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Hooked on fishing

EXPRESS PHOTO BY CORRINE EINARSSON

All the anglers young and old were having a reel good time at the Riverton Classic Ice Fishing Derby on Feb. 17 in spite of the -30 C temperatures.

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Riverton Classic Ice Fishing Derby brings in a crowd to inaugural event

By E Antonio

Ice fishing enthusiasts braved the frigid temperatures for the Riverton Classic Ice Fishing Derby on Feb. 17. The event took place at Sandy Bar Beach, and their inaugural year was a thrilling success.

Ruth Ann Furgala, derby chair, is overwhelmed by the community's support.

"We are exhausted but extremely excited with how everything went."

In total, 317 tickets were sold for this year's event, and many registrations were received the morning of despite the temperature dropping below -30.

The derby raised funds for the maintenance and operations of the Riverton Transport & Heritage Centre (RTHC) and Riverton Minor Hockey (RMH), with proceeds split evenly between the two organizations.

Ross Cooper, RMH president, shared that the association is grateful for everyone's support at the derby.

"Riverton is a very passionate hockey town and the support and commitment from the community is unbelievable."

They plan to use the funds to help keep their registration fees the lowest in Interlake and to purchase new equipment and jerseys.

The total fundraised amount is still being calculated and will be

announced at a later date.

The Riverton Classic Ice Fishing Derby was originally scheduled for March 2024 but was cancelled due to poor ice conditions.

This resulted in changing the date to Feb. 17, which coincided with Louis Riel Day.

Volunteers spent three days preparing the Sandy Beach Bar for the derby. They created an ice road, parking lot and a five-acre derby surface for all patrons. On the morning of the event, supporting businesses set up trailers serving as warming stations and food vendors.

The derby taking place on Louis Riel Day was a happy accident. Furgala explained that they originally picked the date because no other derbies were taking place.

"It was an outstanding idea to pick Louis Riel Day, and that will go down in history," she said.

This allowed for the Riverton and District Friendship Centre (RDFC) and Riverton Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) members to unite with the community to honour Louis



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY CORRINE EINARSSON

These fishers kept warm playing Indigenous games on Louis Riel Day. The funds raised from the derby will be used for the maintenance and operations of the Riverton Transport & Heritage Centre and Riverton Minor Hockey with proceeds split evenly between the two organizations.



Riel.

The day kicked off with a free pancake breakfast hosted by the RDFC and MMF for all derby ticket holders and was offered to community members without a ticket for \$5.

For lunch, fishers were invited to purchase from one of their local vendors. The Djorfung Lady's Aid cooked up a hearty meal of chili and served it with freshly made bannock donated by the MMF.

Danny's Whole Hog Barbecue served patrons a delicious plate of pulled pork on a bun and hot dogs. The RDFC youth group also sold sweet and salty snacks.

All profits from lunch sales were generously donated back to the Riverton Classic Ice Fishing Derby committee.



Continued on page 3



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EXPRESS PHOTOS BY CORRINE EINARSSON



> ICE FISHING, FROM PG. 2

"We got 100 per cent of everything that was brought in," added Furgala.

Other event supporters included Riverton Elks Lodge #530, Westshore Marine & Leisure, Berger Peat Moss, the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton, Palstein Developments, Riverton Apartments, Lakefish Net & Twine and Bardason's Washroom Facilities. These organizations donated cash, prizes, equipment and staff to ensure the derby's success.

RDFC also hosted many inside activities at the Riverton Community Hall in honour of Louis Riel Day.

The jigging contest was the highlight of the breakfast, and it was judged by the audience based on the loudest cheers. There were multiple categories, including youth, adult male, adult female and grannies.

The jigging champions were Keisha Charlotte-Haut, Nevaeh Munroe, JoJo and Shelly Bjornson.

A variety of Indigenous games for youth to play were hosted by the Rivertohn & District Friendship Centre and were fun as well as educational.

The Louis Riel Day celebrations rounded out with free cake and coffee, as they welcomed back ice fishers into the hall.

The entire planning committee is grateful for the tremendous support they received, which they describe as

"the community coming together in the best possible way."

A total of 24 fish were caught throughout the derby, and cash prizes were awarded to those who reeled in the longest fish.

Aurora Hardy, a 17-year-old from Riverton, brought home the \$3,000 grand prize with her 24-inch fish in the adult category.

For the youth, Kaz Sylvester, a 15-year-old from Gimli, won a \$300 prize for his 17.25-inch fish. Ten more lucky winners also took home cash prizes for their big reels.

The day of fun closed off at Riverton Hall, where 350 patrons gathered for the wrap-up ceremony, where prize winners were announced. Everyone who purchased a ticket was entered to win one of 37 prizes. Three grand prizes were up for grabs, including an electric bike valued at \$7,100 donated by Westshore Marine & Leisure, a SnoBear Ice Fishing Trip valued at \$900 donated by Rick Gergatz and a \$900 Fish Finder prize package from Sandy Bar Fishing Club.

Furgala is thankful for everyone who sponsored a prize and to the nearly 50 volunteers who made the derby a success

If you missed the thrilling events at this year's Riverton Classic Ice Fishing Derby, be sure to save the date for their second derby on Louis Riel Day, Feb. 16, 2026.

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Province encouraging increased hunter participation in CWD surveillance program

Improved turnaround time for testing chronic wasting disease in deer, elk

By Patricia Barrett

Since 2021, the provincial government has identified 30 positive cases of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in wild cervids. The government has improved testing turnaround times and is stressing the importance of having hunters participate in the CWD surveillance program.

The province has been monitoring CWD in wild cervids, including deer, elk, moose and caribou, since 1997, and it identified the first positive case in 2021.

Four positive CWD cases were identified during the past hunting season (2024-2025) due to mandatory biological sampling submissions and provincial harvesting efforts, which are part of the CWD surveillance program. The program aims to reduce the spread of fatal and infectious diseases.

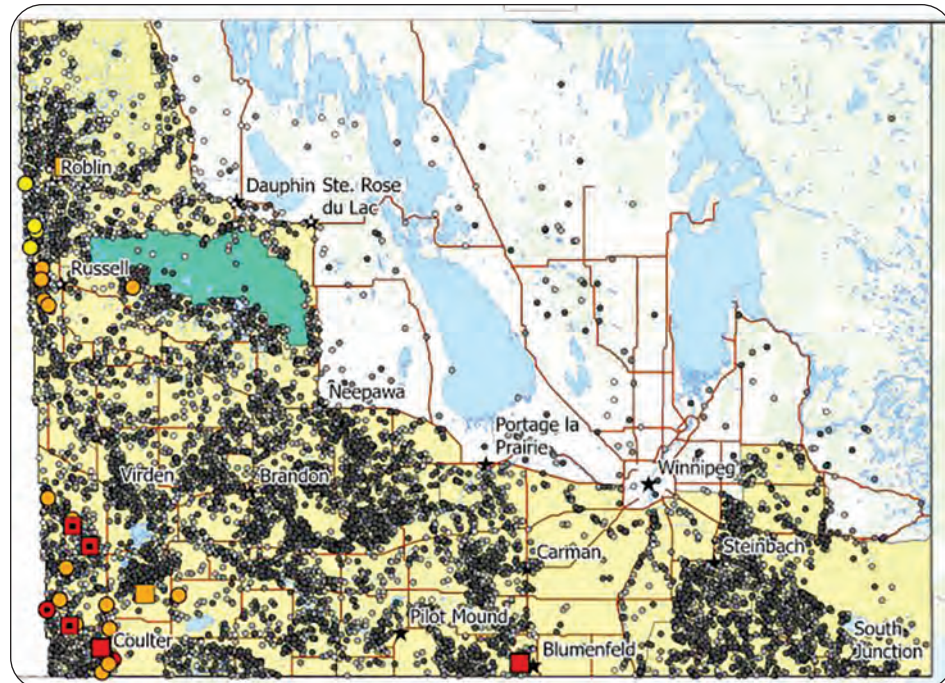
During the 2024-2025 hunting season, the province improved the average turnaround time for CWD test results and processed about 3,100 samples.

"This past year saw success in the program's efforts to streamline processes, reduce staffing requirements and cut testing times significantly, while expanding licensed hunting opportunities. The average turnaround time for test results was 22 days this year, compared to 37 days in 2023-24 and 77 days in 2022-23," states a Feb. 14 provincial news release.

Chronic wasting disease is a fatal central nervous system disease caused by one or more strains of proteins called prions. According to the province's CWD webpage, once infected, the prions first propagate in the lymph nodes and tonsils and later in the brain, spinal cord and other organs. The disease belongs to a group of diseases called transmissible spongiform encephalopathies.

Prions are shed in saliva, feces, urine and possibly through the cervids' remains. Infected animals tend to be less alert and fearful, lose weight, become uncoordinated and often drool excessively. It can take two to five years for the animal to die. There is no cure for CWD.

There is no direct evidence to date that CWD can spread to humans, but available data suggest the risk is "not zero." Various health organizations,



GOVERNMENT OF MANITOBA

The map shows positive CWD cases (identified by red and yellow squares and circles) between 2021 and 2025 in western and southern Manitoba. Four cases of CWD were identified during the 2024-2025 hunting season. The CWD surveillance zone (in light yellow) does not extend to the Interlake, other provincial areas and federal parks. The province says hunter participation in the sampling program is "paramount for CWD surveillance and disease monitoring."



FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

There have been no CWD cases on elk farms in Manitoba. Elk on an Interlake ranch has features to protect the herd from contact with wild deer and elk, as well as other disease-management protocols.

such as Health Canada, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the World Health Organization, advise people not to eat meat from CWD-positive animals.

In November 2021, the province found its first CWD case in a mule deer buck in western Manitoba near Lake of the Prairies. The buck was considered unhealthy, acting unnaturally and euthanized by provincial staff.

A spokesperson for the Department of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures said all four of the positive cases identified in the latest surveil-

lance season originated from an existing CWD area: Game Hunting Area 27 in southwestern Manitoba.

"Wild cervids move regularly across jurisdictional borders, making it difficult to determine if CWD-positive animals are from within Manitoba or are transient animals from other areas," said the spokesperson. "At present, CWD is being detected in low numbers in the province's southwestern corner, which suggests these animals are entering the province from neighbouring jurisdictions that have higher

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Winnipeg Beach launches nomination period for new mayor, starting this Saturday

By Patricia Barrett

The Town of Winnipeg Beach's nomination period for the position of mayor will open on March 1 and run until March 7.

The town has been without a mayor for almost five months since former mayor Pamela Jackson resigned last fall.

Jackson, who was elected mayor in 2022, resigned at the council's regular meeting on Sept. 25, 2024, citing a culture of male harassment of women in politics, homophobic slurs made against her and a refusal to allow her

to take a medical leave for a spinal cord injury (see Oct. 3, 2024, online edition of the *Express*). Jackson had previously served on the Winnipeg Beach council from 2006 to 2010.

Nominations for mayor must be in writing and signed by at least 25 voters or not less than one per cent of voters (whichever is the lesser).

The nomination must also be accompanied by the mayoral candidate's declaration of qualification.

A nomination paper can be obtained from the senior election official (SEO) B. Leah McIsaac.



FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

The Winnipeg Beach seawall is shown in 2022 when Lake Winnipeg had elevated water levels.

The nomination period runs from March 1 to 7. During this time, nomination documents can be dropped off at the Town of Winnipeg Beach administration office at 29

Robinson Ave. between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

For more information, contact SEO B. Leah McIsaac at 204-782-2146 or email: seo@winnipegbeach.ca

> ELK, FROM PG. 4

rates of CWD prevalence, such as Saskatchewan and North Dakota."

He said There have been no CWD cases on elk farms in Manitoba.

"The prevalence of CWD remains very low in Manitoba. The province continues to encourage hunting, which can help decrease deer population densities and reduce CWD risks," said the spokesperson. "Hunters are already required by law to submit CWD samples across the province's CWD surveillance zone."

The CWD surveillance zones contain 25 different game-hunting areas. According to the province's website, hunters can either submit the entire head and upper neck of their animals or extract tissue samples themselves (lymph nodes and lower jaw of mule and white-tailed deer and the brain stem and lower jaw of elk) and submit them. The department is reviewing the surveillance program to potentially require additional sampling in the current CWD zone and elsewhere.

Fantasy market, LARP and ball coming to Eriskdale this June

By Becca Myskiw

A world of wonder is coming to Eriskdale this June.

On Saturday, June 7, the Shadows and Starlight Fantasy Market, LARP and Fantasy Ball will take over the Eriskdale Recreation Centre. The magical event will feature a vendor market full of fantasy wares, live-action role play (LARP) demonstrations and "an evening of dancing and merriment."

Erika Lindell is working with the RogerKimLee Music Festival board to host the Shadows and Starlight Fantasy Market, LARP and Fantasy Ball in town, and she's hoping this year's event is the first of many. The RogerKimLee Music Festival board is trying to bring more people to

Eriskdale and attract all kinds of people, and this event is one way they're doing that.

"We're creating an environment for adults to live out a little bit of that geeky fantasy we had as kids," she said, "and showing just because you grew up doesn't mean you have to stop dressing up."

The day will start at 10 a.m. with the fantasy market and LARP demonstrations, which will go on until 4 p.m. when the recreation centre will close for just four hours to be transformed into a fantasy ball. Lindell said vendors at the market will all offer goods with a fantasy element — like crystals, card reading, tarot, dice markers and more.

While people shop, the LARP

demonstrations will be happening in a corner of the centre to show people what the activity is all about. The demonstrations will be held by Mithaven Underworld LARP, a dark fantasy group that takes inspiration from shows like *The Witcher*, *Lord of the Rings* and *Game of Thrones*. Tickets for the market and LARP demonstrations will be \$5 at the door and free for those under 18.

The recreation centre will open at 8 p.m. for the ball, which will give attendees the opportunity to dress up, learn a dance, partake in a silent auction, enjoy food and drinks, and be together.

The fantasy ball is an all-ages event, and tickets will cost \$45 for adults and \$15 for children. Once on sale, it's rec-

ommended that people buy tickets in advance.

"It'll be a night full of dance and costumes and mystery and magic," said Lindell.

She loves to dress up, often doing cosplay but not LARP, though she is interested in it. Lindell said she's looking forward to the demonstrations so she can learn more about LARP and ask her questions about it.

"If you're interested in the fantastical, if there's that little bit of spark left in you or that little bit of mystery where you're wondering what it's all about, I think it'd be a really good thing to go to," said Lindell. "Getting back to that child inside of us is a really important thing."

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New spaces in hospitals, schools and post-secondary institutes means more children to receive care

By Annaliese Meier

The governments of Canada and Manitoba are partnering to expand high-quality child-care spaces for children up to six years old. Federal Minister of Families, Children and Social Development Jenna Sudds and Manitoba's Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning Tracy Schmidt announced this initiative last Monday.

Sudds said child care is a vital support for parents, families and communities.

"We'll continue to work with Manitoba to find new innovative solutions to creating more affordable child-care spaces, to reduce waitlists and to grow the early childhood workforce, to fit parents needs, where and when they need it the most."

Schmidt shared similar sentiments. "We're investing in child-care spaces to meet parents and caregivers where they're at to make life easier for families," said Schmidt. "Our government continues to build the child-care system as a whole — creating spaces that meet the needs

of families, offering programming to attract and support child-care professionals and investing in learning outcomes for a quality early education experience."

As part of the action plan signed in February 2025 under the Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund, Manitoba will invest \$20.9 million in federal funding over three years to create approximately 324 child-care spaces in health-care facilities.

Minister Uzoma Asagwara emphasized the importance of these flexible spaces for health-care staff and families, helping them balance work and child care while supporting the recruitment of new health-care professionals.

Through the Canada-Manitoba Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, there will be 256 new child-care spaces in six schools, along with a total of over 2,600 new infant and preschool spaces across the province. Additionally, 128 new spaces will open at Red River College

Polytechnic and University College of the North, part of an overall investment of \$60.5 million across post-secondary institutions.

Minister Renée Cable highlighted that improved child-care options will enhance access to post-secondary education, ultimately strengthening the workforce and economy.

In addition to expanding spaces, investments will support training programs, including funding for the Manitoba Métis Federation to assist Ukrainian newcomers and the Urban Circle Training Centre to train Indigenous students for child-care careers. The Outdoor Early Childhood Education Grant will help enhance outdoor programming for licensed facilities.

The Tuition Reimbursement program offers up to \$5,000 per school year to assist Manitoba students in early childhood education programs. Since 2022, the program has provided over \$6.1 million in support. To date, the partnership has opened over 4,300 child-care spaces for children aged zero to six across Manitoba.

Provincial ice-jam mitigation program underway on Red River

By Annaliese Meier

Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure will begin its annual ice-cutting program on the Red River this week to help reduce the potential impacts of flooding caused by ice jams. The work commenced on Feb. 18 and is scheduled for completion by March 15.

The ice-jam mitigation program started in 2006 and aims to decrease the risk of flooding from ice jams on the lower Red River and other rivers. Ice jams occur when floating ice obstructs the downstream flow of water, leading to backups that can overflow

riverbanks.

Each year, remote-controlled ice-cutting units and three Amphibex icebreakers are deployed to cut and break approximately 28 kilometres of ice on the Red River, from Netley Marsh to Selkirk, covering a width of about 100 metres.

Additionally, ice-cutting and breaking operations are regularly conducted on the Icelandic River at Riverton and at the outlet of the Portage Diversion. While ice-cutting activities are planned for Riverton, they are not expected to be necessary at the Portage Diversion; however, the

province will continue to monitor this area.

Notices will be posted in locations where the ice-cutting machines are operating. River users are advised to stay off the ice in these areas or where there is evidence of recent ice cutting. Ice fishers are also reminded to remove their huts or any other materials from the areas affected by the ice-mitigation program.

For further information and updates on Manitoba's water conditions and forecasts, visit <https://gov.mb.ca/mti/floodinfo/index.html>.

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Possible Trump tariff on Canadian lumber to join tariff on steel and aluminium

By Patricia Barrett

Canada may be rolling with U.S. President Donald Trump's tariff punches, but it definitely does not like them.

The country suffered another blow last Wednesday evening when Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One that he was considering imposing a 25 per cent tariff on lumber and forestry products entering the U.S. from other countries, including Canada. That might happen sometime in April.

If a lumber tariff is "stacked" on top of the tariff Trump previously announced, Canada could see a tariff of around 50 per cent on lumber.

Responding earlier this month to Trump's 25 per cent tariff on all Canadian products entering America, Derek Nighbor, president and CEO of the Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC), said the tariff would drive up costs and hurt both Canadians and Americans.

"For home building, the United States can only meet about 70 per cent of its own needs — not considering the need to build even more affordable housing for American families and to urgently rebuild communities in North Carolina hit hard by Hurricane Helen and those around Los Angeles recently devastated by fires. This is work Canadians and Americans can do together. These tariffs will drive up costs and complicate recovery," said Nighbor in a Feb. 1 statement. "Americans also rely on Canadian forest products for further manufacturing — to make everyday household and industrial products like packaging, diapers, hygiene products, paper towels, toilet paper, magazines and specialty paper."

FPAC provides a voice to Canada's wood, pulp and paper producers. The forestry sector is one of the country's largest employers, providing about 200,000 jobs, and sees annual revenues of over \$87.2 billion.

The Express contacted a local sawmill and FPAC for comment about a possible 25 per cent tariff on lumber.

Trump's presidential reign started with two tariffs against Canada: 25 per cent on all products and 10 per cent on energy, both of which are ostensibly scheduled to start on March 4. In mid-February, Trump said he'd impose a 25 per cent tariff on steel and aluminum — "stacked" on top of the 25-per-cent-on-everything tariff — which will supposedly come into effect on March 12 and may effectively be 50 per cent. Trump also threatened to impose reciprocal tariffs against countries that impose tariffs on imported American products.

At a Conservative conference in Maryland last week, Trump reiterated his tariff message: "I'm not happy with Mexico or [sic] I'm not happy with Canada, either," he said. "I imposed 25 per cent tariffs on all foreign steel and aluminum, and I will soon impose reciprocal tariffs on any country that charges us."

In mere weeks, Trump has insulted, threatened and alienated America's allies and trade partners, as well as sullied America's reputation as a relatively stable, secure country.

He said on his personal social media platform, Truth Social, that he had enjoyed "THREE GREAT WEEKS, PERHAPS THE BEST EVER," which came after a flurry of activity that included his throwing the rule law



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

A semitrailer is shown delivering logs to a sawmill in the northern Interlake.

in America and internationally into the rubbish bin, making repeated antagonistic statements about Canada becoming America's 51st state, refusing to rule out using military force to seize Greenland because — according to Trump — "people don't even know if Denmark has any legal right to it," proposing to "clean out" about 2 million people from Gaza and turn the strip into a seaside resort, and harassing fact-checking media outlets that serve as counterweights to hate and misinformation and disinformation.

Last week, Trump brought Russia in from its Western-imposed gulag to talk about Ukraine's future — without the land Russia stole from the country and with American access to 50 per cent of Ukraine's minerals. That move has prompted a crisis in Europe. The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine entered its fourth year on Feb. 24. Oh, Trump also falsely accused Ukraine of starting the war and called Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky a "dictator."

Economic experts and politicians say Trump's tariffs will cause inflation in Canada and America, and consumers will pay the price. Inflation in America rose in January, and there is uncertainty about how the American economy will fare during the 1,426 days left (as of Feb. 23) of Trump's presidency.

Even though many U.S. states have said they value their close economic ties and friendship with Canada — vice versa for Canadian provinces and territories — Trump's tariffs and unstatesmanlike behaviour are changing everyday Canadians' view of America.

A Leger poll conducted between Feb. 14 and 17 on Canadians' perceptions of America shows that three-quarters (74 per cent) of Canadians have an "unfavourable opinion" of Trump, with 13 per cent viewing him favourably.

Regarding the U.S. itself, 27 per cent of Canadians view their southern neighbour as an "enemy country" and 30 per cent view it as an ally.

Customer pays it forward at Inwood café

By Jennifer McFee

A diner at an Inwood café shared a taste of generosity by paying for everyone's meals at the local eatery.

Earlier this month, a customer at Rosie's Café quietly paid for the breakfasts of his fellow diners.

"He's a regular customer. He comes here quite often. He just came in and bought a coffee and said he would get all the breakfasts. I think he paid for three tables," said restaurant owner Rose Emms, who wasn't working at the time.

"He's a super nice guy. He's from the north and he was just travelling through."

The other diners in the restaurant were pleasantly surprised by the anonymous gesture.

"We have that happen every now and then, and they're always quite surprised. We find that a lot of people from the north are very respectful of their elders. So if they see elder people sitting in here, they'll quietly come up and say they'll get their breakfast for them," she said.

"Then they go on their way. We'll tell the customers quietly after they leave. They do it as a sign of respect, not for any recognition. It's always nice when they do that."



TRIBUNE PHOTO SUBMITTED

The spirit of kindness often shines brightest in the simplest of gestures. At Rosie's Café, an anonymous diner took it upon himself to brighten the day for others by covering their breakfast bills earlier this month.

Flag of Humanity Foundation donates \$3,000 to Guatemalan school

By Patricia Barrett

The founder of the Gimli-based Flag of Humanity, which received Canadian charitable status last year, delivered a message of unity and a monetary donation to a school in Guatemala last month.

Bruce Benson visited the town of Poza Verde, where he met some teachers and students at the Escuela Mixta Aldea Poza Verde. He later presented the school with a cheque for \$3,000.

Benson said his foundation was “pretty happy” to do that.

“The initial plan was to find five kids to pick up trash and we’d award them with \$500 each. Having toured the school and realizing there were 150 students, and also realizing they needed a lot of things that could benefit all the students, we gave the money to the school instead,” said Benson. “The teachers told me they dip into



their own pockets to buy supplies for the school. We don’t realize how lucky we are [in Canada] to have the schools we do and the supplies we have.”

Benson had visited Guatemala once before, and he decided to go to a different part of the Central American country, which borders Mexico to the north, after a friend of a friend offered him free lodging so that he carry out his mission of spreading the message of the commonality of being human and voluntarily cleaning up trash.

The homeowner’s wife, who offered Benson his house, is in charge of the school, and she introduced Benson to teachers and many students. Benson said the school was on its scheduled two-month break. They spent a morning cleaning the school, then hung up the Flag of Humanity and distributed about 100 T-shirts to the kids.

“The people I met in Guatemala were absolutely fantastic. I was staying in an out-of-the-way spot and started picking up trash along a gravel road about a two-mile walk from Poza Verde, which is half the size of Gimli,” said Benson. “On the second day, a group of kids came along and said, ‘We will help you.’ It was a wonderful experience.”

Benson created the flag in 2008 after realizing his son would inherit a troubled world. Its mantra is to celebrate the commonality of being human regardless of a person’s religion, skin colour, nationality or politics. Over almost two decades, Benson has taken his flag to Jerusalem, Egypt, China, Thailand and America, to name a few places.

With U.S. president Donald Trump targeting Canada with a suite of punishing tariffs, Benson said his flag sends a message that is the antithesis of nationalistic rhetoric.

“In this time of uncertainly we’re facing right now with what’s happening south of the border with nationalism, we need this message more than ever. When I first heard the term nationalism, I thought it was a wonderful term. People should be proud of their country and be patriotic. But



EXPRESS PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRUCE BENSON

Gimli’s Bruce Benson was in Guatemala earlier this year and presented \$3,000 to the teachers and students at the Escuela Mixta Aldea Poza Verde.



On Bruce Benson’s second day of picking up trash in Guatemala, a group of kids came along helped.

what nationalism has come to mean is us and them. The world is too small for us-and-them thinking, and the problems of the world are too big for us-and-them thinking,” said Benson. “So the message of the Flag of Humanity is opposite of us and them.”

In a month or so, Benson said he’s taking his flag to India to visit the Golden Temple, a religious site in Amritsar, in the Punjab region. Then, in the summer, he’s taking the flag on a lengthy kayaking journey down the Mississippi River, which will take about two months as it’s a couple of thousand miles from the headwaters to the Gulf of Mexico.

“How will I be received in America? Well, I’m bringing a positive message.

I’m just going there with a message of unity; that’s all it is. Who would have a problem with that?” he said.

Wherever he takes the flag, Benson says people appreciate its message.

“The Flag of Humanity is a message that really resonates wherever I go,” he said. “There are a few constants: children always want to help me [clean up trash], and people respond positively to the flag’s message.”

Benson said that if any teacher in Manitoba would like to have a Flag of Humanity in their classroom, he’d be more than happy to provide one.

For more information about the Flag of Humanity, visit <https://theflagof-humanity.com>

Community Support Service

A.A Meeting in Ashern

Location: #11 2nd Ave North
- Pioneer Manor
(beside the main door entrance
of Pioneer Manor)
Contact Jackiem.lwrc@gmail.com

AA Arborg

Thursdays - 7:30 pm
Arborg Support Centre
327 Main Street
Contact 204-376-5861

AA Eriksdale

Eriksdale United Church building
#7 Main Street, Eriksdale (side door)
Meetings are Mondays
at 6:30 p.m.

AA Winnipeg Beach

Lady of the Lake RC Church
Corner of Hwy. 9 and Lake Ave.,
Winnipeg Beach
Meetings are Saturdays
between 7 and 8 p.m.
Contact Ann J 204-389-3417

Gimli Group AA

Bldg 18 Municipal Rd
Industrial Park
Fri & Sun Mtgs at 7:30 pm

Al-Anon

Gimli and Winnipeg Beach

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7:00 pm Wednesday evenings for an
hour of support, strength, guidance
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AA Riverton Group

12 Main St. at the
Riverton Senior Centre
Mondays 7:30 p.m.

Preventing the spread of zebra mussels in Lake Manitoba

By E Antonio

Addressing the issue of zebra mussels in Lake Manitoba is paramount for preserving the health of aquatic ecosystems.

The insights shared at the recent Aquatic Invasive Species Virtual Summit highlight a growing concern that affects not just local lakes but waterways across the entire province. With rapid reproduction and an ability to thrive in shallow waters, zebra mussels pose significant risks to native species and overall water quality.

Recently, RM of Grahamdale Coun. Greg Jabusch and Reeve Craig House participated in the virtual summit to address this pressing issue.

Presenters from across the province covered topics on protecting and managing the spread of invasive species in Manitoban waters.

"The zebra mussels are a big problem here, and these are something that are affecting waters all around Manitoba," said Jabusch. "The concern is that it is going to damage the rest of our water ecosystems."

The municipality has raised many concerns about the mussels in Lake Manitoba and wants to do its best to eradicate the species.

Zebra mussels were first detected in Lake Manitoba Narrows in July 2021 after annual AIS monitoring. All nine collected samples contained the mussel's DNA, and further testing revealed that the species was rapidly reproducing based on its different life stages. Zebra mussels were first detected in the Great Lakes in 1988 and have spread to other bodies of water primarily through human movement.

"The mussels could have been transferred in a myriad of ways, including boat trailers and any kind of watercraft, float planes, construction equipment, fishing gear, boots, beach toys and any other items that were immersed in water and

not thoroughly cleaned and dried. Unfortunately, by the time an invasion can be detected, it is not possible to trace it to its specific cause," explained Dr. Eva Pip, retired University of Winnipeg water quality and toxicology professor.

Zebra mussels pose several concerns for other aquatic species in Lake Manitoba. Dr. Pip explained that the lake's shallowness is a prime colonization ground for the mussels. The mussels are expected to change the lake's aquatic ecosystem, but the exact consequences cannot be determined at this time.

"At this point it is too early to predict how fish populations will be impacted, as each lake is unique, and the speed and pattern of progression of an invasion is affected by many physical and chemical factors."

Zebra mussels spread by attaching themselves to watercraft, including boats, rafts and even kids' floatation devices. Once the mussels are introduced to the water system, it is close to impossible to get rid of them.

"The only way we can address the problem now is to limit exposure of other water bodies. Every one of us must recognize that this is a serious and insidious problem and do our part by always being vigilant and conscientious when moving anything between different water bodies," added Dr. Pip.

As for zebra mussels in Grahamdale, both Jabusch and House agree that the provincial government needs to be more involved in eradicating the species.

"(The summit) is the province trying to offload the responsibility onto the municipality," said House.

Currently, the province of Manitoba requires all watercraft and water-related items to be decontaminated prior to entering another body of water if they were used in an invaded body of water and in an AIS control zone.

Users can face fines of an upwards of \$2,500 if



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Grahamdale Coun. Greg Jabusch and Reeve Craig House recently attended an Aquatic Invasive Species Virtual Summit highlighting the risks of zebra mussels.

they are caught releasing an AIS into a waterway.

"It is more than a little thing," Jabusch said.

The Manitoba government addresses the matter by stating that the protection of waters from AIS is both a task for provincial and municipal governments, along with the local communities.

Derek Johnson, MLA for Interlake-Gimli, notes the issue of zebra mussels in Lake Manitoba and he and his government have already taken action to prevent the spread.

"When we were in government, we brought in a wash station just north of Eriksdale. Anyone travelling to Steep Rock has to go through this, and if they don't they can be fined. Sometimes you need a monetary reason for people to follow the rules."

Johnson has lived off the shore of Lake Manitoba his entire life, and protecting the aquatic ecosystem is his priority.

He has been actively working with communities along Lake Manitoba to partner with businesses to

Continued on page 10

GIFF marking International Women's Day with free Icelandic documentary

By Patricia Barrett

The Gimli International Film Festival will celebrate International Women's Day with a free screening of an Icelandic documentary on collective female action for equality.

GIFF is screening U.S. director Pamela Hogan's 2024 documentary *The Day Iceland Stood Still* at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg. Hogan will be on hand for a Q&A session after the screening.

The film was part of the 2024 festival's Social Justice Film Series and was voted the winner of the Audience Choice Award.

Fifty years ago, on Oct. 24, 1975, a majority of Iceland's women "walked off the job" in an inspiring collective message and in sync with a wider solidarity movement for pay equality and recognition of females' economic contributions. Icelandic women refused to work, cook and care for children, bringing the country to a standstill and leading to a movement for social change.

"We are incredibly grateful to the Mauro Family Foundation for making this special screening

possible. At the Gimli International Film Festival, we are committed to supporting women filmmakers and amplifying stories that address social justice issues worldwide," said GIFF executive director Teya Zuzek. "Given the overwhelming response to Pamela Hogan's *The Day Iceland Stood Still* — which won our 2024 Audience Choice Award — we knew this film would be a perfect fit for an encore presentation on an important holiday like International Women's Day."

Since 1911, International Women's Day has celebrated the social, economic, cultural and political contributions of females. It has also raised awareness of discrimination against and exclusion of females because of their gender. The day is dedicated to advancing women and a call for action to accelerate gender equality around the world.

The free screening will be held on Saturday, March 8 from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

People can register through the Eventbrite link on the GIFF's website or email GIFF: info@gimlifilm.com

A FILM BY PAMELA HOGAN

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Gimli RCMP officers will start training for body cameras

By E Antonio

In a significant step towards enhancing transparency and accountability in law enforcement, Gimli RCMP is set to begin body-camera training this March.

This initiative comes as part of a broader national policy that aims to equip thousands of officers across Canada with body-worn cameras by October 2026.

As communities demand greater insight into police interactions, these cameras promise to bridge the gap between officers and the public they serve.

In October 2022, the RCMP implemented a body-worn camera policy for 10,000 to 15,000 officers nationwide. It is projected that over 90 per cent of frontline officers will utilize a body-worn camera during service calls.

On Nov. 19, 2024, body-worn cameras were introduced in 10 per cent of RCMP detachments in Manitoba. The next phase of roll-outs will occur on March 25, with Gimli RCMP officers being equipped with cameras as part of their monthly deployment.

According to body-worn cameras unit manager Steven Rogers, training for the body-worn cameras will commence on March 10 for all 12 frontline officers with Gimli RCMP.

Different detachments throughout the province are chosen based on their size and type of operations.

"We picked Gimli to be in the next phase as it is a newer development and is a busier district than other communities."

Gimli has an increased number of police reports and Crime Severity Index scores, both factors resulting to implementing cameras as a priority.

Once officers at the Gimli detachment have completed their training, they will be able to use the cameras while on duty.

During the Feb. 13 council meeting for Bifrost-Riverton, Gimli RCMP presented information about the cameras to be shared with council

members.

Larissa Love, CAO of the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton, is excited for the introduction of body-worn cameras.

"In reading about it, body-worn cameras can help increase trust between RCMP and the communities they serve because the video evidence collected will provide an independent, unbiased and objective way to capture interactions between the community and police officers."

No additional comments surrounding the policy were made at the time, and Love would schedule a delegation if requested.

RCMP sends the council quarterly reports discussing calls and statistics for the area.

"Council is always concerned with RCMP and their presence in the community. The RCMP have a large area to respond to," said Love.

Gimli RCMP provides law enforcement services to the communities of Armstrong, Bifrost-Riverton, Gimli, Hecla, Grindstone and Matheson Island. Officers attending calls in these areas will be using their cameras as directed.

Officers are instructed to use their cameras for mental health calls, crime investigations, public disorders and protests, in support of their performance of duties and more. Body-worn cameras will not be used for 24-hour surveillance recording and for intimate searches.

In addition to completing a pre-assigned online policy course, all officers who use a body-worn camera will also participate in a full-day training course.

"We want officers to fully understand when and how they will be expected to use the cameras," explained Rogers.

In February 2024, the RCMP initiated a field trial involving 300 officers in Iqaluit, Alberta and Nova Scotia utilizing a Motorola camera. However, upon completion of the trial, they have now opted to switch to Axon cameras. The reason for this decision



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

RCMP Gimli members will commence training for the body-worn cameras on March 10.

is unclear to Rogers as a non-disclosure agreement has been put in place regarding the change in brand.

"Other than the branding, not much has been changed since the initial testing. Over time, we are figuring out how to improve operations by making training more efficient and how to best provide guidance to our officers. It is about identifying the lessons learned and the ability to implement the new process."

The RCMP also conducted multiple community-wide surveys to gather public feedback on the newly implemented policy regarding body-worn cameras.

Respondents indicated that body-worn cameras can help RCMP officers to be more transparent with their interactions, help officers increase their accountability and increase the public trust in RCMP officers.

"The cameras help make us aware of the incidents that take place. This could be when officers are not acting professionally or as evidence for any interactions that occur between the public and our officers."

Rogers noted that officers in detachments across the province have seen many benefits since the implementation of the cameras.

"They love them. If you are doing

your job as an officer, it will protect you. If there is something you need to work on, it will also come through. The use of the cameras has been going good so far, but it is a brand-new tool and officers are still learning how to use them."

The RCMP acknowledges the public's concerns about privacy, finance and the use of cameras in general. In response, the body-worn cameras unit has taken steps to address these issues and has updated its policy over time including:

- Make their usage policy public and accessible
- Require officers to activate cameras prior to arriving at their service call
- Require all camera deactivations to be documented
- Not use facial recognition
- Ask officers to avoid capturing unrelated incidents or public members (bystanders)
- The public may request to view the video they are captured in
- Require a formal evaluation of the program be conducted after five years

A full list of frequently asked questions regarding the body-cameras is available online at www.rcmp.ca/en/body-worn-cameras.

> ZEBRA, FROM PG. 9

be host locations for wash stations.

"Protecting Manitoba's waterbodies and aquatic resources is a shared responsibility among governments, communities and all those who use of the province's lakes and rivers."

He also shares the importance of educating communities about the prevention and concerns for zebra mussels.

"Education cannot be underestimated," he said. "There have been bills put forward to create an Aquatic Invasive Species Day to devote to AIS awareness campaigns. With more people aware of the issue, this will hopefully limit the spread of zebra mussels."

There are two key prevention factors to stop the spread of AIS:

- Try to limit the number of lakes you take your boat to and

practise "One boat, one lake"

- Look and clean your water devices before and after entering the water.

"Please be mindful of your equipment that you are bringing into the water, even the children's toys. Zebra mussels don't care what they are attaching onto; they just want something to cling on," Jabusch added.

It is important that everyone does

their part in preventing the spread of these invasive species.

If you notice a new zebra mussel or other AIS invasion, Manitoba government's AIS Unit asks you to submit a report. You can report the new invasion by calling 1-877-867-2470, emailing AIS@gov.mb.ca, or by visiting the website https://www.gov.mb.ca/stopais/ais_reporting.html.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY BEN HEWSON

Last week this great grey owl was spotted in the Gimli area intent on finding its next meal. Great grey owls are powerful birds — despite weighing only 2.5 pounds, they can break through hard-packed snow to grab a small mammal. In the winter, they eat up to seven vole-sized small mammals every day. These owls are well-adapted for cold winters in their northern habitats since they have thick, fluffy feathers that insulate them. Help the Express record the weather of the week and send in your photos of friends or family enjoying the outdoors. Email: news@expressweeklynews.ca

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Loan Program a Game Changer for Women Entrepreneurs in Manitoba

Working across sectors – from tourism to manufacturing – and in every region, Canada's women entrepreneurs are making an enormous impact on our economy and in our communities. Yet many face barriers, both in accessing meaningful business advice and support, and securing the necessary funding.

The WEOC National Loan Program is working to address these barriers. In Manitoba our partners at WeMB guide women entrepreneurs on their business journey, providing them with relevant and timely supports available through the life of the business. WeMB provides loans up to \$150,000 and when combined with WEOC's \$50,000 in funding, an entrepreneur may be able to access up to \$200,000 for her business.

"We recognize that support means different things to different people, so we look to be as flexible as possible in meeting the entrepreneur's unique needs," explains Alison Kirkland, CEO of Women's Enterprise Organizations of Canada.

This could mean securing financing to start a dream food brand or expand a healthcare clinic. With a robust list of eligible uses, the WEOC National Loan Program is a transparent, low-barrier option that has already supported more than 300 women in 160-plus communities.

"The program is different than other lending options," offers Kirkland. "We haven't set a minimum credit score – rather we look at the business and entrepreneur as a whole.

And we are mindful of the information we are asking entrepreneurs to provide and the forms they need to complete." The program also helps entrepreneurs access resources and training to build their business plans, increase their financial literacy, and access guidance and mentorship.

"It can be a game changer for women entrepreneurs," says Kirkland.

Ready to get started? Book a meeting with the expert advisors at WeMB, who can walk you through all stages of the WEOC loan application process, providing business guidance and support along the way. Email an advisor at info@wemb.ca.



Looking for more information before you get started? Visit weoc.ca/loan-program.

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Gimli Ice Festival celebrating 14th edition

By Patricia Barrett

The Gimli Ice Festival will celebrate 14 years of outdoor fun and games that are sure to please both locals and visitors.

This year's festival, Celebrating the Arts, runs from Friday, March 7 to Sunday, March 9.

GIF co-chairs Susan and Peter Holfeuer said the festival showcases local culture, heritage, Indigenous traditions, artists and artisans while providing family-fun events around town. It relies on community organizations and hundreds of volunteers to make it shine.

"This annual festival is only possible by means of the collaborative partnership from multiple local community organizations that facilitate the various events though the support of their dedicated volunteers," they said in a statement on the festival's website. "These organizations and all the volunteers can take great pride for having grown the Gimli Ice Festival to become recognized by Travel Manitoba as the 2023 Event of the Year."

The festival is incorporating some dog-pulling power into its wide range of events. A Harness Dog Winter Sport Demo is scheduled for March 8 in Gimli Harbour from 12 to 1:30 p.m.

The festival's much-loved standards include a family-oriented frozen T-shirt contest, Viking culture, a frozen fish toss, motorcycle and sports car racing on Lake Winnipeg and a hockey skills competition.

For the kids, the festival's mascot, Cooley, has commanded part of the Gimli Recreation Centre, where kids can enjoy his indoor playground and win some prizes.

Some of the organizations participating in the festival include the Gimli Art Club, which will be offering kids' face-painting on March 8 and 9 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and the creation of a community mural, and the New Iceland Heritage Museum, which will be hosting a photo exhibit to celebrate 150 years of New Iceland (1875-2025).

On Saturday, March 8 Gimli Harbour will light up with



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Ice Festival mascot Cooley is shown in 2017 hitching a ride on a Viking family's float.

a fireworks display starting at 6:30 p.m. And Indigenous musician Jerry Sereda will take the stage in the Lakeview Resort at 7 p.m.

For more information on events, dates and

times, visit the Gimli Ice Festival at www.gimliicefestival.com. Passes are \$5.



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Gimli-based Toastmasters in the Arts inviting people to zoom in on the action

By Patricia Barrett

The Gimli-based Toastmasters in the Arts (TMIA) club is continuing to keep its members' tongues gambolling along the byways of proper English and well-structured story-telling and is inviting those who are curious about Toastmasters to zoom in on all the action.

The club always has something new to challenge its lively, friendly and fun-loving members. For instance, a few weeks ago, it joined forces with Winnipeg-based Toastmasters club Comedy Club Eh to offer a free improv event.

Over the past year, the club has diversified its membership with some younger folks and newcomers.

"Our club has morphed into something quite magical," said TMIA founder Doreen Pendgracs.

Toastmasters International has clubs worldwide to help people communicate clearly and effectively through public speaking, develop confidence and enhance leadership skills. Through structured meetings, members can learn how to speak in public or enhance their speaking and story-telling skills, learn how to listen, learn new words and receive constructive and supportive feedback from other



Speech contest chair Laurette Greenlay announcing the winners.

club members.

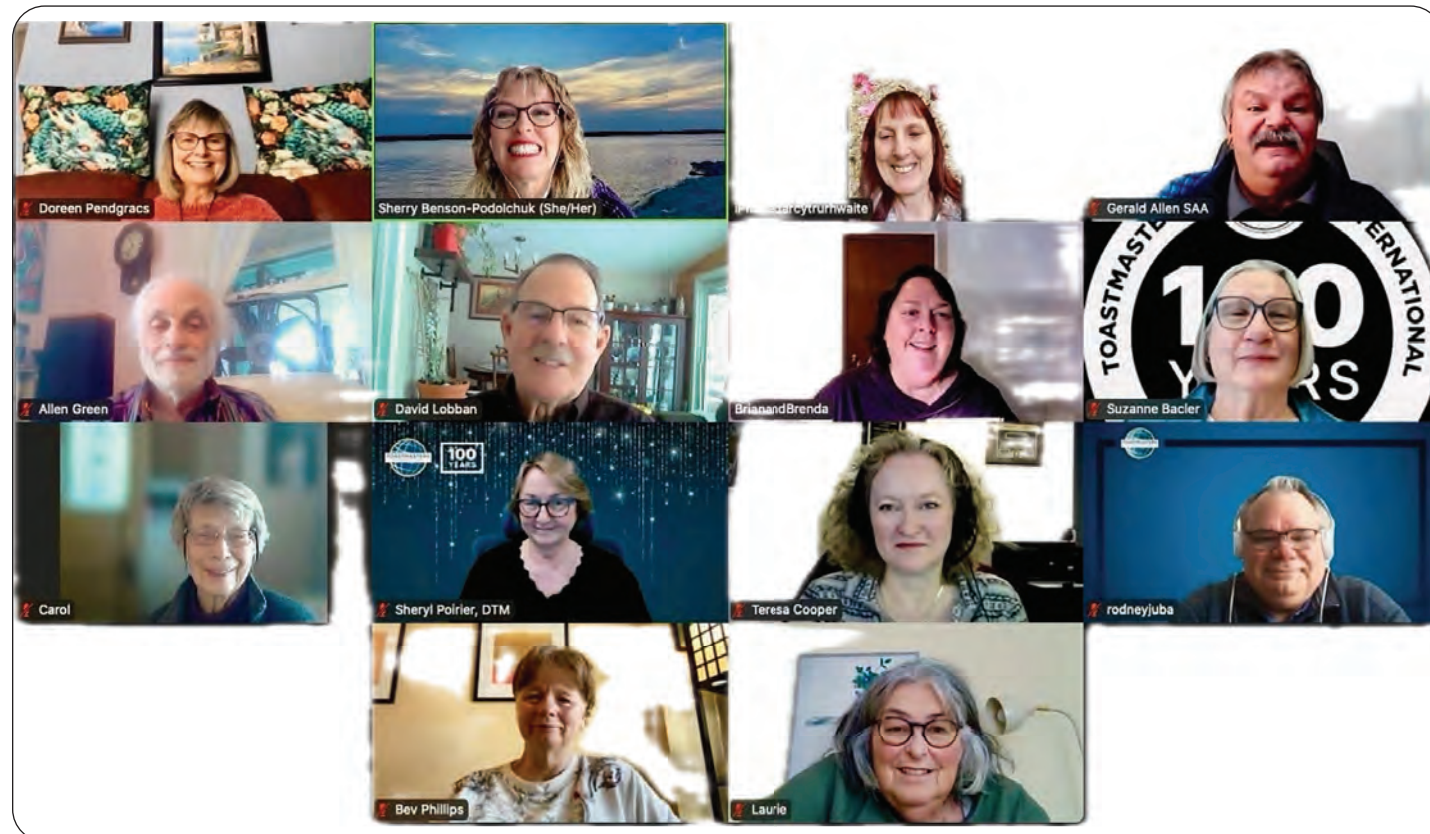
TMIA has long-time members from across the Interlake, including Matlock, Gimli and Fisher Branch. It has recently welcomed a teacher from Winnipeg and a Ukrainian newcomer who teaches in Selkirk and wants to practise her public speaking skills.

Because the club meets via Zoom, it can accommodate members who fly off to warmer destinations for the winter.

Toastmasters in the Arts meets every Wednesday via Zoom from 10:30 a.m.



to noon. For more information about the club, email Doreen Pendgracs: doreenpendgracs@gmail.com



EXPRESS PHOTOS COURTESY OF DOREEN PENDGRACS

Members of TMIA sharing a few laughs with members of the Winnipeg-based club, Comedy Club Eh, a few weeks ago.



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Eriksdale Carnival Rumbles

Submitted by Craig Sidwall

The cold weather did not cool the energy at the second annual ROGer’s Rhythmic Rumble, held on Saturday, Feb. 15 as part of the Eriksdale Winter Carnival.

The Rumble is an event put on by the ROGerKimLee Music Festival as part of the carnival. The event is not a battle of the bands, since it is an opportunity for up-and-coming musicians to take the stage and be heard. The first prize was \$500 and a spot on stage at the RKL Music Festival this August.

Four bands came out and entertained at the Eriksdale Hall. Each band played two sets — two songs in the first set and three songs in the second set. It is a testament to the talent on stage that every band played at least one original song.

Ryes & Shine (Jeff Bloodworth, Jason Cordell, Ashleigh Gray and Doug Decarle) was the first band to play, and they put the crowd in the mood for music. They played a classic rock mix that had people up and dancing. Gray’s vocals on Proud Mary were a highlight, and both CCR and Tina

Turner fans were happy.

Graffiti Parks (Tyler Duke, Jordan Lambert, Benny Doerksen and Sam Menard) played all original material. Their complex, sensitive guitar riffs and strong harmonizing vocals were supported by a sinuous back-end beat. We hope to hear more of them soon.

Dog C. Squirrel (Shelley Maslow, Mike Warbanski and Brad Friesen) were the returning champs. Their guitar/mandolin synergy, backed by percussion you can sit on, gave us music about life and relationships that rang sincerely. Maslow’s vocals on Free Man in Paris put us all in a Joni Mitchell frame of mind.

A fan favourite was a youth band called GrapeRaisin (Stetson Taylor, Mason Coutu, Evan Belaire). Led by Eriksdale’s Taylor on bass, and Coutu and Belaire from St. Laurent on drums and guitar, they laid down a heavy wall of grunge. Nirvana would have been proud, and they were immediately offered a spot on the youth stage at this year’s festival.

And the winner? Ryes & Shine! See



EXPRESS PHOTOS COURTESY OF CRAIG SIDWALL

Ryes & Shine was awarded a prime slot at the upcoming festival in August.

you at the festival in August.

The crowning of the Eriksdale Carnival Royal was a highlight of the evening. Congratulations to Carnival

Queen Lexi Anderson, Prince Wyatt Land and Princess Ana Koch. These royals raised over \$10,000 for this fundraising event for the operations of the Eriksdale Recreation Centre.



GrapeRaisin was the fan favourite. The band was on stage for the first time with their 14-year-old lead singer.



Graffiti Parks played all original music.



Dog C. Squirrel were the returning champs at this year’s Rumble.

Rural EMS stats show ‘critical’ paramedic shortages, long wait times; MAHCP

By Patricia Barrett

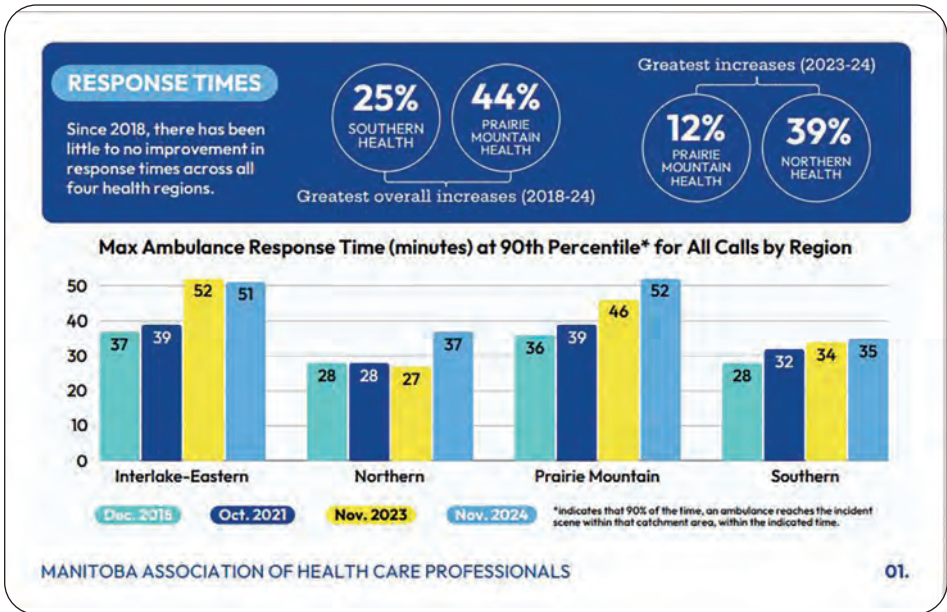
Rural Manitobans are continuing to experience long ambulance wait times as paramedic staffing shortages remain at a “critical level,” according to the Manitoba Association for Health Care Professionals (MAHCP), which represents rural paramedics.

The union obtained wait time information through a freedom of information request.

The data show that EMS call volumes have increased by 64 per cent across Manitoba’s four rural health regions: Interlake-Eastern, Northern, Prairie Mountain, and Southern. Currently, an estimated 28

per cent of Shared Health paramedic positions (about 200 out of 800) are vacant, representing only a slight improvement from January 2023, when vacancies were at 30 per cent.

“Despite the Manitoba government’s commitment to fixing health care, ambulance response times in rural communities are still getting worse,” said MAHCP president Jason Linklater in a Feb. 10 statement. “Paramedics are committed to providing care, but they are struggling with ongoing staffing shortages combined with higher call volumes and



Continued on page 18

RM of Gimli Trails Master Plan public forum draws large crowd

By Gloria Thomas

On Feb. 20, the RM of Gimli hosted a public forum on the Trails Master Plan at the Waterfront Center's Johnson Hall in Gimli. This strategic plan is aimed at ensuring the development of the trail and urban pathway systems in the RM of Gimli.

Council would like to develop an inventory of existing trails, pathways and sidewalks; analyze future needs for the trail network; work with the community to define the vision, goals and objectives for the trail system in the RM of Gimli while aligning with the community's evolving demands; and develop the RM of Gimli Trails Master Plan and strategies that will allow for community feedback.

The goal of the master plan is to create a plan that promotes safe, accessible and enjoyable trail use for the community. The plan considers space for each group of trail users, provides opportunities for positive social interactions and tourism, and supports local businesses.

The key stakeholder groups identified by the RM of Gimli are the Gimli Active Trails Committee, the Gimli Cross Country Ski Club, the Interlake Snow Trackers, the Urban Promenade Committee and the Interlake Off-Road Vehicle Club. Representatives of these groups met on Jan. 30 to discuss the desires and concerns of their respective clubs and committees. Key areas of concern identified in this meeting included speed limits, noise, current trail disconnections, safety, visible signage and a lack of enforcement for irresponsible trail users.

"Community engagement is at the heart of the Trails Master Plan, and we are committed to ensuring that every voice is heard. By gathering feedback from residents, visitors and stakeholders, we are shaping a vision that reflects the needs and aspirations of our community," noted Mayor Kevin Chudd.

"This year we mark the 150th anniversary of the Icelandic settlers' arrival and recognize that Gimli is located on Treaty 1 territory, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Ojibwe, Dakota and Dene peoples, and is the homeland of the Red River Métis. This milestone serves as a reminder of the deep history of collaboration between these Indigenous communities and the Icelandic settlers, who were guided and supported in their early years. That same spirit of partnership continues today as we work together to build a trail network that is safe, accessible and inclusive for people of all ages and abilities. These trails will enhance connectivity, promote active



Gimli Mayor Kevin Chudd speaks with attendees.

living, accessibility and enrich the experience of both residents and visitors alike. Together, we are honouring our shared history while strengthening our community for future generations."

Approximately 80 interested citizens were in attendance and took the opportunity to learn about the trail plans and express their concerns and desires regarding future trails. Any citizens who were unable to attend the public forum are welcome to fill out the survey and view the plans on the RM of Gimli website.

WHAT WAS HEARD AT THE STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP ON JAN. 30:

- Local volunteer groups are advocates and educators of their areas of interest and are willing to share with individuals who want to learn more
- Noise from motorized vehicles is an issue
- Small area of designated ORV Club trails. Seek more opportunities to connect to areas within the RM and beyond
- Varying speeds between modes of travel on the same trail can make sharing difficult
- Stakeholder groups sharing funding, maintenance and working together
- Considerable volunteer effort is spent ensuring trail systems are maintained for users
- Grants and funding can be accessed to enhance the trail experience



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY GLORIA THOMAS

Local residents attended the public forum on Feb. 20 at Johnson Hall to learn about the Trails Master Plan hosted by the RM of Gimli.

- Safety is of utmost importance to all
- Shortfall of communication between event planners on the ice and snowmobile club
- Sidewalks are narrow, and bike paths and bike friendly streets should be identified
- Wayfinding signage along trail systems needs to clarify who uses what and when
- Trail user groups are challenged by their incompatibility with shared trail systems. There is a desire to work together despite this challenge
- Pedestrian and cycling improvements are needed within urban Gimli
- Future plans to consider how this system will connect to the TransCanada Trail, Hecla/Grindstone Provincial Park and established trails outside the RM
- Key connections to communities close to urban Gimli are missing
- Trail and pathway maintenance need to be properly planned and budgeted for the long-term
- A clear trail code of conduct and expectations is desired and required
- Gimli does not meet the expectations for an Age-Friendly community
- On-ice event setup can impair the

- designated pathway and trail marker work of the snowmobile club
- Improving the connection between trail facilities in the RM will strengthen the attractiveness of the trail system to residents and visitors
- Public education is essential
- Lack of enforcement for irresponsible trail users
- Reducing trail user conflict to increase safety
- Ski trails need better washroom facilities at the park entrance and within the park
- Active transportation connections for residents of all ages and abilities to amenities like the schools, library, recreation centre and the new developments

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intensifying social challenges, including on-the-job violence.”

Some key findings from the data show rural ambulances (requiring two paramedics) “sitting idle” across the province for almost 30,000 hours on average each month due to staffing shortages in 2024, which represents a 400 per cent increase since 2020, says MAHCP.

And maximum response times at the 90th percentile have reached over 50 minutes in Prairie Mountain RHA and Interlake-Eastern RHA, which is “a new record” as the target response is under 30 minutes.

Response times increased year-over-year in the Prairie Mountain (+12%) and Northern (+39%) health regions from November 2023 to November 2024. And there was no significant change or improvement in response times for the Interlake-Eastern and Southern health regions, states the release.

MAHCP is urging the provincial government to “take immediate steps” to retain the paramedics it has and start rebuilding EMS.

While Budget 2024 set a goal of adding 90 net new paramedics, the province’s data reveal a net gain of only 14 paramedics between April 1 and Dec. 31, 2024, states the release.

To rebuild EMS, the union says the province should work with frontline paramedics to improve working conditions and work-life balance, settle a collective agreement that expired about 10 months ago, fast-track paramedic training opportunities for rural Manitobans, and ensure training seats are filled.

“Manitobans living and travelling in rural areas deserve equal access to medical care,” said Linklater. “No one should be waiting this long for help in a medical emergency, nor should they be waiting this long for meaningful action to address wait times that are still rising. Solutions are in reach.”

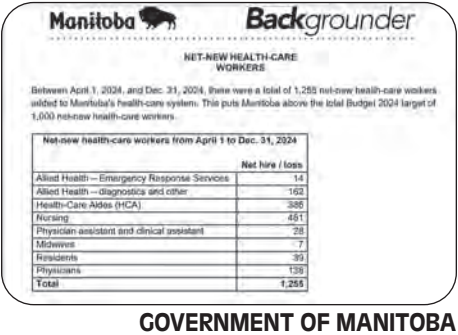
The provincial government recently released data showing that 1,255 net new health-care workers were added to the health system between April 1 and Dec. 31, 2024.

In allied health (emergency response services), the province added 14 posi-

tions. In allied health (diagnostics), it added 162. There were also 481 new nurses and 138 new physicians.

The data pertain only to Shared Health, Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority, Prairie Mountain Health, Southern Health, Northern Health and CancerCare Manitoba, not to health-care workers hired by private clinics or privately operated long-term care facilities.

The government’s strategy to increase health-care staffing includes improving the health-care culture; making Manitoba more welcoming to graduates by offering them jobs; increasing physician training seats and residency positions; increasing training seats for physician assistants, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and nurses; dropping the number of mandatory hours required for nursing licence renewals so that it’s easier for nurses to return to the workforce if they choose; improving nurses’ work-life balance; fast-tracking training for health-care aides; improving safety at hospitals; and rolling out targeted



recruitment efforts, among others initiatives.

In response to the government’s announcement about adding new staff to the system, Linklater said earlier this month that MAHCP appreciates the government’s efforts, but its net gains in allied health are “not nearly enough to have a significant impact on a system in crisis.”

Hiring staff in allied health is a slow process, he said, because allied health workers are highly specialized and Manitoba is not training enough of them. In addition to that, allied health workers are leaving each year for other jurisdictions that have better salaries, incentives and working conditions.

get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



Loaded
Hamburger
Potato Casserole

Recipe courtesy of “Cookin’ Savvy”
Servings: 4-6
1 pound ground hamburger
1 tablespoon garlic powder
1 bag (1 1/2 pounds) tri-colored baby potatoes
1 can (10 ounces) cream of mushroom soup
1/2 cup sour cream
1/4 cup milk
1/2 cup fried onions (optional)
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
2 1/2 ounces bacon pieces

salt, to taste
pepper, to taste
chives or green onions, for topping
Heat oven to 375 F.
In skillet over medium heat, brown ground beef with garlic powder; drain and set aside.
Cut potatoes into small pieces. In casserole dish, mix beef; potatoes; soup; sour cream; milk; fried onions, if desired; cheese; and bacon pieces. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Bake, covered, 50 minutes then uncover and bake 10 minutes.
Top with chives or green onions.



Barbecue
Chili

Recipe courtesy of “Cookin’ Savvy”
Servings: 8-10
1 pork loin (2-3 pounds)
1 can (10 ounces) diced tomatoes and green chilies
2 cups barbecue sauce, divided
1 cup water
1 can (29 ounces) tomato sauce
2 cans (27 ounces each) chili beans
1 package chili seasoning
1 tablespoon barbecue seasoning
1 tablespoon onion powder
1 tablespoon garlic powder
salt, to taste

pepper, to taste
sour cream, for serving
shredded cheddar cheese, for serving
corn chips, for serving
Place pork loin in slow cooker. Cover with diced tomatoes and green chilies, 1 cup barbecue sauce and water; cook on low 4-6 hours.
Cut up cooked meat and place in Dutch oven along with juices from slow cooker. Add remaining barbecue sauce, tomato sauce, chili beans, chili seasoning, barbecue seasoning, onion powder and garlic powder. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Cook over medium heat 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve with sour cream, shredded cheese and corn chips.
Tip: Add can of beans if serving bigger crowd.



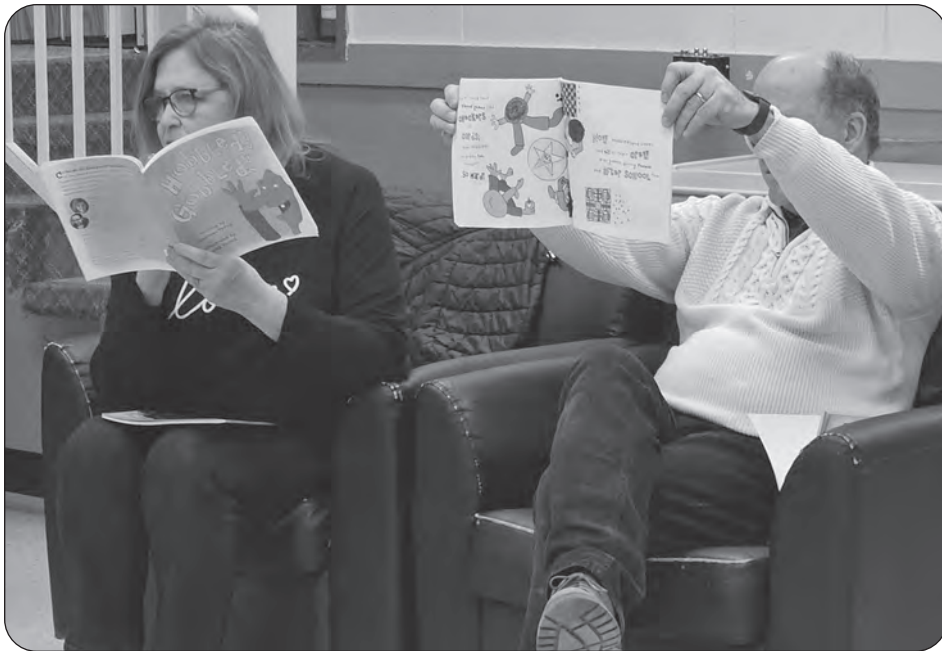
Easy Enchilada
Casserole

Recipe courtesy of “Cookin’ Savvy”
Servings: 6 (12 as appetizer)
1 pound ground beef
1 tablespoon minced onion

1 tablespoon garlic powder
1 cup rice
1 can (14 1/2 ounces) diced tomatoes
1 can (10.7 ounces) enchilada sauce
1 can (15 ounces) rinsed black beans
1 can (15 ounces) whole corn
1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese, divided
2 tablespoons mesquite seasoning
cilantro, for topping (optional)
green onions, for topping (optional)
Heat oven to 350 F.

In skillet, brown ground beef with minced onion and garlic powder. Drain and set aside.
Cook rice according to package instructions.
In casserole dish, mix meat, tomatoes, enchilada sauce, black beans, corn, rice, 1 cup cheddar cheese and mesquite seasoning. Bake, covered, 20 minutes.
Top with remaining cheese, cilantro and green onions.

Gobbling up a love of reading



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

As part of I Love to Read Month, Eriksdale School students enjoyed a special guest reader, Sharlene Yarish from Selkirk, on Feb. 11. Known for her delightful children's books *Hobbledy Gobbledy* and *Hobbledy Gobbledy Learns to Be Thankful*, she brought stories to life in an unforgettable way. Accompanied by her husband, Larry, who turned the pages of their son Jesiah's beautiful illustrations, Yarish captivated the young audience, inspiring them to dive into the world of literature and fostering a passion for reading. The children had the opportunity to ask her questions about the writing and publishing process, character creation and more. Students also shared some fantastic ideas for her upcoming books.

Students in Riverton love to read



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Evergreen School Division trustee Jillian Yorga served as a guest reader at Riverton Early Middle School last week in celebration of I Love to Read Month. The Grade 2 class gathered around to hear her read one of her favourite children's stories. To celebrate the joy of reading, students dressed in their pyjamas and participated in a special reading session in the dark during gym time, using flashlights with their book buddies. Additionally, there was a book swap, where students were encouraged to bring up to three gently used books from home to exchange with their peers. Students also created reading-themed bookmarks, which they entered into two separate draws for a chance to win a book. Each week included D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything and Read) sessions. To conclude the month, there will be a Hats Off/On to Reading event at the end of February, when everyone can wear their favourite hat.

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Sixteens ladies teams rock the ice in Arborg



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

The Arborg Ladies Bonspiel not only showcased the participants' curling skills but also highlighted the hidden talents of the 16 teams, all under this year's theme, "Arborg's Got Talent." A huge thank you goes out to the event sponsors: Interlake Co-op, Arborg Legion and Norstar Consulting, as well as the many local businesses that contributed prizes. The Arborg Men's Bonspiel is scheduled for Feb. 28 to March 2. Pictured, left to right: the 1st Event winners are Karen Leochko, Cheryl Chwaliboga, Donna Gislason and Janice Smith. The 2nd Event was won by Doriane Johnson, Kara Peiluck, Lori Palsson and Aurora Peiluck, while the 3rd Event winners are Alicia Giesbrecht, Shelly Burak, Brynn Shore and Michelle Watson.

sports&recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Gimli's Einarson loses Scotties final to Homan

By Ty Dilello

Gimli's Kerri Einarson put up an excellent fight all week long, but her bid for a fifth Scotties Tournament of Hearts ended in Sunday night's final, where her team fell 6-1 to a red-hot Rachel Homan squad at the Fort William Gardens in Thunder Bay, Ont.

Homan, who skips the world's No. 1-ranked team, has now claimed back-to-back Canadian championships and remains undefeated in the tournament for a second consecutive year — a feat no other team has achieved.

In the championship final, Homan was flawless, curling at 100 per cent, while Einarson missed a couple of crucial shots down the stretch.

"I'm just so proud of my team this week," said Rachel Homan in a media scrum after the final. "It was so tough. We battled through a lot of games. Einarson's team just played phenomenal. We needed the 100 per cent to beat them. Numerous times, I was like, 'Who's going to blink?' Thankfully, you know, it wasn't us."

Homan and her Ontario-based team — Tracy Fleury, Emma Miskew and Sarah Wilkes — will now advance to the 2025 World Women's Curling Championships, scheduled to take place from March 15 to 23 in Uijeongbu, South Korea.

Additionally, Homan has secured an entry for Team Canada in the 2026 Scotties Tournament of Hearts in Mississauga, Ont., along with \$100,000 in prize money. Einarson and her team, which includes Val



Manitoba's Einarson, who skipped teams to Canadian titles four straight years from 2020 to 2023, eked out a 9-8 win to advance to the final Sunday night against defending champion Rachel Homan.

Sweeting, Karlee Burgess and Krysten Karwacki, earned \$60,000 as runners-up.

Among the three Manitoba rinks in the field, Einarson's was the only team to reach the playoffs. Winnipeg's Kaitlyn Lawes and Kate Cameron both finished with 4-4 records, leaving them on the outside looking in for the week.

Einarson made it to the championship final after overcoming Nova Scotia's Christina Black with a score of 9-8 in a thrilling semifinal on Sunday afternoon.

Sunday night's final remained tense for much of the game, with the turning point occurring in the eighth end. After Homan took a 3-1 lead, she managed to steal two more points when Einarson's draw fell short. Homan then stole another point in the ninth end to secure a 6-1 victory.

"I definitely want some shots back," Einarson said after the game. "I got caught in some paths where it just wasn't up to speed. It got fudgy in the middle, and we just didn't pick up on it or believe it. Unfortunately, this game, we just struggled for the last half."

Despite the loss in the final, there was good news for Team Einarson as they will return to next year's Scotties as



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

On Sunday night, Gimli's Kerri Einarson came up short in the championship final at the 2025 Scotties Tournament of Hearts in Thunder Bay, Ont., losing 6-1 to Rachel Homan. Pictured from left to right are Krysten Karwacki, Val Sweeting, Kerri Einarson and Karlee Burgess.

one of the three top-ranked teams in the Canadian Team Ranking System. Einarson has also already earned a spot in the Olympic trials, scheduled for the fall.

"It's definitely disappointing, but I'm super proud of my team," said Einarson. "We've been through a lot over the last year, and it's basically our first major event together as a team, and it's pretty amazing to be able to play one of the world's best that have been together for many, many years."

Selkirk named host of the Curl Manitoba 2026 Viterra Championship

By Kieran Reimer

The Viterra Championship is returning to the east in 2026.

On Feb. 9, CurlManitoba announced that Selkirk will be the host city for the 2026 event during the final day of the 2025 Viterra Championship, which was held in Portage la Prairie.

This will mark the sixth time that the Selkirk Recreation Complex has hosted the Manitoba Men's Championship and the seventh time overall in Selkirk.

"The Selkirk Recreation Complex is one of Manitoba's best curling venues," said CurlManitoba executive director Craig Baker in a press release on Feb. 9. "This venue has provided



excellent curling and entertainment for about three decades. I am excited to see this current group of competitors playing there."

Selkirk last hosted the event in 2022 when Team McEwen claimed victory in a spectator-free Selkirk Curling Club due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The previous three championships took place at Neepawa's Yellowstone Community Recreation Centre, Stonewall's Veteran's Memorial Sports Complex and Portage la

Prairie's Stride Place.

On Feb. 9 in Portage la Prairie, Team Carruthers defeated Team Calvert 9-7 in the final of the 2025 Viterra Championship, securing a berth to the 2025 Manitoba's Brier.

A trip to the Brier will once again be on the line when the tournament returns to Selkirk in 2026.

To see more photos of your favourite Interlake Athletes

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Lightning Report: U17s ready to face Wheat Kings in best of five

By Kieran Reimer

The U17 AAA Male Interlake Lightning are getting ready to open up a best-of-five quarterfinal series with the Brandon Wheat Kings this week.

The Lightning enter the series as the seventh seed after finishing the regular season with a 7-23-5 record and playing their best hockey in the new year.

On the other hand, the Wheat Kings finished second with a 30-3-2-0 record to claim home-ice advantage for games one, two and five of the series.

Lightning head coach Niels Kaczorowski said keeping goals out of their net will be the No. 1 priority.

"We're not a high-scoring team, so if we're going to beat them, it's going to have to be a grinding, low-scoring battle," said Kaczorowski on Sunday.

And playing a grinding style is something that the Lightning have gotten used to this season.

After struggling early in the season, the Lightning fought to a 3-2-2 record in regular season games in January.

They also went 2-1-1 in the Rob-in's Minor Hockey Tournament in January in Thunder Bay where they showed well against some U18 competition.

They also demonstrated their resiliency in a 5-4 loss to the Pembina Valley Hawks two weeks ago, in a game in which they once trailed 5-0 and

nearly mounted a comeback.

"We've had a couple games where we battled back. Definitely a resilient group," said Kaczorowski. "We went down 5-0 to the Pembina Valley Hawks and battled back and almost won the game, it ended up being 5-4. Definitely a never quit attitude with the team so if everything comes together hopefully we can win a game here and make a series of it."

Games 1 and 2 will be played Wednesday and Friday in Brandon before the action shifts to Stonewall for Game 3 on Sunday and Warren for a potential Game 4 on Tuesday.

Game 5, if necessary, would be played back in Brandon on Thursday, March 6.

PLAYOFF SCHEDULE:

Game 1: Wednesday, Feb. 26, 7 p.m. at J&G Homes Arena

Game 2: Friday, Feb. 28, 8 p.m. at Enns Brothers Arena

Game 3: Sunday, March 2, 12:45 p.m. at Veterans Memorial Sports Complex

Game 4: Tuesday, March 4, 7 p.m. at Access Credit Union Arena

Game 5: Thursday, March 6, 6 p.m. at J&G Homes Arena

The **U13 AA Female Interlake Lightning** lost 1-0 to Brandon on Saturday and defeated the Predators 7-0

on Sunday. They finished the regular season seventh with a 9-18-0-1 record.

Upcoming Playoff Games: Playoff Schedule TBA

The **U13 AA Male Interlake Lightning** lost 5-3 to the Winnipeg Wild Red on Tuesday and lost 5-4 to the Pembina Valley Hawks East on Saturday. They finished the regular season 15th with a 12-15-0-1 record.

Upcoming Playoff Games: Schedule TBA

The **U15 AA Male Interlake Lightning** defeated the Winnipeg Thrashers Blue 3-1 on Sunday afternoon. They finished the regular season tied for ninth with a 10-11-5-2 record.

Upcoming Playoff Games: Schedule TBA

The **U15 AAA Male Interlake Lightning** lost 8-4 to the Brandon Wheat Kings in Warren on Friday. They finished the regular season fifth in the Central Division with a 5-26-1-0 record.

Upcoming Playoff Games: Wednesday, Feb. 26 at Central Plains Capitals, 7:15 p.m. at BDO Centre for the Community; Friday, Feb. 28 vs Winnipeg Thrashers Blue, 7:30 p.m. at Veterans Memorial Sports Complex; Sunday, March 2 vs Winnipeg Thrashers White, 2 p.m. at Lundar

Arena

The **U15 AAA Female Interlake Lightning** lost 2-0 to the Pembina Valley Hawks on Friday and split a pair with the Norman Wild on Saturday and Sunday. They finished the regular season seventh with a 4-24 record.

Upcoming Playoff Games: Saturday, March 1 at Eastman Selects, 7 p.m. at Ste. Agathe Arena

The **U18 AAA Male Interlake Lightning** beat the Central Plains 8-1 on Tuesday, lost 6-3 to the Winnipeg Thrashers on Wednesday, and beat the Yellowhead Chiefs 5-1 and 7-3 on Saturday and Sunday. They finished the regular season seventh with a 24-19-2-1-3-2 record.

Upcoming Playoff Games: Playoff Schedule TBA

The **U18 AAA Female Interlake Lightning** lost Games 1 and 2 of the best-of-five quarterfinals to the Eastman Selects by scores of 3-0 and 4-0. The Selects lead the series 2-0.

Upcoming Playoff Games: Game 3: Tuesday, Feb. 25, 7:15 p.m. at Niverville CRRC; Game 4: Thursday, Feb. 27, 7:45 p.m. at Veterans Memorial Sports Complex (if necessary); Game 5: Saturday, March 1, 1:30 p.m. at Niverville Centennial Arena (if required)

Ice Dawgs facing elimination after Game 2 loss

By Kieran Reimer

The Arborg Ice Dawgs are facing a difficult situation after losing 2-0 in their first-round best-of-five playoff series with the Lundar Falcons.

On Friday, the Ice Dawgs opened their Capital Region Junior Hockey League playoffs with a 6-0 loss against the Falcons in game one in Lundar.

The Ice Dawgs kept the deficit to two goals until midway through the second when the Falcons went on for a three-goal onslaught.

The Falcons added one more in the third to take it 6-0, while the Ice Dawgs couldn't find a way past Falcons keeper Kennedy Kerr.

Then on Saturday in Arborg, the Ice Dawgs struck first on Brandon Burak's first of the postseason.

However, The Ice Dawgs lead was short-lived as Lundar tied things up late in the first period.

The Falcons then added a pair in the second and a pair in the third to ice

things 5-1 and take a 2-0 series lead.

The series now heads back to Lundar on Tuesday where the Ice Dawgs will need a win to avoid elimination.

In other Ice Dawgs news, Brandon Burak was named CRJHL Rookie of the Year last week for his impressive freshman campaign.

The 2006-born forward led all rookies in points (41) and goals (27) in the regular season.

He also ranked second among all

skaters in goals and tied for sixth in points.

UPCOMING PLAYOFF GAMES:

Game 3: Tuesday, Feb. 25, 8 p.m. at Lundar Arena

Game 4: Friday, Feb. 28, 8 p.m. at Arborg & District Arena (if necessary)

Game 5: Saturday, March 1, 7 p.m. at Lundar Arena (if necessary)

Falcons take series lead over Ice Dawgs in CRJHL playoffs

By Kieran Reimer

The Lundar Falcons are just one win away from securing a spot in the Capital Region Junior Hockey League semi-finals after their impressive performance last weekend.

In the first two games of the best-of-five series against the Arborg Ice Dawgs, the Falcons dominated, winning both matches.

In Game 1 held in Lundar, the Falcons

won 6-0, thanks to a stellar 26-save shutout by goaltender Kennedy Kerr. Goals were scored by Joel MacMillan, Liam Russell, Ryan Benson, Braeden Lukas, Daniel Masters and Cayden St. Laurent.

The following night in Arborg, the Ice Dawgs initially took the lead, but the Falcons quickly responded by scoring five unanswered goals to secure a 5-1 victory.

This time, the goals came from Joel MacMillan, Troy Johannesson, Cayden St. Laurent, Riley Zdan and Mark Goodman, while Kennedy Kerr made 33 saves.

With these two wins, the Falcons now hold a 2-0 series lead and will return to Lundar for Game 3 on Tuesday, where they will have the opportunity to close out the series.

UPCOMING GAMES:

Game 3: Tuesday, Feb. 25, 8 p.m. at Lundar Arena

Game 4: Friday, Feb. 28, 8 p.m. at Arborg & District Arena (if necessary)

Game 5: Saturday, March 1, 7 p.m. at Lundar Arena (if necessary)

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- We format it, to make it look great!
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- The ads blanket the province and run in MCNA's 31 Manitoba community newspapers
- Very cost effective means of getting your message out to the widest possible audience

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

SCRAP METAL

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

BUYING SCRAP METAL, CARS, TRACTORS, COMBINES, FARM SCRAP, ANY METAL MATERIAL, ANY FARM MACHINERY. PH LONNIE AT 204-886-3407 LVE. MESSAGE OR CELL AT 204-861-2031.

APARTMENT FOR RENT

Tollak Place has 1 & 2 bedroom suites, located at 40 Eveline Street. Spacious suites, with F/S, A/C, storage areas and large balconies; utilities are included, parking is extra. Tollak 2 is a 55 plus bldg., river view apts. with central air, F/S, DW & microwave; large storage area off the kitchen and a balcony; utilities and parking extra. Call the onsite office 204-482-2751 for AVAILABILITY.

PROPERTY FOR SALE

For sale - 17.14 acres with treed yardsite with 24x40 fully wired shop with heated floor and washroom; also, 36x44 truck shop with 3 doors, fully wired with 200 AMP service; approx. 15 acres is pasture with heated drinker; property has hydro service, 4 year old well & septic field. Ready for mobile home, RTM or build on site. Located 9 miles NW of Riverton. Call or text 204-642-2249.

PROPERTY FOR SALE

Nice 20-acre retirement or subdividing opportunity 4 miles west of Brandon on paved road. 1,572 sq. ft. home including appliances, wheelchair accessible, 1-level, attached garage. Also, additional adjoining subdivided 5-acre lot. Immediate possession, private sale. \$750,000. Call 1-204-723-0083 for appointment to view, anytime.

HELP WANTED

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

WANTED

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

HEALTH

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

NOTICES

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

NEED CLASS 1 DRIVERS? SEASONAL HIRING? SELLING SOMETHING? Jump on our great prices and start getting responses! Book your blanket classified ads, seen in the 31 Member Newspapers which are seen in over 368,000+ homes in Manitoba. Please call 204-467-5836 or MCNA at 204-947-1691 for more details or to book ads. MCNA - Manitoba Community Newspapers Association. www.mcna.com

EMPLOYMENT

- CHEF OR EXPERIENCED COOK
- CASHIER • BARTENDER
- MANAGER

Full-time Seasonal Positions - Living Quarters
-Above Average Wages



Contact Irv for more details.
Email: office@narrowssunsetlodge.com
Phone 204-981-2831
or 204-467-8507

HIRING

Interlake Auto is seeking immediate additional staff:
Inventory Management & Cleaning Position

- Experienced person who works well in a fast paced environment
 - Knowledge of car parts an asset
- Competitive wages and benefit plan available.

Apply in person or email iautoar@aol.com
Box 249 Arborg MB R0C 0A0
Phone: (204) 376-2667 Fax: (204) 376-5760
www.interlakeauto.ca

Interlake Auto & Tractor Parts Ltd.
ARBORG, MANITOBA

..your



source

Parts Stores

Locally owned and serving the Interlake since 1981



Town of Winnipeg Beach PUBLIC NOTICE

FORM 12
Subsection [41(1)]

NOTICE OF NOMINATIONS Town of Winnipeg Beach

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on the following days:
between March 1 and March 7, 2025
between the hours of 8:30 am to 4:30 pm (by appointment only)
at the following location Town of Winnipeg Beach
administration office, 29 Robinson Avenue

I will receive nominations for the office of
Mayor
of the aforesaid Local Authority.

The nomination deadline is March 7th, 2025 at 4:30 pm.
Nominations cannot be accepted after this day.

All nominations shall be made in writing and shall be signed by at least twenty-five voters, or NOT less than 1% of the voters (whichever is the lesser) of the authority or ward (as the case may be), but in all cases by at least two voters. Each nomination shall also be accompanied by the candidate's declaration of qualification.

Nominations may be filed in person at the above location, on the date and hours specified, by an agent, or by email. To obtain a nomination paper, and / or candidate's declaration of qualification, contact the SEO at the telephone number listed below.

Nomination papers not accompanied by the required documents and not properly filed shall be rejected.

B. Leah McIsaac, SEO
(204) 782-2146
seo@winnipegbeach.ca
Dated at Winnipeg Beach on February 11, 2025

B. Leah McIsaac

Senior Election Official
Town of Winnipeg Beach



204-376-2386

We're Hiring!

Come join our team!

**HVAC/GAS
FITTER/REFRIGERATION
TECHNICIAN**

Job Description:

- Possess a valid Class 5 Drivers Licence
- Good Public Relations
- Perform service calls (commercial & residential)
- Troubleshoot and repair HVAC systems including boilers, commercial coolers, Electric/Gas/ Geothermal Furnaces

Please email your resume to:
ventrix@mymts.net

RECYCLING NOTICE FOR MARCH / 2024

Riverdale Place Workshop Inc.
WILL NOT be picking up Recycling
on the below MENTIONED DATES

- March 4
at Arborg curbside pickup
- March 6
at Riverton curbside pickup
- March 18
at Arborg curbside pickup
- March 20
at Riverton curbside pickup

**Please do not put
garbage in recycling**

**Please rinse
your containers**

Thank you for recycling

Classifieds Announcements

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



WANTED

COIN COLLECTIONS & OLD JEWELRY!



CASH for Unwanted Jewelry, Accumulations & Collections of Coins, Numismatics, Royal Canadian Mint Coins, Franklin Mint, US & CAN. SILVER DOLLARS, Old Rolls, Bags & Boxes of Coins, Silver Coins, Gold Coins, Old paper \$\$\$, Bullion, Jewelry, Nuggets, Sterling Silver & ALL Silver & Gold items!

Todd
204-904-9705

Responsive Career Pathways Project

Are you mid-career and employed in Winnipeg? Do you want to increase your career confidence and work satisfaction?

Take part in this research to:

- Get career planning support in person and online
- Receive an honorarium

Apply by
Tuesday, March 25, 2025
<https://mittcp2024.weebly.com/>
Starting April 8, 2025

Funded by:
Government of Canada,
Future Skills Centre,
and MITT



HIP/KNEE Replacement?

Other medical conditions causing TROUBLE WALKING or DRESSING?

The Disability Tax Credit allows for **\$2,500 yearly tax credit and \$20,000 Lump sum refund.**

Apply NOW; quickest refund Nationwide!

Expert Help:
204-453-5372

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Online McSherry Auctions

Estate & Moving
March 5th @ 7:00PM

Estate & Moving
March 12th @ 7:00PM

McSherryAuction.com
204-467-1858
or 204-886-7027
mcserrytld@gmail.com



Rural Municipality of
FISHER

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Section 194 of The Municipal Act of Manitoba, the audited financial statements for the Rural Municipality of Fisher for the year ended December 31, 2023 have been completed and are available for inspection by any person during regular office hours at the Rural Municipality of Fisher Municipal Office, 30 Tache, Fisher Branch, Manitoba.

Kelly Marykuca, CMAA
Chief Administrative Officer



Town of Winnipeg Beach

PUBLIC NOTICE

2023 Audited Financial Report

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given, pursuant to Section 194 of *The Municipal Act*, that the auditor's financial report for the 2023 fiscal year has been deposited in the office of the Interim Chief Administrative Officer of the Town of Winnipeg Beach located at 29 Robinson Ave, Winnipeg Beach, Manitoba.

Persons wishing to view the report and the municipality's financial statements may view the documents:

- on our website at www.winnipegbeach.ca,
- request a copy by email to info@winnipegbeach.ca
- calling our office at 204-389-2698 to make arrangements.

Dated in Winnipeg Beach, Manitoba this 21st day of February, 2025.

Tara Antichow, CMAA
Interim Chief Administrative Officer
Town of Winnipeg Beach



Notice of Nominations By-Election R.M. of West Interlake

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on the following days:

March 21st, 2025 thru to March 27th, 2025
By appointment

I will receive nominations for the office of Councillor Ward 1

For term - May 2025 to October 2026

The nomination deadline is March 27th, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.
Nominations cannot be accepted after this day.

All nominations shall be made in writing and shall be signed by at least twenty-five voters, or NOT less than 1% of the voters (whichever is the lesser) of the ward, but in all cases by at least two voters. Each nomination shall also be accompanied by the candidate's declaration of qualification.

Nominations may be filed in person on the dates and hours specified, by an agent, or by fax or email. To obtain a nomination paper, and/ or candidate's declaration of qualification, contact the SEO at the telephone number or email listed below.

Nomination papers not accompanied by the required documents and not properly filed shall be rejected.

Myrna Little
SEO R.M. of West Interlake
10 Main Street
Eriksdale, Manitoba R0C 0W0
Cell: 1-204-941-0156
Office: 204-739-2666
Fax: 204-739-2073
Email: seo@rmofwestinterlake.com
Dated at Eriksdale, MB this 27th day of February, 2025



204-376-2386

We're Hiring!

Come join our team!

CERTIFIED PLUMBER

Job Description:

- Troubleshooting, Repairs & Service to Plumbing Systems, Deep Well Pumps, Jet Pumps, Hot Water Tanks-Electric & Gas Electric & Gas Boilers

Please email your resume to:
ventrix@mymts.net



FARMERS AND RANCHERS

Plan to attend the Bred Cow and Heifer Sale

Saturday, March 15, 2025 at the Ashern Auction Mart Starting at 1 PM

Complete Dispersal Sale for
LARRY RUSSELL
Horned Herefords bred to
Horned Hereford bulls
Full Health program

Please contact Kirk Kiesman at 204-768-0019 for more information
This sale is open to all consignors
Call Larry Kornelsen at 204-494-0455,
Tyler Slawinski at 204-672-0450
To book your cattle
Updates will be posted on
facebook and on our website:
ashernauctionmart.com
For further information contact:
Ashern Auction Mart – 204-768-2360
License #1128



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

RECREATION AND LEISURE DEPARTMENT

FULL TIME, PERMANANT OPPORTUNITY

Position: Recreation Programmer

40 hours per week. Position requires occasional evening and weekend shifts.

The Recreation Programmer, reporting to the Director of Recreation & Leisure Services, will be responsible for planning, organizing, and promoting recreational, leisure, sport, and related tourism programs for the residents and visitors of the RM of Gimli.

Duties:

- Plan, implement and promote recreational, leisure, sport, and related tourism programs, activities, and events.
- Collaborate with community organizations and government departments to stay informed and ensure community programming needs are met.
- Promote programs, facilities and events through various communication channels.
- Supervise and manage seasonal programming staff and volunteers.
- Assist the Director with grant applications and other funding opportunities
- Provide office and administrative support as required.

Qualifications:

- High School diploma, GED, or equivalent.
- Post-secondary education in recreation-related studies or equivalent training/experience is an asset.
- Class 5 Manitoba Driver's License or equivalent.
- Grant writing experience is an asset.
- Criminal Record and Vulnerable Sector Checks are required.

Skills:

- Strong verbal and written communication skills, with frequent public interaction.
- Ability to work well with others, demonstrate initiative, and be flexible.
- Capable of handling multiple priorities and working independently.
- Proficient computer skills, including email, office software, and social media.
- Knowledge of sports, recreation, and leisure services in the RM of Gimli.

Salary as per union collective agreement

For more information, please contact Brenna Philp at 204-642-6653 or recdirector@rmgimli.com. Applications will be reviewed starting March 3, 2025, but the posting will remain open until the position is filled.

To apply, submit your resume, detailed skill set, and references to:

Brenna Philp
Director of Recreation & Leisure Services
Rural Municipality of Gimli
62 Second Avenue, PO Box 1246, Gimli, MB R0C 1B0
Email: recdirector@rmgimli.com
Fax: 204-642-6660

We appreciate all applications; however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

Classifieds

THE EXPRESS

WEEKLY NEWS

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY



PART-TIME ASSISTANT
EMPLOYER: Western Interlake Planning District
OFFICE LOCATION: St. Laurent, Mb
Job Description The Assistant Office Administrator will assist with duties such as receiving and examining various forms of proposed and existing development applications including but not limited to development permits, re-zonings, subdivisions, variances, conditional uses, etc. to determine compliance with respective zoning by-laws, development agreements and development plans.
The AOA will interpret zoning and development by-laws, investigate property history and perform zoning analysis in order to process a development proposal, and perform other duties as assigned.
Please note that all training will be provided.
Salary will be based on the successful applicant's qualifications, education and experience.
To apply for this opportunity send your resume to: wipd@mymts.net or drop off at the Western Interlake Planning District office at #16 Veterans Memorial Rd in the Recreation Centre, St. Laurent, Mb, during regular office hours.
This position will be open until filled. Start date TBD.



MUNICIPALITY OF BIFROST-RIVERTON
SEEKING QUOTATIONS
Privately Owned Equipment Rates
The Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton is seeking quotations from qualified bidders for hourly rates for Privately Owned Equipment for the 2025/ 2026 season.
Request for Quotation packages, including specifications and submission documents are available at the Municipal Office, 329 River Road, Arborg or from the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton website, www.rmbifrost.com
Sealed submissions clearly marked "Privately Owned Equipment Rates" will be received at the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton office, located at 329 River Road, Arborg, MB, up until 12:00pm, local time on March 21, 2025.
All inquiries related to the Request for Quotation should be directed to Jason Comeau at 204.641.2167.
The lowest or any hourly rate bid not necessarily accepted.

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POST CARDS

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take a break

> GAMES

SUDOKU

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

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

Level: intermediate

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

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

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

Sudoku Answer

Crossword Answer

X

CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS
1. Greek mythological figure
5. Small amount
8. Play a role
11. River in Georgia and Alabama
13. Water in the solid state
14. Ancient Greek sophist
15. Having a strong sharp smell or taste
16. Fleece
17. Writer/actress Dunham
18. Behave in a way that belittles
20. Comedienne Gasteyer
21. Zoroastrian concept of holy fire
22. Conceits
25. Slowed down
30. Nourishment
31. Midway between east and southeast
32. Fights
33. Comedienne Tyler
38. Standing operating procedure
41. Locks
43. Old
45. Song sung to one's lover
47. Whale ship captain
49. Moved quickly on foot
50. Volcanic craters
55. Large musical instrument
56. Liquefied natural gas
57. Ethiopian town
59. Not closed
60. A team's best pitcher
61. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
62. Disfigure
63. Prefix denoting "in a"
64. Sleep

CLUES DOWN
1. S. American plant
2. Soul and calypso song
3. Fruit of the service tree
4. Continent
5. Albania's capital
6. Poisonous plant
7. Argues
8. Assists
9. Town in Galilee
10. Russian leader
12. Promotional materials
14. Wings
19. Not odd
23. Expression of creativity
24. Conceptualize
25. A digital tape recording of sound
26. Peyton's little brother
27. Cost, insurance and freight (abbr.)
28. Difference in potential
29. Owner
34. I (German)
35. Chinese conception of poetry

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
				38	39	40		41	42		
				43			44				
		45	46								
47	48				49				50	51	52
55					56				57		58
59					60				61		
62					63				64		

Announcements

BRIDAL SHOWER



Bridal Shower in Honour of
Ciara Stanowski
March 8th, 2025 at 1 p.m.
Arborg Bifrost Community Center
Registered at Arborg Home Hardware
and myregistry.com
Costco and Home Depot Gift Cards
encouraged
Social Evening to follow
- Hope to see you there!

IN MEMORIAM



Robert (Bob) Olender
October 17, 1937 – February 28, 2015
 Ten years have come and gone,
 We still talk and think about you every day.
 We love you and will always miss you.
 -Your wife, children,
 grandchildren and great-grandchildren

OBITUARY



Raymond Howard Ford
March 18, 1943 - February 11, 2025

With heavy hearts, we announce the passing of Raymond Howard Ford on Tuesday, February 11, 2025. He leaves behind a legacy of love, hard work, and family.

Ray is survived by his three loving sons, Randy (Heather), Rick (Kathie), and Russ (Barb), as well as his cherished grandchildren Wade (Megan), Jocelyn, BJ, Brandon, Becca, Emilie, Adam and Zena and great-grandchildren Kaylynn and Isla. His family was his greatest pride and joy, and his impact on their lives will never be forgotten.

Ray lived an incredible life filled with many achievements, but none meant more to him than his family and the successful company—Ford Drilling, a business that has now spanned generations.

Ray was an accomplished bush pilot and would often fly into remote spots to enjoy his passion for the outdoors which included camping, hunting and fishing. Ray was always up for an adventure.

Later in life after he hung up his wings you could find him enjoying the Manitoba winters in Florida.

Ray was very quick witted and known for his amazing sense of humour. Spending time with him was always full of laughs.

His dedication, work ethic, and love for his family will always be remembered.

As per his wishes, no formal service will take place, with a private gathering to be scheduled at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in his memory to the Heart and Stroke Foundation or Diabetes Canada.

Raymond will be deeply missed but forever in our hearts.

Tributes: www.gilbartfuneralhome.com

Gilbart Funeral Home, Selkirk in care of arrangements.



OBITUARY



Hubert Vouriot

Hubert Vouriot, passed away peacefully on the late evening of February 16th, 2025 after a prolonged illness, at Gimli Community Health Centre.

He is survived by his loving wife Jeannette, his son Daniel and wife Nadine along with their children Natalie and Marc. He will be joining his late son Dean, who is surely waiting for him in heaven.

A Funeral Mass will be held on March 12th at 11:00 a.m. at St Michael's Roman Catholic Church in Gimli, with the reception to follow in the hall.

We would like to thank Dr. Ludwig, nurses and staff at Gimli Community Health Centre for their amazing care and compassion shown to our loved one.

In lieu of flowers please consider a gift to the Canadian Cancer Society.

Tributes: www.gilbartfuneralhome.com

Gilbart Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



OBITUARY



Cherney, Ronald Stanton
December 7, 1949 - February 20, 2025

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Ronald Stanton Cherney who was born on December 7, 1949 in Gimli, MB to Thorey Thompson and Stan Cherney. He died on February 20, 2025 of pancreatic cancer.

Ron was born in Gimli, MB and went to school there until graduating from high school. He always had a special place in his heart for Gimli and went back as often as he could. He shared friendships with the people he knew for his entire life, returning to celebrate significant birth years with his former classmates.

Ron's optimism and zest for living was present throughout his life which shone through to the very end. He had the ultimate farewell tour over the last year, meeting every goal he set for himself including looking and feeling terrific during his summer HS reunion

trip to Gimli and celebrating his 75th birthday in December.

He had a special relationship with everyone at The Ottawa Hospital Cancer Centre. They have taken very good care of him for many years. It's thanks to their care and expertise that he was able to make that special trip to Gimli and feel so good on his birthday.

Ron signed up for Medical Assistance in Dying in May 2024. The MAiD program was very important to alleviate Ron's suffering at the end of his life. We are so grateful to the medical personnel who make this service possible.

Ron has lived in Ottawa, ON since he was a young man, where he and Ellen raised their children, enjoying many close, lifelong relationships. His love and respect of his children and their spouses brought him tremendous pride. The arrival of each grandchild compounded his pride and joy in his family.

Marrying Deborah expanded his brood adding her daughters, their spouses and five kids, whom he developed strong loving connections with.

Ron was filled with complete wonder and delight in all 13 of his grandchildren. He'd watch them in awe as they learned and processed the world around them. His laughter filling the room with each of their quips and maneuvers.

His hugs and words of encouragement were sought by all.

Ron never met a stranger. His genuine curiosity for people magnetized them to him which made him a highly respected and successful businessman as owner of Message Centre Wireless. The team knew they could count on him, and he threw one hell of a holiday party.

Ron loved watching sports. Lots of sports. All the sports. Creating many special connections and memories with families and friends over the years, especially when watching the Super Bowl where many friendly rivalries were played out.

It's unanimous that Deborah's unwavering support, delicious freshly prepared meals, and meticulous note-taking that made the nurses giddy, are why we had so much bonus time with Ron.

He was loved and gave love and will be missed tremendously.

Ron is survived by his sister Rhonda Cherney Svendsen (Don) and brother Bruce Cherney, his children Allison (Justin Roth), Jason (Lauren Posen), Carolyn (Spencer Ross), and Daniel (Vanessa Lawton Cherney) and grandchildren, Hudson, Easton, and Brooklyn Ross, Shay and Denny Cherney, Bowie and Lola Roth, and Max Cherney.

Ron is also survived by his wife, Deborah Ferris, and her daughters Michele Magner (Todd) and Rachel Klapperich (Matt) and the grandchildren Tessa, Maya, and Logan Magner, and Michael and Anthony Klapperich.

Ron will be buried in the Gimli Cemetery where there will be a graveside farewell for him when the weather is warm. If you make it to Gimli, go check out his tombstone. There's a special message for all who do.

Please consider making a contribution to The Ottawa Hospital Foundation Cancer Centre.

Condolences/Tributes/Donations

Hulse, Playfair & McGarry

www.hpmcgarry.ca

613-728-1761



OBITUARY



Franziska Feschuk (nee Hofbauer)

Peacefully on February 17, 2025, Mom passed away at the Ashern Personal Care Home.

She leaves to mourn her children: Leona (Marcel), Marty (Lynda) and family, Michael, Jim (Melanie) and family and Kim; her brother Heinz (Heidi) Hofbauer and family along with many nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her husband Walter, parents Erich and Ilse Hofbauer, brothers Hans Treuter and George Hofbauer (Anne).

Mom was a very hardworking person and always had a huge vegetable garden and many flowers blooming all over the yard. Inside the house flowers bloomed as well with her many plants that we called "the jungle" because there were so many. Mom was very outgoing and would start a conversation with anyone, friends and strangers alike. At her house the coffee was always on and

ready for anyone who stopped by. You always saw her out on the dance floor dancing up a storm at the Old Time Dances in Faulkner until she physically couldn't do that anymore, but her feet would still be tapping to the music.

As per Mom's wishes cremation has taken place and no funeral will be held. A private family service will take place at a later date.

The family would like to thank the staff at the Lakeshore General Hospital, Ashern and the Ashern Personal Care Home for their care of Mom. A special thanks to Helen Webster for her compassion in this difficult time for us.

Arrangements by:

ARNASON FUNERAL HOME

Ashern - Lundar

1.204.768.2072 / 1.866.323.3593

Classifieds Announcements



OBITUARY



Josephine Hattie Horvath (née Rolfe)
January 25, 1932 – February 6, 2025

With profound sadness, we announce the passing of Josephine Hattie Horvath (née Rolfe) after a brief illness. Josie was the last surviving member of her generation, the beloved daughter of Albert and Wilma Rolfe, and the final sibling of nine children.

She was predeceased by her four brothers Martin, Steve, Ken, and Albert and her four sisters Elizabeth (Lundgren), Abigale (Lindblad), Myrtle (DeReuck), and Jean (Smith). She was also predeceased by her grandson KY Lamont and granddaughter Jennalee Finnsson and son-in-law Glenn Jonasson.

Born in Winnipeg and raised in St. Norbert, Manitoba, Josie was a woman of remarkable creativity and passion. After dedicating 40 years of service to MTS, she pursued her love for baking and established her own business, crafting and decorating exquisite wedding cakes. In the 1990s, she and her husband, Martin, relocated to Arnes, Manitoba, where she embraced her talent for painting, becoming a professional landscape artist. Josie joined the Gimli Art Club in 1998, serving as its president from 2002 onward. Her artistic legacy includes four stunning acrylic murals on the Gimli sea wall.

Beyond her visual artistry, Josie was a gifted musician, playing the keyboards, harmonica, and even the musical saw. She was a founding member of the band The Silver Tones, with whom she performed at numerous venues throughout the Interlake region.

Josie leaves behind her devoted husband, Martin; her loving daughter, Catherine; her son, Douglas (Naoko); her cherished granddaughter, Aleah; and her grandson, Tem (Kie). Her memory will forever live on in the hearts of those who knew and loved her.

The family extends their deepest gratitude to Dr. Donnelly, Dr. Nazim, the staff at Assisted Living, Home Care Services, Arborg Hospital, and the Arborg Personal Care Home for their compassionate and exceptional care during Josie's final days.

Josie's life was a testament to creativity, resilience, and love. She will be dearly missed, but her spirit will continue to inspire all who were fortunate enough to know her.

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OBITUARY



Alyce Edna (Johnston) Sigurdson
January 23, 1926 – February 20, 2025

A life well lived strung together with love and laughter.
A celebration of life and notice to follow at a later date.



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OBITUARY



Frank Skibinski
January 25, 1929 – January 3, 2025

On January 3rd, 2025, Frank Skibinski passed away peacefully at Percy E. Moore Hospital in his hometown community of Hodgson, MB, at the age of 95.

Frank, a loving husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather (Gigi) will be dearly missed by his daughter Phyllis (Gerry Bouchard), son Wayne, grandchildren Kristen (Kevin Teasdale), Keri (Luis Midence) and great-grandchildren Gabrielle, Emma, Lucia, and Alessandra. He will also be missed by his sisters-in-law Beatrice, Evelyn, and Helen Wallach; Joyce, Ruth, and Lillian Skibinski, as well as dear family friend Gail Nahuliak (Auntie Gail), and many nieces, nephews, and friends.

While his absence is deeply felt, it brings comfort to know that Frank has been reunited with many special people who predeceased him, including his longtime love and wife of 58 years Anne (nee Wallach), his parents John and Martha Skibinski, and his brothers Joseph, Walter and Edward, along with numerous extended family members and friends.

Frank and his twin brother Walter were born in Winnipeg, MB on January 25th, 1929 and raised in Fisher Branch, MB. The family later moved to the nearby town of Hodgson, MB where he eventually took over the family's general store. He and his wife Anne, whom he married on October 25, 1958, worked side by side to grow their business, while building a life, lasting friendships, and a family together.

Frank's passions included sports, nature, the arts, and travel, all of which he loved sharing with his family. Not a day would go by without him attending a sporting event in person or watching one on television - even if it meant rewatching classic tennis matches from 20 years ago. Over the years, many cherished family memories were made sitting around the campfire and fishing at Lake St. George. Frank also eagerly looked forward to his annual hunting trip at Mantagao Lake, where his favourite part was socializing with the boys and enjoying camp meals. Saturday night Polka Party was never missed, often combined with quality time spent with family and friends. Dancing was another one of his favourite past times, as he rarely sat-out a good tune. Grandpa was always present at each one of his granddaughter's Ukrainian dance concerts and loved taking them to see Rusalka and other dance ensembles in Winnipeg.

Frank and Anne's travels with IGA, and later with family, allowed them to explore many beautiful destinations. They returned from each trip with wonderful stories and, at times hilarious photos of their adventures.

In addition to family, community was an especially important aspect of Frank's life. During his younger years, he volunteered countless hours with the minor hockey program and numerous other boards. In his final decade, Frank could still be found at the rink enjoying Junior B games as a spectator. He remained an active member of the Fisher Branch Golf & Country Club and was part of the local choir group, "The Songbirds". Each summer, Frank enjoyed attending the annual Treaty Days in Peguis and Fisher River - two nearby communities that were also especially dear to his heart.

The family would like to express their utmost gratitude to James and Julianne Thiessen, two very special individuals and neighbours who were always there to lend a helping hand and support Frank, especially after the passing of Anne. The family also extends their heartfelt thanks to the wonderful staff at the Percy E. Moore Hospital for their excellent care and compassion during Frank's final days. We are deeply appreciative and thankful to family and friends for their love and support during this time. As per Frank's wishes, a small family burial will take place later this summer.

We're forever grateful for the time we were blessed to have together. It was a great run Dad/Gramps/Gigi, we love you.

Fisher Funeral Home Inc.
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OBITUARY



Sandra Ann Gumbrell

December 30, 1959 – February 19, 2025

It is with heavy hearts and profound sadness that we must announce the passing of Sandra Ann Gumbrell (nee Cook) on February 19, 2025 at the age of 65 years. She left this world peacefully, at home, surrounded by family and love.

Sandra was born in Calgary, AB on December 30, 1959. She devoted her life to caring for others, working as a health care aide for 29 years and retiring in 2014 to care for her other two passions, her yard and her garden. She also loved hosting family gatherings and volunteering in her community, especially with the E.M. Crowe Hospital Guild. Above all, she found immense joy in the company of her grandchildren and her beloved pets.

Sandy is survived by her loving husband of 39 years, Harold (Ross) Gumbrell; her children Sheena (Lee) Morsette and Janine Gumbrell; her grandchildren Lincoln and Rylee Morsette; her mother Patricia Cook; her siblings Randy (Shelly) Cook, Wendy Sigfusson (Oluf), and Cindy Cook (Wayne); her brother and sisters-in-law Boyd and Doreen Gumbrell and Adele Mamona and many cousins. She is also remembered by her many nieces, nephews and extended family members including: Ronald, Aaron, Johannes, Nicole, Tim (Brenna), Kohl, Charlee, Titan, Dawson, Devon, Shyanne, Tanner (Michelle), Savannah, and Jackie (David).

She was predeceased by her father Jack Cook, her nephew Ryan Sigfusson, and her niece Debbie Mamona.

Sandy's genuine kindness and compassion were well known by those who worked with her and the residents she cared for during her career as a health care aid. She had a unique ability to balance humor with empathy ensuring that the dignity and pride of her patients were always maintained, especially during their most difficult times.

The family would like to express their heartfelt gratitude to all those in the Healthcare system who made her cancer journey easier, especially those at E.M. Crowe Hospital and Home Care.

As per her wishes, cremation has taken place and no public funeral will be held. A celebration of life with family and friends will be held at a later date.

The family requests that in lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the E.M. Crowe Memorial Hospital Guild c/o Debbie Lundale, Box 474 Eriksdale, MB R0C 0W0.

Arrangements by:
ARNASON FUNERAL HOME
Ashern – Lundar
1.204.768.2072
1.866.323.3593

OBITUARY



Marjorie June Narfason (nee Gartry)

June 24, 1928 – February 18, 2025

The family of Marjorie (Marj) Narfason announce, with sadness, her passing at the Gimli Betel Home in Gimli, Manitoba on February 18, 2025, at the age of 96.

Marjorie leaves to cherish her memory, her four sons: Jim (Melanie), Stan (Linda), Robert (Valerie) and Rick (Catherine). Her children from her late husband Oli: Candace, Janice (Cameron), Laureen and Clifford (Shelley). Her sisters-in-law, Dilla Narfason and Olan Isfeld; along with many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

Marj was born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. She was the only daughter in a family of five brothers. She married the first love of her life, Jim Gendron, in 1949, and raised four sons with him. They lived in various locations across Canada, following Jim's Canadian National Railways career, finally landing in Gimli, Manitoba in 1971.

After Jim's death in January 1981, Marj met the second love of her life, Oli Narfason. Marj and Oli enjoyed an active family and community life in Gimli. They became sustaining members of the Westshore Community Foundation. Volunteerism and giving back to the Gimli Community was a priority for them during their marriage. Oli predeceased Marj in April of 2023 after 35 years of marriage.

Marj will be remembered as a devoted wife, a loving mother, aunt, grandmother and great-grandmother. Over her life, Marj made many cherished friends, who were attracted by her lively personality, wit, and sense of humour. Marj also enjoyed an active life of curling, bowling, playing bridge and travelling.

A service will be held on April 25, 2025 at the Gimli Lutheran Church at 2 p.m.

Marj's family would like to acknowledge the support, patience and kindness shown to her by the medical, nursing and day to day care givers at Betel Home, Gimli, Manitoba.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to the Westshore Community Foundation.

<https://www.endowmanitoba.ca/community-foundations/westshore-community-foundation/>



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