Riverton compliance saw two men in an ATV driving across private land, illegally spotlighting and sweeping a hay field. Two males from Peguis First Nation were detained at the scene and their hunting equipment seized. The pair must now appear in court to face charges of night hunting and hunting on private land with-

out permission.

On Nov. 26, Riverton compliance area was conducting an aerial patrol for illegal night hunting. The helicopter located an illegal spotlight working less than three miles northeast of Chatfield off municipal roads on private land. The truck was located at a hunt camp with two suspects nearby who admitted their offences. A third suspect left the area without apprehension. The two suspects were ordered to appear in court. Conservation officers are working to identify and locate the third suspect. The truck and various hunting equipment were seized.

While the vast majority of hunters follow safety rules, dangerous hunting is a major concern to enforcement.

Anyone with information on illegal activities is asked to call their local Manitoba Agriculture and Resource Development office or the Turn in Poachers (TIP) line at 1-800-782-0076.

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COVID-19 had a minor impact on Gimli RCMP in 2021

By Nicole Brownlee

The Gimli RCMP detachment report over a 30 per cent decrease in property crime for 2021, one of several highlights for the year.

"We've had a 36 per cent decrease in property crime which has been fairly significant for us," said Sgt. Robert Gray.

The officers warn property and cottage owners to secure their homes with locks, hide valuables and invest in lighting during the winter when the population decreases in beach towns.

"We get a high report come April when people return to their cottages," said Gray.

The Citizens on Patrol (COP) program helped report any suspicious

behaviour to the detachment, which allowed officers to quickly respond to calls and avoid some damages.

"Having that good community involvement or engagement is a positive and helps us do our job," said Gray.

Online and phone call reports increased this year after COVID-19 restrictions shut the detachment's doors to the public, but Gray said the detachment received about the same number of reports as normal years.

"We're still business as usual except for a few minor changes," said Gray.

The detachment's doors opened in September. All detachment members are also fully vaccinated.

Gray does note that the detachment

saw an increase in calls about mental health issues.

"We certainly saw an increase in (calls about) youth mental health," said Gray.

Sheila Hillier works at the Gimli detachment and runs the Family & Youth Regional Support Team (FYRST). Hillier is a part of a team that helps support youth access health and well-being services.

"She's done amazing work with youth who otherwise would be kind of left behind of fall through the cracks," said Gray.

Hillier's work at the detachment has been a significant help to address youth mental health concerns in the community for over five years, said

Gray.

"We recognize there are certain people that could use the benefit of Sheila and the program. ... It's hard in the rural area to access some supports."

The detachment is looking forward to moving into their new building in Gimli in the new year around fall 2022.

"We're excited about it being a community base," said Gray.

"With the type of infrastructure we've had for the last 50 years, the old red brick buildings have come and gone. ... It's not what modern police need."

They also hope to design the modern building with cultural sensitivities in mind, said Gray.

> LIGHTS, FROM PG. 2

cated within the heart of Gimli's business and tourism hub and only a few blocks from the beach and harbour.

Inn on Centre is located at 35 Centre St. Visit www.innoncentre.com for more information. To contact Giesbrecht at Right Choice Realty, call 204-641-8450.

Most Creative Use of Lights: The Stebee (Arborg). Stefan Borgfjord is a grain farmer located just east of Arborg and founder of The Stebee, a handcrafted home décor business. He put together a farm-themed light display using a pair of tractors and an old truck. He decorated the vehicles with twinkling lights that made it look as though the vehicles were moving.

"I used a lot of lights and I had lots of people coming by," said Borgfjord. "You could also see it from the highway [Highway 68] coming into Arborg."

Borgfjord created The Stebee workshop on the family farm after the pandemic hit and after creating pieces for family members. He sells handcrafted home décor items such as lamps and coffee tables that he fashions from pipe, wood and epoxy resin (an adhesive).

"I make live-edge river tables [tables that mimic the contours of a river] and use fractal burning to create pieces. Fractal burning uses electricity to make patterns which I fill in later with epoxy resin," said Borgfjord. "I do mostly custom order jobs because everybody wants something different, something that's tailored to their personality. But I do have demo pieces."

The Stebee is online at thestebee.ca or on Snapchat. Call Stefan at 204-981-0828 or email: stefan711@live.com

Best Window Display: Senior Fletcher's Galeria (Gimli). Senior Fletcher's Galeria owner Don Fletcher

works with glass, wrought iron, metal, ceramics and other media to create distinctive décor and other items. He also builds furniture. In addition to making art, Fletcher offers studio classes and workshops, according to his Facebook page.

The gallery is located at 4-40 Centre St. in Gimli. For more information, visit Senior Fletcher's Galeria on Facebook or call 204-960-5078.

Fan Favourite: HL Ministries Thrift Store (Arborg): Julia Penner of HL Ministries Thrift Store in Arborg created a country-style, winter wonderland lighting display that included Rudolph and friends and signs with Christmas messages that a friend made.

"We did a winter wonderland scene — a miniature version. We lit a number of different-sized trees and placed lit-up reindeer among the trees. We have a covered wooden deck in front of the thrift store and we strung lights all around it," said Penner. "People really liked the display. Whenever we can light up the community and bring some hope, we will."

HL [Harbour Lights] Ministries Thrift Store is a non-profit organization. It receives donations from the local community and from other communities such as Selkirk, Stonewall and Gimli on a regular basis. The store stocks clothing, hardware, kitchenware, books, toys and whatever else people have generously donated.

"A lot of people have a connection to us because we used to [pre-COVID] put on banquets for elderly widows," said Penner. "We did that for about 20 years, inviting widows to a community centre or public venue where we would serve them a full Christmas dinner around Christmastime. We'd do a music program with local musicians and we'd give the widows a gift. The holidays can be lonely for some

people and that's just a way to show them we care. The last two years we've been unable to hold banquets."

Penner said providing hope and caring for others was how HL Ministries started, and it has now grown to include prison ministry.

"This year we partnered with Prison Fellowship and we bought gifts for children (on behalf of their parents) who have an incarcerated parent or parents," said Penner.

HL Ministries Thrift Store is located at 500 River Rd. in Arborg. For more information, call Julia at 204-494-0495 or visit www.harbour-lights.ca The ministry is also on Facebook and Instagram.

Fan Favourite: The Powder Princess (Gimli). Gimli's Powder Princess Spa & Boutique is a one-stop pampering shop for both women and men seeking to indulge their outer beauty or rejuvenate their inner senses. Owner Tanya Grimolfson opened last spring in the Lakeview Resort.

Working with a team of four other women, Grimolfson offers a range of beauty and well-being services, including facials, pedicures, massage, yoga and Zumba workouts. She created her own makeup line called Royal Beauty, which includes primer, high definition foundation, lip gloss, eyeliner and mascara. She also carries high-end skincare products such as Eminence Skin Care.

The Powder Princess is located in Unit 120D-10 Centre St. in the Lakeview Resort (south side of the building). Call 204-642-3022 or visit www.thepowderprincess.com. The spa is also on Facebook

and Instagram.

Fan Favourite: Garriock Insurance (Gimli). Garriock Insurance is one of the largest insurance brokerages in Manitoba, providing residential, commercial, group and automobile insurance, including driver licensing photos.

The company has been serving Manitobans and Canadians for over 65 years. It has offices in Winnipeg, Gimli and Winnipeg Beach, and also provides insurance services to Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta customers, according to its website. Its highly trained, accredited staff design policies to meet customers' unique needs. The company offers a 24-hour emergency support number for insurance claims.

Garriock Insurance's Gimli office is located at 61 Centre St. Call 204-642-8591 or toll free 1-800-773-7157. Email: insure@garriock.ca

Fan Favourite: Interlake Handmade Boutique (Gimli). Interlake Handmade Boutique is a gift shop and home décor store offering a variety of products made by artists and craftspeople from across the Interlake. The store stocks paintings, decorative signs, game boards, cutting boards, clothing, jewelry and quilted items, among other items.

Interlake Handmade Boutique is located at 118B-10 Centre St. in the Lakeview Resort. For more information, call 204-894-3050.

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Home care expansion underway in IERHA with 49 new positions

By Patricia Barrett

The hiring of additional home care staff in the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority (IERHA) is already underway and is expected to help alleviate COVID-related pressures for acute care beds and may help prevent patients from being transferred to other health regions across the province.

The provincial government made patient transfers (for those who don't need acute care) mandatory last October in order to free up acute care bed space for people infected with COVID and for those needing emergency and surgical care. There is little capacity in the IERHA and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, necessitating transfers to the Southern, Northern and Prairie Mountain health regions.

The IERHA's chief executive officer Dr. David Matear made the home-care expansion announcement a few weeks ago.

"There's a significant amount of funding that has been identified to support increased in-home care services," said Matear during a virtual briefing with municipal leaders on Dec. 17. "We're putting that in place very, very quickly in order to be able to sustain seniors at home in their communities rather than having to look at alternatives."

RM of Grahamdale Reeve Craig Howse told Matear his municipality needs home care services to support seniors living in local manors [housing facilities] and at home, and to prevent people from being transferred out of the region should they require

hospital care. A number of patients has been transferred to hospitals hundreds of kilometres away.

"I talked to a couple of residents and they were left with no alternative [except] to go to the [local] hospital once health-care aide hours were cut back in these manors. If we could increase those hours instead of cutting back that would bring back some seniors forced to relocate," said Howse during the briefing. "I talked to a couple of them personally and they said they could still live on their own with a health-care aide but those hours have been cut back. That's a concern. I know these people want to come home and be back in their community."

Greg Reid, the IERHA's regional lead of health services, community and continuing care, spoke with the *Express* after Christmas, saying the IERHA created 49 new home care positions.

"We did a detailed analysis of our home care resources. With some funding adjustments we received from the province and some funds already budgeted, we were able to put forward a proposal to our senior leadership team, which was approved within the region to expand our home care services pretty significantly," said Reid on Dec. 31. "Funding is coming from some vacancies that we had in home care."

The 49 positions — full-time, part-time and casual jobs — are already posted online, he said. There are a range of positions available, including nurses, social workers, health-care aides, occupational therapists, physical therapists and rehabilitation aides.

"We need everyone [but] we don't have enough funding to represent all our needs," said Reid, who is part of the IERHA management team and has expertise in home care, social services, mental health and crisis stabi-

lization. "The greatest number of positions are for nurses and home care attendants [because] our needs are primarily in the area of nursing and HCAs [health-care aides]."

Because of the immense pressure on the health-care system from COVID, Reid said the IERHA has expedited the recruitment process and is in the midst of reviewing applicants and hiring.

The positions are being allocated to communities with the highest demand for home care services: Selkirk, Ashern, Eriksdale, Stonewall, Gimli, Beausejour, Oakbank and Pine Falls.

IERHA communities closest to Winnipeg — such as Selkirk and Stonewall — have higher populations than smaller centres and, therefore, the demand for home care is greater, said Reid. Other communities have a high proportion of aging seniors.

"Gimli is a community with an aging population that is increasing. And we're seeing a trend now: folks who have a summer home in Gimli were only there during the summer but now during COVID they've decided to live there full-time and that has placed strain on the acute care facility in Gimli and on home care resources," said Reid.

In addition to pressure to free up acute care bed space, the IERHA is also trying to move transferred patients back home to their communities. To do that, it needs "robust" home care service, he said. Shoring up home care resources also falls in step with the provincial government's transformation of the health-care system and provides, according to research studies, a better quality of life to residents who, with the right supports, can live "safely" in their own communities.

"Some people think personal care homes should be a destination point for everyone. There will always be pa-

tients who need to go to a PCH, but the only people that should be going there are those who require 24-7 nursing care," said Reid. "And, unfortunately, because we haven't had the right mix of housing options and support options in our communities in Manitoba, sometimes people go to PCHs by default. Ideally, what we want to see in our



PHOTO COURTESY OF IERHA

Greg Reid, the IERHA's regional lead of health services, community and continuing care, said the region can hire 49 new home care staff.

system is more accessible housing options ... whether it's additional home care support or supportive housing where there is 24-7 supervision."

He stressed that supportive housing, assisted living and 55-plus facilities need to be accessible to low-income people. Some of the facilities out there right now are cost-prohibitive and "that's something that needs to change if we're going to maintain people in their communities."

The new home care positions will be filled as soon as they can, he said, and the staff oriented and deployed.

The IERHA actually needs more than 49 home care positions as this complement of new staff won't "get us to where we need to be," said Reid. Historically, Manitoba has had high numbers of patients (who don't need acute care) in acute care beds because there's "nowhere for them to go." When the government embarked on its health-care system transformation, home care was identified as one of the major areas in need of enhancement.

Reid said the IERHA's frontline staff are working flat out as COVID cases skyrocket and continue to exert pressure on the health-care system.

"I really feel for our frontline staff. Kudos, huge respect and thank you to those staff who are really doing the heavy lifting [in this pandemic]," he said. "We're all working long hours, but, ultimately, the folks on the front-line are feeling this more than anyone; they're seeing the tragic outcomes; they're wearing a mask for eight or 12 hours a day. Lots of them are also stepping up to take additional shifts and work overtime. If it's wearing on us, we can only imagine how it's affecting them."

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Physician Departure – Arborg

Please be advised that Dr. Fadekemi Akinpelu has concluded her practice (as of December 31, 2021) at the Arborg Primary Health Care Centre and the Arborg and District Health Centre.

Interlake-Eastern RHA wishes Dr. Akinpelu all the best and thanks her for her years of service to Arborg and area residents.

If you are seeking doctor services in the Arborg area, please contact the Family Doctor Finder to speak to a primary care connector by calling **1-866-690-8260**.

Recruitment efforts are underway for additional care providers for the area.



Interlake-Eastern
Regional Health Authority

Interlake MP Derek Johnson reflects on 2021

By Nicole Brownlee

As a 2021 addition to the municipal relations department, Derek Johnson, minister of municipal relations, helped support several projects to benefit the province and the Interlake.

Originally from Oak Point, Johnson lives near Lake Manitoba with his family. Johnson was a councillor for the RM of St. Laurent from 2010 to 2014 before being elected as the MLA for the Interlake in 2016. Johnson was re-elected in the new constituency of Interlake-Gimli in 2019.

On Jan. 5, 2021, Johnson secured his position as minister of municipal relations.

The project Johnson said he is most proud of this year is the upgrade to the North End Sewage Treatment Plant in Winnipeg.

The North End site is Winnipeg's oldest and largest sewage treatment plant and processes 70 per cent of the city's wastewater.

The plant's capacity needed to be increased and updated because of Win-

nipeg's population growth.

The project will add new raw sewage pumps, plate screens and grit washing units. Updating the plant will extend the plant's service life, population growth and help improve the health of Lake Winnipeg.

"We all enjoy our 100,000 lakes but a lot of people especially enjoy Lake Winnipeg," said Johnson.

"People who live on lakes probably have a higher awareness of the health of the lakes."

The federal government invested more than \$116.1 million in the project. The province kicked in \$96.7 million, and the City of Winnipeg contributed over \$143 million.

"Our government's commitment to moving that forward ... has been a huge step forward."

Another project Johnson participated in was legislative amendments to streamline municipal planning processes.

"It's about looking at areas as a regional area rather than each municipi-

pality individually," said Johnson.

For example, reviewing a region can reveal that one treatment plant could serve several municipalities.

"Looking at things regionally, now the neighbouring (municipalities) will know what's available and can potentially share services," said Johnson.

"I view it as good neighbours helping good neighbours."

Johnson also helped update the province's municipal grants application deadlines to better align with municipal budgeting deadlines.

The provincial government's budgets end on March 31, but municipal governments' budgets end on Dec. 31. The different budget periods make municipalities' budgets less precise because they apply late in the year for grants.

Several grant application dates have been moved to accommodate municipal planning, like the deadline for Building Sustainable Communities and the Green Team grant.

Reflecting on his time as a council-



Interlake MP Derek Johnson

lor, Johnson said receiving grants partway through the year was always a welcomed surprise but frustrating because projects would often be delayed waiting for fundraising.

"Municipalities can actually budget sooner and not go through those hardships."

Manitoba to delay return to school to Jan. 10, 2022

Submitted by Manitoba government

Manitoba will delay the return to school for students following the winter break to Jan. 10, 2022, to give public health officials additional time to assess the risk of the omicron variant in Manitoba and what changes might be needed on the return to school in early January, Education Minister Cliff Cullen announced last month.

"As we begin the holiday break across Manitoba schools, the Manitoba government would like to thank students, teachers, school staff, school leaders, school divisions, parents and caregivers for ensuring schools have been safe and open for in-class learning since September," said Cullen. "But right now, things are changing rapidly and public health has recommended a slight delay to the return to

school. This will give them more time to better assess the risk and look at options for the new year."

Most students were scheduled to return to school on Jan. 6. The change means school staff will return on Jan. 6 for professional learning and to prepare for the continuation of learning, and students will return on Jan. 10. Many childcare centres will remain open for children under the age of 12 to ensure families can continue to access needed childcare services.

The minister noted the delayed return to school would also provide more time for the distribution of rapid tests to schools provincewide. In addition to vaccination, staying home when one is sick, using masks and reducing contacts, the minister noted rapid tests are another tool that can

be used to help screen for cases and provide peace of mind to parents and caregivers.

"We appreciate your understanding and will share any additional information about the return to school as we learn more about the variant and what this means for schools," said Dr. Brent Roussin, Manitoba's chief provincial public health officer. "We have recommended this delay to a return to school in addition to the restrictions under the public health orders and I want to remind Manitobans of the importance of keeping gathering sizes small to allow a safer return to school in the new year."

Roussin noted those eligible to receive a booster vaccine for COVID-19 are encouraged to make appointments or visit a walk-in clinic during

the break to better protect themselves and others.

"Again, we extend our thanks to everyone for their efforts over the last several months," said Cullen. "I encourage everyone to do their part to keep schools safe as students head back to class in January by getting vaccinated, minimizing contacts over the holiday break, monitoring for symptoms and, of course, getting tested and staying home when sick."

Manitobans showing signs and symptoms of COVID-19 should use the online COVID-19 screening tool at <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/> and visit a provincial testing site.

For a list of provincial testing locations, visit: www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/testing/locations.html#map.

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Community partnerships valued at Fisher Branch RCMP in 2021

By Nicole Brownlee

The Fisher Branch RCMP detachment focused on community involvement in 2021, with one member getting recognized for her exemplary service.

"We had a busy summer. Our detachment members really stepped up," said Sgt. Gabe Simard.

Const. Christmas Lindal, a member of the detachment, received an Excellence in Law Enforcement Award in November. The Excellence Awards were created by the province to recognize extraordinary efforts by police officers in Manitoba.

"She got that award obviously for her policing service and her community involvement," said Simard.

Lindal started a chapter of Girl Guides of Canada in Fisher Branch, organized several fundraisers and continued her investment in community groups this year.

"It definitely wasn't expected, but it felt wonderful to be recognized for the work that I'm doing within the community," said Lindal.

"I'm trying to help build some relationships between the communities and the detachment and try and

change how we're viewed within the community."

Lindal also raised money to buy Christmas presents for 76 children from Jackhead, which is a part of Ki-nonjeoshtegon First Nation.

"Our detachment really highlights involvement in the community and working with community partners," said Simard.

Along with Lindal, the detachment values working with First Nation community leaders, RM of Fisher council members and people within the communities.

"With COVID, it was very challenging to be involved in the community just with all of the restrictions," said Simard.

The detachment was able to take part in the annual holiday

Moonlight Parade throughout Fisher Branch and visited a few schools for presentations.

The detachment closed its doors to the public because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but Simard said this didn't impact the number of reports they received.

"Even though we were closed for a period, we still managed to deliver services the best we could through

"I'M TRYING TO HELP BUILD SOME RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE COMMUNITIES AND THE DETACHMENT."



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Const. Christmas Lindal fundraised and distributed 76 Christmas presents for the children of Jackhead this holiday season.

the email system," said Simard.

The detachment is still closed to the public, but the members are actively working to assuage hesitations about COVID-19.

"I think our members have done a very good job here in Fisher Branch

keeping those worries and fears at bay," said Simard.

All staff members of the detachment are mandated to be vaccinated.

"The members of Fisher Branch have worked hard and stuck together to get through this tough time."

Interlake-Eastern RHA's New Year's baby has arrived

Submitted by IERHA

Interlake-Eastern RHA's New Year's baby arrived at 9:59 a.m. on New Year's Day at Selkirk Regional Health Centre.

Selah Praise weighed seven pounds, 12 ounces, and she is the third child of Iris and Titus Hofer of Interlake Colony near Teulon. She will be going home to meet her big sister Gracie Joy, 3, and big brother Blake, 1.

Dr. Margaret Speer attended the birth.

"She was so calm. The staff here are amazing, even with COVID and the protocols that need to be followed," said Titus.

It's become a tradition for the Selkirk Ladies Hospital Auxiliary, which runs the hospital's gift shop, to present a gift basket to the health centre's first born child of the year. It's a gift that the Hofers were "flabbergasted" to receive.

"It's extremely appreciated," said Ti-

tus.

According to Betty Milkowski, chair of the auxiliary, the basket is a collection of items that will be helpful to the family.

"We're always sure to include a playpen and a bunch of other goodies that a new family will need," said Milkowski.

"We want to contribute to their enjoyment of their baby and we send them our best wishes for the coming years."

The family birthing unit team at Selkirk Regional Health Centre feels honoured to play a role in welcoming babies into the world and getting families off to a good start.

The unit is composed of eight beds and all rooms are private with a comfortable space for partners or other family members to rest. This unit is filled with bright natural light and it's equipped with everything needed for low-risk deliveries.



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Titus and Iris Hofer of Interlake Colony welcomed their daughter Selah Praise on New Year's Day. Selah was the first baby born in 2022 at Selkirk Regional Health Centre.

Vidir Vertical Storage Solutions earns Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters award

By Patricia Barrett

Vidir Vertical Storage Solutions has earned an Export Award from the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters (CME) for innovation, growth and manufacturing excellence.

CME works with and advocates for manufacturers across Canada and presents annual awards for excellence in the industry.

Vidir Vertical co-owner Peter Dueck said he is very proud of his company's workforce and their dedication over the past few challenging years.

"It is an honour to receive this export award in these challenging times. This speaks to the amazing job our entire workplace is doing in keeping each other safe and keeping production going," said Dueck. "I am so very proud of what our team is accomplishing."

The family-owned company is located in the community of Vidir, about 20 kilometres north of Arborg. It maximizes vertical space with products such as automated storage and retrieval systems, carousels, flooring cutters, vertical lifts, hospital bed lifts and medical supply carousels. The company serves a broad range of industries such as aviation, automotive, energy, construction, retail, manufacturing and health-care. Its mechanized units improve workflow proficiency and organization and can be found in Home Depot stores, Lowe's, Mercedes Benz, Honda, GM and Nike, among others. To date, the company has expanded its worldwide reach to 48 countries.

Vidir Vertical chief executive officer Ernest Rempel said it was an honour to be recognized for innovative design and contributions to the provincial economy.

"We are honoured to be selected for this award. Manitoba is home to many manufacturers like Vidir that help create a steady provincial economy through export of goods and services around the globe," said Rempel. "This award recognizes our spirit of innovation and customer satisfaction that has set Vidir apart, and allowed Vidir to continue to grow our customer base domestically and beyond."

The company is in the middle of a multi-million-dollar order for a plastic films manufacturer in Portugal, he said, and is continuing to grow its exports to the U.S. with a brand-new product line called the Vertical Lift Module (VLM), an innovative product that builds on the carousel and improves retrieval speed, ergonomics and software that manages inventory.

"The VLM is designed for anyone moving inventory or product through their process. It improves space utilization over 85 per cent from standard racking solutions. It's a modernization of VLM product in the industry and utilizes state-of-the-art drives and electronics to provide significantly more up time and reliability for the customer," said Rempel. "The VLM really completed our material handling product offerings as Vidir can now supply equipment for any organization, from the very basic motorized material handling equipment to the highly automated and integrated solutions."

CME presents an Export Award every year to a company that demonstrates excellence in expanding into geographic markets and significantly expanding exports sales, according to CME's website. Companies that receive the award have demonstrated



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Vidir Vertical Storage Solutions earned a CME Export Award.

revenue growth through regular operations or new product lines or an innovation of existing designs, and have also exhibited good corporate citizenship and expanded Manitoba employment.

"Manufacturing continues to be the driving force behind our province's success, which has become even more apparent since the pandemic showed Manitobans how important the industry is to our livelihoods. CME works in partnership with manufacturers and exporters to excel and to grow," said CME vice-president Ron Koslowsky in a Dec. 14 media release announc-

ing the winners. "It's important for us to recognize excellence in our industry and support other companies on their journeys, and to share these incredible stories to inspire others."

CME will be holding a Gala Award event on March 24 at the Winnipeg Convention Centre to honour the recipients. In addition to the Export Award, CME will present the Hall of Fame, Pioneer and Emerging awards.

For more information about Vidir Vertical Storage Solutions, visit www.storevertical.com or call toll-free 1-800-210-0141 or 204-364-2442.

Happy New Year
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2022

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Attn: Landowners

Who is the EIWD? In 2005, the local governments within the East Interlake partnered with the Province of Manitoba to deliver land and water conservation projects on a watershed basis.

STEPS TO COMPLETE A PROJECT

- 1 DISCUSS**
EIWD and Landowner to discuss project design and partnership.
- 2 DEVELOP**
EIWD staff will work with landowner and partners to develop project design and Enhancement Protection application/bid.
- 3 APPLY**
Project design and application/bid submitted for evaluation by Watershed Sub-District/ GROW committee.
- 4 APPROVAL**
Project Approved or Denied.
- 5 IMPLEMENT**
EIWD staff will work with landowner and partners to complete project as designed.
- 6 EVALUATE**
Completed/ongoing projects will be inspected and evaluated regularly by project team with reports submitted to Watershed Executive Board.
- 7 REVIEW**
Executive Directors will review project reports and may make recommendations on project design and delivery. Directors will finalize annual reports then deliver results to project partners.

What type of projects does EIWD do?

- Well sealing
- Wetland enhancement
- Water retention
- Buffer strips
- Exclusion fencing
- Shelterbelts
- Riparian enhancement
- Upland enhancement
- Conservation contracts
- Protection payments
- Soil enhancement
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For more information, Call or visit us online: 1.204.642.7578 eastinterlake.ca

MP shares reflections on the new year

By Jennifer McFee

Now that 2022 has arrived, our local member of Parliament reflects on the past year while looking ahead at what's to come.

For Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman MP James Bezan, his top priority is to continue helping constituents and local businesses, which he considers to be his greatest role.

"COVID has continued to negatively impact our day-to-day lives, and I am proud of the hard work by my staff to ensure constituents get the assistance and answers they need," he said.

"Secondly, I am very grateful for being re-elected by the great people of Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman and returning to the House of Commons to be their voice."

Without a doubt, 2021 brought its challenges. For Bezan, one of these challenges included the recent federal election.

"It is frustrating to be stonewalled by red tape created by an unnecessary election when fighting for the best interests of constituents. This was clearly evident as we fought for the supports for our farmers and ranchers who were devastated by harsh drought conditions," Bezan said.

"It was difficult and heartbreaking to watch Prime Minister Trudeau have an expensive and unnecessary election while Canadians were dealing with increasing COVID-19 cases, Western Canadian farmers dealt with drought, British Columbia battled wildfires, and the world watched Afghanistan fall to the Taliban."

In these early days of 2022, the focus will remain on the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It is imperative that all levels of government and individuals take the lessons learned to date and ensure that we are working together to protect the well-being of all Canadians and our health-care systems," Bezan said.

"This includes our health and mental health, the opportunity for Canadian businesses to thrive and managing the overall economic recovery of the nation."

Looking ahead, Bezan shares some goals for the upcoming year.

"My goal for 2022 is to continue to provide support to constituents, especially those individuals and businesses hardest hit by pandemic lockdowns — as well as holding the Liberals to account both as your member of Parliament and in my new role on the Conservative House leadership team," he said.

"We are committed to being your voice and making sure that Justin Trudeau's inflation crisis does not continue to drive up the cost of living."

At the same time, Bezan shares



MP James Bezan

words of encouragement as we start another year in the midst of the pandemic.

"I want to encourage everyone to continue to stay vigilant in our collective fight against COVID-19," he said.

"Also, a big thank you to all of our frontline health-care workers for their tenacity, perseverance and personal sacrifice to keep Manitobans as safe as possible during the pandemic."

Nearly \$180,000 given in prizes from Recycle Everywhere's incentive program

Submitted

Since the Recycle Everywhere Incentive Program & Mobile App was launched in April, Recycle Every-

where has given back almost \$180,000 in cash and prizes to nearly 400 Manitobans who have used the app and recycled their empty beverage contain-

ers.

For the month of December, Recycle Everywhere announced it would reward Manitobans for their good recycling habits through its "Season of Giving Back" campaign. For every download and use of the app, \$5 goes to Harvest Manitoba, up to a total of \$15,000. Community response was so overwhelming, however, the total was reached by Dec. 18 — less than three weeks after it was announced, thanks to 3,500 new registered users. Also for December, each weekly \$1,000 app winner gets to choose a local charity to also receive \$1,000 from Recycle Ev-

erywhere.

"Manitobans are known for their generosity when it comes to helping those in need, and they also care about contributing to a sustainable environment," said Ken Friesen, executive director of Canadian Beverage Container Recycling Association (CBCRA), the organization that runs the Recycle Everywhere program. "Congratulations to all our mobile app winners, and thank you to the community for embracing our Season of Giving Back. The response to our

Continued on page 17

Reminder:

NOVENTIS MEMBER FORUM January 11th, 7pm

Noventis Credit Union will be holding a virtual member forum on January 11th at 7pm.

The member forum will provide information about the merger and will allow for questions and feedback from our membership.

Visit cusuccess.ca to register for this event.

MORE IMPORTANT DATES:

Member merger vote - January 25-27

Special Meeting of Members - January 27th, 6pm



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PHOTO: ©PILOT COLLECTIVE

Nature enthusiasts flock north every winter to witness the light show of a lifetime. Because of its location beneath the auroral oval, the northern lights can be seen up to 300 nights of the year. Your best chance for viewing the flickering green hues of the aurora borealis is between February and March when the night sky is at its clearest and darkest.

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discoverchurchill.com



Churchill Northern Studies Centre

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churchillscience.ca/event/winter-skies-2



Frontiers North Adventures

Treat yourself with this all-inclusive winter adventure where you can view and photograph the aurora borealis and dine beneath the northern lights.

frontiersnorth.com/adventures/winter/northern-lights-and-winter-nights



Great White Bear

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greatwhitebeartours.com/package-tours



Nanuk Operations

This six-day tour includes winter activities like snowshoeing and dogsledding during the day and photographing the aurora from a modern yurt in the boreal forest at night.

nightsunderlights.com/tours-and-prices

Be safe in Churchill

To ensure the safety of visitors and residents in Churchill, please note:

- It is required that all guests and staff be fully immunized for at least two weeks prior to their scheduled departure.
- Each individual business has a complete list of their COVID-19 policies for reference.



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NOTE: While Travel Manitoba strongly recommends that all tourism businesses adhere to the operating protocols and capacity restrictions allowed by the Manitoba government, we cannot guarantee the compliance of any business featured in our content. While information is accurate at the time of writing, please contact businesses directly for operating hours and policies and availability of packages and tours. Throughout the province, please continue to practise safe physical distancing and adhere to all recommended guidelines.

Ice Time™ app keeps anglers safe from space

By Iris Dyck

Every time Trevor Kristjanson steps onto the ice, he knows it comes with a risk.

"The beginning of winter and end of winter certainly feel a little treacherous," the fifth-generation commercial fisherman said. "You always have to kind of keep your wits about you when you're on the ice."

Kristjanson's family has been fishing out of Gimli for the past 130 years. He has a good feel for the ice — he can tell when it's been cold enough for Lake Winnipeg to freeze over, and he knows what weak spots and cracks look like.

Still, it's impossible to know for sure if he's heading into danger.

"The main thing that freaks people out, and should, is going through the ice," he said.

On Nov. 1, NextGen Environmental Research Inc. (NGE) released their app Ice Time™ to help decrease that risk. The app gives up-to-date ice conditions for lakes in Manitoba, Ontario and Minnesota. Subscribers can see satellite maps marked to show ice thickness, condition and hazards on their smartphone or computer.

It's a project NGE founder and president Dr. Paul Cooley has been working on for over a decade. An avid angler with a long career in environmental research, Cooley knew it was possible to track lake ice with satellite data. He just didn't know how to efficiently get the information to people who needed it.

"The science was there, but technology and making it available to people was not," he said.

Cooley sat on his idea for years before putting in a proposal to the Canadian Space Agency (CSA) in 2017. Cooley wanted to do a study to test the accuracy of radar satellite images of lake

ice.

"They came back and said, 'We really like this.' And you know what? Within five months it was funded," he said.

Cooley and his colleagues at NGE spent two winters studying the ice in the south basin of Lake Winnipeg. They flew drones to survey the ice and compared the images to radar satellite data taken at the same time. They found they could get very accurate and detailed information about the ice from the satellites.

"What this tool allows us to do is see the bird's eye view, what's going on with the ice," said Cooley.

Radar satellites circle and map the earth regularly and can take images regardless of snow or cloud cover. The satellites send out a wave, much like how a sonar system in a boat sends out a "ping," and then maps the area based on how and when the wave returns.

"These are really reliable satellites that give you all-weather data for what we're doing, day or night, rain or shine," said Cooley.

Ice Time™ uses data from Canadian and international satellites to update its maps as often as possible. Recently, Ice Time™ got data from satellite to app in just 19 hours — a new record.

"We're really proud of what we've done in a really short time," he said.

Cooley felt there was a lack of information around how to travel safely on lake ice. He hopes the Ice Time™ app fills that gap and can help people become more aware of ice safety.

"You can actually see open water in the offshore zone of the lake from the comfort of home without even having to go out and test it," he said, "and that's how I think Ice Time™ will save the



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY DR. PAUL COOLEY

NextGen Environmental Research Inc. studied lake ice on Lake Winnipeg for two years before developing the IceTime™ app.



Dr. Paul Cooley launches a drone to study the ice on Lake Winnipeg. Images from the drone were checked against satellite data to determine ice conditions.

most lives."

Ice Time™ hopes to expand their service to more lakes soon. The app's website has an option for users to vote on which area to serve next.

More information about Ice Time™ can be found at ice-time.app.

Updates, markets and annual events on the roster for Grahamdale in 2022

By Nicole Brownlee

The RM of Grahamdale is celebrating several achievements in 2021, including the near completion of a sought-after development plan.

At the end of 2020, the conceptual plan for the development of Steep Rock was approved, and over the past year the council and the HTFC Planning & Design team developed a comprehensive plan for the next 25 years in Steep Rock.

"So much work and effort went into this," said Devan McCoubrey, administrative assistant at the municipality.

"It's a beautiful plan to move forward with, and we're all just really proud of that."

The plan was spurred by an exponential increase in tourism in the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. The boost in visitors, cottagers and campers revealed a need for the region to grow.

Through public surveys, most community members noted the community needed more signs to guide visitors to attractions, public parking for cars and boat trailers, public washrooms and eating areas and refurbished walking trails.

The plan identified six areas that could be improved or developed including, buildings (commercial, residential and industrial infill), the waterfront, cliffs, market, campground, northwest and

southeast quarries.

Council hoped the plan would be completed in 2021, but they will make minor changes until January 2022, said McCoubrey.

In an interview in September, Reeve Craig Howse said the signs would be the first phase of the conceptual plan the council would complete.

The RM of Grahamdale's Community Development Corporation was also awarded \$90,000 from the municipality and the province to help fund the restroom facility at Wayside Park in Moosehorn.

The facility will have restrooms, changing facilities, rentable space and a concession stand window.

In April, the municipality also purchased a property in Steep Rock. The green space is behind a powerhouse in the community.

"Other than on top of the cliff, this is really the only green space that the municipality owns in Steep Rock," said McCoubrey.

The municipality built a road through the space in August to divert traffic and will continue developing the space.

"Our plan is to do a farmers market," said McCoubrey. "Maybe with some permanent wooden stalls for our local entrepreneurs to utilize and sell their goods there."

The municipality celebrated its seventh annual

Christmas lights competition in December and added a new tradition to its social calendar for August.

Farm Family Appreciation Day was a huge success that welcomed around 500 people to the outdoor event, said McCoubrey.

The inaugural event was held at Wayside Park on Aug. 21 to show support for farming community members impacted by 2021's drought.

"Hopefully, that can be an annual thing because that was super fun for everybody," said McCoubrey.

The municipality hired Landmark Planning & Design Inc. in September to start updating the community's zoning bylaws. The bylaws haven't been updated since 2005, but McCoubrey expects the updated bylaws will be released by spring 2022.

"That is long overdue, and it is really exciting that we're prioritizing it."

The municipality is also looking forward to centralizing its recreational services in 2022. This year the Lakeshore Recreation Commission dissolved, and all recreational activities are now be controlled by the five surrounding municipalities.

"We have a lot of close relationships with people in the province that we're hoping will kind of guide us to, hopefully, get (recreational programming) out there," said McCoubrey.

MPI reveals Top 5 auto insurance frauds of 2021

Submitted by MPI

Auto insurance fraud costs Manitoba Public Insurance ratepayers an estimated \$50 yearly. A dedicated special investigation unit (SIU) at MPI is committed to investigating suspicious claims and detecting fraudsters on behalf of honest ratepayers.

"MPI releases its annual Top 5 fraud list to raise awareness about the costs related to auto insurance fraud," said Satvir Jatana, MPI's chief customer officer. "The list is compiled based on the unique circumstances of each fraud, financial savings to MPI ratepayers, and the investigative techniques used in confirming fraudulent activity."

Anyone with information about auto insurance fraud is encouraged to call the Manitoba Public Insurance TIPS Line: 204-985-8477 or toll-free 1-877-985-8477. All calls are anonymous. Last year the SIU closed about 1,000 investigations, resulting in a claims savings of about \$14 million.

No. 1 "Phony Kidnapping"

After her badly damaged vehicle was recovered by police, the Winnipeg woman told MPI her vehicle had been stolen out of her garage. She said the thieves messaged her via Facebook, demanding payment for returning the car. The woman admitted she did not call police but agreed to meet the thieves, who she stated then kidnapped her, speeding around the city for hours and eventually crashing the vehicle.

Due to many gaps in the story, MPI's SIU launched an investigation. An examination of the vehicle's ignition and immobilizer system conducted by MPI's Research and Training Department revealed that the vehicle would not run without a key inserted into the ignition. In her statement, the owner

confirmed that she had all keys in her possession.

When presented with the findings of the investigation, the vehicle owner admitted she had lied about the kidnapping. Truth was, she was in the vehicle driving around with a group of "friends" drinking and speeding around the city. They eventually crashed into another vehicle and immediately ran from the scene.

The theft claim was denied, saving MPI an estimated \$68,000.

No. 2 "The Fast & Furious"

The 20-year-old driver told the MPI adjuster that he had been working a lot of overtime during the week and one night while driving home around midnight fell asleep and drove off the road, crashing into half a dozen parked vehicles. The posted speed limit on the road was 50 kilometres, with the young driver saying he was travelling 55 kilometres per hour at the time of the crash.

However, the extent of the on-site damage contradicted the man's story. A download of the vehicle's data crash recorder indicated the vehicle was travelling at nearly 140 km/h at time of impact. The brake pedal was not applied and seatbelts were unbuckled. Surveillance footage was also taken from various locations on the travelled road, showing the vehicle was racing with another vehicle seconds before the crash.

There was also an on-site investigation that confirmed there was a long, straight 1.6 km stretch of road where the racing took place. The road then makes a left curve which the one vehicle was unable to negotiate, causing it to leave the road and crash heavily into a number of parked vehicles.

Based on the true facts of this inves-

tigation, the collision claim was denied and MPI has begun a recovery of costs from the responsible driver. Cost savings to MPI is estimated to be \$150,000.

No. 3: "Truckin' Along"

A professional truck driver, the Winnipeg man was injured in a single-vehicle incident while hauling a load. Based on the extent of his injuries, he was entitled to receive income replacement benefits and personal care assistance payments.

He told his MPI case manager that his injuries prevented him from lifting his arms above his shoulders, unable to lift heavy objects, physically unable to drive more than 15 minutes, could no longer take out the garbage and recycling bins or work his regular job.

After receiving information that the man was working while still collecting benefits, an investigation was opened, consisting of surveillance that conclusively showed the man was working, able to drive many hours a day and was seen carrying a number of objects, including heavy wooden crates.

Based on the investigation, MPI contacted the man and informed him his benefits were being terminated. He was also charged with Fraud Over \$5,000 and Make False Statement. Estimated savings to MPI was more than \$700,000.

No. 4 "Centre Stage"

Two individuals opened separate collision claims, with one driver admitting he was responsible for the T-bone collision at an intersection. The SIU investigator attended to the collision scene and noticed a surveillance camera pointed in the direction of the collision intersection. The surveillance clearly showed both vehicles slowly travelling through the intersection several times prior to the collision.

The surveillance also showed both vehicles were deliberately positioned in a T-bone configuration, with one car accelerating into the other vehicle, which was slowly entering the intersection. When presented with the facts, one owner admitted he and his friend planned this "staged" collision to write-off their vehicles. Savings to MPI was \$15,297.46.

No. 5 "Canine Caper"

The Winnipeg woman opened a collision claim, stating a dog ran onto the roadway, causing her to swerve and collide with a pole and large flower pot located on the yard of a private residence. There was significant damage to both the woman's 2020 Ford Explorer and items in the yard.

The woman also provided the name of a third-party witness, who told the MPI adjuster that the vehicle did swerve to avoid a dog and the woman was driving. Based on statements received, MPI determined the driver was not at fault, resulting in no financial compensation from MPI to the owners of the property.

When told of this decision, the owners of the property then provided MPI with video footage of the collision, which clearly showed there was no dog running across the road, and the driver of the vehicle was a male.

When presented with this new information, the woman admitted to lying to protect her boyfriend who was driving and did not hold a valid driver's licence. The witness would later admit they had come across the crash after the fact and did not see a dog.

The collision claim was denied and MPI is seeking to recover costs from the unlicensed driver. Claims savings to MPI was \$29,840.08.

> INCENTIVE PROGRAM, FROM PG. 14

incentive program and mobile app is greatly appreciated. It helps move us closer to the government-mandated goal of recovering 75 per cent of all empty beverage containers sold in Manitoba."

The last three of four December winners who have received the Get \$1,000, Give \$1,000 weekly cash prize are:

1. Martin Martel – Charity of choice: Harvest Manitoba

2. Melanie Gerula – Charity of choice: Cat Tails Rescue

3. Annemarie Barnett – Charity of choice: Salvation Army

"Harvest thanks Recycle Everywhere and all Manitobans who download and use the Recycle Everywhere mobile app in December to help us feed more hungry families,"

said Vince Barletta, Harvest Manitoba president and CEO. "We are a community of Harvest Stars and, as Ken said, Manitobans are a special kind of people who recycle to put their money to good work all season long."

Lastly, Recycle Everywhere has announced Eunice Popoola as the month's \$25,000 grand prize winner — the last monthly grand prize winner in 2021. Congratulations, Eunice, for doing a good thing for the environment and your community.

The idea behind the Recycle Everywhere incentive program and mobile app is to help Manitobans track their recycling habits and the positive impact they can make. December marked a significant milestone, with more than 25,000 Manitobans regularly using the app.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Recycle Everywhere's \$15,000 cheque presentation to Harvest Manitoba.

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Einarson to play baseball in Moose Jaw this summer

By Brian Bowman

Kalli Einarson expects to be really busy this summer.

The Gimli product recently committed to play baseball for the Moose Jaw Miller Express of the Western Canadian Baseball League this summer.

"My coach (at the University of Calgary) and myself made the decision to find a nice college team for the summer," said Einarson on Sunday evening. "I first looked at Weyburn and Edmonton and nothing really came out of that. Moose Jaw's coach reached out to my coach and he asked if we had any outfielders looking to play this summer and I was lucky enough that they liked what they saw in my video. It was a pretty easy process."

Einarson is really looking forward to playing in Moose Jaw.

"It will be nice because a lot of the other teams are playing out of cities and I like the small-town community style of things, in the summertime especially," he said. "It's a little smaller like Gimli."

The calibre of ball will be high, said Einarson, with rosters loaded with American players. It will be kind of neat playing with teammates from south of the border and it will be a

step up for Einarson.

"I think it will be a cool experience to say I played with guys from California and Texas and all that kind of stuff," Einarson said. "Because (in our university league) we only really have Canadians and there are not a lot of Americans in our league. It will be a cool little dynamic to play with and against all of these different guys."

The 12-team league consists of six teams from Saskatchewan and six more from Alberta.

Einarson is currently in his fourth season as a starting outfielder for the University of Calgary Dinos. He regularly hits in the middle of the Dinos' lineup.

"It's been going good and this is probably our best year since I've been with the program," said Einarson, who is majoring in sociology and minoring in business. "We played last year's spring season this fall because of COVID and whatnot. We were above .500 in the regular season and we really thought we had a good chance at a championship but it didn't go our way. It was a little disappointing but that's why we have the spring. We have some rookies coming up that didn't play in the fall and will get to



EXPRESS PHOTO UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Gimli's Kalli Einarson has committed to play baseball for the Moose Jaw Miller Express of the Western Canadian Baseball League next summer.

play in the spring. Our team should be a competitor."

Einarson has really enjoyed his time in Calgary and has made a lot of friends and met a lot of people.

He made a great decision going to

school and playing baseball out west. Einarson is very grateful for the opportunity.

"I want to thank my coaches and family that have helped get this far," he said.

Canada's Olympic mixed doubles curling trials cancelled

Staff

Canada's Olympic mixed doubles curling trials were cancelled late last month due to a rise in athletes testing positive for the COVID-19 virus.

The rate of positive tests — along with the risks associated with travelling caused the cancellation — Curling Canada said in a statement on Dec. 26.

The 16-rink trials to determine Canada's mixed doubles team for the Winter Olympics in Beijing were

scheduled to begin on Dec. 27.

"The increasing numbers of trials-bound athletes testing positive for COVID-19, along with the rise in cases across Canada, made it impossible to stage the event in a safe, responsible manner for athletes, staff and volunteers," Curling Canada said in a statement.

"Unlike the Calgary bubble, which had months of preparation time and allowed athletes to self-isolate at home, and get tests done prior to their

departure for the events, the dramatic rise in positive cases related to the sudden emergence of the Omicron variant across Canada in the past week made those safety precautions impossible to carry out."

The organization's high-performance staff will consult with the Canadian Olympic Committee and Own The Podium on how to nominate a mixed doubles team for China. Curling Canada had earlier said the trials would go ahead with specta-

tors capped at 50 per cent capacity in Stride Place and with athletes' movements limited to their hotel room, the arena, and transportation to the venue.

Canada is the defending Olympic champion in mixed doubles, which made its debut in 2018 in Pyeongchang, South Korea.

John Morris and Kaitlyn Lawes won the first gold medal.

CRJHL reschedules games due to COVID-19

Staff

Here we go again.

Due to concerns for the safety and health of participants caused by the newest COVID-19 variant (omicron) and the rapid spread recently, the Capital Region Junior Hockey League

decided to reschedule some games.

The Selkirk Fishermen's home game with the North Winnipeg Satellites, scheduled for this past Sunday, will be played on a yet-to-be-determined date.

Arborg's home game last Sunday

against St. Malo has been rescheduled to Jan. 22 (7:30 p.m.).

North Winnipeg's home game against Arborg this past Tuesday has been rescheduled to be played Feb. 1 (8 p.m.) at Billy Mosienko Arena.

Meanwhile, the Fishermen's home

game that was scheduled for Jan. 22 versus St. Malo is now moved to Jan. 18 at 7:30 p.m. due to the Viterra Championship being held in Selkirk.

For the same reason, Selkirk's game scheduled for Jan. 30 against Lundar will now be played on Feb. 22.

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

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY - 6-8 MONTH PART-TIME TERM POSITION

R.M. of Grahamdale Economic Development Office/ Municipal Recreation Facilitator

The desired applicant will perform a variety of administrative, technical and professional work to research, prepare and implement economic and community development plans, programs and services.

This is a part-time, term position - 3 days per week starting in February, 2022 (approximately 21.75 hours per week.). This term position has the potential to be extended or become a permanent part-time position. The successful applicant will work with the R.M. of Grahamdale's Community Development Corporation (CDC), Reeve and Council and Municipal Administration.

The applicant should possess the following skills:

- A self-motivated individual, with the ability to work with minimal supervision;
- Have excellent oral and written communication skills;
- The ability to perform varied and multiple tasks within deadlines;
- Computer skills required;
- Dedicated team player;
- Willingness to attend training for Economic Development Officers as well as educational workshops and seminars.

Job Description:

- Administrative - managing the day to day affairs of the CDC (meeting agendas and minutes, correspondence, coordinating reports);
- Administer and implement the decisions of the CDC (this may require attending the occasional event or workshop in the evening or on weekends);
- Research funding opportunities;
- Proposal writing;
- Project development, management, and promotion;
- Public speaking and delivering presentations;
- Marketing and promoting the community.
- Working with community clubs and members of the community to facilitate events and activities within our Municipality;
- Providing general assistance to recreational programs being delivered within our communities;

Hours and wages are negotiable with experience and qualifications.

For more information contact CAO Shelly Schwitek, 768-2858.

Please submit a detailed resume on or before January 12, 2022 by 4:30 p.m. to the R.M. of Grahamdale Municipal Office, PO Box 160, 23 Government Rd., Moosehorn, MB R0C 2E0.
Email: rm606@grahamdale.ca

THE SURVEYS ACT PUBLIC NOTICE

In accordance with Section 11 of the above Act, notice is hereby given that the original monument establishing the following location has been lost:

• ¼ N Section 15-20-3 EPM

A new monument to perpetuate the original location has been planted by Dwayne Denchuk, Manitoba Land Surveyor, on December 21, 2021.

Any person wishing particulars about the re-establishment of this monument is advised to contact the following:

Dwayne Denchuk
Manitoba Land Surveyor
Isaac & Denchuk Manitoba Land Surveyors Ltd.
200 Clandeboy Avenue
Selkirk, Manitoba R1A 0X1
Phone No. 204-785-2924
ddenchuk@idsurveys.com

Examiner of Surveys
Teranet Manitoba
or PO Box 50030
Brandon South East
Brandon, Manitoba R7A 7E4
Phone No. 204-726-6854
Tim.Cassan@teranet.ca

Any persons having any objection to or having any evidence which he/she desires to give against the confirmation of the re-establishment of this lost corner is to submit any such objection or evidence in writing verified by affidavit to the Registrar-General within thirty days from the publication of this notice in the *Express Weekly News*.

Where no objection to or evidence against the confirmation of the re-establishment of this lost corner is received by the Registrar-General within thirty days after publication of this notice, or where any such objection is subsequently withdrawn in writing, the Registrar-General shall confirm the re-establishment of this lost corner.

Registrar-General
Office of the Registrar General
1203-155 Carlton Street
Winnipeg Manitoba R3C 3H8

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Rural Municipality of Woodlands EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

PUBLIC WORKS HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR 2 AND/OR 3

The Rural Municipality of Woodlands invites applications for the full-time position of Public Works Heavy Equipment Operator (Operator 2 and/or 3). The HE Operator's main responsibilities are the operation of a grader and/or excavator. The HE Operator reports to the Public Works Foreman.

Contact the RM of Woodlands Office for a complete job description


Salary as per the agreement between The International Union of Operating Engineers Local 987 and the Rural Municipality of Woodlands. Starting salary for the Operator 2 position (without Class 1 license) \$23.52/hr. Starting salary for the Operator 3 position (with Class 1 license) \$24.41/hr. There is a \$2.00/hr premium for all hours operating the excavator.

Upon completion of probation employees receive Health & Dental, Pension, Group Benefits, and Long-Term Disability.

Applications will start to be reviewed January 21, 2022. Additional applications will continue to be accepted until the position is filled.

R.M. of Woodlands
Box 10
Woodlands, MB R0C 3H0
Fax: (204) 383-5169
Phone: (204) 383-5679
Email: finance@rmwoodlands.ca

We thank all candidates for their interest, however, only candidates selected for interviews will be contacted.



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITION FACILITY MAINTENANCE B

Under the direction of the Public Works Foreman, and with oversight/guidance from the Facility Maintenance A, the Facility Maintenance B is responsible for minor carpentry and repairs to municipal buildings, parks and playground equipment.

High school diploma, GED or equivalent combination of education and experience. Certification, diploma or degree in related field would be an asset

One year of related experience as a carpenter or in the construction industry

Possess a valid class 5 driver's license

Knowledge of equipment maintenance and storage

Must be able to work with little supervision

Candidate must be physically fit, able to lift at least 50 lbs.

Must be flexible to work odd hours and available for overtime when required.

Excellent communication and organizational skills, and a demonstrated ability to work independently and in a team environment are required

Salary is in accordance with the Collective Agreement.

Completed applications stating the position(s) applying for, with resume and references, should be submitted to the Municipal Office located at 62 2nd Avenue by 4:00 p.m. on January 21, 2022

Karl Bergman
Public Works Foreman
Rural Municipality of Gimli
PO Box 1246, 62 – 2nd Avenue
Gimli, MB R0C 1B0
Email: kbergman@rmgimli.com
Fax: (204) 642-6688

We thank all applicants; however only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

Classifieds



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI TOURISM AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE CLERK (.6 FTE – 42 Hours Bi-weekly)

The R.M. of Gimli is seeking to fill the position of Tourism and Visitor Experience Clerk. Reporting to the Chief Administrative Officer, this position will undertake duties and responsibilities to develop, implement and support a variety of tourism initiatives aimed at promoting Gimli as a tourist destination. The following are the key responsibilities:

Tourism Development and Coordination:

- Identify, develop and implement tourism related activities that support promotion of Gimli and the broader municipality as a year-round tourist destination.
- Present new tourism initiatives including costs, target markets and the potential local and municipal impacts of such initiatives.
- Support and coordinate approved initiatives including the marketing and development of tourism promotional campaigns
- Evaluate results and prepare reports including recommendations
- Prepare and produce promotional materials and design displays; sets up and attend relevant events to promote Gimli and the Municipality.
- Develop and maintain the tourism section of Gimli's webpage and manage and support tourism services publicity on various social media platforms.

Support Visitor Experience:

- Support and promote the Gimli downtown, the Beach and Harbourfront.
- Work with local business in support of various tourism initiatives
- Seek business sponsorships for tourism activities

Tourism Administration:

- Administer the Beach Parking Lot
- Oversee and administer the Beach Concession and Red Dock
- Oversee and support the Beach Bash series
- Responsible for the Harbour Market

Works closely with other members of the Municipal team including the Recreation Programmer and others in support of tourism initiatives and community events. Will perform other related duties as assigned.

Qualifications and Experience:

The ideal applicant will have a relevant post-secondary degree in Tourism, Hospitality or a related field and demonstrated relevant experience, or a suitable combination of education and experience. In addition, possess the following:

- Knowledge of the tourism industry in Manitoba with experience in tourism promotion and administration a definite asset.
- Knowledge of Gimli and the surrounding RM would be an asset
- Highly developed oral communication and interpersonal skills
- Customer service focus
- Excellent written communication skills
- Strong computer skills with experience in web-page development and maintenance
- Ability to work varied hours including evenings and weekends.
- Valid Class 5 Driver's Licence and access to a vehicle.

The position is part of the IUOE Office Collective Agreement. The RM provides a comprehensive benefit package. The current salary range is \$20.02 – 23.92 per hour (2021).

Interested applicants should submit a resume detailing their relevant qualifications and experience by 4:00 pm January 20, 2022 to:

Kelly Cosgrove
Chief Administrative Officer
Rural Municipality of Gimli
Box 1246 Gimli MB. R0C 1B0
kcosgrove@rmgimli.com



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FIND THE RIGHT PERSON FOR THE POSITION with an EMPLOYMENT/ CAREERS AD in



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

Sudoku Answer

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

Crossword Answer

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING MEMBERS OF NOVENTIS CREDIT UNION LIMITED (the "Credit Union") TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE CREDIT UNION

TAKE NOTICE THAT a special meeting of the Members of the Credit Union will be held at 6:00 pm on Thursday, the 27th day of January, 2022, via videoconference, for the purpose of announcing the results of the member vote on the proposed Special Resolution for the amalgamation of the Credit Union with Access Credit Union Limited and Sunova Credit Union Limited. All members wanting to participate in the Special Meeting are required to register by January 26th @ 4pm CST.

The Amalgamation Agreement, proposed bylaws, and meeting attendance and voting information package will be available upon request at any branch of the Credit Union.

Questions from members regarding the amalgamation should be submitted to together@noventis.ca, or by calling 1.844.826.6500.

VOTING

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE THAT Voting on the Special Resolution prior to the Meeting will be by electronic ballot and will be tallied electronically by a third party provider. Voting will be open from 9:00 am CST on Tuesday, the 25th day of January, 2022 until a motion is resolved at the Special Meeting on the day of the Meeting. Each member may vote on a personal electronic device or should any member prefer, computers/tablets for the purpose of voting will be available at all branches of the Credit Union during operating hours. Voting will end during the Meeting, with no further votes to be cast after a motion to cease voting is passed at the Meeting.

PROPOSED SPECIAL RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the Board of Directors of the Credit Union has recommended that the Credit Union amalgamate with Access Credit Union Limited ("Access") and Sunova Credit Union Limited ("Sunova") in accordance with the provisions of the Amalgamation Agreement made between the Credit Union, Access, and Sunova, dated December 15, 2021 (the "Amalgamation Agreement");

AND WHEREAS it is in the Credit Union's best interests to enter into the Amalgamation Agreement and to amalgamate with Access and Sunova on the terms and conditions set out therein;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED AS A SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF THE CREDIT UNION THAT:

1. The execution of the Amalgamation Agreement by the Credit Union be and it is hereby ratified and confirmed;
2. The amalgamation of the Credit Union with Access and Sunova on the terms and conditions set out in the Amalgamation Agreement be and it is hereby approved.

SUMMARY OF THE AMALGAMATION AGREEMENT

An Amalgamation Agreement, dated December 15, 2021, has been approved by the Boards of Directors of the Credit Union, Access, and Sunova. The agreement provides for the amalgamation of the Credit Union, Access, and Sunova into one credit union, to be effective on July 1, 2022. The credit union resulting from the amalgamation will be called Access Credit Union Limited and will have its registered office in the Rural Municipality of Stanley, Manitoba.

Following amalgamation, all members of the Credit Union, Access, and Sunova will be members of the amalgamated credit union and all deposits and shares of or loans owing to either of the predecessor credit unions will be deposits or shares of or loans owing to the amalgamated credit union. The common shares and surplus shares of each of the Credit Union, Access, and Sunova will become the common shares and surplus shares of the amalgamated credit union on a one for one basis.

Because of the size of the amalgamated credit union, the transaction must be reported to the Competition Bureau of Canada and is subject to its approval.

RIGHT OF DISSENT

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE THAT, under the provisions of Section 127 of *The Credit Unions and Caisses Populaires Act*, members have the right to dissent to the proposed amalgamation. To dissent, a written objection to the amalgamation must be submitted to the Credit Union at or before the meeting of Members referred to in this Notice.

DATED this 4th day of January, 2022
NOVENTIS CREDIT UNION LIMITED
By Order of the Board of Directors



take a break
> GAMES

SUDOKU

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

Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:

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

Fun By The Numbers

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

	1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	11	
12						13	14						15
16				17								18	
19			20			21			22			23	
24		25			26			27		28	29		
	30			31			32		33		34		
		35	36					37		38			
	39								40				
41					42			43					
44				45		46		47			48	49	
50			51		52		53			54			55
56			57	58		59			60			61	
62			63		64				65			66	
67		68									69		
	70							71					

- pity
56. Hectoliter
57. Morning
59. NYC subway dweller
60. Law enforcement
61. Sodium
62. Elevated subway
63. Facility where wild animals are kept
66. Integrated circuit
67. Seaman's tool
70. Drink to
71. Small group
CLUES DOWN
1. Poem
2. Everest is one (abbr.)
3. Olympic legend Jesse
4. Portable tent
5. When you hope to get there
6. Unwavering

7. Back muscle
8. Within
9. Excessive fluid accumulation in tissues
10. Six
11. Involved as a necessary part
12. 2002 Liotta, Patric film
13. Living thing
14. Type of gin
15. Moved around in pursuit of fun
25. Makes light bulbs
26. Story of one's life
27. Small island in a river
29. A type of bliss

31. Genus of large herons
33. A way to make dry
36. One's grandmother
38. Vocal style

39. Pronunciation mark
41. American Indian chief or leader
42. Insecticide
43. Go bad
46. Capital of Zimbabwe
47. Polish river
49. Cast out
51. People of India and Sri Lanka
53. Cleaning fabrics
54. Very skilled
55. Pouches
58. Restaurant must-have
60. Native Americans from Arizona
64. Remaining after all deductions
65. Fleece
68. Dorm official
69. It cools your home

X CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

1. Struck firmly
6. Shirt part
12. Nevertheless
16. Article
17. Adornment
18. Educator's helper
19. Healthcare pro
20. Atomic number 28
21. Extinct flightless bird
22. Mystic syllable
23. College sports decision

maker (abbr.)

24. Edible mushrooms
26. Venerable English monk
28. Surrounded by
30. Forming fractional numbers from 4 onwards
31. Eastern France river
32. Short cry or yelp
34. Brew
35. Ornamental box
37. In a way, surfaced

39. Attired

40. Peculation
41. Netted
43. It shows you paid (abbr.)
44. Payroll firm
45. Antidiuretic hormone
47. Japanese classical theater
48. The first two
50. Ancient burial chamber
52. Type of card
54. Expression of sorrow or

Announcements

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OBITUARY



Kristjan Paul Vigfusson (Babe)
August 21, 1949 – December 21, 2021

It is with great and overwhelming sadness, we the family of Kris Vigfusson, announce his passing. He passed away peacefully in his home in the early morning hours of the 21st day, in the 21st year, of the 21st century. The true significant meaning of this we are not sure yet, but we know Kris did. He did it in his own way and on his own terms. We often told Kris in his health enforced retirement, to look for a passion, but as I sit and reflect on his life, his passion in life was his family, his community and working. He was a true workaholic. He loved his family completely, warts and all. He was never the type of Dad, Uncle, or Grandfather that would spend hours playing with kids, but his pride in their accomplishments was obvious and evident always.

To Michael he passed his passion for cattle and through the years they enjoyed many a cattle auction and bull buying trips. Kris loved wheeling and dealing, buying, and selling cattle. Nothing gave him as much joy as making a better deal than his dad or brother. Kris also passed another strong trait onto his son Michael and granddaughters Sigga and Steina, and that was his competitive nature. Whether it was playing sports, showing cattle, or just playing a game of cards, Kris went to win.

Although Kris did leave Lundar to work construction on the powerline and to work in Fisher Branch, it did not take long for him to return home and buy his Uncle Leifer and Aunt Alice's store. He established Lundar Meats & Groceries and his love for his community was really allowed to bloom. He became involved in all aspects of community life.

He could curl, golf, play ball, be involved in Grettir, The Ag Society, and later when Michael played hockey, he devoted hours to Mike's hockey team. He was never much of a hunter but became very involved in the All-Canada Goose Shoot. He spent hours looking for fields and geese. He was never afraid of a microphone and for years was the announcer, which was a job he gladly handed over to his brother-in-law Virgil. He passed his love for the Goose Shoot on to his son, who has also spent hours looking for geese and fields.

Kris became a school trustee and put all his passion into trying to improve and maintain the quality of education in Lakeshore School Division. This led to many a heated discussion around the kitchen table but he never wavered in his beliefs of what was needed to keep our school community a strong, healthy, and highly functioning unit. One of the highlights for Kris in this role was graduation and he would try and make graduation special for each group of graduates. From dressing up to picking music specifically for each group of students, to dancing for and with the grads, he always did his best. How he performed the way he did for the grads was beyond me. Kris suffered from almost crippling anxiety but on those grad days no one would have ever known. In fact, he had suffered from it his whole life, but with his charismatic personality, no one but a very select few would have ever known what he went through.

When Kris's body started to deteriorate and forced him into retirement, he had to make adjustments that for him were not easy. He was diagnosed with Parkinsons disease, and it took away his ability to verbalize which caused him some real issues and affected his mobility which was also very disturbing to him. But every now and then the twinkle in his eye was there and he could get his little digs in. In casual conversation sometime, you can ask Judy and Roy about the twinkle. They saw it often and knew when it was there it was a good day.

His newest partner in crime was his great nephew Kauri and the bond that developed between them in such a short period of time was very special and obvious to us all.

In Kris's life he often enjoyed the company of other women. He loved his Lauraly completely. The addition of a daughter was something new and wonderful for Kris. Kris didn't really worry about hurting your feelings and often had Cathy near tears as a teenager. The bond between Cathy and him was never ending.

Kris loved life, he loved his family, he loved his community, loved to dance, and sing. He devoted his life to making his piece of the world a better place. He was a very grateful member of AA for 47 years and throughout those years he tried to give as much back as he had got from the program.

If Kris touched your life in anyway just know that he appreciated everything you ever did for him. Throughout the years his body had suffered a great deal of trauma and he was always grateful for the support that him and his family received from friends, family, and the community. No one will ever really know what it meant to him, Cindy and Michael but thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Rest easy Kris.

Hope you are wheeling and dealing with Butch.

Sharing a laugh with Lucky and Stan.

Playing a game of crib with Mart.

Getting a lecture from Isabel.

And wrapped up in the love and comfort of family and friends.

Know you were well loved and are truly missed by your family and friends. You never have anything to be sorry for. Love you now and forever.

I won't be long.

Love, me.

Cremation has taken place. A service will be held at a later date.

If anyone wishes to make charitable donation in Kris's honor please send to the Lundar Agricultural Society, Box 687 Lundar, MB R0C 1Y0 or charity of your choice.

Arrangements by:
ARNASON FUNERAL HOME
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OBITUARY

Hertha Wanda (Geisler) Arnason

In the early morning of December 27, 2021, Hertha Arnason, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother passed away in peaceful dignity.

She was born on July 9, 1916 to Ernest and Augusta Geisler in their home on the family farm in the R.M. of Siglunes, 7 miles from Ashern. Her early years were spent on the farm. She attended Marne School and Ashern Central School. Together with her sisters, she enjoyed an active social life including recreational baseball.

In 1942 on October 18, Hertha married Lawrence Gudmundur Arnason. They started their married life in Winnipeg where Lawrence worked for the Mordue Brothers Funeral Home and their first son, Glen, was born in 1944. In 1946 the family moved back to Ashern where, together with Thorkell J. Clemens, they established Clemens & Arnason General Store and Clemens & Arnason Funeral Home.

Hertha worked at both the store and the funeral home. She continued to answer phones and order the flowers for many years even after her son Glen became the director of Arnason Funeral Home. Many people, no doubt, remember ordering flowers through her for their special occasions of weddings and graduations.

In 1951 Hertha and Lawrence had their second son Chuck.

Her life of 105 years, 5 months and 18 days saw many changes in the country and the world: world wars, pandemics (including COVID), telephones from party lines and operators to dial phones to cell phones, television from black and white to colour to satellite to internet, box cameras to a camera in almost everyone's pocket, from waiting for pictures to be developed to instant photos, from horse and buggy to cars with satellite radios, 19 different Canadian Prime Ministers, four Kings and Queens, from mailing a letter to instant email and messages and even the right for women to vote.

She was an independent woman. It was only at the age of 80 that she consented to a move to a 55 plus apartment where she lived for 16 years before moving temporarily to the Lundar Personal Care Home and then to Ashern Personal Care home for her last years. She was an active member of the Grace Lutheran Church where she sang in the choir. She enjoyed the NHL broadcasts, first on radio and then on TV, especially if her son or grandson were playing. She was a very astute card player and remained adept at Skip Bo even in her 104th year.

Hertha was predeceased by her parents Ernest and Augusta; her husband Lawrence in 1967; her daughter-in-law Carol in 2009; her sisters Tillie, Olive, Alma and Emily; her brothers Rudolph, Leonard, Roy, Albert and Edward.

She is survived by her sons, Glen, Chuck (Leanne), her grandchildren Aubrey (Graham), Tyler (Nicole), her great-grandchildren Langston and Clara; her sister-in-law Antoinette Geisler; her God-child Sandra Falk and many nieces and nephews in Canada and the United States. She will be missed by her family and the families of many of her friends who have lovely stories to tell of her time in their parent's lives.

The family is grateful to the caring staff at the Lundar Personal Care Home and the Ashern Personal Care Home where she was respected and well cared for in her last years.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, information on a memorial service to celebrate her very long life will follow at a later date.

Donations in her memory, if so wished, can be sent to the Lakeshore Hospital Guild, c/o Julie Bergner, Box 721 Ashern MB R0C 0E0, or Ashern Personal Care Home, Recreational Use, c/o Darlene Hargot, PO Box 110, Ashern, MB R0C 0E0 or Grace Lutheran Church, Box 240, Ashern, MB R0C 0E0.

Arrangements by:
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OBITUARY

Catherine (Cathy) Doreen Slimon (nee Sneesby)

Peacefully on Tuesday, December 28, 2021 at the Tyndall Building, Selkirk, with her husband by her side, Cathy Slimon, aged 67 years of Gimli, MB passed away.

She is survived by her husband John; her children Mark Richardson, Ky Richardson (Stephanie) and Brandi Wilkins; grandchildren Michelle, Jake, Nichelle, Breeze, Bay, Calliway, Kaid, Brody and Cass; step-children Jamey Slimon and Tracy Sheppard and their families; brother Les Sneesby (Diana); sister Lynne Laramee (Joseph); numerous nieces and nephews.

Cathy was predeceased by her parents George and Alice Sneesby; brother Donald Sneesby and in-laws James and Gloria Slimon.

She was born on November 25, 1954 in Winnipeg and was raised there. Cathy enjoyed gardening, music and being out on the water in the pontoon. She loved being with her grandchildren and her dogs.

Cathy and John travelled to Mexico a number of times and to the U.S.A.

In keeping with her wishes, cremation has taken place and a celebration of life will be held in the summer.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Cathy's name to the Alzheimer's Society of Manitoba.

Condolences may be left on her tribute wall at www.gilbartfuneralhome.com

Gilbart Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



IN MEMORIAM



In Memory of
Lyla Smith
August 18, 1945 - January 9, 2021

The moment that you left us,
Our hearts were torn in two;
One side filled with heartache,
The other left with you.
But you left us with Great Memories that we
will Forever hold onto.

-Love As Always:
husband Mike
son Wade, daughter Laurie and Greg
grandchildren and great-granddaughter

IN MEMORIAM



Edward John Kowalchuk
August 13, 1945 - January 8, 2013

Though your smile is gone forever,
And your hand we cannot touch;
Still, we have so many memories,
Of you who we loved so much.
Your memory is our keepsake,
With which we'll never part;
God has you in His keeping,
And we have you in our hearts.

-With love from your whole family
that misses you every day.
Hug Dad and Tom for us

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OBITUARY



Judith Margery Sigurdson
November 16, 1934 - December 21, 2021

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Judith Margery Sigurdson (nee Thorsteinson) on December 21, 2021 at Betel Home in Gimli.

Judith is survived by her children Clyde (Doreen), Keith (Connie), Ingrid, and Kevin (Jen); seven grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; her brother Brian Thorsteinson (Karen); brother-in-law Irwin Olafson; sister-in-law Alta Sigurdson; many nieces, nephews, family and friends.

She was predeceased by her parents Chris and Ingiborg Thorsteinson; husband Victor Sigurdson; her brothers Russel and Ken; sister-in-law Matilda.

It was difficult to watch as Alzheimer's slowly stole away her personality, dignity and memories.

Judith was kind, patient and loving. She always had time for a visit, a cup of coffee and she loved Sunday dinners with family.

She loved spending time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren and will be missed by all.

Cremation has taken place and a celebration of life will be held next summer.

We would like to thank all the staff at Betel for the wonderful care over the past many years.

If you would like, donations can be made to Alzheimer Society of Manitoba.

Condolences may be left on her tribute wall at www.gilbartfuneralhome.com

Gilbart Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



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