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Touring the town

EXPRESS PHOTO BY BRETT MITCHELL

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Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine shows up to six-month immunity

By Patricia Barrett

Research carried out by Pfizer-BioNTech shows their COVID-19 vaccine to be 91.3 per cent effective for up to six months.

The findings were announced this month after the two companies updated their initial analysis of the vaccine in a Phase 3 study. The results are based on two doses of the vaccine administered three weeks apart.

An analysis of 927 symptomatic people with COVID-19 demonstrated that BNT162b2 [the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine] is 91.3 per cent effective against COVID-19, measured seven days and up to six months after the second dose, states an April 1 news release on Pfizer's website.

The vaccine also showed high efficacy against the South Africa variant (B1351) of COVID after researchers enrolled 800 participants in a study. Nine cases of COVID, including the South Africa variant, were detected in the placebo group and none in the group inoculated with BNT162b2.

"It is an important step to further confirm the strong efficacy and good safety data we have seen so far, especially in a longer-term follow-up," said BioNTech's CEO and co-founder Ugur Sahin in the release. "These data also provide the first clinical results that a vaccine can effectively protect against currently circulating variants, a critical factor to reach herd immunity and end this pandemic for the global population."

The efficacy was generally consistent across different age, gender and ethnic groups as well as among participants with underlying conditions.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY GOVERNMENT OF MANITOBA, D. LITTLE

Manitoban shown getting a COVID-19 vaccine shot at one of the province's supersites.

It's unclear whether or how fast immunity wanes after six months; further research is needed. Health experts have postulated that COVID vaccinations may be necessary every year.

Safety data from Pfizer-BioNTech's Phase 3 study was also collected from over 12,000 vaccinated participants at least six months after their second dose, and demonstrated a "favourable safety and tolerability profile."

The safety of the vaccine has now been evaluated

in over 44,000 participants aged 16 and older.

The vaccine is based on BioNTech proprietary mRNA technology and was developed by both BioNTech and Pfizer. It is authorized for emergency use in the United States. In Canada, the federal government authorized its use under an interim order, taking into consideration "urgent public health needs."

Pfizer-BioNTech plans to submit their latest findings for peer-review by other researchers and for potential publication, according to the release. The results will also be submitted to regulatory health agencies around the world.

As of April 10, 949 Manitobans have died from COVID, and 135 new cases were identified that day, according to provincial data. The provincial test positivity rate has risen to 5.7 per cent. Health experts say Manitoba is on its way to a third wave of infections after public health restrictions were loosened and families gathered for Easter.

More contagious variants — the South Africa and the British — are spreading rapidly in the province, notably among younger people. The variants are also causing more severe illness. As of April 10, 376 variant cases have been identified.

Worldwide, almost 135 million people have been infected with COVID and over 2.9 million have died (data: Johns Hopkins University, April 10).

Public health experts and governments are urging people to continue practising physical distancing, wearing masks and avoiding gatherings, indoor and outdoor.

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Golf clubs are looking forward to another busy season

By Staff

Manitoba golf courses saw one of the busiest seasons on record last summer. Now over a year into the COVID-19 pandemic, Interlake golf courses are expecting much of the same this go-around.

Pat Doyle, co-owner of the Sandy Hook Golf Club with his brother Byron, said he and many of his fellow course managers are preparing for what they anticipate could be another record-setting summer.

"Last year was absolutely bizarre. We've never seen anything like it, and any golf business would tell you the same thing. I can't see it changing. This year is going to be identical," said Doyle.

He emphasized the course will always follow the current government's public health regulations, but Doyle said golf has been one of the few activities throughout the pandemic people have been able to continue participating in.

"But we still won't be able to have any tournaments. If cases go up again, we'll have to put restrictions on who can ride together in carts, etc. The reality is, more families are playing now, we're going to be just as busy without those tournaments," he said.

"It's been unfortunate how the pandemic has impacted so many businesses, but golf hasn't been one of those businesses. The golf business has undoubtedly benefited."

Leagues are unlikely, Doyle said, as it was different due to the pandemic. He said the plan is to wait until opening day, assess provincial regulations, and make decisions at that point. New provincial public health regulations are expected April 16.

"I can't see the restaurant opening at full capacity either," said Doyle.

"We might operate ours as we did last year, on a very minimal scale. No full meals, as it's just too much co-ordination on all ends: staffing, booking reservations, not being able to accommodate the full menu, etc. We'll see," he said.

Alcohol restrictions

As of April 1, the province announced its public health orders did not allow for the sale or consumption of alcohol on the golf course.

Sandy Hook Golf Club wasn't too worried about the decision, as Doyle said it was an oversight by the provincial government.

In line with Doyle's comments, the province changed its mind within a week. As of April 8, golfers are allowed to purchase liquor on the course once again.

Despite the warm weather last week,



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Opening day for Sandy Hook golf course is planned for April 16, weather permitting.

Doyle said the course won't open any earlier than usual. Sandy Hook typically opens up the last week of April, and he said he expects the same opening date in 2021.

"In the past, it's been like this, too," said Doyle, noting staff haven't begun dragging tee boxes or draining water.

"Although it gets nice, it doesn't really make sense to open for two days and close again if the weather doesn't co-operate," he said.

Once the snow disappears, Doyle said his staff will get to work on preparing the course shortly. He said, while it's early, the course looks like it's going to be in great shape this year.

The water system won't be turned on, however, until there is no chance of the mercury dipping below -5 C. Once it's warm enough, the grounds crew will begin filling ponds and preparing the rest of the course.

Green fees are \$35 at Sandy Hook seven days a week, and if you include a cart, Doyle said the total will end up being just north of \$50.

"IT'S BEEN UNFORTUNATE HOW THE PANDEMIC HAS IMPACTED SO MANY BUSINESSES."

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Fire chief credits Arborg-Bifrost residents for preventing grass fires

By Patricia Barrett

The Arborg-Bifrost Fire & Emergency Services chief Leroy Loewen credits area residents for preventing grass fires as Manitoba emerged from winter facing dry conditions.

Touch wood, the area the fire department covers has been grass-fire free since a fire last August.

"I might be a little proud of my local RM, but they sure did well last summer and this spring so far. As of this point, the department hasn't responded to a grass fire," said Loewen by phone last Thursday. "And that's a good thing. It indicates that the residents of Arborg-Bifrost are being responsible. And we definitely appreciate them for that."

The fire department covers the Arborg area and half of the RM of Bifrost-Riverton.

Neighbouring municipalities have implemented burn bans.

The RM of Gimli put a burn ban into effect April 6. The ban includes camp/open fires, the burning of garbage, fireworks, yard waste and agricultural burning.

"Please note that if a fire is lit during this period and becomes out of control, the person who lit the fire will be held responsible for the cost of resulting damages and will be fined," states the notice on the RM's website.

The RM of Armstrong put a burn ban in place on April 1, stating that council is "very concerned with the current dry conditions." The ban includes camp fires, burning yard waste, burning garbage and burning agricultural waste. A person responsible for lighting a fire will be held responsible for damages and costs as per the RM's



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Fast-moving grass fires can quickly engulf property and damage or destroy hydro poles. In 2018 poles along Highway 68 were scorched during a grass fire.

Bylaw 2-19.

The RM of Fisher has also implemented a burn ban.

Whether this week's snowfall will be enough to change all that is yet to be seen.

Stricter restrictions loom as COVID numbers rise

By Ashleigh Viveiros

More restrictions could be on the way if Manitoba's COVID-19 numbers continue to rise.

Public health officials announced 114 new cases of COVID-19 on Monday, making it the sixth straight day of triple digit increases.

"Today we're strongly advising people wear masks as much as possible, and this includes even when gathering outdoors," said Dr. Brent Roussin, chief provincial health officer. "Gatherings of any kind are not without risk, certainly if we're not following the fundamentals such as distancing."

"We know the variants of concern are much more transmissible and we're starting to see the B117 variant become more and more prevalent in Manitoba," he said, noting other juris-

dictions have reported transmission of the variants of concern even when outdoors.

Manitoba reported a total of 1,370 active cases of COVID-19 on Monday. The province only updates its variant tracking data from Tuesday to Saturday. As of Saturday, the number of variant cases was a 412.

The number of COVID-related deaths was at 949. There were 135 people with COVID-19 in hospital at press time, 33 in intensive care.

The increasing number of new cases of the virus coupled with the more infectious variants has health officials very concerned, especially since contact tracing is showing many people have been holding large private gatherings in their homes of late.

"We're seeing house parties. We're

seeing playdates. We're seeing sleepovers," Roussin said. "We're seeing cases with many more contacts than we saw in the recent past and we're seeing this contribute to the transmission of the virus."

"If we don't act now, we will be right back into stricter restrictions very soon."

That could include mandatory masks outdoors and a tightening of indoors gathering restrictions in the near future.

Roussin again urged Manitobans to stay home when ill, even mildly ill, and to get tested if showing any symptoms of COVID-19.

"We continually hear of cases that have multiple unnecessary contacts because they're out and about while symptomatic," he said. "We have peo-

ple who have delayed getting testing for quite some time because of mild symptoms."

"Even mild symptoms, even if you're not sure, get tested. Isolate pending results. This is one of the best ways that we could avert a third wave, which is pending."

By the numbers

Interlake-Eastern Regional Health at press time had 25 active cases of COVID-19 and four hospitalizations, two in the ICU. A total of 2,441 people in the region have recovered from the virus; 37 people have died.

In the Interlake-Eastern region reporting active cases on Monday included Stonewall/Teulon (four) and the Unknown district (four), with all other districts recovered.

Fisher Branch RCMP seize meth, cocaine in Fisher River

Staff

Fisher Branch RCMP charged two people with the possession of cocaine and methamphetamine after stopping a vehicle in Fisher River Cree Nation last Saturday.

Officers conducting traffic enforcement duties stopped an SUV for a traffic offence around noon April 10 and the male driver fled on foot. He was apprehended a short time later.

A search of the vehicle and suspects turned up cocaine, crystal methamphetamine, cannabis, pills, cash and drug paraphernalia.

"Fisher Branch RCMP are commit-

ted in keeping crystal meth off the streets and out of our communities," said Cpl. Michael Garton of the Fisher Branch RCMP detachment. "The consequences are devastating for families."

Further investigation led to the arrest of the male driver and his female passenger for drug-trafficking.

An adult male from Selkirk and an adult female from Lundar are facing charges of possessing cocaine and meth for the purpose of trafficking. No ages and names were provided. Both were released but will appear in a Peguig court in June.

EXPRESS PHOTO BY FISHER BRANCH RCMP

Fisher Branch RCMP stopped a SUV in Fisher River Cree Nation on April 10 and seized cocaine, crystal methamphetamine, cannabis, pills, cash and drug paraphernalia.



ESD unsure how schools will be supported given education property tax cut

By Patricia Barrett

The provincial government announced last week it plans to eliminate 50 per cent of education property taxes starting this year, leaving school divisions unsure of how that will play out in terms of future funding for schools and students.

The tax break comes a few weeks after the government announced it will dissolve Manitoba's 37 English-speaking school divisions under Bill 64, The Education Modernization Act, and replace them with a single provincial education authority (PEA).

The government's 2021 budget promises to reduce education property taxes by 25 per cent this year for residential and farm properties, and by a further 25 per cent in 2022. Commercial, industrial and institutional property owners will see a 10 per cent reduction.

Evergreen School Division (ESD) Supt. Roza Gray said she and the division's school trustees don't know at this point how those tax reductions will directly affect schools, but they're concerned because they represent a loss of \$380 million in general revenue.

Evergreen has been subjected to provincial funding cuts for the past five years, she said, and is unsure how the further erosion of revenue will affect provincial support for ESD schools.

"The province has not announced a plan to recover this revenue," said Gray.

She added that the government had promised to phase in reductions to education property taxes over a 10-year period.

Quoting information provided by the Manitoba School Boards Association (MSBA), she said the property tax reduction, based on a 365-day year, is equivalent to a month and a half of funding support for all students and schools across the province.

Under the present system, in which "local taxes are raised by the local school board," community members know their taxes go towards supporting schools in their communities, she said. But all that could change when Bill 64 passes as expected.

"With the dissolution of all school boards on July 1, 2022, taxes raised will go to the provincial government to be dispersed at the will of the provincially appointed Provincial Education Authority," said Gray. "It is not known if these funds will flow back proportionately to continue to support our local schools."

The MSBA said the government claimed other provinces have eliminated their education property taxes,

but the claim is untrue. Manitoba is the last province that allows local school boards, with community input, to decide how best to apply funding to local needs.

MSBA president Alan Campbell said on Twitter that "local democracy shouldn't be taken for granted."

The provincial government did promise a number of funding initiatives in its 2021 budget, including up to \$40 million for its new education strategy under Bill 64, called Better Education Starts Today. Of that, \$5 will go towards advancing that strategy. A further \$5.5 million will go towards special needs and \$4 million will go towards virtual learning, according to budget documents.

But Gray said the announced increases in education spending include support divisions would have received from other sources, funding to offset pandemic-related expenses and dollars to fund the provincial government in transitioning to an education system that eliminates the infrastructure for local decision-making.

"For example, this announcement includes \$23 million allocated for the Property Tax Offset Grant, which replaces the two per cent increase in taxes divisions would have been able to raise via local taxation. This is not new money in the education system."

When Bill 64 takes effect, the Evergreen School Division will lose all the equipment it purchased through local taxation as its assets and liabilities will be transferred to the province's sole school authority (PEA) on July 1, 2022.

"This means that on that day, our staff will no longer be employed by Evergreen but by the provincial government through the Provincial Education Authority (PEA)," said the board in a statement to the *Express*. "Further, all the equipment, buses, computers, supplies, etc., which were purchased by Evergreen School Division with the support of local tax dollars, will also become property of the PEA."

It's unknown whether that equipment will remain in former ESD schools, whether the schools themselves will stay open or be amalgamated and whether the busing of students may entail longer trips.

The provincial government also promised to introduce a refundable Teaching Expense Tax Credit for qualified teachers in elementary or secondary schools. Teachers who have to shoulder out-of-pocket expenses for teaching supplies will be able to claim a 15 per cent refund for up to \$1,000. The credit is retroactive to Jan. 1, 2021.

Many teachers, associations such as



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Questions about possible school closures and longer bus trips have arisen after the provincial government announced it will disband 37 school divisions. Buses purchased with support from local tax dollars will become the property of the province. The government announced a 50 per cent reduction in education property taxes last week.

the Manitoba Teachers Society and critics reacted negatively to the credit, questioning why the government won't just properly fund education. Paying teachers 15 cents on the dollar won't address under-funding.

Evergreen Teachers' Association president Jay Ewert, who teaches grades 7 and 8 in Arborg, said the credit for expenses is an insult.

"Teachers are consistently taking their own initiatives to meet the needs of their students. Having Mr. Pallister behave as if these personal initiatives taken by teachers are not only necessary but expected is an insult to the incredible integrity of our learning professionals," said Ewert. "My question is, 'Why isn't the government willing to put forth the money necessary in the first place to address the current impoverishment of our education system instead of acting as if it is the responsibility of the teachers to answer the problems imposed by five years of under-funding?'"

A provincial government spokesperson said the government expects to save "upwards of \$40 million per year" by abolishing the 37 school divisions. That money "can be redirected to the classrooms and front lines of education."

In response to a question about how the government will fund education with a reduction in property taxes, along with other reductions for Manitobans such as vehicle insurance, the spokesperson said the money will come out of general revenue.

"All grants and transfers to schools and universities, Winnipeg, municipalities, hospitals, etc., come out of general revenue raised by the province and transfers

from the federal government, with any shortfall funded through borrowing in the capital markets," said the spokesperson by email.

When asked if that will be sustainable in the long run, the spokesperson said the province will "continue to manage its fiscal affairs in a manner to ensure it will meet its commitment to put more money on Manitobans' kitchen tables."

For more information about how Bill 64 or education funding in the 2021 provincial budget will affect schools, visit the Manitoba School Boards Association's website.

Bill 64 is currently on hold. To register with the Office of the Clerk at the Legislature to speak about the bill when it goes before a review committee in the fall, call 204-945-3636.

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Trespassing and biosecurity

By Bill Campbell, Keystone Agricultural Producers

Bill Campbell, president of Keystone Agricultural Producers, reminds Manitobans to be confident about where their food comes from. Farmers take biosecurity and food safety seriously because they know that the food they produce should meet the highest standards.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency creates and enforces stringent national biosecurity standards aimed at keeping livestock and the food supply safe. The livestock industry also creates on-farm food safety programs and develops biosecurity protocols through consultation. These standards and programs are mandatory, universal, enforceable and include third-party independent auditing and verification.

An ongoing issue in Manitoba is the growing trend of rural crime and trespassing on farmyards and livestock

operations. This trend is alarming and intimidating for farmers, who work hard to develop and adhere to biosecurity protocols to protect their farms and livestock from the spread of disease. A breakdown in these protocols jeopardizes food security and often necessitates drastic action to prevent disease breakouts.

KAP has lobbied the provincial government for stronger legislation, with tougher penalties to deter rural crime and trespassing. Many farmers live and raise their families near their farming operations and are concerned that they may be threatened. Farm families should feel safe, secure and at ease living and working in rural communities.

We are pleased that the Government of Manitoba has introduced legislative amendments to protect farmyards and Canada's food system. Our industry and the farmers in this province have high standards for them-



KAP president Bill Campbell

selves and stringent requirements they must meet when it comes to the food on your plate."

Fishing licences available online

By Staff

Manitobans can get their 2021-22 fishing licences online ahead of the season's start next month.

Agriculture and Resource Development Minister Blaine Pedersen reminded Manitobans last week that the province's e-licensing portal launched last year is open for business.

"Our online e-licensing portal has made it easier than ever for Manitobans to purchase their angling licenses from their own homes," he said. "Our government is continu-

ing to modernize the way we deliver services while decreasing our carbon footprint."

The recreational angling season officially opens on May 15 in Manitoba's southern region, and May 22 in the northwest and north central regions. The northeast region remains open to angling year round.

The 2020 angling season officially closed at midnight on April 4 in the southern division. It ends on April 30 in the northwest and north central divisions.

All anglers are required to obtain an

angling licence to fish in Manitoba, unless exempt.

Licences are available online 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and can be immediately purchased and printed at home.

For more information and to purchase an angling licence, visit www.manitobaelicensing.ca.

Twenty fisheries, forestry and wildlife applications have also been added to the e-licensing portal this year, ranging from competitive fishing events to taxidermy. Check out the website for details.

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EXPRESS PHOTO BY BRIAN JONASSON

Buddy at Valhalla Beach this past Monday. Most of the Interlake was under a heavy snowfall warning Monday and Tuesday this past week. A low pressure system tracking in from northwest Ontario brought upwards of 25 centimetres of snow, making highway travel difficult. Visibility was reduced while, highways, roads, sidewalks and parking lots had to be cleared due to accumulating snow. Help us record the weather of the week and send in your photos of friends and/or families enjoying the outdoors. Email: weather@express-weeklynews.ca

MMF increases financial supports for Manitoba's only housing repair program

Submitted

Low- to middle-income Métis families are getting a bump in the amount they can receive to make needed home repairs.

David Chartrand, president of the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF), and Will Goodon, minister of Housing, announced that the Home Enhancement Loan Program (HELP) will be increased from \$15,000 to \$18,000.

"The costs of lumber and other construction materials have risen substantially in the last while," said Goodon. "The HELP program has received a lot of interest since we announced it almost a year ago, but we are finding that some houses need that little bit more."

HELP is the MMF's forgivable loan program that allows Métis families to maintain and improve their homes, which can be especially challenging in the North. To help address this

challenge, the program allows for up to \$25,000 in forgivable loans for Métis families living above the 53rd parallel, which includes those living in The Pas and Thompson.

"The cost of materials and transportation leaves Métis families in the North at a disadvantage," said Chartrand. "Citizens who live in these regions can't get the same amount of work done for the same amount of dollars as those who live in the South. This increase for the North will allow for warmer and safer homes for many families."

Since the Government of Manitoba cancelled all its repair programs a couple of years ago, there has been nothing available to assist with housing repairs for Métis families. The MMF is expanding the program based on the overwhelming demand uncovered since the launch of HELP. To date, over 190 homes have been repaired or are being repaired, with

forgivable loan amounts totalling over \$2.4 million.

"Housing has been one of the most important sectors of the MMF since our founding in 1967," said Goodon. "Our president, cabinet and staff are committed to building on those lessons and successes."

"We are very proud to expand on successful programs like HELP," said Chartrand. "They allow us to continue improving our support and make life even better for Métis families across Manitoba."

These increases are not retroactive to existing loans but do apply to applications still being processed in the system. Métis families interested in the program should get in touch with the housing department for more information by calling 204-586-8474 or visiting our website at www.mmf.mb.ca. The guideline booklet and the application forms will be updated shortly.

Budget includes \$1.2B for COVID-19 response

By Lorne Stelmach

The provincial budget introduced last week includes nearly \$1.2 billion to continue protecting Manitobans through COVID-19 as well as to prepare for future pandemic and economic needs.

Making the announcement last Tuesday in advance of unveiling the full budget, Finance Minister Scott Fielding and Health and Seniors Care Minister Heather Stefanson noted the majority of the funding includes amounts for the health care system and the full year cost of the vaccine program as well as support that may be required for the K-12 education system and additional personal protective equipment and related supplies.

"Our pandemic response has required unprecedented government support," said Fielding, who noted their top financial priority over the past year has been to direct critical funding to the front lines. "Obviously, COVID-19 of course is the front and the most important aspect of our provincial budget ... our government's main priority is to protect Manitobans and to really advance Manitoba."

The COVID-19 funding includes:

- \$230 million for personal protective equipment, testing and vaccine site infrastructure, contact tracing and other preparations.
- \$350 million for additional health care systems costs in preparation for a potential third COVID-19 wave.
- \$160 million to support school and education needs.
- \$100 million for the vaccine program.
- \$40 million for Manitoba Restart Program capital initiatives at

Continued on page 10

Food quality and care complaints at Gimli Betel PCH raised and addressed

By Patricia Barrett

A resident of Gimli's Betel Personal Care Home concerned about the quality of the food, as well as an incident of unprofessional conduct, wonders whether those concerns will be addressed by management.

A group of residents had made a formal, written complaint last month about the quality and taste of the food and questioned its nutritional value.

"The food here is just dreadful," said the resident by phone about three weeks ago. "I don't know what they budget, but sometimes people just don't eat their food. It's really not edible from time to time."

Among residents' concerns are frozen vegetables that "disintegrate into a little pile of mush" when they're heated up, the use of liquid eggs, "tasteless" tinned fruit such as pears, unidentifiable fish covered in bread-ing with "some white substance in between," processed products called chicken Kiev and chicken a la king but which "bore no resemblance to what it was supposed to be," and Ukrainian and Polish residents who "wouldn't eat the borscht because it tasted awful."

"I think they assume old people have no more taste buds left," said the resident. "We didn't have fresh fruit today; it was out of a can. There's no taste to that so I didn't eat it."

A committee of about 12 residents met mid-March with staff to discuss their concerns about the food, the resident said. And those concerns were forwarded to dietitians and kitchen staff rather than to management.

The resident said he/she is not willing to be identified because he/she fears some form of retribution, that speaking out might affect his/her provision of care. The *Express* independently verified he/she is a resident of Betel.

"I would like to think I could let you use my name and nothing would happen, but I'm not a fool," said the resident. "This place typically meets my needs. But there is history of covering things up. For some people, the staff are wonderful. Some of the nurses are great and they go over and above. There are a number of people here with dementia and they're treated beautifully. But some of the staff make fun of people with dementia: 'Did you poop your pants again? OK, C'mon, we'll get you new pants.' That is to-



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

The Betel personal care home in Gimli.

tally unprofessional. People are afraid in here."

The resident said he/she wonders why they can't get fresh food, why the variety of ethnic groups in the PCH can't be once in a while served meals/desserts they used to eat at home, and why, with Lake Winnipeg fishers "on our doorstep," residents don't get fresh fish.

Angela Eyjolfson, chief executive officer of the Betel Home Foundation, said the home facilitates the complaint-making process, welcoming concerns from individual residents and/or their family members, providing a complaint form that's freely available in holders around the PCH and having staff members attend residents' council meetings (about six a year).

"Most of the complaints I see in [the *Express*] email came to me following that [March 18 council] meeting," said Eyjolfson by phone last week. "The complaints don't go to the cooks or the dietitian. The recreation manager and the social worker usually attend the meetings as mediators. They write out the complaints and the residents can check and say, 'Yes that's what we want to say.' And then they forward two copies — one to the department manager and one to me."

Following those complaints, Eyjolfson said she met with the dietary care manager and the director of resident care and came up with a plan to address food concerns.

"We're going to take the menu, before it's posted, to the residents' council so they'll have an opportunity for input. Is there something they really don't like? Do they want some recipe they had growing up? We can send

the recipe to our dietitian and see if we can incorporate it," she said. "I think one of the hardest parts of this is that everybody's personal taste is so different. It's difficult with 80 residents."

She said Betel's foodservice provider is Compass Group Canada, which has been serving the PCH longer than she has been there (since 2008), and the home also uses Sysco Canada.

Based in Ontario, Compass says it's the country's leading foodservice and support services provider with over 2,200 locations across Canada. In addition to PCHs, it provides food to hospitals, sports venues, schools, universities and oil rigs.

"Food is probably the single-most important thing to residents living in personal care homes, the thing they talk about the most and look forward to the most. This is a huge priority for us," said Eyjolfson.

Not only does Betel have a foodservice provider, but kitchen staff also purchase fresh food from supermarkets and prepare it, she said. Soups, roasts, lasagna, quiche and shepherd's pie are cooked in-house according to an approved recipe. Deli meats and breaded fish is supplied.

"We do purchase fresh food. I think there might be a misunderstanding [among some residents] about that, I can't say for sure. But the two things we spend the most money on are staffing and food," said Eyjolfson. "Food costs have risen over the past year, but that's something we let run over budget. We won't cut back money for food."

What the home has to be careful about is how each resident can handle certain food items. Fresh fruit, such as grapes, for example, could cause a choking hazard, she said. Other food items have to be minced or blended.

"Every resident has a feeding and swallowing assessment to see what they're able to tolerate," said Eyjolfson. "There's a lot to consider when it comes to food and it can get complicated."

Although family members are allowed to bring in fresh fish for their loved one, she said the PCH doesn't purchase from local fishers. Its food-service providers have to meet quality assurance, safety and health standards for PCHs.

Likewise, family members wouldn't be allowed to make something like borscht for all 80 residents because of health and safety regulations.

If there's something being served for supper that a resident doesn't like, say, liver and onions, Eyjolfson said there's always an alternative meal they can order. Food intake is also monitored.

"The health care aides do monitor how much food someone has eaten, and they keep track of their weight," said Eyjolfson. "If we see a real fluctuation, we have a dietician come in and do an assessment."

As for the unprofessional comments and fear of retaliation should one speak out, Eyjolfson said the PCH has policies on abuse. Staff receive education when they start and every year of their employment. They also sign a code of conduct every year that outlines what the PCH expects.

"We talk about not shaming or humiliating or swearing or other things perceived as abuse," she said.

"If a staff member ever witnesses that, or a resident or a family member does, there's actually a legal requirement for us to report that to [the provincial government's] Protection for Persons in Care office," said Eyjolfson.

The office is part of Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living, investigating reports of suspected patient or resident abuse and neglect.

Residents can report directly to the Protection for Persons in Care office, anonymously, through forms that are available in the building, she added. That will trigger an investigation.

"We have a number of oversight bodies that come in as well. Manitoba Health Standards talks to a number of residents and family members about whether they're being treated respectfully and if they feel staff are being inappropriate or withholding care in any way," said Eyjolfson. "Then Betel has a disciplinary process for dealing with that."

She said the concern regarding a resident being shamed for soiling themselves, which the *Express* asked about in its email, is not one that she has yet received.

"If someone did see that, we encourage them to tell us right away because that's not what we see in our staff. If something is occurring, we would want to be able to address it," she said.

"I WOULD LIKE TO THINK I COULD LET YOU USE MY NAME AND NOTHING WOULD HAPPEN, BUT I'M NOT A FOOL."

Bifrost-Riverton echoes AMM op-ed

By Staff

After two separate surveys sent out to every Manitoba municipality, the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) is calling on the province for more support.

Kam Blight, AMM president, said in an op-ed to the *Winnipeg Free Press* that municipalities remain on the front lines, keeping communities safe by continuing to deliver essential services.

"The overall goal of these surveys is to provide guidance to the provincial and federal governments, as they contemplate additional financial assistance to municipalities in their 2021 budgets," said Blight, noting that while the AMM appreciates the federal government doubling the gas tax transfer and providing \$106 million for municipalities under the Safe Restart Agreement (SRA), AMM members are bracing for more financial hardship in 2021.

The Manitoba government did not formally match federal funds under the SRA.

Based on ongoing discussions with the province, AMM said existing funding support to municipalities was counted as Manitoba's share, while provinces such as British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario did match federal contributions under the SRA by allocating an additional \$212.5M, \$203M and \$695M, respectively, in new funding to support municipal operating costs.

Eighty-five per cent of AMM members indicated code red restrictions have financially impacted their municipalities, while 71 per cent of municipalities also noted the single largest financial hit has been due to the closure of community recreation centres.

"When asked how long it will take to financially recover to pre-crisis COVID-19 levels, the majority of survey respondents indicated more than two years, with some responses indicating

as long as five to eight years," he said.

In 2020, the Manitoba government provided a larger share of municipal operating funding earlier in the year, which Blight said members appreciated, as it allowed RMs to respond to the pandemic more effectively.

AMM hopes the measure will be repeated in 2021, according to Blight, but he noted municipalities require additional funds over and above existing levels to offset the expected operating shortfalls in 2021.

While RM of Bifrost-Riverton wouldn't comment on any of Blight's specific comments, in a statement to the *Express*, the RM echoes Blight's sentiments but is choosing to focus on appreciation of the gas tax transfer in 2021.

The RM said that since amalgamation and through the end of 2020, the RM of Bifrost-Riverton received over \$1.3 million in gas tax funds and has spent more than of \$1.4 million on eligible capital projects.

The statement said those projects would have otherwise been borne by the mill rate or simply would not have been completed. The lifetime of the Gas Tax program for the RM has totalled just under \$3 million to date.

The RM said the larger share of municipal operating funds from the province in 2020 year allowed the RM to financially navigate the pandemic by seeing an additional \$456,000 in revenue compared to the 2019 amount of \$254,000.

"Though the operational department of recreation and culture was certainly impacted by COVID and the subsequent restrictions forcing the facilities to be closed for the majority of the year, the support bridge funding payments provided by the province to the groups and organizations responsible for managing and operating the facilities certainly lessen financial impact when reviewing the 2020 year-end numbers and that, too, the RM of Bifrost-Riverton is truly appreciative

of," the statement reads.

"Council understands, a high level of uncertainty exists in the development of the 2021 financial plan. Currently, the RM is planning on another year of not increasing their indemnities, while continuing to uphold their goal of providing the highest level possible of municipal services to their ratepayers with the lowest possible impact on (ratepayers)," it goes on.

The RM's statement also acknowledges it's aware the AMM is trying to help municipalities meet the challenges facing them and is appreciative of the advocacy.

Municipalities are facing even more uncertainty as they finalize 2021, according to Blight, given the uptick in COVID-19 cases and threats posed by new variants.

Without the provision of additional emergency operating funding, Blight said municipalities will be forced to consider capital project deferrals or even job and/or services cuts, which will undermine the provincial economic recovery.

"All Manitobans have felt the impacts of this pandemic. By working collaboratively, we will ensure our economy is ready for a robust recovery as we aim to build a more pros-

perous, resilient and connected province," said Blight.

"Local communities are the backbone of our province and country, so any recovery plan must include and support all municipalities by providing immediate financial and economic relief," he said.

The economic slowdown has also increasingly highlighted the digital divide between communities. AMM is calling on the province to expedite its broadband strategy to better equip its municipalities in rural Manitoba.

Blight closed by adding AMM members want to see funding flow under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP), so communities can move forward with shovel-ready growth projects to boost the economy.

"We know municipalities are in the best position to determine local infrastructure priorities," said Blight, adding municipalities are anxious and eager to start projects.

"Nobody wants to miss out on another construction season like they did last year due to not receiving approvals from the provincial and federal governments.

"They should be empowered to meet those priorities to ensure growth continues."

Male shot while taking out garbage

Staff

Lundar RCMP received a complaint of a male having been shot outside his residence on the Lake Manitoba First Nation on April 9 at 5:35 a.m.

The 47-year-old male victim was taken to hospital where he advised officers that he was taking out the garbage when a car drove by and he was subsequently shot.

The victim remains in hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

The RCMP are asking anyone with information in regards to this shooting to call the Lundar RCMP at 204-762-5088, call Crime Stoppers anonymously at 1-800-222-8477 or secure tip online at www.manitobacrimestoppers.com.

Lundar RCMP, along with Major Crime Services and Forensic Identification Section, continue to investigate.

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Manitoba 

More details about education property tax reductions, program funding required

By Patricia Barrett

The provincial government announced plans last week to reduce education property taxes for residential and farm properties by 50 per cent over a two-year period, starting this year, as well as a 10 per cent reduction for commercial and institutional property owners.

Finance minister Scott Fielding made the announcement April 7 after the 2021 provincial budget was released. The reductions in education property taxes will result in rebates of nearly \$250 million for about 658,000 property owners.

The provincial budget also promises a number of expenditures on education.

"We know Manitobans deserve a break, especially during this pandemic," said Fielding in an April 7 news release. "That's why we will take even more steps to protect your incomes by reducing the taxes you pay and helping you keep more of your hard-earned money with you, where it belongs."

Donald Nikkel, Lakeshore School Division's superintendent of human resources, policy and public relations, and alternative programming, said Lakeshore needs more details from the province on the property tax reduction and can share only preliminary thoughts about the announcement.

The government had been talking about "slowly phasing" out the education property tax over a 10-year period, said Nikkel, but it appears it's "moving ahead quite rapidly" with a "significant drop."

Because the province will be sending refund cheques to property owners, Nikkel said it's likely the 25 per cent reduction for the 2021-2022 fiscal year won't affect Lakeshore.

"Judging by the fact the province will be sending out a rebate directly from its coffers, it appears that won't affect the funding it already announced in February for school divisions," he said. "It doesn't appear as though there's an immediate effect on school divisions and that they'll be supporting us for the coming year."

Despite the provincial government saying it's facing an estimated defi-

cit of \$1.597 billion, it's promising to make a "record investment above \$3 billion in the public school system," according to its April 7 news release, while also increasing funding to Manitobans needing rent assistance, cutting sales tax from haircuts and salon visits and reducing vehicle registration costs.

Nikkel said he's rather circumspect when he hears announcements pertaining to increased education funding. The province's "funding increases" over the past four years haven't corresponded to the division's "lived experience." Each year resulted in a two per cent reduction.

"When we hear about funding increases for education, we have to read that carefully," he said. "Oftentimes those increases don't keep up with general population growth and with inflation, and we need to carefully factor in all those things."

Although grateful the division seemingly won't be affected this year by the 25 per cent reduction in property taxes, Nikkel said they're "definitely concerned" about funding in the coming years and the "sustainability" of supporting schools without property taxes.

"In the end, funding for education needs to come from somewhere. If you're reducing that from the education property tax, it's going to have to come out of general revenues from provincial coffers," he said. "On an ongoing basis, I would hope [the government] recognizes that and has a plan to make that sustainable going forward so that we're not seeing deeper cuts than what we've already received."

Nikkel said it appears there will be additional provincial money to help schools cope with COVID-related costs, along with \$5 million for the government's new Better Education Starts Today [BEST] strategy, \$4 million for a virtual learning strategy and \$5 million [\$25 million over five years] for a Teachers' Idea Fund, in which teachers can submit suggestions to the province for programming to help improve student outcomes. But more details about how those outlays will directly affect Lakeshore are required.

"We don't know what [funding] will

look like on a Lakeshore School Division level, and we don't know whether there'll be certain parameters established on what that can be spent on," he said.

When asked if he thinks the property tax reduction is another step along the continuum to abolish school divisions and their boards, Nikkel said he thinks so.

"I think the province, in its communications, has been quite open about abolishing school boards, that they see them becoming redundant if there's no longer an education property tax," said Nikkel. "So I think it's fair to say the 25 per cent reduction of education property taxes for homeowners and farmers would be a step in that direction."

Manitoba School Boards Association president Alan Campbell said divisions aren't against reducing education property taxes but are against reducing funding for schools.

"We're opposed to reducing funding for schools, not replacing it, and then [the province] saying that other provinces have already done it [abolished education property taxes] when they actually haven't," said Campbell by Twitter after the province's budget announcement.

A reduction in property taxes has to come with a "clear plan to sustainably replace" them, he added. Other provinces continue to generate billions every year from education property taxes to fund their public schools.

"If they don't have that money in their 'general revenue' a very real concern is that @MBGov doesn't either," wrote Campbell.

A spokesperson for the provincial government said even with the property tax reduction and other funding breaks for Manitobans, education funding will come out of general revenue.

"All grants and transfers to schools and universities, Winnipeg, municipalities, hospitals, etc., come out of general revenue raised by the province and transfers from the federal government, with any shortfall funded through borrowing in the capital markets," he said.

After it abolishes Manitoba's 37 English-speaking school divisions



Don Nikkel, Lakeshore School Division's superintendent of HR, policy and public relations, alternative programming

(under Bill 64), the government expects to save multimillions every year, "upwards of \$40 million per year that can be redirected to the classrooms and front lines of education," said the spokesperson.

When asked if the dissolution of education property taxes will be sustainable in the long-term, the spokesperson said the province "will continue to manage its fiscal affairs in a manner to ensure it will meet its commitment to put more money on Manitobans kitchen tables."

Nikkel said what he and Lakeshore's school board really want, above all, is to see rural schools being funded fairly based on their needs.

"Whatever happens with property taxes, we want a system put in place to ensure rural areas are funded equitably so that kids in the Interlake, whether they live in Ashern, Eriksdale, Lundar or Fisher Branch, are given equal opportunities to programming as students in Winnipeg are," said Nikkel.

"The reality is that it costs more to educate kids in rural areas. That's something we need to see recognized by the province. Whatever changes are coming, we want to make sure there's a strong focus on creating an equitable education system across Manitoba."

> BUDGET, FROM PG. 7

the municipal level.

The remaining \$300 million will be set aside as a contingency for currently unbudgeted expenses, explained Fielding, who noted Manitoba to date has committed a total of \$3.2 billion to address COVID-19 including investments to address and mitigate the ongoing impacts of the pandemic and

future-year spending to help recovery.

"Budget 2021 will support the health, education and financial needs of Manitobans and prepare for potential future waves of COVID-19 or other emergencies that arise," said Stefanson.

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Pallister says budget a 'road map to a safer and healthier Manitoba'

By Lorne Stelmach

The new provincial budget may be resulting in one of Manitoba's highest ever deficits, but Premier Brian Pallister suggested it is a financial plan that strikes a balance in setting out "the road map to a safer and healthier Manitoba going forward."

Both Pallister and Finance Minister Scott Fielding trumpeted *Budget 2021: Protecting Manitobans, Advancing Manitoba* as a sound plan to protect Manitobans and their services through COVID-19 while also advancing the provincial economy past the pandemic.

And despite the deficit level, they defended the range of tax relief measures set out in the budget as necessary at this challenging time and as a means of fulfilling their promises to Manitobans.

"We have to address that [deficit] ... we have created that deficit as a consequence of the fact that we will not stop addressing the health care needs, the support programs of Manitobans who are vulnerable," said Pallister.

He said the government is "moving our provincial budget back into a situation that we had, where we've tried to get it to, where it's more sustainable and balanced over the next few years. It's going to take time to clean up this pandemic mess, and we're facing that today with this budget."

"We made a vow to Manitobans that we would focus on fixing our finances, repairing our services, rebuilding the economy. We kept our word, and now we're going to have to do it again."

Pallister maintained it was vital to deliver on tax relief for Manitobans amidst the pandemic.

"We believe now, more than ever before, that Manitobans deserve a break, quite frankly. They deserve to keep a little bit more of their hard earned money," he said. "I think this is the right time to give Manitobans a little bit of a break."

"We know Manitobans deserve a break, especially during this pandemic," said Fielding. "That's why we will take even more steps to protect your incomes by reducing the taxes you pay and helping you keep more of your hard-earned money with you, where it belongs."

Some reaction to the budget included Manitoba Liberal leader Dougald Lamont raising concern about what he suggested would be \$2 billion in new debt over the next eight years, while Green Party of Manitoba leader James Beddome said the net result will be increasing inequality in Manitoba.

"This government talks about returning money to the kitchen table of



Finance Minister Scott Fielding

Manitobans, but in the midst of a pandemic, whose kitchen table is seeing the returns? Tax cuts are delayed, and they are unlikely to get to those that need it most," noted Beddome.

"Now, in the midst of a global pandemic, is the perfect time to invest in poverty reduction, future generations will thank us for these smart and strategic investments," he added. "We believe implementing a basic income as the Greens have called on for decades is a logical starting point."

"We need to see more urgency from the Pallister government — public health and our economy depend on it," said Kevin Rebeck, president of the Manitoba Federation of Labour. "Government should be leading the recovery through forward looking plans to protect our economic future, with the goal of maintaining employment and getting thousands of Manitobans back to work in fairly paid, family supporting jobs."

Record investments: Fielding

"Despite the ongoing financial and economic challenges posed by the pandemic, this budget continues to make record investments in the priority public services that Manitobans rely on," Fielding maintained. "We will grow our way out of deficit and back into balance by investing in more jobs, tax relief and economic growth."

Fielding acknowledged that COVID-19 has created a significant deficit due to unanticipated health-care costs and support programs as well as unprecedented drop in revenues from the economic shutdown. The province projects a deficit of \$1.597 billion for 2021-22, which is however an improvement from the third quarter projection for 2020-21 of \$2.08 billion.

He said the first priority of the bud-

get is to continue to protect Manitobans through the ongoing pandemic. This includes \$1.18 billion in 2021-22 for COVID-19 costs including personal protective equipment, vaccine deployment, education supports and future needs.

Health care funding increases by \$156 million to the highest level in Manitoba history at \$6.98 billion, and Fielding said it builds a stronger health care system with better care sooner.

Commitments include \$812 million in capital for rural and northern health care, \$50 million to reduce wait times for hip, knee and cataract procedures and surgeries and services delayed by the pandemic. There is also an additional \$23 million for cancer treatments, \$2.7 million to expand dialysis and \$9.3 million to add more than 120 personal care home beds.

The budget also includes an initial \$342 million for programming and services within the new Department of Mental Health, Wellness and Recovery plus an additional \$1.7 million for the mental health and addictions strategy and \$1.8 million more for housing supports for Manitobans with diagnosed mental health conditions.

A nearly \$34-million increase to the Department of Families includes money for early learning and child care, a rent control guideline frozen through 2023, an increase for Community Living and disABILITY Services, funds to address homelessness and new workforce training and support programs for Employment Income Assistance clients.

The budget makes a record investment above \$3 billion in the public school system including more than \$78 million for COVID-19 costs, \$5.5 million for special needs funding, \$5 million for the strategy to improve the education system plus a funding guarantee of at least \$1.6 billion over four years and nearly \$4 million to support online, distance and remote learning. There is also an increase of \$100 million in school capital project funding.

The budget delivers the \$2,020 tax rollback guarantee one year earlier than planned and phases out education property taxes by 50 per cent over the next two years (25 per cent per year) for residential and farm properties and 10 per cent for other types of property.

The province is removing the retail sales tax on personal services including haircuts and salon services as of December and reducing vehicle registration fees a further 10 per cent in July.

Environmental investments include \$1.2 million to the climate and green plan implementation office, \$1 million for conservation and climate fund projects and a \$20 million endowment fund for provincial parks.

The budget includes more than \$62 million to help businesses retrain employees and develop e-commerce platforms and \$25 million for youth job programs while also providing additional tax relief for small businesses includes lowering payroll tax thresholds.

It helps advance post-secondary students with nearly \$700 million to post secondary institutions plus an additional \$4 million in bursaries and \$1.4 million in interest-free student loans.

The province also cited what it called a record \$2.1 billion investment in strategic infrastructure, including almost \$630 million for road construction and maintenance, \$415 million for kindergarten to Grade 12 and post-secondary infrastructure.

The budget as well sets aside \$100 million for potential emergencies such as floods, forest fires and drought, and there is flexible funding to municipalities with \$172.6 million in operating costs and \$137 million in capital costs with advanced operating grants again this year as well as \$5.6 million more for the Building Sustainable Communities Program to fund more than 10 larger-scale community capital projects.

Third quarter results

A day before the introduction of the budget last Wednesday, the government released its third quarter financial results for the 2020-21 fiscal year, and there is an increase in the deficit forecast for 2020-21 compared to December's mid-year financial report to \$2.08 billion from \$2.05 billion because of additional COVID-19 spending.

"The unforeseen impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on our finances and economy have greatly affected the revenue and expenditure projections we made last March in Budget 2020," said Fielding. "The rising costs of our pandemic response, combined with the economic shutdown in the final months of 2020, certainly impacted our third-quarter financials and contributed to our deficit."

Pallister concluded that he sees much reason for hope on the horizon.

"Manitobans are resilient people, and we're projected to come out of this better than most, and that is a tribute to our diverse economy and the work that this government and Manitoba small businesses have done in tandem with one another to strengthen the opportunities for recovery."

Interlake Saskatoons launches PurpleFit powder

By Jennifer McFee

Interest is blossoming for a berry exciting product coming out of a local orchard.

Interlake Saskatoons recently launched its saskatoon berry powder called PurpleFit, which is both delicious and nutritious.

Doug Langrell, one of the directors and orchard owners involved in the endeavour, explained that PurpleFit powder is made from 100 per cent saskatoon berries.

"First of all, they're freeze-dried, which is a slightly more complex process than drum-drying or heat-drying them," he said.

"It's a colder process that uses a much lower temperature. The advantage is that more of the nutrition, and particularly the sugar, is maintained in the process of freeze-drying."

In contrast, the heat-drying process caramelizes and partially processes the sugar.

"But when you freeze-dry it, the sugar is left in its natural state," he said.

"So a dried saskatoon berry tastes and looks very much like a normal fresh or frozen berry — but, of course, it's much lighter. About 80 per cent of the weight is water, so that's taken out

in the freeze-drying process."

After that, the second step is quite simple.

"You freeze-dry saskatoons — which still have the same size, bulk or displacement of the frozen or fresh but they're only 20 per cent of the weight — and then you put them in a grinder or hammer mill," he said.

"You grind it down to your specifications. It could be ground as fine as icing sugar if you really want to do that. We have ours half-ground so it's got a lot of fibre and a lot of substance."

After that, you can let your creativity take over while you dream up all the different ways to incorporate the powder into your foods and beverages.

"Because they're a natural product, they can be used in essentially any way. There are no additives, so there's nothing to steer away from. There's nothing to be scared of because they're just as nutritious as the berries you would pick off the trees in July," Langrell said.

"The advantage is that because they're in a powdered fashion, they could be put in your porridge, added to smoothies or milkshakes or used in baking both as a colorant and as a



Powdered saskatoon berries provide a nutritional boost.

taste additive. Compared to the usual process of adding saskatoons to muffins, this is much more flexible. Or you could bake a raisin or cherry pie and put saskatoon powder in it. If you want an apple pie with a nice purple fleck on top, you can do that too."

For Langrell, he has discovered there's almost no limit to the purple powder's uses. In fact, Patent 5 Distillery uses saskatoon berries from Interlake Saskatoons to create the Winnipeg-based company's popular Manitoba berry gin.

"I've taken glasses of beer and poured the freeze-dried powder on top and stirred it up — and you get this nice purple saskatoon beer," he said.

"There are blueberry beers all over the place, but saskatoon beer is great too."



PHOTO SUBMITTED


Interlake Saskatoons recently launched PurpleFit berry powder.

Since the powder is almost completely soluble in water, it leaves only minimal residue after it's been added.

Adding to the appeal, the powdered berries provide a nutritional boost that's easy to incorporate.

"The freeze-drying does not diminish the nutrient features at all. We've had it tested at labs both in Canada and in the United States," Langrell said.



Continued on page 14



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Incredible Creatures: Migration of the Tundra Swans

By John Gavloski

It is always exciting to see migratory birds and insects returning in the spring. There are some species that we only get to see for short periods in the spring or fall when they migrate through on their way to their summer or winter homes.

One such species is the tundra swan. A large flock of these was present on the lake at Stephenfield Provincial Park recently, along with an assortment of migratory ducks. The assortment of waterfowl that we observed on the lake April 5 included tundra swans and ducks such as ring-necked, northern shovelers, canvasbacks, mallards, common mergansers and scaups. In this month's Incredible Creatures we will explore the tundra swan, a bird with a long migration and interesting breeding rituals.

There are seven species of swans in the world. Two of these, the tundra swan and the trumpeter swan, are native to North America. Any swan seen

in Manitoba will either be a tundra or trumpeter swan. One non-native species, the mute swan, is also found in some eastern parts of North America. People brought mute swans from Europe and Asia for ornamental display in parks and zoos, and now this species is found in the wild in certain areas.

Telling tundra swans and trumpeter swans apart can be tricky. Trumpeter swans are slightly larger than tundra swans. At close range, a small yellow mark at the base of the bill, close to the eye, can be seen on the tundra swan. There is no such mark on the trumpeter swan.

Twice a year, tundra swans migrate up to about 6,000 kilometres between the areas where they spend the winter, and the Canadian Arctic and Alaska where they spend the summer. They fly in a V-shaped formation. Tundra swans used to be called the whistling swan, which referred to the sound made by the slow, powerful beating of

their wings in flight.

The courtship and pairing of young adult birds is in full swing in late winter and continues through the spring migration. Adults already paired reinforce their bond by vocal and visual displays. The most spectacular of these is the so-called victory display, where male and female face each other, extend and wave the wings slowly, bow the head and neck forward and backward and, in duet, produce a formalized sequence of loud, melodious sounds. Swans and geese generally mate for life. By contrast, most ducks pair for only one season.

Tundra Swans usually do not breed until their fourth or fifth year. A year before breeding, pairs normally "go steady" and select and defend a territory without actually nesting. At

breeding age, they begin to nest in late May or early June before the snow is off the tundra, while many of the lakes are still frozen.

In the summer, tundra swans feed mainly on the seeds, stems, roots and tubers of aquatic plants, as well as a few small invertebrates. They plunge their long necks into shallow water and pull out vegetation from the bottom. Adults may paddle their feet to bring submerged food to surface for the young. In other seasons, they will eat grain in harvested fields of crops such as corn, barley and soybeans.

Observing the return of birds, butterflies and some of the creatures that we have not seen in awhile is an exciting part of spring. It's exciting to think about what will be returning or flying through that waits to be seen.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY JOHN GAVLOSKI

Tundra swans date for four or five years before breeding.

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Taking to the skies: Arborg resident earns private pilot licence

By Patricia Barrett

Arborg resident Leroy Loewen plans to take his family on excursions this summer — by plane, that is — after he earned a flying licence last week.

And what better way to beat the COVID-19 blahs than taking to the skies.

"I have some friends who have their licence and I enjoy flying with them," said Loewen, who wears many hats, including that of chief of the Arborg-Bifrost fire department. "I also enjoy learning new things. I wanted to learn something new this winter when it was a little slower on the farm."

Loewen enrolled last December in flight training offered by the Lakeside Flight School in Gimli and graduated this month with a Transport Canada-approved private pilot licence.

He said he's not licensed for commercial flying; he can't make money from flying. But the private licence enables him to take multiple passengers on flights during the day.

And if he wants to upgrade his flying skills later on, he can add ratings to his licence such as float plane and night-time flying.

He undertook 40 hours of ground school and 45 hours of flight training, which included solo flights.

"I've [flown] by myself as part of this training program. I had to fly over to Dauphin and Gladstone and fly back to Gimli," said Loewen.

Now that he has his licence, he says he either can buzz around the local area or go farther afield. But long-distance flights require the filing of a flight plan.

"If it's a local flight, you don't have to file an official plan," he said. "But if you fly a longer distance, say to Dauphin, it's recommended that you file a flight path plan."

He can cruise over Lake Winnipeg if he likes, as



Loewen started training in December 2020 and earned his certificate last week.



Loewen at the controls, earning his private pilot's licence from Lakeside Flight School in Gimli.

long as he meets safety requirements specific to flying over water.

"I can't fly over the lake unless I have flotation devices — a lifejacket — for everybody," he said. "We have to stay within gliding distance of the shore if the engine were to fail unless I have those flotation devices on board. That's why when we get in a big jet, they show us the lifejackets. It's part of the regulations when you fly over open water."

He said he had a lot of support from his family while he was enrolled in the course, and the flight school staff were very helpful.

"My family had to sacrifice our family time so I could do my studying and get it done within that timeframe," he said. "And I would like to thank the staff at Lakeside Aviation for their help."

At this point, he said he has no plans to earn a commercial licence. For now, taking to the skies will be just for fun. Because he doesn't have his own plane, he'll use the aviation school's rental aircraft.

"As a family we're hoping to go out for the first time this weekend [April 10]," he said. "We are excited."

> PURPLEFIT, FROM PG. 12

"The nutrient qualities or oxygen radical absorbent capacity, which is a way of measuring antioxidants, is very high. It's top notch — actually about three times what blueberries have as an antioxidant cancer-fighting property."

Even during the pandemic, business has remained steady for Interlake Saskatoons, which consists of five independently farmed orchards — two in Stonewall, two in Warren and one in Grosse Isle.

At Langrell's orchard in Warren, they've also set up a processing facility. In addition, Langrell's orchard has a commercial kitchen that is available for rent.

"We planted the orchards between 2007 and 2008. They took several years to take root and expand. With saskatoons, everything is in the root. You have to have a huge, solid root ball. Their root ball is very much like a prairie plant. They're 15 feet deep, 10 feet wide," Langrell explained.

"They have a huge root system, which is why they can survive drought. Basically, they can keep enough water stored in the root right from spring runoff through to harvest in July. So if we had no rain in that period of time, we'd still have nice plump, rich berries."

These hardy native berries remain well poised for growth, no matter what the future brings.

"They're drought-friendly plants, which is actually a big plus going into the drier turn in climate that we're both in and anticipating with climate change," Langrell said.

"While field crops may suffer from increased drought and heat, saskatoons don't suffer at all."

And the pandemic has not slowed down sales for their business either. Instead, it's seemed to have the opposite effect.

"We've had a very busy winter because the pandemic has actually had the reverse effect of increasing our market," he said.

"More people are baking at home and there is a focus more on local food. In that sense, the pandemic has helped our market."

For those looking to try something new with their baking, cooking or beverages, they might consider picking up a package of PurpleFit, which is available for direct order online at www.PurpleFit.ca. The new product is also available through Good Local, Vita Health and Crampton's Market in Headingley, as well as Warren Hardware and Market 6 in Warren.

"We expect to be spreading out to quite a number of stores within the province," Langrell said. "We'll see where it goes from there."

For more information about Interlake Saskatoons, visit www.PurpleFit.ca.

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Presentations empower students to stay safe from human trafficking

By Jennifer McFee

Local parents, teachers and youth are now armed with more tools to help identify and prevent human trafficking.

The Joy Smith Foundation has been providing virtual presentations to schools throughout the Interlake about human trafficking and gender equality. There is no charge to the school division for these presentations, thanks to the Equity Fund provided by the Interlake Community Foundation in partnership with the Community Foundation of Canada.

Last week, Joy Smith, a former MLA and MP, presented to Stony Mountain School and Warren Collegiate. More presentations are scheduled throughout the Interlake this month.

These presentations, geared for students in grades 5 to 12, are particularly timely since human trafficking has surged during the pandemic due to increased internet use.

According to the Joy Smith Foundation, human trafficking victims are primary girls (97 per cent) and close to three-quarters (74 per cent) of victims are under the age of 18. The goal of the program is to empower all youth, particularly girls, to prevent their own

victimization through education.

Smith has been working hard to fight human trafficking, not only in Manitoba but also across Canada, for the past two decades. She launched her foundation in 2011 with a mission to ensure that every Canadian man, woman and child is safe from manipulation, force or abuse of power designed to lure and exploit them into the sex trade or forced labour.

“Parents and teachers should know the signs. They should be aware if there’s a sudden interest in a boy or man who’s several years older or if there’s new clothing, jewelry or gifts without having money to purchase these items,” said Smith in a phone interview.

“Sometimes in a school setting, the trafficker will lure several girls from the same place. So if there are frequent sleepovers, always see if it really is a sleepover. Sometimes the traffickers use that idea and it’s not a sleepover at all.”

Other warning signs could be a sudden change in style of dress or makeup.

“If there’s a new group of friends in isolation from their old group of friends, that’s a real red flag. If there’s

a change in attitude towards school, regular activities, friends and family, if their grades are dropping or there’s unexplained cuts or bruises on them, those are also red flags,” said Smith, who was a teacher for 23 years.

“And the real red flag is using two cell phones. They might all of a sudden show up with a second cell phone because the perpetrator always wants power and control over their victim.”

For parents, Smith suggests keeping a recent photo of their child, as well as their fingerprints, in an accessible location.

“Never leave your child alone in a vehicle or sitting alone at a public place such as a mall or public wash-room. And always take note of anyone who’s giving undue attention or noticing your child,” she said.

“Children need to be valued in order for fear and manipulation tactics used by traffickers to be effective, so parents should always tell their child they are valued and loved. Talking to your child in a loving way often equips them with a very strong connection to the parents and it empowers them to be safe.”

For kids, she advises them to always tell someone they trust — such as a




Joy Smith

parent, teacher, coach or friend — where they’re going. A common trafficking ploy is to invite kids to a party or another location away from where they’re supposed to be.

“Sometimes it’s a setup. So if they

Continued on page 17



The West Interlake watershed District, in partnership with local stakeholders, developed the Southwest Interlake Integrated Watershed Management Plan. A Project Management Team established three watershed goals, based on review of technical information and public input received.

WATERSHED GOALS



- 1. SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT** - Enhance surface water management while ensuring that practices and activities respect current land use, the environment, and potential for downstream impacts
- 2. WATER QUALITY PROTECTION** - Protect and improve ground water and surface water quality
- 3. FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT CONSERVATION** - Protect, restore and enhance fish and wildlife habitat

You can access full IWMP on our website.

West Interlake Watershed District

FUNDING AVAILABLE

Through the Following Programs



Well Water Protection Program: to assist landowners with the protection of ground water supply. Includes Abandoned Well Sealing, Flowing Well, and Well Head Protection up to **\$1,000.00**

Well Chlorination Program: to assist residents with disinfecting well and plumbing systems. Up to **\$250.00** (partial chlorination) and up to **\$500.00** (full chlorination)

Water Testing Days: to assist landowners in the payment and transportation of their water samples, cost and transportation of sample covered by WIWD (sample taken by owner) Days for water samples **May 10 and May 25, 2021.**

Community Tree Nursery Program: to assist residents with the purchase of seedlings. Part of the cost will be covered by the WIWD. Applications can be submitted from **September 1 to October 31.**

Fuel Storage Tank Rebate Program: to reduce the risk of soil contamination from damaged tanks. **\$500.00** rebate provided by WIWD with the purchase of a new Double Wall Stationary Fuel Tank

Growing Outcomes in Watersheds (GROW): to encourage incorporation of beneficial management practices on private land.


Public Education: to educate youth about the environment and conservation. Schools within the WIWD can receive up to **\$500.00** per year

Composters and Rain Barrel: turntable composter and rain barrel sold at **\$50.00** and standing composter sold at **\$30.00** (no tax)

Properties must be in the WIWD boundary to be eligible

For more information on these programs please visit our website wiwd.ca or contact us

Contact: T.204.762.5850 admin.wiwd@mts.net



The GROW program developed by the West Interlake Watershed District (WIWD) is delivered in the context of the Southwest Interlake Watershed Management Plan.

Growing Outcomes in Watersheds (GROW)

GROW is designed to assist landowners in developing projects that maintain or improve local watershed health. GROW encourages the delivery of ecological goods & services (EG&S), promoting conservation of natural areas and changes to land uses that provide EG&S.

Eligible Project Activities

GROW Activity	Projects	Goals	Contract Length
Wetland Conservation, Restoration or Enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Conserving class 1 & 2 wetlands on annual crop land (not draining or filling).Re-establishment of perennial upland buffers (inter-pothole seeding) around wetlands to minimize mechanical disturbance.Fencing & off-site watering systems for grazing management.	To improve water quality and aquifers, enhance recharge and water storage areas moderating the timing and volume of runoff, reduce negative impacts down stream, and increase wild life habitat.	10 Year Contract With WIWD
Riparian Area Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Conservation of existing healthy riparian areas.Exclusion fencing that optimizes grazing impacts.Alternative watering system to keep cattle out of riparian area.Establishment or improvement of stream crossing.Constructed works to stabilize banks & prevent erosion.Re-establishment of riparian vegetation.	Projects to improve water quality, improve storage capacity to reduce downstream flooding during high water events, stabilize shorelines and prevent erosion and, increase wild life habitat.	5-10 Year Contract With WIWD
Buffer Establishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establishment of a new buffer or shelterbelt.Expansion of existing buffer or shelterbelt (adding new rows, inter-planting differing species to add diversity).Re-establishment of buffer vegetation.Pruning or removal of deceased trees.	To improve water quality and water conservation efforts, increase crop yield and carbon sequestration, add thermal protection for livestock, reduce surface runoff and soil erosion, and to improve wild life and pollinator habitats.	10 Year Contracts With WIWD
Upland Area Conservation, Restoration or Enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Conserving native prairie or highly erodible up-land areas.Enhancing natural and managed upland areas.Re-establishment of perennial native/tame cover on sensitive lands.Re-forestation of previous wooded areas.Permanent or alternative fencing and watering system to improve grazing strategies that support pasture health.Establishment of Soil Health crops (cover-crops, polycrops, green-manure).	To improve the ecological function of natural and maintained upland areas, increase soil health and carbon sequestration, reduce soil erosion, and to promote healthy wildlife and pollinator habitat and biodiversity.	3-10 Year Contracts With WIWD

2021 forecast for crop-feeding grasshoppers; RM Rockwood at risk

By Patricia Barrett

Manitoba Agriculture is predicting certain areas in the Interlake region could be at moderate to severe risk of grasshoppers this year.

Adult grasshopper counts were completed in August 2020 from 132 locations in Manitoba and form the basis of this year's forecast. Counts provide estimates of the egg-laying population, weather conditions — which help determine whether females are capable of laying an optimum number of eggs — and recent trends in grasshopper populations, according to the department's grasshopper forecast webpage.

The highest count showed an average of 19 grasshoppers per square metre (the severe risk category) in the Municipality of Rockwood, the department states.

Two of the severe risk areas are located in the southern Interlake and two are in the central region of Manitoba, but other than Rockwood, they aren't specifically named.

Some areas within the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton and one area in the Municipality of Fisher are shown at risk of moderate and/or severe grasshopper populations, according to the 2021 forecast map showing affected areas.

About two thirds of the 2020 counts (89 out of 132) were in the very light risk category (0 to 4 grasshoppers per square metre). Twenty-seven counts fell into the light risk category (5 to 8 grasshoppers per square metre), 12 counts were in the moderate category (9 to 12 per square metre) and four counts were in the severe risk category (13 to 24 grasshoppers per square metre). There were no "very severe" risk categories.

All grasshoppers are plant-eaters. Some species feed on crops while other species don't or will rarely nibble on crops. Older crop-feeding grasshoppers can do the most damage because they can travel greater distances than younger insects.

The dominant species counted in 2020 in the Interlake region were the two-striped variety, which feeds on non-crop and crop plants. Nine species are found in Manitoba, including the migratory grasshopper, which feeds on non-crop and crop plants, the clear-winged, which is primarily a grass feeder, and the Carolina, a non-pest species.

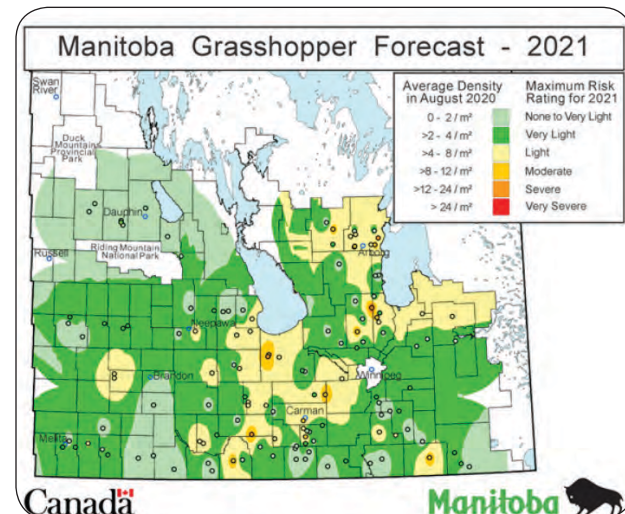
Any grasshopper that flies before June is not a crop pest, states the department. Any grasshopper with hind wings highly visible in flight (red, yellow, orange or black) is also not a crop pest. Any grasshopper that sings, clacks or clatters, likewise, is not a pest.

Factors affecting grasshopper populations include natural predators such as bee flies, field crickets and species of blister beetles, which all eat grasshopper eggs. Weather is another factor. Over the past few years, grasshopper populations have had "more successful development" during dry years and generally increase over a series of dry years, according to the department.

For more information about grasshoppers and monitoring, con-



The two-striped grasshopper is the dominant species in the Interlake.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY MANITOBA AGRICULTURE
The 2021 grasshopper forecast map shows affected areas across Manitoba.

tact entomologist John Gavloski at 204-750-0594 at the Manitoba Agriculture office in Carman.

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A breakthrough denture procedure making a lot of smiles

By Elisha Vantor

OPINION GIVEN BY ACTUAL PATIENT

"I didn't realize how much your confidence is shot when you have no teeth. I am so much more confident now, wow," says Mark S. about his new permanent teeth.

Mark, like so many others never could get used to his denture. "They just fall out; they won't stay there. I had to use 10 tons of that paste that you stick them in with and I hated that. I would rather go with no teeth than put that stuff in, you know," said Mark in a recent interview regarding his smile.

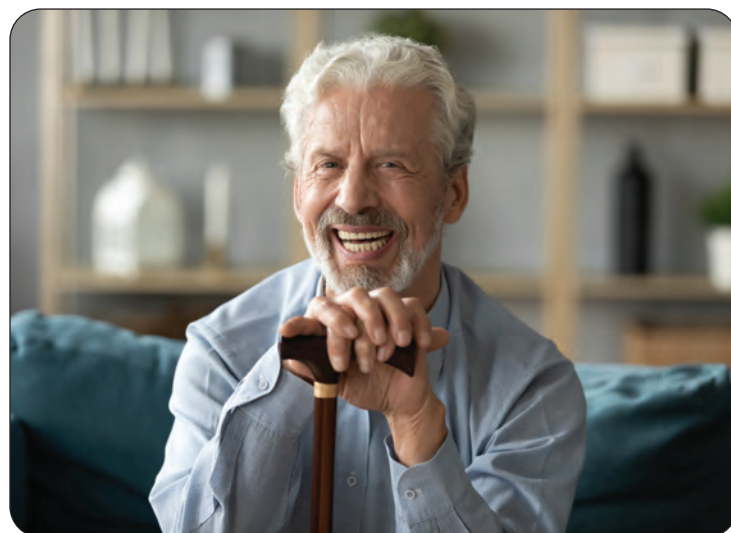
This 'breakthrough' procedure works so great because it doesn't just replace the white teeth and pink gums like a denture, it actually replaces the roots of the teeth as well. "It is the roots that give your teeth the stability to chew. They are the foundation that gives someone the freedom

to enjoy all kinds of foods again, smile without fear of their teeth falling out, and actually work to preserve ones jaw bone from shrinking away," says Brock Vantor, owner of Vantor Denture Centre.

The official name for the replacement tooth root is a 'dental implant', which is a titanium post the size of a natural tooth root. What this procedure does is use (typically) 4-6 dental implants to become the stable foundation for a denture. "We like to call it The Freedom Smile, says Brock, because it gives people a 21st century solution to age old denture problems. We work right alongside a Dentist who places the dental implants, then while the patient is still in the chair, I fit the denture (which is now much smaller and more comfortable than the regular one) on top of the dental implants, and voila, Mark has teeth again!"

We asked Mark about how that procedure went on his end. He said, "Actually, I was a little apprehensive about it, but it went really really well! They froze me up really good and I got little breaks now and then. Anytime the freezing wore off, they put more in. After the procedure it was hardly sore at all, which amazed me. Very slight bit on the gums, hardly anything to worry about. I took no pain killers, I didn't need them, I'm serious. I can eat pretty much whatever I want and smile whenever I want. It's just a real pleasure, the ability to laugh again and enjoy life. They are just like regular natural teeth in my mouth, that is the coolest part about it, it's incredible and I'm loving every second of this!"

Whenever you have questions, we are here to answer them. The start of a well-functioning and good-looking smile is one call away.



After years of suffering with loose bulky denture problems, Mark S. shares his experience with permanent dentures.

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Provincial budget includes financial help for diabetics under 25

By Sydney Lockhart

Last week the provincial government released its budget plan, which included covering the cost of continuous glucose monitors and insulin pumps for diabetics aged 25 and under.

If the budget is passed, this could save young diabetics thousands of dollars annually.

"I was actually fairly surprised. It was a little shocking but it's definitely a great step in the right direction," said Type 1 diabetic Alex Melsted.

"For me, personally, it just means that I might be able to move out," she said.

Melsted said while the change is great for those under 25 years, it doesn't help out the millions of diabetics who are older than that.

"I don't know what their thought process is, but diabetes doesn't just stop at 25," she said.

Continuous glucose monitors (CGM) help diabetics regulate their blood sugar levels, helping prevent their sugars from reaching extreme high or low levels.

Without it, diabetics have to do finger pricks on a regular basis. But if they were to not test often, their blood sugars could fluctuate too much and, if mismanaged, cause long term health issues.

CGMs eliminate finger poking and the risk of spiking blood sugar levels, and insulin pumps eliminate the need to manually take insulin via syringe.

"If someone, let's say, is running higher with their blood glucose levels that could maybe not have as many short-term effects but definitely have more long-term effects. So, the kidneys could end up failing. They could have feet problems. They could have vision problems," said 21-year-old Melsted.

She added that she worries about the day she ages out of provincial coverage for her insulin pump and her Dexcom CGM.

"When I do turn 25, it's a little worrisome because if I do move out, there's going to be extra expenses then, so I would most likely have to hand the CGM



The supplies needed to attach a CGM will be covered for diabetics 25 years and under if the provincial budget is passed.

to the government because I won't be able to afford it," she said.

Melsted said a big goal should be for the government to cover all ages and expenses for diabetics.

"There's still a lot to be done, sadly, in this province but hopefully they can realize that we don't want to be last in everything," said Melsted.

She currently uses a CGM and insulin pump while still living at home.

"It helps tremendously. I absolutely love wearing mine. It's been a lifesaver, really. Not having to worry about whether or not I'm going low because I can see that I'm going low," she said, "I don't have to worry about if I'm sleeping. My Dexcom will wake me up and alert me."

Pharmacist Bryn Lindsay of Quarry Ridge Pharmacy said the average CGM without insurance costs about \$5,000 a year on top of other supplies needed to manage diabetes.



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Diabetic Alex Melsted's CGM helps her regulate her blood sugars.

"You have 24-hour monitors; you know what your sugars are doing all the time so if you're going low or high, you can adjust your insulin accordingly, especially if you have a pump," he said.

The Manitoba Pharmacare Program deductible is income-based, which still leaves many diabetics with large sums they need to pay for supplies just to stay alive.

> HUMAN TRAFFICKING, FROM PG. 15

do leave where they were originally going, they need to tell someone they trust so everyone knows," she said.

"I've had many cases when a kid has disappeared and there's no way that you could find them. You didn't know where they went. So kids should always tell someone where you're going."

Smith also tells kids to say no immediately to any inappropriate touching or interaction that makes them feel uncomfortable.

"Kids have an intrinsic sense of what should be done," she said. "If there's something that makes them uncomfortable, just say no immediately. It doesn't matter if they know the person or not."

Another safety tool is for parents or teachers to create a three-digit secret code with the youth.

"Often traffickers will take their own phone away from them before too

long. So if you're in trouble, you text that secret code to a person you trust and they know you're in trouble. I also tell them don't go with a uniformed person unless they know your secret code. Sometimes we've had cases where people have dressed up as police officers in unmarked cars," Smith explained.

"They say, 'Something is happening at your home and your parents want you home right away. I told them I'd pick you up and take you.' Kids should ask that uniformed person for their secret code. If it's a real police officer and they don't know the secret code, they'll phone the parents and ask what it is so the kid will know it's safe to go with them."

If an unknown adult asks for directions or help, kids should say no and leave immediately, Smith added.

"If you're in a mall or community centre or park, they shouldn't be ask-

ing young people for directions. Often this is a ploy that traffickers use to get their victims out of public view. Don't approach people in cars who are asking for directions. Walk away. Don't get near their car," she said.

"I also tell my students don't ever take dares and get into a stranger's car, even if you're with your peers. There could be someone planted who's a peer that's actually affiliated with a gang member."

For older youth, Smith advises them to avoid accepting online job offers that seem too good to be true.

"Don't let strangers or even acquaintances take your photograph and offer you a job if they're promising to make you rich and famous," she said. "That's a line traffickers always use."

In addition, she warns youth not to run away from home.

"If there are some problems at home, share it with someone you trust and problem-solve it. Sometimes kids are placed in foster homes, but if they

know all these tips, they'll be safe in those homes if anybody approaches them inappropriately," Smith said.

"If you're in danger or anyone touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable, you have to know it's not your fault. Often they feel guilt and don't want to tell anybody, especially if traffickers tell them it's their fault. That's not right. The blame is solely on the shoulders of the perpetrator — not the child or parents or teachers."

If an inappropriate or dangerous situation takes place, Smith says to report it right away to the police.

"Often traffickers tell them they can't report to the police or they'll be put in jail. That's not true," she said.

"With these presentations, it's going to save a life. It's all about keeping them safe."

For more information about the Joy Smith Foundation, visit www.joy-smithfoundation.com or call 204-691-2455.

get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



Pastry Brunch Cups

In small saucepan, melt butter. Whisk flour with butter. Gradually pour in milk, whisking each time. Bring to simmer, whisking until mixture starts to thicken. Remove from heat; stir in Swiss cheese. Set aside.

Use rolling pin to thin out puff pastries. Cut each into nine squares. Line pastry squares in muffin cups, pressing bottoms down firmly and moving pastries up sides for edges to come up just over muffin tins. Fill each cup with 1 teaspoon cheese sauce. Crack one egg into each cup and sprinkle each with diced ham.

Bake 10-15 minutes until eggs set. Sprinkle with chopped green onions.

Servings: 18
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons flour
1 1/2 cups milk
1 cup shredded Swiss cheese
2 sheets puff pastry
18 eggs
2 cups diced ham
chopped fresh green onions
Heat oven 375 F.



Breakfast Burrito

um-high heat.

Rub steak with oil and season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Cook until medium-rare, approximately 3-4 minutes each side. Remove from pan and cover loosely with tinfoil to rest 5 minutes.

Reduce heat to medium and add splash of oil. Add onion; cook 1 minute. Add red bell pepper and mushrooms; cook 1 minute.

Add cumin, paprika and chili powder; stir through.

When veggies are tender (about 2 minutes), add tomato and cook until soft. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

In large bowl, whisk eggs, milk and salt and pepper, to taste.

Heat pan to medium heat and add splash of oil.

Pour egg mixture into pan and cook, lifting and folding eggs until thickened and no visible liquid egg remains. Do not stir constantly.

Lay tortillas on flat surface or plate.

In center of tortilla, add cooked veggies and top with thinly sliced beef. Add handful of spinach, scrambled eggs, crumbled feta, cilantro and avocado. Fold bottom of tortilla and roll.

Serve with lime wedges and hot sauce, if desired.

1 Silver Fern Farms New Zealand 100% Grass-Fed New York Strip Steak (10 ounces)
oil
salt, to taste
pepper, to taste
1/2 onion, finely chopped
1 red bell pepper, sliced lengthwise
4 large mushrooms, sliced
1 teaspoon cumin
1 teaspoon paprika
1/2-1 teaspoon chili powder
1 tomato, finely chopped
8 eggs
1/2 cup milk
4 large tortillas
1 cup spinach
1 1/2 ounces feta cheese, crumbled
1/4 cup cilantro
1 avocado
lime wedges (optional)
hot sauce (optional)

Remove steak from packaging and set aside 10 minutes. Once steak reaches room temperature, heat pan over medi-

How to hit your fat loss goal fast!

Submitted by Julie Germaine

Though it may not quite feel like it, given the snowfalls we experienced at the end of March, summer sunshine is coming! I've noticed the gyms are busier than ever and that means we all have weight loss on the mind, shedding those COVID-19 pounds to feel like our early 2020 selves again.

Burning off excess fat is undoubtedly challenging, so it's important to take steps to lose weight while keeping a positive mindset. Having realistic goals will keep you feeling good about your progress, which will push you to continue on your fitness journey. If you expect to drop five inches from your waist in two weeks, you're setting yourself up for disappointment and could potentially give up.

Choosing a program that fits with your schedule will ensure you don't become overwhelmed with the process. To slim down, start by incorporating resistance training workouts 2-3 times per week for 30 minutes, and match that time commitment with equal sessions of cardiovascular activities, like walking or bike riding. This makes for a total of 2 to 3 hours of exercise each week – totally manageable! If you want to try my home and gym workouts absolutely FREE, sign up at www.sweatwithjulie.com

Adjust your diet to include at least one gram of protein per pound of bodyweight. This may take some planning, but it is worth the effort because you'll find your feel more satisfied after each meal and will likely decrease your total daily caloric intake by filling up on protein-rich foods such as eggs, chicken, seafood, and low-fat dairy products. If you aren't about counting calories, then just be sure to prioritize your



Health and Wellness Fitness expert
Julie Germaine

protein during each meal, and gauge your hunger level often to avoid over-eating.

Start cooking with coconut oil! This healthy fat has been shown to reduce belly fat and tastes delicious. Not a fan of coconut? Opt for a flavourless version. You should also reduce your intake of refined sugars, such as milk chocolate. If you're like me and have a sweet tooth, check out my Sugar Free Peanut Butter Cup recipe on my blog to enjoy a treat every evening (bonus: this recipe uses coconut oil!).

I am passionate about helping men and women achieve their fitness goals! Please visit my website for information on my virtual personal training and nutrition programs, including my 30 Day VIP Fat Loss Challenge and one-on-one live video workouts! www.juliegermaine.com

Julie Germaine is a 2x Pro Fitness Champion, Certified Nutrition Expert and Specialized Weight Loss Coach. She has helped thousands of men and women achieve inspiring body transformations through her virtual coaching since 2005.

Doughnuts:
Vegetable oil, for frying
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 3/4 cups Domino Golden Sugar, divided

2 tablespoons baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons lemon zest
5 large eggs
1 3/4 cups ricotta cheese
1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
Lemon Curd (optional):
1 stick unsalted butter, softened
1 1/2 cups Domino Golden Sugar
2 large eggs
2 egg yolks
4 lemons, zest and juice only
1/8 teaspoon salt

To make doughnuts: In large saucepan, preheat oil to 350 F. Prepare cookie sheet with paper towel to drain doughnuts once out of hot oil.

In bowl, mix flour, 3/4 cup sugar, baking

powder and salt. Add lemon zest, eggs, ricotta cheese and vanilla extract; mix until well combined.

Use ice cream scoop to scoop small amounts dough into oil, 4-5 pieces at a time. Fry each batch until golden brown, about 7 minutes. Keep oil at or near 350 F; if oil is too hot, doughnuts will turn golden brown but centers may still be raw. Remove from oil and drain in paper towel. Repeat with remaining dough.

While still hot, toss doughnuts with remaining sugar.

To make lemon curd, if desired: In large bowl of stand mixer, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs and egg yolks, one at a time. Add lemon zest, lemon juice and salt.

Transfer mixture to saucepan and cook at low-medium heat until thick and creamy, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and let cool before serving with doughnuts.

Lemon Ricotta Doughnuts



Prep time: 20 minutes
Cook time: 7 minutes

Weightloss • Energy & Performance • Healthy Aging

Allana Sawatzky
allana333@hotmail.com

Janice Gulay
jkaraim@mymts.net (c) 1-204-648-3836

Rose Sawatzky
isa.rose1957@gmail.com (c) 1-204-479-8227

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Province invests in wildfire prevention, mitigation and preparedness across Manitoba

By the Manitoba government

With the arrival of warmer weather, the province reminds Manitobans to be careful with any spring burning activities and to ensure they have the required burn permits from either their local municipalities or the province, Conservation and Climate Minister Sarah Guillemard announced Monday.

"We all look forward to the warm weather but we must remember that when conditions are dry, the risk of wildfire increases," said Guillemard. "The Manitoba Wildfire Service and municipalities are getting ready for another season, and we must all do our part to minimize the risks."

Southern and central Manitoba are especially dry this spring because of low moisture levels last fall before lower-than-normal winter snow accumulations. The dangers of spring wildfires have increased in the central and southern regions of the province due to the dry conditions and as a precaution, restrictions on travel and burning have been implemented in some areas. In areas affected by such conditions, provincial burn permits may be limited to essential burning operations or could be cancelled entirely. The public is reminded to contact their municipalities or their local Manitoba Conservation and Climate offices for updates. The latest infor-

mation on municipal and provincial burning restrictions can be found at www.manitoba.ca/wildfire. Provincial burn permits will not be issued for areas where municipalities have implemented burning restrictions.

Permit holders are reminded to check weather conditions, have adequate suppression equipment and ensure proper fuel breaks are in place before burning. They should never leave an outdoor fire unattended and always extinguish it before departing.

As Manitobans begin spring clean-ups, the province urges caution in their removal of grass and leaves or crop residue from fields.

As part of the Manitoba Wildfire Service's prevention and mitigation programming efforts, an additional \$460,000 has been invested across the province this past year. Recent partnerships include involvement with Partners in Protection/FireSmart Canada in the development of wildfire prevention and mitigation materials that are relatable and relevant to Indigenous communities across Canada. This project includes support for the printing and distribution of Blazing the Trail – Celebrating Indigenous Fire Stewardship, a publication promoting action to ensure wildfire-resilient communities. Also included is support for an exhibit and educational outreach through the Boreal

Discovery Centre at Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation's traditional territory in Thompson. Programming addresses boreal forest fire ecology, fire weather and Indigenous fire management.

The Remote Lodge and Outfitter Mitigation Program is a unique effort to make specialized fire equipment, such as sprinkler systems, available to eligible lodges and outfitters across Manitoba to promote FireSmart planning and preparation. This program will ensure that lodges in remote areas are able to protect themselves from approaching fires prior to support from the Manitoba Wildfire Service.

Other important projects include the development of a comprehensive wildfire management strategy for Whiteshell Provincial Park and upgrades to the Manitoba Wildfire Service weather monitoring stations across the province. The Whiteshell wildfire management strategy has been developed in consultation with many stakeholders, including the Whiteshell Cottagers Association, and will guide provin-

cial efforts in future mitigation and response.

Preparedness efforts include an investment of \$774,000 for salaries and other costs to support the hiring of an additional five initial-attack fire crews, consisting of 25 members, for this wildfire season. These highly mobile crews will be assigned to existing bases around the province for deployment to wherever they are needed. As an important proactive measure, the province will implement a COVID-19 rapid testing program at Manitoba Wildfire Service bases to protect front-line staff and partners.

The province has also recently committed \$2.6 million for avionics and communications upgrades to its water bomber fleet, to allow these aircraft to be deployed to the U.S. if assistance is requested and if the aircraft are not needed in Manitoba.

To report a wildfire, call 911, the local emergency number in areas not covered by 911, or the provincial T.I.P. line toll-free at 1-800-782-0076.

"WE ALL LOOK FORWARD TO THE WARM WEATHER BUT WE MUST REMEMBER THAT WHEN CONDITIONS ARE DRY, THE RISK OF WILDFIRE INCREASES."

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Baseball Canada cancels 2021 National Championships

From Baseball Canada

Due to the ongoing concerns surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic and taking into consideration the realities of hosting national level competitions for communities, Baseball Canada's board of directors have made the difficult decision to cancel all 2021 Baseball Canada National Championships scheduled for August and September.

"The health and safety of all of our members is our first priority and with that said we felt that there was no other choice but to cancel all of our national tournaments for 2021," said Baseball Canada president Jason Dickson. "When you consider all of the elements that go into a national

championship including provincial qualification events, inter-provincial travel, shared accommodations and the strain that running championships in a safe manner would entail for host committees, this was the best decision for all parties involved."

Although Baseball Canada has made the decision to cancel national championships for a second consecutive year, the federation would like to clearly state that baseball is not cancelled by any means across the country.

"Our provincial members and local associations proved in 2020 that by working with their local health officials in providing a safe environment that a baseball experience can be en-

joyed for participants," added Dickson. "We are confident that our membership can enjoy our sport again in 2021."

The excitement for baseball across the country has not waned over the past year and it has been encouraging to see the teamwork and creativity that people have displayed in order for the game to be enjoyed.

The Major League Baseball season is now underway and our partners, the Toronto Blue Jays through the Blue Jays Baseball Academy, have provided some excellent resources for families including a "League Finder" interactive map to make it easier to find where baseball is played in Canada.

Baseball Canada will now focus its

national championship efforts on the year 2022 where we anticipate the return of our full slate of championships that will be highlighted by the Canada Games baseball competition in the Niagara region.

"We realize that the decision to cancel our championships for a second time in as many years is not ideal for the athletes and teams that have been working hard with the goal of playing in them," said Dickson. "We encourage you all to stay focused on the things that you can control and create an environment that will still allow you to achieve your individual and team goals."

"We look forward to the day that our championships can resume."

Bear receives Manitoba Indigenous Male Coach of the Decade award

Submitted by Sport Manitoba

Manitoba Indigenous Male Coach of the Decade award very deservedly went to Dale Bear last week.

Bear's career as a coach has been focused on developing Indigenous athletes. He has contributed national medals for the province's as the coach for the National Aboriginal Hockey Championship Female hockey team.

He has brought back gold in 2017 and 2018, silver in 2019 and bronze in 2013, 2015, 2016.

Since he started his involvement with the Manitoba Aboriginal Sports & Recreation Council 10 years ago, there has been an increase of female participation in hockey academies and university teams.

His philosophy is to always bring up "aged-out" athletes from his teams to develop them as coaches. His commitment to increasing female representation in coaching, and on the provincial and national stages is unparalleled.

At the grassroots level, Bear has coached the Norquay Knights in the North End Hockey Program for six consecutive years, winning one city championship and placing second the following year.

He then went on to coach the Prairie Blaze in the Manitoba Junior Women's Hockey League in 2018-

2019.

With the Prairie Blaze, Bear coached the team from being middle of the pack to elite in the league, leading them to victory at the 2019 Provincial MWJHL League Championships.

Many of his female hockey players have gone on to playing on university and college teams. Being able to coach at all levels goes to show how well rounded of a coach Bear is.

He is a pioneer in the Indigenous coaching world in terms of having an Indigenous worldview and using a holistic approach to coaching. It is second nature for Bear as he lives and breathes this way of life that was passed down by his ancestors.

His coaching style results in overall empowerment. He invites others to lead with him and encourages his athletes to go to school and to value their education. He teaches his female athletes to set healthy and strong boundaries in life.

To Bear, sport isn't the be all and end all. His athlete's mental, emotional, spiritual and physical health is a priority, and if those are suffering, then hockey is a low priority. These are true qualities of a leader and MASRC is happy to name Bear as the Indigenous Male Coach of the Decade.



EXPRESS PHOTO JAMES CAREY LAUDER/
GAME ON MAGAZINE

The Manitoba Aboriginal Sports and Recreation Council recognized Dale Bear as the Manitoba Indigenous Male Coach of the Decade.

Baseball Canada strikes out Women's Invitational in Stonewall

By Brian Bowman

For the second consecutive year, Baseball Canada has cancelled the Women's Invitational baseball tournament in Stonewall due to the COVID pandemic.

The announcement was made April 6.

"I wouldn't say that I was surprised given the increase in variants and what's been happening with increasing numbers across the country," said Gail Langlais, the chair of the tournament's host committee, last Friday afternoon. "Our priority is to always keep the athletes safe and we did look

at the potential of a bubble scenario."

The bubble concept was deemed too expensive, said Langlais, especially for a tournament run by volunteers.

"To cover the cost of COVID testing and things like that, it just became another reason why we couldn't move forward," she said.

The news of a national championship being cancelled in our community is a disappointing one for the players, coaches, and fans. It would have been a great opportunity to showcase the sport of women's baseball here in Manitoba.

"It's huge. We were going to be pair-

ing this tournament with westerns so the young players could play during the day, and then on their breaks, they could watch the senior women's team to see what's out there for them with respect to baseball," Langlais said. "We're disappointed that we can't move forward but it's something we can't change, of course."

There is a possibility that Stonewall will try to host the Women's Invitational in 2022. But Baseball Canada has the final say as to which community will get the opportunity to host the elite tournament.

Langlais, meanwhile, is hopeful that

the women will have an opportunity to play some baseball this summer.

"Hopefully, the young adults will still get to play in their province and still see the field this year," she said. "They won't be able to come together but I know many of them stay connected virtually throughout the year so they will keep their connections that way. But to say they aren't disappointed wouldn't be true. I'm sure that they are very, very disappointed that they can't come together and play."

South Interlake Phillies ready to start league play

By Brian Bowman

The South Interlake Phillies are ready to hit the diamond for game action in 2021.

The teams had their tryouts back in September and have been practicing for the start of a new season.

"We had a good turnout this year in all age categories," said Phillies' president Blaine Shewchuk. "We're looking to field teams in all age brackets."

Age brackets include U12, U14, U16 and U19. South Interlake has not had a U19 team for a "few years now."

"It's nice to see (the U19) get off the ground," Shewchuk said. "We've had a lot of good programs over the years in high school and Interlake minor ball and then with the Phillies, so the girls

have had a lot of opportunity to play a lot of ball."

Playing a lot of games over the years has been beneficial to the players' development, said Shewchuk. Many of those U19 girls, in years' past, have gone on to be very successful at the college level.

"When the girls go down to college and play, it's a great representation for both the Interlake and the province," Shewchuk noted. "All of a sudden, the coaches start saying, 'Wow, I didn't know this level of ball existed' and it creates a great opportunity for the younger girls coming up."

Many of those players come back to assist with the Phillies.

"A lot of the older girls are giving

back now," Shewchuk said. "The U19 team is coached by three former Phillies and U16, U14 and U12 all have former players that are helping with the program. It's great to see where these girls have travelled but they're also giving back to the organization, which is really nice to see."

Last year, fastball leagues played a very condensed schedule due to Manitoba restrictions involving COVID. If all goes well this year, leagues are slated to begin play in early May.

"We were grateful for the season that we had because most provinces didn't have an opportunity to play last year," Shewchuk noted. "We were able to run a provincial in Manitoba ... and the westerns and nationals were can-



celled (which is unfortunate) because that's such a great experience for the girls and the exposure that they get from university coaches."

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ARBORG BIFROST PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION Summer Employment Opportunities

Summer Camp Leaders (2 positions)

Organize and plan activities and programs for summer camp.
Position will be full-time, Monday - Friday for eight (8) weeks.

Green Team (1 position)

Grass cutting, watering flowers, and
other miscellaneous maintenance duties.
Position will be full-time, weekdays with occasional weekends.

Aquatic Centre

The Noventis Aquatic Centre is accepting applications
for positions of Lifeguard and Swim Instructor.
All positions will be weekdays/weekends.

Please submit resume with references to:

Arborg Bifrost Parks and Recreation Commission
Box 555 Arborg, MB R0C 0A0
Email: tom.abprc@mymts.net

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

Rural Municipality of Woodlands EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Youth Employment (3 Positions)

Qualifications:

- Valid Class 5 Manitoba Drivers' license
- Knowledge in the operation and maintenance of riding mower, weed eater
- Knowledge of safety procedures and of the use of safety equipment
- Ability to do physical labour
- Available from July to August
- Must be 16 to 29 years old

Salary as per the agreement between The International Union of Operating Engineers Local 987 and the Rural Municipality of Woodlands.

All applications must be in writing and may be sent to the attention of the Finance Manager, Rural Municipality of Woodlands, Box 10, Woodlands, MB. R0C 3H0, emailed to finance@rmwoodlands.ca or delivered to 57 Railway Avenue, Woodlands, MB. Applications will be accepted until **12:00 noon May 14, 2021.**

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



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Rural Municipality of Gimli invites
written applications for the position of
PUBLIC WORKS STORE/YARD PERSON

This position will be under the supervision of the Public Works Foreman. This position is responsible for inventory, airport fuel inspections, light shop duties, pick-ups and deliveries and other duties as assigned.

Candidate must possess the following:

- High School Diploma, GED or equivalent
- Valid Class 5 Drivers License
- Have knowledge of Workplace Safety Practices

Candidate must be physically fit, able to lift at least 50 lbs. Must be available to work flexible hours and overtime when required.

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

Salary is in accordance with the Collective Agreement.

Resumes complete with 3 references will be received by the undersigned until 4:00 p.m. on April 23, 2021.

Karl Bergman
Public Works Foreman
Rural Municipality of Gimli
PO Box 1246, Gimli, MB R0C 1B0
Email: kbergman@rmgimli.com

*We thank all candidates for their interest, however, only those individuals
considered for an interview will be contacted.*



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Rural Municipality of Gimli invites
written applications for the position of
OPERATOR B

This position will be under the direction of the Public Works Foreman. Duties will include utility repairs, operation of tractors, compactor, tandem and single axle trucks, skid steer, sweepers, snow blowers, grass cutting and other related equipment.

Valid Class 3 with air endorsement drivers' license required.

A minimum of two years' experience operating and maintaining equipment.

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

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

The incumbent may be required to work shift work, including weekends, and to be on-call and/or available for any call out emergencies that may arise from time to time.

Previous municipal and or heavy construction (sewer, water and LDS installation) experience will be considered an asset.

Salary is in accordance with the Collective Agreement.

Resumes complete with 3 references will be received by the undersigned until 4:00 p.m. on April 23, 2021.

Karl Bergman
Public Works Foreman
Rural Municipality of Gimli
PO Box 1246, Gimli, MB R0C 1B0
Email: kbergman@rmgimli.com

*We thank all candidates for their interest, however, only those individuals
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TOWN OF WINNIPEG BEACH

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION OF PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES FOR THE 2021 MUNICIPAL BY-ELECTION

Please be advised that a municipal by-election will be held on **Saturday, June 19, 2021**.

Prospective candidates must register with the Senior Election Official (SEO) during the registration period before they may begin to accept contributions, incur expenses, fundraise or borrow money for their campaign.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, **by appointment only**, I will be receiving candidate registrations:

For the office of **Councillor**: Between April 8 and May 15, 2021.

At the Town of Winnipeg Beach office, 29 Robinson Avenue, Winnipeg Beach during regular office hours or at a mutually agreed upon time and location.

To schedule an appointment to receive a registration form, please contact me at the telephone number below or by e-mail at: seo@winnipegbeach.ca

David Lobban, Senior Election Official (SEO),
204-389-4980 or 204-918-7563 (cell)



TOWN OF WINNIPEG BEACH

2021 - 2024 SEPTIC PUMPOUT TENDER

The Town of Winnipeg Beach invites tenders for the cleanout of septic tanks during the three-week period in spring and fall as permitted under the Provincial Operating License 3165.

Contract will cover the period of May 1, 2021 to April 30, 2024.

The discharge of wastewater into the lagoon shall proceed under the following conditions:

1. Sewage shall only be discharged into the primary cell between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M. for a period not exceeding three weeks during the months of June 4 - June 28 and September 10 - October 1 to allow for septic tank cleanout.

Please quote for a three-year term. Only tenders quoting the total cost of cleaning out both compartments plus applicable taxes will be considered during the two, three-week periods.

Emergency Pump out to be liquid side only.

Quote should include the cost that will be collected from the resident for pump out of Septic Tanks (both sides) for each year of the contract (plus GST),

- Emergency pump out of solids outside of regulatory dates to be hauled to mechanical plant.
- During the two, three-week periods mentioned above; dates to be set by the municipality.
- For emergency pump out outside of the two, three-week periods mentioned (**liquid side only**).
- For an emergency pump out after hours or weekends (Saturday and/or Sunday)
- Electronic data form to be completed and sent to Town of Winnipeg Beach Municipal Office (including a picture of pump out)

Spring & Fall Rates include access to the Winnipeg Beach Lagoon.

Note: For Emergency Pump Out situations, residents are to contact the hauler directly (liquid side only).

The hauler awarded the tender/contract will be required to report bi-weekly (septic logs) to the municipality. All pump outs will be invoiced for a tipping fee at a rate of \$25.00 per truck load per By-Law 5/2018, subject to PUB Rate Study.

Closing date for tenders is Tuesday, April 27, 2021, at 4:00 P.M. Please mark the envelope "Septic Tender" and submit to the following address.

Town of Winnipeg Beach
Attn: Roger A. Bouvier, CAO
29 Robinson Street
P.O. Box 160, Winnipeg Beach, MB, R0C 3G0

The Town of Winnipeg Beach reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive irregularities and informalities therein, and to award the tender in the best interest of the town. Lowest bid may not be accepted. Contractors must comply with the town's requirements for liability insurance, WCB coverage and business licensing to be eligible to be awarded the contract.

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Purebred Charolais yearling bulls & purebred black Angus yearling bulls. Ph 1-204-280-0122.

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MISCELLANEOUS

Spring Sale? Re-opening for the season? Want people to know? Advertise it in the 37 MB weekly newspapers and get noticed! Each week our blanket classifieds could be helping your organization get noticed in over 340,000 homes! It's a great way to connect with our 37 weekly member newspapers and their readers! For as little as \$189 + GST, get your important messaging out! Call us at 204-467-5836 to book or email classified@mcna.com for details. MCNA - Manitoba Community Newspapers Association 204-947-1691. www.mcna.com

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: KEITH STUART RANKIN, late of the R.M. of Gimli, in Manitoba, Deceased. ALL claims against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at their offices, 2500 - 360 Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 4H6, on or before the 15th day of May, 2021. DATED at Winnipeg, Manitoba, this 8th day of April, 2021. **PITBLADO LLP** Attention: Leith Robertson Solicitors for the Estate of Ross Kent Krisjanson

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: EILEEN KATHLEEN MAZUR, late of the Town of Arborg, in Manitoba, Deceased.

ALL claims against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at their offices, 2500 - 360 Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 4H6, on or before the 15th day of May, 2021. DATED at Winnipeg, Manitoba, this 9th day of April, 2021. **PITBLADO LLP** Attention: Leith Robertson Solicitors for the Estate of Eileen Kathleen Mazur

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: ROSS KENT KRISTJANSON, late of the Postal District of Cross Lake, in Manitoba, Deceased. ALL claims against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at their offices, 2500 - 360 Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 4H6, on or before the 15th day of May, 2021. DATED at Winnipeg, Manitoba, this 8th day of April, 2021. **PITBLADO LLP** Attention: Leith Robertson Solicitors for the Estate of Ross Kent Krisjanson

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TOWN OF WINNIPEG BEACH

NOTICE OF VOTERS LIST/ VOTING AS A NON-RESIDENT VOTER/ PERSONAL SECURITY PROTECTION

In accordance with Section 26 of *The Municipal Councils and School Board Election Act*, notice is hereby given that a copy of the VOTERS LIST may be reviewed, by appointment with the SEO, at the Town of Winnipeg Beach Office, 29 Robinson Avenue, Winnipeg Beach. Updates to the Voter List can be made until May 15, 2021.

Updating the Voters List including:

- (a) adding names of voters who are entitled to have their names on the list;
- (b) deleting the names of persons who are not entitled to have their names on the list; and
- (c) making such other corrections of errors to the list, as required.

VOTER ELIGIBILITY:

A person is eligible to have their name added to the Voters List if they are:

- 1) a Canadian Citizen and at least 18 years of age on Election day; and
- 2) a resident of the local authority for at least six months prior to election day; or a registered owner of land in the municipality for at least six months prior to Election Day.

VOTING AS A NON-RESIDENT VOTER:

A maximum of two non-resident property owners per property are permitted to vote in a municipal election. In order to vote, each of these voters must obtain written consent from the majority of the registered land owners and this is to be filed with the SEO prior to May 15, 2021 for inclusion to the voters list.

Note: When voting, you may be required to provide proof of ownership to the voting official. When voting, proof of identity may be requested by the voting official.

A voters name must not appear on the voters list more than once.

APPLICATION FOR PERSONAL SECURITY PROTECTION:

A voter may apply in writing to the SEO (at the address below) no later than May 15, 2021 to have their name and other personal information omitted or obscured from the voters list in order to protect the voter's personal security. The application may be submitted in person, by mail or fax and must include your name, address and include proof of identity (an official document issued by a federal, provincial or municipal government). Any photocopies must be legible.

All changes to the voters list are to be completed by the close of business (16:30) on May 15, 2021, in preparation for the municipal by-election to be held on **Saturday, June 19, 2021**.

David Lobban, Senior Election Official (SEO)
for the Town of Winnipeg Beach.
Box 285, Winnipeg Beach, MB R0C 3G0
Phone: 204-389-4980 Cell: 204-918-7563 Fax: 204-389-4966
E-mail: seo@winnipegbeach.ca

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Arborg Community Cemetery TENDER

Tenders are being taken for the lawn care and general maintenance of cemetery grounds for the 2021 cutting season.

Tenders should include cost per cut.

Fuel and machinery to be provided by successful tender.

Apply to Kris Gudmundson - Box 713 Arborg, MB R0C 0A0

Deadline to submit: April 30, 2021

For more information call 204-376-2248

**Please consider a donation towards
the maintenance of this cemetery.**

Make cheques payable to Arborg Community Cemetery,
Box 744, Arborg, MB R0C 0A0



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Johnson Seeds is currently looking for a capable and reliable individual to work at its Processing Facility. Experience is an asset but training will be provided.

• WAREHOUSE ASSOCIATE

Duties include packaging seed and the loading of trucks and overseas containers.

We offer competitive wages and a benefit package.

Please send in your resume or drop by in person.

S.S. Johnson Seeds Ltd.
Box 3000, Arborg, MB R0C 0A0
e-mail: linda@johnsonseeds.com
Phone: (204) 376-5228



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY EASTERN INTERLAKE PLANNING DISTRICT BUILDING INSPECTOR

The E.I.P.D. (comprised of the RM of Gimli, Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton, Town of Arborg and the Town of Winnipeg Beach) requires the services of a *Building Inspector*.

The successful candidate will undertake building, plumbing and fire safety inspections to ensure compliance with applicable codes and standards in Manitoba.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:

- Valid Driver's License & access to personal vehicle for work purposes.
- Physically capable to perform the duties and functions of the job, ie: kneeling, standing, climbing stairs and ladders, entering confined spaces, etc.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Completion of post-secondary education related to building construction and fire safety inspections. Preferably the completion of Part 3 and 9 of the Building Inspector Certification courses offered by Red River Community College and Fire and Life Safety Inspector Certification courses offered by the Manitoba Emergency Services College.
- Demonstrated experience in conducting building, plumbing and fire safety inspections.
- Demonstrated ability to review blue prints and plans for various types of buildings.
- Strong & effective interpersonal, verbal and written communication skills.
- Ability to manage priorities within tight timeframes.
- Strong decision-making and problem-solving skills.
- Computer proficiency in processing documents and spreadsheets and operating e-mail software.

We offer a competitive benefits & pension package. Interested candidates are invited to submit a resume giving full particulars as to education, experience and expected salary on or before **APRIL 30th, 2021** to:

E.I.P.D. c/o Nancy Thom, CAO

Drop Box: 62 - 2nd Avenue, Gimli, MB

Mail: PO Box 1758 Gimli, MB R0C 1B0

Email: eipd@mts.net Fax: 204-642-4061

We thank all who apply however, only those selected for further consideration will be contacted.



SENIOR ACCOUNTANT

Vidir Solutions Inc., elevating Careers and Community

If you're looking for a chance to foster a deep sense of purpose in your work and the opportunity to elevate as a leader both in your career and in your community, exciting possibilities are waiting for you with Vidir!

Working at Vidir is about more than just being an employee; it's about being part of a growing family making a positive impact both globally and in your community.

From our operations in Arborg and Teulon to our work with communities, everything we do is with the future firmly in mind. We are always looking for innovative ways to do our business, deliver results and build a great work environment.

Our mission is to "Make the world's products safely accessible". We continue to innovate, implement best practices and adopt new technologies in all areas.

The Opportunity:

**For our ARBORG FACILITY, we are seeking a:
Senior Accountant (Term Position)**

This is a term position. The Senior Accountant plays a lead role in the accounting function at Vidir. This position supports the CFO with the execution of Vidir's financial reports and records, including month-end, year-end and budget, ensuring that all financial data is accurate and complete. The Senior Accountant is responsible for developing efficient, effective and secure internal controls and processes through collaboration with the accounting team and other department managers.

Key Responsibilities: Reporting to CFO

- Ensures the timely delivery of accurate financial statements to support Executive decision-making as well as banking reporting requirements
- Prepares monthly balance sheet and income statement, analyzing reports to ensure accuracy
- Supports the CFO in preparing year-end journal entries, supporting documentation and financial reports
- Works closely with the CFO in the annual budget process
- Prepares and reconciles monthly budget variance reports and distributes to department managers
- Provides support to department managers, responding to inquiries and requests, and identifying issues that need to be brought to the CFO's attention
- Examines budget line items to ensure accurate coding
- Improves the budget process by seeking opportunities for coding or reporting changes that would help identify and understand key cost drivers better
- Monitors and controls the general ledger to enable accurate reporting on operational objectives, projects and other initiatives
- Conducts monthly account reconciliations to ensure accurate reporting and ledger maintenance
- Regularly reviews general ledger transactions ensuring that data entry processes are leading to accurate account balances and information.
- Utilizes a strong knowledge of transactional processes to provide training and assistance to the Accounts Payable/Receivable Clerk as well as employees in other departments as needed
- Handles income tax and sales tax requirements
- Prepares monthly tax filings and ensures taxes are paid on time
- Leads the external tax audit process, serving as the primary contact for auditors. Compiles and organizes required information, delegating as necessary
- Develops and implements internal controls and processes to safeguard Vidir's assets, and to help create accurate and efficient workflow

Qualifications:

The successful candidate must have a minimum of 3 years of experience in a financial accounting role. The successful candidate will also have advanced proficiency in Microsoft Excel, Outlook, Word, and Accounting Software. A diploma or certificate in business administration or accounting is preferred.

Working at Vidir:

Vidir offers a competitive salary and benefits package; as well as incentives and promotes a culture of recognition. We support professional growth, development and success!

Explore our company and products at www.storevertical.com

Apply at carissa.rempel@vidir.com

We thank all candidates for their interest, however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

Applications will be received until Friday, April 30th, 2021

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RM of West Interlake Notice of Public Hearing

Public Notice is hereby given pursuant to Subsection 162(2) of *The Municipal Act* that the Council of the R.M. of West Interlake intends to present its Financial Plan for the fiscal year of 2021 at a Public Hearing in the Eriksdale Recreation Centre, #2 First Avenue, Eriksdale, MB on Wednesday, May 5, 2021 at 7:00 pm.

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to allow any interested person to make representation, ask questions or register an objection to the Financial Plan as provided.

Copies of the Financial Plan will be available for review on the 16th of April 2021, and may be examined by any person during regular office hours at the Municipal Offices.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, please register with the Ashern (204-768-2641) or Eriksdale (204-739-2666) Municipal Office prior to the Public Hearing.

Dated this 9th day of April, 2021

Courtney Roehl, CMMA
Chief Administrative Officer
RM of West Interlake

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Riverton Coop
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RIVERTON (204) 378-2251

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

MEATCUTTER/CLERK

The Riverton COOP is seeking a **FULL-TIME MEATCUTTER/CLERK**. Outstanding customer service, team player and attention to detail are important traits that one must possess. **Experience desired but will train a suitable applicant.**

Competitive starting wage, comprehensive benefits package, including dental, vision, extended health, and pension plan to qualifying employees as per policy.

If you require more information, please contact Derek or Darlene at 204 378-2251.

Job Applications is available at our retail or you may submit your resume including 3 work related references to Derek at meatrivertoncoop@mymts.net or to Darlene at rivertoncoop@mymts.net

Thank you for your interest.



We Are Hiring! Positions available:

• **3 Full-time Summer Student Sales-person positions**, May 3 - September 4. Hours and dates flexible, must be able to lift 50 lbs unassisted and available to work Saturdays.

Application deadline: April 17, 2021.

• **Permanent part-time salesperson and/or lumber yard worker.** Must be able to lift 50 lbs. unassisted. Class 5 Drivers licence holder is preferred.

Please submit resume at #28 Railway Avenue, Ashern, or by e-mail to jason.carpenter@homehardware.ca

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Rural Municipality of
FISHER

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

TRACTOR OPERATOR/PUBLIC WORKS

The position of tractor operator / public works is a year-round position which requires a self-motivated individual who can work with little supervision and as part of a larger municipal team. The successful applicant will be mechanically inclined, able to operate various tools and equipment. Training for relief operator to municipal graders will be provided. Duties include but are not limited to roadside mowing, snow removal, maintenance of equipment, and assisting other municipal departments. Hours of work are Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. during summer months and 7:30 to 3:30 winter months, with statutory holidays off.

As a municipal employee the RM of Fisher offers a comprehensive benefits package including holiday and sick leave entitlements.

Requirements for this position are:

- Valid drivers' licence (Class 3 an asset)

Salary is set out in the CUPE Local 4348 Collective Agreement.

Commencement of duties May 3, 2021

Please forward your application by 4:00 p.m., April 30, 2021 by mail, e-mail or drop box at Municipal office.

The Rural Municipality of Fisher supports equitable employment practices and promotes representation of a designated group (women, Indigenous people, persons with disabilities, visible minorities)

For further information regarding this position, please contact the Rural Municipality of Fisher Office at 372-6393.

Kelly Marykuca
Chief Administrative Officer
Rural Municipality of Fisher
Box 280, Fisher Branch, Manitoba ROC OZO
fishercao@mymts.net



Employment Opportunity

COME JOIN OUR TEAM!
HECLA PROVINCIAL PARK IS HIRING

A Campground Supervisor, Campground Attendants, Labourer Janitors, Labourer Operator, and an Operator 1

Campground Supervisor: is responsible for scheduling, training, supervising staff, performance management, and guidance in general revenue collection and working with the computerized Park Reservation System.

Campground Attendants: are responsible for the delivery of services directly to the public at the Gull Harbour campground.

Labourer Janitors: are responsible for the cleaning and maintenance of various park facilities and grounds within the park, including campsites and vacation cabins.

Labourer Operators: are responsible for the maintenance, construction, landscaping and upkeep of various park facilities within the park.

Operator 1: operates and maintains heavy equipment in the Operator 1-2 range such as; 3-5 ton truck with cranes, tractors, wheeled loaders, backhoes, large commercial mowers and other equipment as assigned. Must maintain a valid full stage Manitoba Class 3 drivers licence with air endorsement

Conditions of Employment

- Must be legally entitled to work in Canada.
- Must possess and maintain a valid full stage Manitoba Class 5 driver's license.
- Must be physically able to perform the duties assigned to the position including lifting approximately 50lbs in weight.
- Must be willing and able to work weekends and statutory holidays
- Must be able to work outdoors for extended periods of time under various weather conditions.

The Manitoba Government has a comprehensive benefits package, which includes extended health care, group life insurance, family related leave, and a defined pension plan.

The Manitoba Government recognizes the importance of building an exemplary civil service that is inclusive and reflective of the population it serves. We encourage applicants to voluntarily self-declare in their application if they are from any of the following employment equity groups: women, Indigenous people, visible minorities, and persons with disabilities. Employment Equity is a factor in selection for this competition. Consideration will be given to women, Indigenous people, visible minorities and persons with disabilities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION and to receive the complete Bulletin:

Contact the RIVERTON DISTRICT OFFICE at 204-378-2261

124 Main Street, Riverton MB R0C 2R0 or

Email sandra.davies@gov.mb.ca

Closing Date: April 23, 2021 @2:00 PM

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Spring to late fall**

Duties to include some heavy lifting, raking gravels and soils, laying sod, installing unistone, planting trees and shrubs.

Must have a valid drivers license. A class 3 is preferred but not mandatory. Experience in landscaping and operating skidsteers and other equipment would be a definite asset.

Apply via e-mail mtf@mymts.net or fax @ 204-642-9026

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CARD OF THANKS

We leave Eriksdale with 63 years of wonderful memories. A heartfelt thanks to all for the wonderful going away gift.

-Charles and Lucy

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Matteo Thomas April 28th.

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OBITUARY



Joseph (Joe) Winston Lenchuk
December 8, 1941 - April 8, 2021

It is with great sadness we announce the passing of our Dad, Joe Lenchuk, at the age of 79 years.

Surviving are daughter Shelly Wright (Tim Wright); son Darryl Lenchuk (Anne Morin); grandchildren Blair Colles, Brooke Colles (Troy Byzuk), Morgan Lenchuk and her mother Nita Jackson, great-grandchildren Sequoia Mayo, Zyrach Mayo and their mother Melissa Mayo, Colbie Byzuk. Also left to mourn sister Elaine Lenchuk; brothers Lawrence (Larry) Lenchuk (Diane), Glen Lenchuk (Ev); sister-in-law Pat Lenchuk; as well as numerous neices, nephews, cousins, friends.

Predeceased by life partner Dagny Lenchuk; father Johann (John) Lenchuk; mother Mary Lenchuk (nee Wawrykow) and brother Karl Lenchuk.

Dad was born in Gimli and raised in St. James area in Winnipeg. Dad was a carpenter by trade and known in the Interlake area for his carpentry and vinyl siding skills. Dad's younger years were spent working in the far north. Dad built three homes for his family. The first home was in Headingley, then Clandeboye and then his retirement home in Petersfield/Matlock area. After working for various construction companies Dad decided to go independent and started Joe Lenchuk Construction. Dad hired local helpers and made new friends through his helpers and customers all over the Interlake area. Dad's life lesson to us kids was, you have to work hard to get what you want.

Dad enjoyed travelling to many areas in Canada. Dad and Mom enjoyed time in Florida, and especially his time on a Caribbean Cruise. Although travel was enjoyed, Dad mostly enjoyed the peaceful lifestyle of living in the Interlake and being close to home. Favorite pastimes were fishing, hunting, trapping, gardening, berry and mushroom picking and birdwatching. Dad was always excited to show his grandchildren and great-grandkids how to call the birds and feed them from your hand. Dad enjoyed holiday dinners when all the family was together. Dad was a good cook and took pride in his bread making and Saskatoon recipes he created. In retirement dad enjoyed working and selling his Saskatoon berries which he planted and took meticulous care of. Dad's musical talent was his guitar which we grew up listening to and singing along as a family. Dad's knowledge of history, trees, nature and birds was passed on to all of his family. He was happiest when he was being productive. Using his tractor to cut and split wood was more of a hobby than work to him. Dad was a very hard working independent man. Your work is done, now it's time for rest Dad.

In keeping with Dad's wishes cremation has taken place. Due to COVID an immediate family only service will be held at Gilbert Funeral Home in Selkirk, Manitoba on Wednesday, April 14, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. Those wishing can watch the service live streamed through Gilbert's web site at www.gilbertfuneralhome.com

The family wishes to thank Dr. Zahari, Dr. Ian Alexander and staff on Medical 2 at Selkirk Regional Health Centre as well as the staff at Red River Place in Selkirk.

Dad you will never be forgotten and always missed and loved. XOXO

Our loss is Heavens gain!

Condolences may be left on his tribute wall at www.gilbertfuneralhome.com

Gilbert Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



IN MEMORIAM



In Memory of
Joyce Johnson
January 2, 1962 - April 15, 2013

You left us beautiful memories,
Your love is still our guide,
And though we cannot see you,
You're always at our side.
May the winds of Heaven blow softly
And whisper in your ear,
How much we love and miss you
And wish that you were here.

-Love always, Rob, Janessa and Carrigan

IN MEMORIAM



Anna Chuba
In loving memory of our Baba
May 17, 1907 - April 14, 1998

It seems like only yesterday
We sat and chatted
We miss your smile
That twinkle in your eye,
But most of all we miss your hugs.
Forever in our hearts.

-Love Cathy, Roger, Kristi and Scott

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THE RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ST. LAURENT CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Assistant Chief Administrative Officer (Finance & Administrative)

The Rural Municipality of St. Laurent is inviting applications for the full-time position of Assistant Chief Administrative Officer (CAAO).

The CAOA will assist in the management and implementation of all aspects of daily municipal finance and administration. We are seeking an individual that has *advanced skills in accounting*, and has the ability to lead, oversee and implement organizational administration, assisting, reporting to and taking direction from the CAO. A high level of ability to communicate and assist staff, council, and the public will also be expected from the successful candidate and excellent human resource skills will be required.

The CAOA will be expected to assume the authority and duties of the CAO in an acting capacity when appointed to the role in the CAO's absence. Assuming the roles and responsibilities of other staff in extended absence may also be required from time to time.

Assets considered: CMMA course certification or extensive experience in local government/public sector environment; high-level accounting and managerial skills/background; knowledge of federal, provincial and municipal legislation; extensive computer and software (accounting and Microsoft) experience; political and financial acumen; and an individual who has excellent French language communication skills as well would be ideal.

The successful candidate can expect a salary and benefit package reflective of their experience and qualifications, starting at no less than \$21.00 per hour. Interested individuals may submit a cover letter* and resume with three references to:

Hilda Zotter
Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
The Rural Municipality of St. Laurent
16 St. Laurent Veterans' Memorial Road (Inside St. Laurent Recreation Centre)
P.O. Box 220, St. Laurent, Manitoba R0C 2S0
E-mail: cao.rmstlaur@mymts.net
Fax: 204-646-2705

*IMPORTANT: In your cover letter, please briefly describe each of your assets that would make you the ideal candidate for this position. Also, all prior work experience should be listed including name of employer.

If you have any questions, please call the CAO at 204-646-2259. A complete job description is available upon request.

The deadline for submitting your Resume is Wednesday, April 28, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. however this posting will remain open until a suitable candidate is found. The position is to commence June 1, 2021. We thank all that apply, however only those selected for interview will be contacted.

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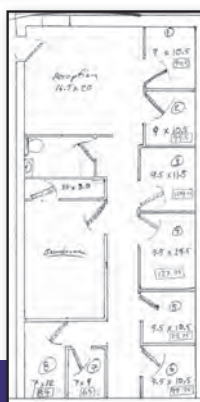
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Total square Footage 1700, includes eight offices of various sizes, a board room and a front reception area. Current tenants include The Lord Selkirk Teachers Association, Sun Life Financial, two Massage Therapists, an Esthetician and the Selkirk Record. The building was upgraded in 2012. Both the reception and board room are shared, there are currently two offices available for lease.



For information please contact:

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OBITUARY

Ernie Pawluk

March 19, 1936 – April 1, 2021

Peacefully with his wife by his side Ernie Pawluk passed away on April 1, 2021 at the age of 85.

Ernie leaves to cherish his memory his beloved wife of 65 years Phyllis; sons, Todd (Norma), Scott (Lynne), and daughter-in-law Sharon; his grandchildren, Ashley (Johan), Shawna (Matt), Trevor (Missy), Chantal (Paul) and TJ (Taylor); as well as his great-grandchildren, Harlan, Hudson, Blair, Kyler and Emmett. Ernie is survived by his sisters Elsie and Sophie (Clarence). He is predeceased by his son Bradley; parents John and Anne, six brothers and five sisters.

Born on March 19th, 1936 in Melnice on the family farm, Ernie was the 13th child of 14 siblings. On October 6, 1956 he married Phyllis and together they raised three sons on the farm. Ernie spent many of his years farming, which he loved. His passions were gardening, golfing, hunting, travelling, supervising, and especially spending time with his family. Ernie also spent time as a plumber's helper with his longtime friend Dick Cain.

He continued to enjoy the farm until 1999. They later moved to Aspen Park where they made many lifelong friends. In 2010 they moved to Winnipeg Beach where he spent the rest of his years closer to family.

Ernie and Phyllis spent many years travelling together. Ernie's dream trip was to go to Alaska, which they joyfully experienced in the summer of 1993. He truly enjoyed making memories travelling, road tripping, camping with his family, close friends, and people he met along the way. Ernie's many adventures made for the best stories that could only be told by him.

He was the family foreman and always took on the supervisor role while doing work with Brad, Todd and Scott. Dad always oversaw what the boys were working on, whether they liked it or not and his famous last words were always, "that's good enough." Now that he is reunited with Bradley they can start their own garden together.

Gigi loved his grandchildren and great-grandchildren tremendously, his eyes lit up every time he saw them. He was a good Santa, a great sports fan and the best Gigi.

Ernie met Phyllis at Tomko's hall on the dance floor and they continued to dance their way through life together. Whether it was in a hall, at a social, in a garage or during a card game Ernie loved to dance. Ernie, thank-you for the lifetime of memories we made together, until we meet again.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Cancer Care Manitoba. Cremation has taken place and a private service will be held at a later date.

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

Gilbart Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



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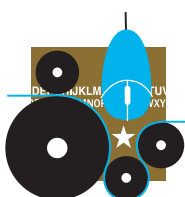
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