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EXPRESS PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

That candy cane better be the same as mine! Jax and Jace visited Santa in Winnipeg Beach last Saturday at the Interlake Relay for Life pancake breakfast.

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


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Family supports teen injured in accident

By Jennifer McFee

The community is coming together to support a local teen who suffered major injuries in a recent car accident.

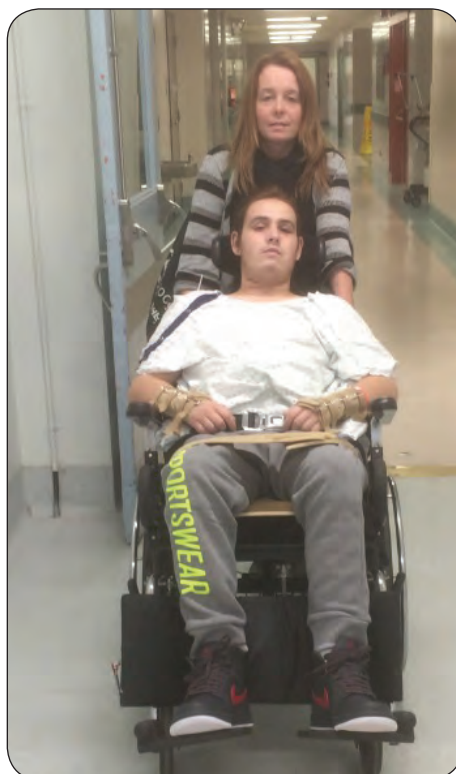
At about 6 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 12, 17-year-old Kienan Roche of Arborg and three of his cousins were driving on Road 415 heading towards Teulon. When the driver swerved to avoid a deer, the car hit a driveway and rolled.

Kienan, who was in the back passenger seat, ended up with a broken neck and spinal cord trauma that caused paralysis from his upper chest downwards. His sister Alexa said that their cousins are all OK.

Kienan underwent two surgeries to repair his neck and take the pressure off his spinal cord, and his mobility remains limited. They are still waiting for the swelling in his spinal cord to go down.

Currently, he can move his arms a little bit but he lacks fine motor skills and control of the movement. Doctors aren't sure how much mobility and strength he'll regain in his arms and fingers, but they don't expect much more. Kienan is determined to prove them wrong, and his family is keeping close to offer as much support as possible.

"He's at HSC right now, so we were



Kienan Roche is at Health Sciences Centre after a recent car accident.

staying at the Canad Inns for almost two weeks, and we just got a room at the Ronald McDonald House," Alexa said.

"He has moved to the rehabilitation area of the hospital so he's doing more



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

The Roche family is raising funds to cover costs related to Kienan's recovery.

active physio with his arms right now and he's doing breathing physio. His diaphragm was very weak, so they're just trying to work those muscles. He had a ventilator for a few days, and now that has come off."

A Grade 12 student at Arborg High School, Kienan is still hoping to graduate alongside his classmates.

"There is a tutor that will be coming to see him, so hopefully by next week we'll get that going," Alexa said. "He still wants to graduate with his friends."

His parents and siblings Alexa, 24, and Darian, 21, are doing everything they can to support Kienan throughout his recovery and rehabilitation.

"Kienan is a very compassionate person. He's wonderful to talk to and always has something witty to say," Alexa said.

"He can be a bit shy at first, but once

the ice is broken, he's very sociable. Kienan won't sugarcoat anything and will give you an unfiltered reality check when you need it," Alexa said.

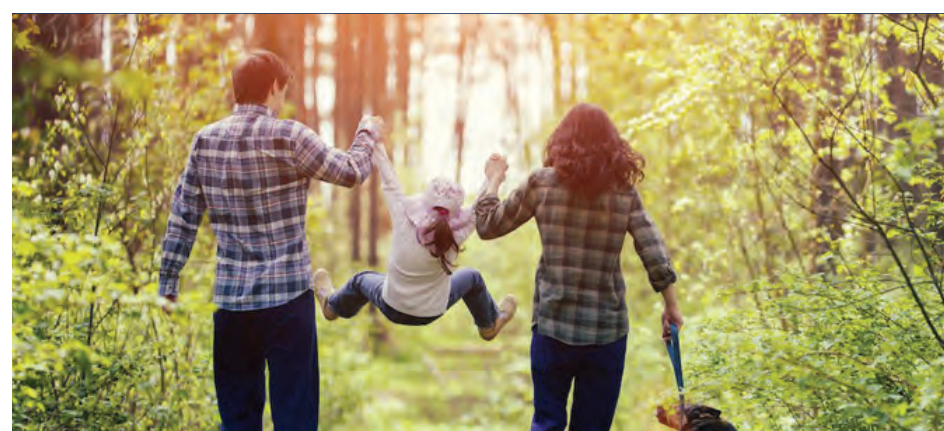
Spending time with family is a priority to Kienan, she added.

"He was usually seen driving around with his brother and would visit often with his sister. He would help out his cousins and friends, driving them around and just hanging out and having fun," she said.

"Kienan also spent a lot of time on his grandparents' farm and would stay over most of his weekends. He was a hard worker, doing what he could for his Amma and Afi, whether it was helping with various barn chores, fixings or what needed to be done in the field."

Kienan is committed to regaining as

Continued on page 4



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Silent Auction

Province gives city 27 years to reduce combined sewers flows

By Patricia Barrett

The province's decision last week to give the City of Winnipeg over a quarter century to reduce combined sewer outflows by 85 per cent has those living on Lake Winnipeg and the political opposition questioning its stance on the future health of Lake Winnipeg.

Gimli Mayor Randy Woroniuk said he was "literally shocked" when he heard the news last week that Sustainable Development Minister Rochelle Squires gave the city 27 years to reduce the waste flowing into Lake Winnipeg via the Red River.

"We're having a problem on our lake

right now. We know the lake is clearing up [filtration by zebra mussels]. We know the lake is going to warm up because of climate change and we're going to have larger algae blooms," said Woroniuk. "And they allow the City of Winnipeg — even though it's a four to six per cent discharge into our waterways — that'll still be coming in for the next 27 years. This is just not right."

Combined sewer systems use single pipes to collect both household and

industrial waste and rainwater and snowmelt. All of that is supposed to be treated at one of the city's wastewater treatment plants before it's released into the river. But heavy periods of rain or snowmelt can overwhelm the capacity of the pipes, which then bypass treatment plants and discharge raw sewage directly into the river.

There are about 1,037 kilometres of combined sewers (with 77 outlets) in

Continued on page 5



EXPRESS PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

During the Canada Summer Games Sailing competition in August, parts of Gimli Harbour were covered with algae.

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Lundar Seniors gather to share stories of inspiration

By Jeff Ward

Nearly 30 participants gathered in Lundar last week for the Let No One Be Alone campaign, a twice annual event hosted by Lundar Seniors Resource Centre and designed to get seniors more socially active.

Resource centre co-ordinator Cindy Thorkelson said she was thrilled with the turnout last Thursday, Nov. 30 at the Lundar New Horizons Club. She said attendees shared inspirational stories in an effort to encourage more social activity within their community. The goal of the event is to create more opportunities for seniors who may be isolated and to give them the space to meet and chat with others.

Thorkelson said that loneliness is hard to deal with, as we all want

someone to talk to, so gatherings like this go a long way to reduce feelings of isolation.

"It was such a wonderful thing to see them all smiling and sharing stories and it was such a beautiful day. It's kind of like the congregate meal program in a way because they get to enjoy the company of others and forget about their aches and pains and just be happy," said Thorkelson.

Attendees brought cookies to enjoy with their coffee or tea and shared recipes to make for the next Let No One Be Alone gathering in May 2018. Thorkelson said she's started organizing the event twice a year in Lundar because of the great feedback and the positive influence the gathering has had for its attendees.



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED BY CINDY THORKELSON

Nearly 30 seniors gathered at the Lundar New Horizons Club last week to share inspirational stories as part of Let No One Be Alone.



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Adam T. and Jackson T. Elvis rocked the Winnipeg Beach Bandstand last year.

Evergreen Basic Needs to host Rockin' Elvis Toy Drive concert

By Patricia Barrett

Gimli's Elvii are set to rock Evergreen Basic Needs' annual Toy Drive on Wednesday, Dec. 6.

Adam Tarnowski, who works as a radio announcer for CJ107 and is best known as Adam. T. Elvis, will be appearing with his son Jackson T. Elvis to help with the toy fundraiser, which is scheduled for 7 p.m. at EBN.

The show was originally scheduled last week, but Jackson got sick.

"I have decided to keep the show going as there is a need in the community for more toys for the kids," said

Tarnowski on EBN's Facebook site. "With your help, we can give the kids a great Christmas."

Every year, the food bank and used clothing store distributes Christmas toys to less fortunate families in Gimli and the surrounding area.

The Elvis concert is free with the donation of a new unwrapped toy for a boy or a girl, a gift card for a teen or a cash donation.

Evergreen Basic Needs is located at 71 Fourth Ave. For more information about how to donate a toy, call EBN at 204-642-9736.

Eriksdale Christmas Hampers help lift spirits of families less fortunate

By Jeff Ward

Organizers for the Eriksdale Christmas Hamper campaign are asking the community to help stock their boxes with items that go out to an average of 20 families each year.

Debbie Lundale is one of the organizers of the annual program, which aims to feed families on Christmas. Their base line goal is to provide a traditional Christmas meal of turkey and all the fixings that more fortunate families are accustomed to.

Their stretch goals aim to provide breakfast items like eggs, bacon, fresh fruit, vegetables and even gifts. The stretch goals are largely dependent on community donations, both financial or food and gift related. Lundale said that she is flexible and would like those who are thinking about donating to consider sponsoring a family.

This can mean providing one turkey, one gift or even sponsoring an entire hamper.

"We're going to do as much as we can this year. If we have enough funds for those extras, we will supply them," said Lundale.

"Last year, we had 23 hampers go out and we already have families signed up. This year we would love to have someone sponsor a family, even if it just for the gifts. It really does mean a lot."

Families who want to be included on the list to receive a hamper are asked to call the RM office in Eriksdale at 204-739-2666. The deadline to do so is noon on Dec. 11. Hampers will be available for pickup on Dec. 19 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Eriksdale United Church. Those that make monetary donations of \$10 or more will receive

a tax receipt.

Lundale said that monetary donations will be accepted until the end of the year and put into a fund specifically for Christmas hampers. Money that isn't used to purchase items for hampers, or that is donated after the fact, will be used in next year's campaign.

"It's a hard time for many families and all donations help make it a little bit easier," said Lundale.

Those wanting more information on what hamper items are currently needed can contact Debbie Lundale at 204-739-2606 or Sandra Hogue at 204-739-2605.

> FAMILY SUPPORTS, FROM PG. 2

much independence as possible, with a focus on being able to walk again. To help him achieve this goal, his family is raising funds to meet his changing needs.

"We'll need wheelchairs and other equipment," Alexa said.

A GoFundMe page has been set up at <https://www.gofundme.com/>

kienans-rehabilitation to help raise funds for Kienan and his family. At press time, the page had raised more than \$4,200 of the \$20,000 goal.

In addition, Kienan's Aunt Chantel has set up a charity account at CIBC. For anyone who would like to make a contribution, the account number is 00567 - 0541036.

Moosehorn's flood protection project hits another delay

By Jeff Ward

Another delay in the Moosehorn flood protection project hasn't sullied the reputation of contractors Fast Brothers Ltd. in the eyes of RM of Grahamdale Council.

The project was delayed with the discovery that the wrong covers had been placed over the newly installed culverts under Jensen Road. Work is now back on track, but the small mistake added more time to an already missed deadline.

The project was supposed to be completed by Sept. 15, but it was delayed when a fire broke out in the warehouse that supplied culverts to the project contractors.

Grahamdale CAO Shelly Schwitek said that this most recent issue with culvert covers has been resolved and

work is already back on track. However, asphaltting the road will need to wait until spring.

Even with all the delays, Schwitek said that Fast Brothers Ltd. has been great to work with and that the first big delay was a freak accident.

"We're totally happy with them," said Schwitek.

"Even with the delays, we've had an excellent experience with them. They always kept us informed on what was happening. Communication was great. They held onsite meetings with our councillors and everything."

Heavy rainfall in late summer also contributed to the original missed deadline. Schwitek said Jensen Road will be open throughout the winter to allow traffic to pass once work is completed.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY JEFF WARD

Road closure signs are likely to be removed soon as the Moosehorn flood protection project wraps up for the winter.

> SEWERS FLOW, FROM PG. 3

the city, comprising 31 per cent of the total sewer system, states the city's website. Overflows occur on average 22 times a year.

The 27-year announcement coincided with the release of a study on Lake Winnipeg algae carried out by University of British Columbia chemists (see reference below). Toxins in that algae have been linked to neurodegenerative disorders.

In 2016, Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium scientists gathered algae samples from 20 different sites and sent them to UBC, where chemist Susan Murch and her team found BMAA, an amino acid associated with human neurodegenerative disease, and isomers related to BMAA.

The highest concentration of those toxins were found in the centre of the north basin.

Cyanobacterial blooms on Lake Winnipeg began in the 1990s, stemming from increased nutrient (phosphorus, nitrogen, etc.) loading from agricultural runoff, industrial waste and wastewater.

"Research on BMAA intensified after a 2002 hypothesis that it could bioaccumulate in the ecosystem and food webs, thereby leading to a much higher consumption of the toxin than thought previously," wrote the UBC team.

They did, however, point out that the risk to human health was not a focus of their study.

"Although we report the presence of BMAA in cyanobacteria collected from Lake Winnipeg, we did not assess the amount of the neurotoxin in the water. It is unknown how much water would need to be collected to accurately detect BMAA, and therefore, the risk to human health cannot be assessed by this study."

Nevertheless, implications for human health has the mayor concerned, and he'll be raising the issue at this week's South Basin Mayor and Reeves' meeting.

"It's one thing to say your pet will get ill and another thing to say there's a link between toxins in algae and ALS [Lou Gehrig's disease]," said Woroniuk. "We need to work together to solve all the issues on Lake Winnipeg and we need to do it now — not 27 years in the future because that will be too late."

The Lake Winnipeg Foundation released a blueprint in 2013 consisting of eight key actions to reduce algae-caus-

ing phosphorus from making its way into the lake. Those include keeping water on the land, conserving boreal forests along the lake and setting standards for wastewater treatment.

Manitoba has the distinction of being among the worst wastewater polluters in Canada.

"Human sewage from municipal wastewater treatment facilities and lagoons throughout Manitoba contributes to a quarter of the province's phosphorus inputs to Lake Winnipeg," states the foundation's website. "The North End Water Pollution Control Centre ... remains the fourth largest phosphorus polluter among all wastewater treatment facilities in Canada."

The most recent cost estimate (Dec. 1) to upgrade the North End plant has been pegged at over \$1 billion.

The province's combined-sewer directive and the algae study doesn't sit well NDP environment critic Rob Altemeyer, who called the 27-year timeline a "horrible decision."

"It's outrageous," he said. "How on earth is it fair for anyone living downstream of Winnipeg that [the city] gets over a quarter century to address a problem that has been known for decades and now it's another 27 years?"

He said the Tories' focus on deficit reduction may be the reason for the "ridiculously long timeline" on replacing combined sewers.

"What we're really talking about is digging pipes. We know how to put pipes in the ground. It's not rocket science," said Altemeyer. "So it's almost undoubtedly this

provincial government's obsession with a bottom line that they alone have made up."

Sustainable Development did not respond to an *Express* email inquiring about the timeline and whether the government will be contributing funding to the sewer upgrade.

UBC's study should be raising alarm bells and prompting immediate government action said Altemeyer.

Reference: Stephanie L. Bishop, Jeff K. Kerkovius, Frederic Menard and Susan J. Murch (2017). "N- - Methylamino-L-Alanine and Its Naturally Occurring Isomers in Cyanobacterial Blooms in Lake Winnipeg." Neurotoxicity Research.

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Wedding groom gets the best catch of the day

My good friends, how are you?

Driving down the sloping snowy gravel road to the Balsam Bay harbour last Saturday, I was amazed at the endless lines of anglers' parked vehicles. More were spotted on the harbour ice and still more vehicles and anglers dotted out on the ice pack of Lake Winnipeg as far as the eye could see.

Some fishers sat on sleighs fishing from holes amongst a vast array of portable shacks. With so many folks on hand, I simply idled Old Red up to the nearest shack, got out and called to a young, slight chap with short blond hair. His quick smile emphasized his sharply defined features as he basked beside his shack in the sun's warmth, jigging his short rod in an ice hole. He seemed a naturally quiet fellow and couldn't think of a fishing story at first, but as we talked of the peace and silent joy of being out here, his eyes lit up and he recalled an unusual story.

Our new friend Josh Junerum now hails from East Selkirk, but years ago he lived in Swan Lake. Even though he's quite young, he had no problem going fishing by himself.

One particular time, he hooked and pulled up a big jackfish, but he was using a pickerel rig and the other hook buried itself in his finger as the jack flapped around. Pain shocked through his body as he tried to kneel on the jack so he could get the hook out of his finger, but try as he might, the fish kept wiggling, wrenching the hook, causing him further grief. Just then, an RCMP car came cruising past on a nearby road and Josh waved frantically at them for help.

Unfortunately, a border of high bulrushes prevented the officers from seeing Josh's predicament. They simply waved back with a smile and carried on. Resolved, Josh became a man of action. He cut the fish line, tucked the now dead fish under his arm and made for the hospital.

His mother, who worked there, stood shocked at the receptionist's desk to see her son walking in holding up one hand with a hook-impaired bloody finger and a huge fish under his armpit.

It was also a very agreeable day on the Red River a bit upstream of Selkirk last Tuesday. There were a few guys fishing in the open and one tall fellow seemed to stand out from the others.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY ARNIE WEIDL

Lucas Champagne with the pickerel he caught at Breezy after parasailing with his portable ice shack.

My spiked boots made small crunching noises on the ice as I tread up to him. He introduced himself as Lucas Champagne of Winnipeg. He hadn't caught anything but was quick to pull out his cell phone and show me a giant pickerel he had caught on the Red by Breezy last week. That wasn't the only thing that impressed me about Lucas.

He told me he had been fascinated with marine life since he was a kid. He went to college in Newfoundland to become a marine biologist on a volleyball scholarship. If you can believe it, when returning to Manitoba, he went to work dealing with invasive species in our waterways. Josh, you are a wonderful credit to our fishing culture.

Josh is also good at parasailing with a portable ice shack. Before he caught that pickerel at Breezy, he had tried to pin down his portable shack. The wind was very gusty, catching it just right and up it went with him hanging on. He literally became airborne for a moment, and when he landed, the tent and his butt took a pretty good smacking.

Josh was not deterred. He went back to his truck got some tools and fixed his tent, set it up and got fishing. It wasn't long after that he got the walleye we're admiring.

Continued on page 17

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Alf Cuthbert staff throw Christmas dinner for school

By Jeff Ward

A Christmas tradition is taking place this week at Alf Cuthbert School in Moosehorn as educational assistants (EAs) plan to serve nearly 150 hungry students, staff and community volunteers.

The annual meal takes place on Dec. 7 during lunch hour at the school and is planned by six EAs. Tracey Konzelman and Janeen Price are two of these organizers. They said that while it's a lot of work, it's rewarding and brings the school together for the holidays.

The meal began with the idea that every student should be able to experience what more fortunate families consider a traditional Christmas meal. While the holidays are a fun and exciting time to be with friends and family, they also serve as a sobering reminder that some families simply don't have the means to experience the luxury of a Christmas dinner. That's where the EA organizers step in.

"It's all about the kids," said Konzelman.

"We know those families who can't do something like this at their own home and it's hard. But we know it means a lot to these kids."

Price agreed and said added that many graduates of Alf Cuthbert K-8 school have often told her how much fun it was and that they miss being a part of it.

The purpose of the event, Konzelman and Price said, is to bring the school together. Grade 7 and 8 students help set up the gym with tablecloths and decorations before the other grades flood in and choose seats. Students can then decorate their spot with artwork to personalize it before they're served a meal of turkey, meatballs, mashed potatoes, fresh buns and just about everything you'd find at a traditional Christmas meal.

All the food is donated by local businesses or purchased by staff. Most items, like the meatballs, are hand-



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED BY ALANN FRASER

Students at Alf Cuthbert decorate their place at the table during last year's annual Christmas dinner, organized by the school's educational assistants.

Grahamdale to explore noise bylaw, place signs along PR 513



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Signs like this prohibiting the use of retarder brakes could appear next year along PR 513 near Gypsumville.

By Jeff Ward

In the future, heavy-duty vehicle operators travelling along PR 513 near Gypsumville may need to watch for new road signs prohibiting retarder brakes as Grahamdale council responds to noise complaints.

There has been an increase in heavy-duty vehicles along PR 513 due to construction projects in a neighbouring First Nations community.

Grahamdale CAO Shelly Schwitek explained that while there haven't been any formal complaints, word

has reached councillors about the excessive noise.

Retarder brakes work by changing the action of the valves inside a vehicle's engines cylinders. Traditionally, as the piston moves into top dead centre during its compression stroke, the air fuel mixture is ignited, powering the piston back down. When the retarder brakes are active, the exhaust valve opens at top dead centre allowing that mixture to escape, robbing power from the engine and basically turning the engine into an air compressor. This creates a lot of noise. In an area like Gypsumville, which doesn't see a lot of noisy traffic, it's very noticeable.

"We actually found out that we do have a noise reduction bylaw that prohibits the use of these brakes in Moosehorn," said Schwitek.

"Council just started speaking about this, so no decisions have been made yet. But I have to do some research on where signs would go, how it would be enforced and how much they would cost."

The bylaw was created back in 2003, before Schwitek was an employee of the RM. She said she will begin to investigate how council can add new signs to PR 513, but residents shouldn't expect them to go up anytime soon.

made, and staff members like Konzelman and Price wake up around 5 a.m. the morning of the dinner to cook the turkeys at home.

"We do it because we enjoy it. It's the season of giving, so even though it's a lot of work, it just feels good,"

said Price.

Students are also asked to bring non-perishable food items to help stock the local hampers, which in turn allows more families in the community to have a Christmas meal.

Call for donations for Ashern and Grahamdale Christmas hampers

By Jeff Ward

The Lakeshore Women's Resource Centre in Ashern is leading an organizing and distribution effort for Christmas hampers, and they need your help.

Donations of non-perishable food, dry food like pasta, as well as new toys and even cash can be made directly to the resource centre.

Janice Postlethwaite, who is leading the organizing effort, said that she expects that about 60 families in the Ashern and RM of Grahamdale area will need a hamper this year, so demand is high. Monetary donations are one of the better ways to give back as it allows organizers to purchase exactly what is needed to fill gaps.

Postlethwaite explained that every year, she's never sure what will be donated and that certain items will tend to pile up while other items are under-represented. Cash donations help her level out the donations and make

every hamper as similar as possible.

"The money also lets us go out and buy a new toy or gift for every child under 18," said Postlethwaite.

"What we want to happen as a result of these hampers is for families who need them to have a nice, relaxing Christmas like everyone else. We know they appreciate these quite a bit when they do get them."

Those that need a hamper can call Postlethwaite directly at 204-768-3016 to be put on the list for one. She explained that other people cannot call on behalf of someone else.

Postlethwaite said that she hopes to provide enough items in each hamper to feed a family for the entire day, but that's a tall order, and it's where the community comes in.

"We need their help, for sure. Give what you can and it all adds up."

Your help in stocking these hampers goes a long way in making Christmas bright for every family in the area.

Gimli's pot plan up in the air despite provincial directive

By Patricia Barrett

The province has asked municipal leaders to make a decision as to whether or not they'll allow marijuana retailers in their respective jurisdictions and has given them a three-week deadline.

During the Association of Manitoba Municipalities' Annual Convention Nov. 27-29, the province told municipalities they'll have to opt in or opt out by Dec. 22.

That deadline is too tight for Gimli's mayor.

"I find that timeline unacceptable," said Randy Woroniuk. "I don't think it's fair to the municipalities or to the citizens of our communities to tell us that [in three weeks] we have to have a yes or no about allowing cannabis into our communities. It doesn't give us enough time."

He said a provincial representative at the AMM was asked "how firm that date is," but didn't provide a clear answer. Other mayors and reeves that Woroniuk said he spoke to at the convention told him they don't like the timeline.

"There's a whole comfort factor with cannabis itself. Legalizing it is one

thing, but to tell the municipalities we have to do something in such a short time is just not acceptable," he said.

Gimli council plans to hold a manager's meeting (closed to the public) on Dec. 19 to discuss the issue and may or may not render a decision.

"I am not standing by anybody else's timeline. This is too big of an issue to be rushed," said Woroniuk. "We'd like to get this right the first time and we're going to do it at our own pace, not somebody else's."

The mayor said he'd like public feedback on pot vending but that it's ultimately a council decision.

"I personally would like to engage with the public. And I would invite them to let their views be known — and not on Meanwhile in Gimli or What's Up Gimli [Facebook sites]. Please send us an email or a letter."

To help municipalities prepare for the federal legalization of pot, which will come into effect in July 2018, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities published a Cannabis Legalization Primer. Municipalities will be required to update bylaws, create regulations and enforce new rules.

"But this work will stem from frame-



EXPRESS PHOTO BY US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE. WIKIMEDIA COMMONS Cannabis plant.

works set out by provinces and territories," said FCM president Jenny Gerbasi in the AMM's fall edition of its magazine *Municipal Leader*. "While much uncertainty remains, our pan-Canadian analysis suggests municipalities will be most active in the areas of zoning, business licensing, building code, municipal workplace safety, and enforcing public consumption and impaired driving rules."

On Nov. 7, the province issued a news release announcing a hybrid model for the distribution and retail of cannabis. It will allow both the public and private sectors to decide how to sell it. The model will see the Liquor and Gaming Authority given "an expanded mandate to regulate the purchase, storage, distribution and retail of cannabis" while the private sector "will operate all retail locations."

Part of the province's plan, the mayor learned, is to implement timely access to pot, something that sounds exactly like its revamped rural ambulance service.

"The province was [saying] that 90 per cent of the population within five years will have access to pot in 30 minutes," he said. "I'm kind of baffled by that. My question is are that many people smoking dope?"

Thirty-minute access seems to contradict the province's decision to let municipalities decide whether or not they'll allow pot retailers. But a bigger issue for RMs is access to tax revenues, which Woroniuk said the province was "very vague" about.

"One of the issues I have with this

whole thing is that as municipalities, we'll get no tax revenue," he said. "There's nothing left for us because the feds are taking 50 per cent and the province is taking 50 per cent. If we got a cut of those revenues, I would want it to stay in the community and we would use it for infrastructure."

Should the RM of Gimli permit pot sales, the mayor said he doesn't know whether there will be any social repercussions.

"Those are the unknowns — what it's going to 'cost' us," he said. "We hope cannabis will be treated just like alcohol in that you just can't smoke it anywhere. We are going to get ahead of this by proposing a bylaw to ban smoking in all our public areas, including the beach. The province currently prohibits smoking cigarettes on their beaches and we're going to follow suit."

He said he's also concerned about the effects of marijuana on the body in that it may impair co-ordination, reflexes and judgment, especially while driving a vehicle or operating machinery.

"If you're drinking [heavily] tonight and get up in the morning, you're probably still over .08. But generally by noon, the alcohol has gone through your system," he said. "Marijuana isn't like that. THC takes longer to get out of your system."

Woroniuk said the RCMP "has about as much information" as the RM does at this point. "But I've told them my views that I want this treated like alcohol, and they support that."

Holiday Schedule

EXPRESS
WEEKLY NEWS

December 21st	Christmas Greetings
Greeting Deadline – Mon., Dec. 11th, 4 pm Regular Paper Deadline – Mon., Dec. 18th, 4 pm	
December 28th	Boxing Week
Display Ads, Classified Ads or Announcements EARLY Deadline – Tues., Dec. 19th, NOON	
January 4th	Year in Review
Display Ads, Classified Ads or Announcements EARLY Deadline – Thurs., Dec. 21st, 4 pm	
Offices will be closed December 23rd through January 2nd. Offices will reopen Wednesday, January 3rd	

Happy Holidays!



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Interlake Coop
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Riverton Food Store
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Moosehorn Coop
1 Main St, Moosehorn

Ashern Coop
53 Main St, Ashern

Gimli Snowmobile Centre
HWY 9, Gimli

Pharmasave
45 Centre St, Gimli

Ukrainian Farmers Coop
22 Tache St, Fisher Branch

**Interlake Auto
& Tractor Parts**
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Corner of HWY 17 & Tache
St, Fisher Branch

Arborg Pharmacy
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THE EXPRESS
WEEKLY NEWS

Relay for Life and Lakeside Lions raise community spirit

By Patricia Barrett

Santa paid a visit to Winnipeg Beach last Saturday to help the Interlake Relay for Life committee raise funds for cancer research.

Committee members organized a pancake breakfast at the Community Centre, where Santa spoke with dozens of kids to find out whether they've been naughty or nice and to take Christmas gift requests.

After Braden, Jada, Liam, Mia, Kylie, Jax and Jace spoke with Santa, the Relay team had their turn.

This is the first year the committee has hosted breakfast with Santa, and they got some help from local businesses.

"We've had generous donations from Park Place (grocery store) and Beach Handi-mart for the breakfast," said committee member Betty Loewen.

At the legion two doors down, the Lakeside Lions were busy preparing for their annual Cookie Walk fundraiser.

People purchase either a medium or large box and fill it with homemade cookies, muffins, cakes and other treats.

"They can stuff as many as will fit in the box," said Lions' president Brian Magnusson. "The lid should close — you can't stack them up!"

All the proceeds go to community causes.

"The Lions use those funds to support the community and surrounding area initiatives and needs," he said.

"We have a number of annual causes we support, such as the children's breakfast program at the school, the Christmas hamper program out of Gimli's Evergreen Basic Needs and this year we purchased new soccer nets for the local club."

The Lions also contribute funds to Gimli High School's graduating classes, and helped Betel Home purchase a blanket warmer.

The array of goodies are supplied primarily by the Lions.

"The Lions spend an entire day baking in someone's kitchen and we have other community volunteers who help," said Magnusson. "And if need to, we do purchase some."

This year the club offered a 50/50 draw for a 1 in 500 chance to win \$2,500.

"It's a good fundraiser for the Lions to put back into the community."

The club is 30 years old and is the first co-ed Lions Club in Canada, said member Ed Winiarz. This year marks the 100th Anniversary of the Lions Club International and the 15th year of the Cookie Walk.

The Lions had a lot help from the community's youth, who earn "volunteer hours" at school. The Lions provide them with a volunteer service letter that they can use for their resumes.

"We also pay them in cookies — as many as they can eat afterwards," said Lions member and Mayor Tony Pimentel.



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Liam (baby Santa) and Mia had a chat with Santa at the pancake breakfast in Winnipeg Beach last Saturday.



Winnipeg Beach kids visited Santa. From Left Braden, Jada, Liam (baby Santa), Santa Claus, Mia, Kylie. Front row: Bella, Jax and Jace.



Interlake Relay for Life members had a visit with Santa. Back from left: Bill Martin, Sharon Mulder, Kathy Sigurdson, and Adrian Van Driel. Front: Steve Bemchuk (cook) on Santa's knee, Cindy Genik and Betty Loewen.



Lakeside Lions and volunteers organized a sweet fundraiser.

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Fisher River Cree Nation ahead of curve on financial transparency

By Patricia Barrett

Fisher River Cree Nation has proven it's ahead of the financial management curve by becoming the first Manitoba First Nation community to earn Financial Management System (FMS) certification from an organization that helps Canada's First Nations develop strong fiscal practices.

Representatives from the First Nations Financial Management Board (FMB), community members and special guests honoured chief and council Nov. 30 for their achievement during a celebration held at the Fisher River Community Hall.

FMS certification singles out First Nations with sound financial and transparency practices, and that comes with a number of benefits, including an ability to secure low-interest loans for projects to enhance a community's quality of life.

The FMB, a First Nation-run, non-profit organization, worked with Fisher River over the past five years to help it strengthen its financial management practices.

"When we became aware of the Financial Management Board, we wanted to strengthen our governance in the area of financial management for the community," said Chief David Crate before the celebration got underway. "We notified the government that we wanted to have the support of the [FMB] and we were added to a schedule of communities that had signed on."

Fisher River underwent a series of steps necessary to achieve FMS status. The Board then reviewed its overall financial system before granting the certificate.

Previous to earning the FMS certification, Fisher River achieved Financial Performance Certification in 2013 and Approved Financial Administration Law (FAL) in 2015. FAL is the governance model for financial management that applies to all of the organizations governed by Fisher River.

The movement towards First Nation financial transparency began in 2013 after the federal Conservatives passed legislation requiring the publication of audited financial statements and salaries and expenses of chiefs and councillors.

But Fisher River had been disclosing its financial accounts to the community as far back as the 1980s, said Crate, long before federal legislation was implemented.

"Fisher River has a history of accountability to their members," he said. "And it wasn't a government-driven process; it was a community process that started way back."

Fisher River is the sixth First Na-



EXPRESS PHOTO COURTESY OF JEREMY NEAULT

First Nations Financial Management Board members congratulated Fisher River Chief David Crate (centre with certificate) and councillors Vince Crate (to his left), Darrell Thaddeus, Shirley Ann Cochrane and Carl Cochrane (to his right) for earning Financial Management System Certification.

tion in Canada to earn the prestigious certification status, following Nipissing First Nation (Ont.), Lil'wat Nation (B.C.), Tsleil-Waututh Nation (B.C.), Tzeachten First Nation (B.C.) and Membertou First Nation (N.S.).

In a congratulatory notice on its website, the FMB noted that Fisher River's achievement will encourage other First Nations to work on enhancing their financial practices.

"It marks an historic moment that leads the way for other First Nations to follow," says the notice. "Fisher River has worked diligently to be a self-sustaining and progressive community with a strong and accountable government."

Some of the major benefits of earning FMS certification is an ability to secure loans through the First Nations Finance Authority at below bank prime and without having to secure collateral. Loans can be used for infrastructure, social and economic development projects, land purchases and community housing developments.

Crate said Fisher River has already tapped into financing for a motel, which is badly needed for visitors to the community. The motel – which includes a 20-unit gaming centre – was cited as an economic opportunity by the community's Economic Development Corporation, which is separate from council. VLT revenues will go towards servicing the loan.

The community is also working on financing the balance of its new \$25-million school, which received a \$13-million contribution from the federal government.

The community's 88-lot Lake Winnipeg cottage development, which gives property owners full title, will continue to see marketing initiatives.

Fisher River is also constructing a new child and family services centre and an office building. The flurry of development has resulted in spin-offs for community members.

"With capital projects, you've got to think of the benefits that will come back to the community," said Crate. "We have a lot of our members employed on these projects."

A good financial management system will serve as a template for the community's future leaders.

"I think the other thing, too, for our community is long-term stability," said Crate. "When I'm not here anymore, and council members change, this will continue on into the future."

As part of its governance system, Fisher River conducts a budget review once a year, identifying priorities, and has established a 20-year plan for community development. Good infrastructure – roads, sewers, water and sewage treatment, etc. – are vital to stimulate economic growth.

"We can build businesses that can be hooked up to our [existing] water

and sewer. Paving all our roads is another project that has cost savings to the community – we have the majority of our main roads paved now – and that saves us in terms of maintenance funding," said Crate. "We don't have to gravel our roads and safety is improved for our members. What I've noticed with government is when they see the bigger picture on what these projects do for the community, we're successful in securing their support."

Sound financial management also entails an oversight body, which Fisher River has established.

"We have a separate body – the Finance and Audit Committee – and they review on a monthly and quarterly basis all the financial statements of our various entities. And they'll make recommendations to chief and council if there has to be changes made."

NDP MP Niki Ashton, in whose riding Fisher River falls, sent congratulations through her constituency assistant Clif Evans.

"I congratulated Chief Crate on this milestone," said Evans. "They're the first in Manitoba to have earned this distinction and Niki recognizes the work that had been put into this by chief and council."

Evans said sound fiscal management instils confidence in investors and helps secure government funding for future growth.

"This will give Fisher River the opportunity to attract interest from more investors to partner with them on future developments."

"FISHER RIVER HAS A HISTORY OF ACCOUNTABILITY TO THEIR MEMBERS."

Lundar Lutheran Church accepting donations for Christmas Hampers

By Jeff Ward

It's the season of giving and that means important donations of food, toys, personal hygiene products and cash are now being accepted for Christmas hampers going out to residents of Coldwell.

Cindy Thorkelson is organizing the annual hamper drive through the Lundar Lutheran Church Sunday School and looking to fill each hamper with food so that families' tables will want for nothing this holiday season. Non-perishable food items like canned soups, dry pasta and vegetables like carrots and potatoes are all welcome donations. Monetary donations are still one of the most important items you can give, as it allows Thorkelson and her volunteers to purchase turkey, chicken, bacon, eggs and other items that are harder to accept as a donation.

Hampers will be delivered on Dec. 18 and families that wish to be recipients are asked to call the RM office at 204-762-5421 by Dec. 11 to provide their information.

"Nobody knows another person's situation. Sometimes you just never know who is struggling," said Thorkelson.

"Asking for help isn't an easy thing, but I've seen people who do so be so grateful to get their hamper full of food. That's why we're so grateful for the community support because this fills a big need."

Thorkelson explained that for families who are struggling, it only takes one negative event to send their lives into a downward spiral. Whether it's needing to travel to Winnipeg for a medical appointment or an unexpected home or auto repair, these expenses hurt a lot more for some families. Combine that with paying the increasing costs of fuel and hydro on a limited fixed income, and the holidays can be a tough time for some.

"But we can all help with that and make sure that they get a good meal," said Thorkelson.

Those who make cash donations will receive a tax receipt and anyone who wants more information on what items are needed can call Cindy Thorkelson at 204-762-5378.

*Arborg District
Christmas Cheer Board*

Once again the Arborg & District Christmas Cheer Board is preparing Christmas hampers. To request a Christmas hamper, please contact Wanda at 376-3465 or Brenda at 376-3585.

The deadline for requests is Friday, December 15th and the Christmas hampers will be delivered on Thursday, December 21st.

Monetary donations can be mailed to Box 185 Arborg ROC 0A0, or may be deposited at the Arborg branches of Noventis Credit Union or CIBC.

Non-perishable food items can be dropped off at participating local businesses, churches and schools.

Thank you for your support.

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Auto Parts Plus

Arborg & District Ladies Health Auxiliary supports students and local health care

By Patricia Barrett

The Arborg & District Ladies Health Auxiliary recently distributed its annual health-care bursaries to area students to help them pay for their nursing studies.

The Auxiliary awarded Carlea Shepell and Jesseica Kozminski-Kirby \$400 each for earning high grade-point averages.

Shepell, who's from Fisher Branch, is in her third year of Brandon University's four-year Bachelor of Nursing program and will graduate in 2019.

"I'm extremely grateful for this bursary," said Shepell. "I sent [the Auxiliary] a thank-you letter showing my appreciation and told them how grateful I am to have been selected as a recipient."

In her letter, Shepell wrote that the bursary is a "nice reminder that encourages me to keep working hard and alleviates some of the financial burden involved with going to university."

Shepell said she hopes to work in a rural setting after she graduates.

"I for sure want to work in rural Manitoba, and I would like to come back close to home," she said. "But I guess we'll see — that's a whole year away. But that's the plan."

Jesseica Kozminski-Kirby, who's from Arborg, is in her final year of Assiniboine Community College's two-year licensed practical nursing program and will be graduating next June.



Carlea Shepell

"The bursary will help pay for my final term, books and my senior practicum," said Kozminski-Kirby, who spent 10 years in the workforce before going back to school. "I was very grateful to receive it."

She's currently in the process of completing her fourth practicum at Brandon General Hospital.

"I have eight weeks of that in different areas and that's helpful in figuring out where I want to be when I graduate," she said. "I have an interest in surgical maternity right now, but



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED
Jesseica Kozminski-Kirby

I may be going into foot care afterwards. That's a whole separate course to take."

Unlike some of her classmates, Kozminski-Kirby said feet don't bother her.

"I've seen a lot of feet being in health care previous to this program," she said. "I've seen toenails falling off, missing toes and stuff like that. It doesn't bother me at all."

Applications for the bursary will be available next September and awarded in October. The auxiliary advertises

in towns such as Morweena, Fisher Branch, Poplarfield and Arborg. Information about the bursary can also be obtained from high school guidance counsellors.

In addition to helping relieve the financial burden of students pursuing a health career, the 13-member auxiliary continues to support the health-care needs of Arborg and area residents.

Last year, it contributed to the cost of a warming cupboard (for sheets and towels) for Arborg personal care home residents. It also purchased a bladder scanner that's used by both the PCH and the hospital.

This year, the auxiliary will be purchasing tables for patients.

"We're in the process of purchasing hi-lo adjustable over-bed tables for the Arborg hospital for \$5,250 plus tax," said board member Vangie Bardarson.

The auxiliary holds yearly celebrations (spring tea, June birthday party and Christmas party) for the 40 or so PCH residents, and it also bakes and buys presents (at Christmas) for each resident.

The auxiliary welcomes volunteers to sit on its board or to help out with special events. It also welcomes monetary and other donations, as well as memorial donations.

For more information about volunteering or donations, contact Vangie Bardarson at 204-641-4369.

Contest kick-off celebrates small business owner achievements

Launch coincides with International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Submitted

Rural Manitobans with a disability or health condition and running a business have a chance to enter a unique contest aimed at celebrating their successes and encouraging others to embrace entrepreneurship on their own terms.

The Just Watch ME! video contest launched Monday, coinciding with the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities (Dec. 3), a day observed worldwide to raise awareness and encourage a more inclusive and equitable society for persons with disabilities.

In Canada, according to Canadian Business SenseAbility, about one in five people have a disability, and close to 500,000 people with disabilities are

job-ready — making self-employment a viable employment solution, particularly in rural Canada, says Community Futures, the organization behind the video contest.

"Owning a small business offers people with a disability or health condition the flexibility, control and freedom to set their own hours and create their own work environment — important tools for success," says Susan Bater, the program manager for Community Futures' Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program. "Our annual video contest is just one way we celebrate and showcase the success of rural entrepreneurs with disabilities or health conditions."

A panel of local small business owners, contest judges, past contest

winners and award-winning, prairie-based entrepreneur and business coach Katrina German were on hand in Saskatoon with Community Futures today to officially launch the contest and offer advice and tips on using digital storytelling to promote business success.

Last year's winner, Lucy Fouasse of St. Malo, Manitoba, owns Lil' Steps Miniatures & Wellness Farm, an equine-facilitated wellness centre for children and youth. Fouasse successfully launched her own business after recovering from a serious head injury that limited how many hours she could work and the types of jobs she could do.

"Being my own boss has been a really awesome experience," says Fouasse. "After my injury, I really had to focus on not looking at my limitations but on my strengths, and that is really what being an entrepreneur is all about."

Any entrepreneur with a disability or health condition operating a business in rural Manitoba or rural Saskatchewan is now invited to submit a short video about their business success on the Just Watch ME! website. This year's winner will receive \$1,000 in cash and prizes to support their business and will be announced in February of 2018.

Community Futures is a non-profit organization assisting rural communities with economic development. For over 30 years, Community Futures has supported entrepreneurs with starting a small business, expanding a business or purchasing an existing business. One of the programs they deliver is the Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program to support people with disabilities or ongoing health conditions in starting businesses in rural Manitoba and rural Saskatchewan.

This holiday season give your child the gift of literacy

Submitted

Literacy has a profound impact on our lives. Children and teenagers who love to read and take good reading skills with them to school each day have an invaluable head start on career success and personal happiness. Those burdened by poor literacy are significantly more likely to struggle.

Canadians understand the power of strong reading skills to transform lives. A recent Environics survey exploring attitudes about literacy found nine-in-ten believe improving literacy skills will improve everyone's quality of life, and 87 per cent think more needs to be done to improve literacy rates.

When asked about the negative outcomes of struggling with literacy:

- 86 per cent believe poor literacy hinders employment opportunities
- 76 per cent think it increases the likelihood of poverty

- 40 per cent believe poor literacy rates are detrimental to physical health

Other studies clearly show the love of reading, not just the ability to read, is a huge predictor of school success. Conversely, children who struggle with literacy are up to four times more likely to drop out of high school.

The holiday season is a wonderful time for parents to encourage children and teenagers to read. By creating opportunities for reading, parents can spark excitement about reading and begin laying the all-important foundation for strong literacy skills.

"Learning to read fuels a child's imagination," says Stephen Faul, president of Frontier College, a national charitable literacy organization. "There is no more powerful way to expand horizons, improve self-confidence and spur creativity. Simple activities to get your kids reading can

have a profound impact on their future success. One of the key lessons we've learned from providing literacy programs to thousands of people in need each year is the crucial importance of reading from a young age."

Frontier College offers these tips get your kids reading this holiday season:

- Establish a tradition by reading the same book each year around the holidays.
- Think about what interests your children (start with their hobbies) and find materials to read aloud (i.e. magazines, flyers and newspaper articles).
- Encourage older children to read to younger children. Both develop their reading skills through this experience.
- Visit your local library and let your child choose books and materials to bring home to read.
- If you are on the road visiting family and friends, encourage children to read street signs.

- If your family receives greeting cards, have your children read them aloud or help them create their own personal greeting cards and write messages to family and friends.

- Ask your children to help make a grocery list or read labels in stores.

- Encourage your children to read recipes and help with the measuring and baking.

- For parents, the true magic of the holidays is creating family traditions and memories that last a life time and even impact future generations. Reading and storytelling traditions offer an easy and powerful way to strengthen the fabric that binds families together and increase the chances of future happiness and success.

This holiday season give the gift of literacy. Read to your child, give them a book and plant a seed.

To learn more visit frontiercollege.ca.

CIBC to close Lundar branch and merge services with Stonewall

By Jeff Ward

The Lundar CIBC will be closing its doors on June 7, 2018, and will merge its services with the branch in Stonewall.

The closure is due to a low volume of transactions and the move to online banking by many of its customers, said CIBC director of media relations Caroline Van Hasselt.

Van Hasselt explained that, similar to the Ashern branch closing that we reported on last week, this closure was a regrettable decision that wasn't easy to make. Clients of the bank have been sent letters explaining how the merger will work.

Van Hasselt said the Lundar branch has three employees that CIBC will work with to try and find positions for them within the company. How-

ever, it is too early to know if they will be guaranteed jobs. CIBC will hold a community info meeting on Jan. 11 at the Lundar Community Hall from 7 to 9 p.m. to go over the changes and answer any questions from the community.

"While the decision has been made, the community meeting provides an opportunity to discuss the closure, and we do take out clients concerns seriously and will work with the community to see how we can best support them through the transition," said Van Hasselt.

This is the third closure at a banking institution this year along Highway 6 with the Ashern CIBC closing its doors in April of next year and the Caisse Financial Group in St. Laurent that closed its ATM in October 2017.

Christmas hamper help



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Riverton Mennville Youth Group donated to the Riverton Community Christmas Hamper Program. Pictured is Riverton & District Friendship Centre program worker Dylan Furgala, left, youth leader Dahlen Barkman and his two children Elizabeth and Zan.

The Riverton Community Christmas Hamper program encourages the public to "bring a tin for the bin" during any of the December RDFC events. Hamper items can also be dropped off at RDFC, Riverton Co-op or Shop Easy. Donations for the Toy Drive can be dropped off at RDFC or Riverton Co-op. Any donation is appreciated.

"It takes a village to Raise a Child.
Every Child deserves a Christmas."

> GET FISHING, FROM PG. 6

Last Saturday, after meeting Josh at Balsam, I thought I would see if anyone was fishing by the Winnipeg Beach harbour. As I drove up to the rise of the north beach, I was surprised to see a crowd of people grouped together on the beach snow banks. I was further taken aback when I saw a minister performing a wedding ceremony. I waited until it was over then threaded my way through the crowd and accosted the local newly

married couple, Bill and Heather Paterson, kidding them, saying, "Since you guys are making it difficult for me to get a fishing story from the anglers beyond you on the ice, maybe you have a story for our readers."

They laughed, saying no. A slim, pretty, shivering gal, Billie Joe Lake, beside me observed, "This wedding is really like fishing: Bill got a great catch with Heather!"

Till next time. Bye now.

Ashern Vet focus of new Animal Planet reality TV show

By Jeff Ward

Ashern-based veterinarian Dr. Keri Hudson Reykdal is the focus of a new Animal Planet reality show that premieres this weekend.

The show is called *Dr. Keri Prairie Vet* and follows Hudson Reykdal as she goes through her daily routine of caring for Interlake animals. Viewers will see her travel to different farms in her mobile clinic, and care for cattle, horses, dogs, cats and many other animals all over the region.

Hudson Reykdal said that her friend Katharina Dueck thought a veterinarian's life would make a great focus for a television show and tried to get the show made five years ago. When Hudson Reykdal got her mobile clinic, Dueck tried again to make the pitch to broadcasters, who green-lit the project.

Filming began over the summer. The first episode of *Dr. Keri Prairie Vet* premieres this Sunday, Dec. 10 at 8 p.m.

CST.

"It's never something I wanted to do, but when an opportunity like this comes up, you just roll with it," said Hudson Reykdal.

"Now it's actually on TV and it's a little hard to believe. But it's really cool for the town of Ashern, the Interlake and Manitoba. It's been a really fun experience."

"IT'S NEVER SOMETHING I WANTED TO DO, BUT WHEN AN OPPORTUNITY LIKE THIS COMES UP, YOU JUST ROLL WITH IT."

The show provides an interesting perspective on a job that is technically complex while also telling compelling stories. Each episode is meant to be entertaining first but also educational as viewers learn more about the job, and also about animal behaviour and health care.

Hudson Reykdal said that the production basically just followed her around. They weren't involved in creating scenarios for drama or excitement and she wanted the show to be an accurate representation of her day.

"I saw the rough cuts of the show, and during that time, I got to make sure all images shown are portraying



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED BY BELL MEDIA

Dr. Keri Prairie Vet premieres this weekend on Animal Planet and follows a local Ashern veterinarian as she takes viewers through her daily work routine.

what we're doing and that nothing is confusing to the viewer. When I was watching it back, I thought I would hate seeing myself on TV, but it was fun to watch because it brought back all the memories of filming the show."

She said her clients were very receptive to the camera crew and that the vignettes of farm life made for compelling episodes.

The show airs every Friday on Animal Planet, which is available for free

right now through Bell until Jan. 11. Ten episodes have been filmed so far.

Hudson Reykdal said that there are numerous other stories to tell and that she hopes the show is popular so they can continue the series and do more seasons in the future.

"There are so many interesting things that go on out here. Hopefully it is popular and people enjoy the show and learn things and have a laugh along with us," she said.

Ashern Chamber of Commerce in need of members and volunteers

Submitted

The Ashern & District Chamber of Commerce is in need of new business members and event volunteers for the coming year, as declining membership and participation could soon threaten the future of the chamber.

At the annual general meeting on Nov. 8, the looming membership challenge was the main topic.

"Over the past few years, paid memberships have declined and the number of active volunteers for events has

also declined," said incoming president Jason Carpenter.

"Without new blood, the same people were on the board and working events year after year, and those people are now retired or have moved onto new challenges."

At the AGM, the members in attendance discussed several options regarding the chamber's future, which could include amalgamation with other chambers or other community groups, with the worst case scenario

of dissolution not being ruled out.

"We will be sending out a survey to members shortly to get more feedback on how to move forward. In the meantime, if we get a good turnout of new members on the board and committed to active membership by the end of January, it may be enough to continue with business as usual," said Carpenter.

Each year, the chamber organizes community events such as the rodeo parade and fireworks, Christmas light

judging competition, the "shop local" Christmas promotion, and community garage sale and barbecue. Business members are also able to access to the Chambers of Commerce group benefits program, and have their name added to the Ashern.ca website.

Any businesses wishing to join can contact the chamber at ashern.chambercc@gmail.com or contact Jason at 204-768-3980.



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Rosser named Midget Football League of Manitoba's MVP

By Brian Bowman

Joe Rosser made the rare switch from lineman to middle linebacker this season for the Interlake Thunder Midget football team.

And it's safe to say that switch was a tremendous one.

Rosser enjoyed a standout season with the Thunder this past season and was recently honoured with the league's most valuable player award.

Rosser was grateful to win the award and was quick to thank his coaches and teammates for his success. He also wanted to thank his late grandfather, Leonard Vandale, for introducing him to football.

Vandale, who passed away in 2015, heavily influenced Rosser's decision to play football.

"I honoured him by playing football after his death and I haven't stopped playing," Rosser explained. "He was a huge football fan and he played when he was young, too."

Remarkably, Rosser has played football for just three years, all with the Thunder Midget team. And he enjoyed his time with them tremendously.

"It's a great program," said Rosser, who lives in Selkirk. "There's great coaches, great kids - it's amazing. They gave me an opportunity to learn and improve my skills in football."

Rosser started out playing on the offensive and defensive line for the Thunder. But the 5-foot-11 1/2, 175-pounder made the unique switch to linebacker seemingly with ease.

It takes a very special player to make that change so quickly and successfully.

"(Playing) linebacker is so much better," Rosser enthused. "I was working hard and couldn't wait to start this year."

Rosser, 17, led the league in solo tackles with 29 and special team tackles. He also had an interception that he returned for about 50 yards and "three or four" fumble recoveries during the season.

"I just love making players when they count and feeling good about yourself," Rosser stressed.

Rosser, also a defensive captain on a young Interlake squad, is one of those players that lead by example.

"You know that all of the guys look up to him," said Thunder head coach Mitch Obach. "He's a quiet leader and that carries much more weight when he does speak up, whether it's in the play or between plays."

Next season, Rosser is hoping to play either at the junior or university level. He hopes to make that decision in the near future.

Obach, meanwhile, really enjoyed coaching Rosser, considered by many to be a complete football player, this past season.

"He's one of those hard-working, mature football players that you wished that you had a team full of," Obach said last week. "He has a serious approach to the game. If he wants to learn something, he'll tell you (and) if he thinks he can help you out by

telling you something, he'll let you know."

Here are the other nominees and winners at the Midget Football League of Manitoba awards banquet:

Nominees for the 2017 MFLM Defensive Player of the Year:

Falcons Football - Nicholas Paluck - Linebacker

Interlake Thunder - Colton Meisner - Linebacker

St. Vital Mustangs - Clayton Antymis - Linebacker

Sunrise Coyotes - Cody Hutlet - Linebacker

Winner - Clayton Antymis

Nominees for the 2017 MFLM Most Outstanding Lineman of the Year:

Falcons Football - Brighton Kwiatek - Defensive Lineman

Interlake Thunder - Gabe Simard - Offensive Lineman

St. Vital Mustangs - Lucas Davidiuk - Defensive Lineman

Sunrise Coyotes - Aaron Dyck - Offensive Lineman

Winner - Brighton Kwiatek

Nominees for the 2017 MFLM Offensive Player of the Year:

Interlake Thunder - Colton Nedotiafko - Running back

Falcons Football - Reece Derksen - Receiver

St. Vital Mustangs - Breydon Stubbs - Running back

Sunrise Coyotes - Brandon Goodman - Receiver

Winner - Breydon Stubbs

Nominees for the 2017 MFLM Special Team's Player of the Year:

Falcons Football - Reese Derksen - Kicker/Kick returner

Interlake Thunder - Joe Rosser - Long snapper

St. Vital Mustangs - Owen Brown - Kicker/Punter



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Thunder's Joe Rosser was recently honoured with the league's most valuable player award.

Sunrise Coyotes - Erik Tomasson - Kick returner

Winner - Owen Brown

Nominees for the 2017 MFLM Most Outstanding Rookie:

Falcons Football - Carter Kutzan - Running back

Interlake Thunder - Connor Henry - Linebacker

St. Vital Mustangs - Riley Ho - Receiver

Sunrise Coyotes - Carter Fuerst - Quarterback

Winner - Carter Kutzan

The Interlake Thunder also had six players selected to the league all-star team. Those players included Rosser, running back Colton Nedotiafko, linebacker Colton Meisner, offensive lineman Gabe Simard, defensive back Anthony Joynt and offensive lineman Carter Becker.

Interlake's six rookie all stars featured linebacker Conner Henry, defensive back Brandyn Linklater, quarterback Carlin Doak, defensive back Eric Zotter, defensive lineman Lowell Wilkinson and running back Chris McKay-Burnstick.

Female Lightning to compete at Bantam Showcase this weekend

By Brian Bowman

The victories have been hard to come by so far this season but the effort certainly has been there for the Interlake Lightning Bantam female hockey team.

Interlake's record dipped to 0-10-0-1 after a 3-1 loss to the Central Plains Capitals on Sunday. But the team is showing plenty of progress.

"They're doing (well)," said Lightning head coach Charlene Bodnarchuk Tuesday. "The record isn't there but the effort is there. They're working hard at practice, so I'm happy with that so far."

Sunday's two-goal loss to Central Plains was a perfect example of the Lightning's improvement this season.

Interlake took a 1-0 lead about a minute into the first period.

Central Plains tied the score in the second period and then added a pair in the third.

The Capitals' loss was a good reflection as to how the Lightning has played in most games.

"If you look at our scores and you break it down period by period, for two out of three periods, we're in tight with those teams," Bodnarchuk said. "We're battling in 0-0 games and not out of it completely."

"My team knows that they have some MIA periods where there are missing for five, six minutes and that's where the score gets built up."

Bodnarchuk feels the Lightning are

playing more consistent hockey and she expects their club to be pretty good by season's end.

Goal scoring, though, has been a problem for the Interlake so far with just 12 goals in 11 league games. The Lightning will have to do a better job sending pucks towards the opposition's net.

"We have a tendency to pass first and that can't be the tendency if you want to score goals," she admitted, noting the Lightning players do a real good job passing the puck. "You have to put pucks to the net. The more pucks you put on net, the more rebounds you'll create and the more chances that you'll create."

The Lightning will be busy this

weekend when they compete at a Bantam Showcase at the Bell MTS Iceplex.

That showcase is part of Hockey Manitoba's Girls' Hockey United event, which is a special weekend that brings together approximately 750 females from across the province in celebration of the tremendous growth and development of girls' hockey.

The weekend features a variety of exhibition/showcase games, skills camps and development clinics, and marks the largest annual female hockey event hosted in Manitoba and one of the largest in Canada.

All told, almost 100 hours of female hockey at all ages and skill levels will take place.

Lakers and Cobras ousted at MHSAA ‘AA’ volleyball provincials

Staff
The Gimli Lakers were eliminated from the MHSAA “AA” varsity boys’ volleyball championship in Warren after a quarter-final loss to the Green Valley Pirates.
Green Valley won 2-0 by scores of 25-19 and 25-20.
Gimli finished pool play with a 1-3 record. The Lakers defeated Lac du Bonnet 2-0 (25-10, 25-18) but lost 2-0 to Steinbach Christian (25-7, 25-18), Major Pratt (25-19, 25-23) and Carman (26-24, 25-18).
Steinbach Christian won the varsity

boys’ “AA” provincial title after beating Green Valley 2-1.
In varsity girls’ “AA” provincial action, the Ashern Cobras failed to make the playoff round. Ashern finished pool play with an 0-4 record.
The Cobras lost 2-0 to Niverville (25-16, 25-20), Warren (25-14, 25-17), Major Pratt (25-15, 25-9) and 2-1 to Gabrielle-Roy (23-25, 25-14, 9-25).
Green Valley captured the varsity girls’ “AA” provincial championship after beating Niverville 2-0 in the final.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER
The Cobras’ Emily Thorlacius (16) goes high for a block against a Warren player during the “AA” varsity girls’ volleyball provincials last Thursday.

OCN storms past local teams in weekend KJHL action

By Brian Bowman
There’s no question that the OCN Storm can score goals this season.
They proved that once again this past weekend.
OCN scored 26 goals in just two Keystone Junior Hockey League games – both victories — against local teams.
The visitors capped off an impressive weekend with a 17-2 win over the Fisher River Hawks. OCN leads the 10-team league with 130 goals in just 16 games — an average of over eight goals per contest.
OCN, which led 7-1 after the first

period and 15-2 after 40 minutes, received three goals each from Bryce Young, Bryson Werbicki-Mallett and Tanner Barbeau.
Dustin Parker and Broady Persenius scored twice apiece while Ethan Stuckless, Sheldon Chartier, Brandon Sinclair-Martin and Messier Constant added singles.
Joshua Beaulieu and Evan Thickfoot replied for Fisher River.
On Saturday, OCN was in Warren to face the Lundar Falcons, winning a wild 9-7 slugfest.
Lundar led 7-5 until the 12:35 mark

of the third period when the Storm mounted their comeback, scoring the game’s final four goals in a 4:52 span.
Dennon Sichewski, Brent Johansson and Zack Bone each scored twice for Lundar. Johansson and Brett Jocelyn finished the game with three points each.
The Falcons’ Brandon Worthing had a goal and an assist while Braden Paulic had a pair of helpers.
Ethan Stuckless, Young, and Vergus Chartier each scored twice for OCN while Ethan Constant, Werbicki-Mallett and Sinclair-Martin added singles.

On Friday, the Arborg Ice Dawgs defeated the Fisher River Hawks 4-1.
Arborg’s Colton Davies scored in the first period and then the Ice Dawgs took a 3-0 lead on a pair of goals by Clint Torfason.
Fisher River’s Darryl Thaddeus answered late in the second period and then Torfason tallied in the third.
Arborg outshot Fisher River 58-51 as Travis Rigden earned the win.
The Peguis Juniors, currently second overall in the KJHL, had the weekend off but did play North Winnipeg this past Tuesday.

Lightning losing streak reaches four games

Manitoba Hockey Standings										
MANITOBA JUNIOR HOCKEY LEAGUE										
	GP	W	L	OTLPTS	GF	GA				
Steinbach Pistons	29	21	7	1 43	144	76	Yellowhead	22	12	10
Winkler Flyers	30	21	9	0 42	112	73	Parkland	23	9	12
OCN Blizzard	29	19	8	2 40	108	86	Southwest	22	9	12
Portage Terriers	29	19	8	1 40	121	73	Central Plains	22	7	12
Virden Oil Capitals	26	17	9	0 34	118	78	Kenora	23	7	14
Selkirk Steelers	28	14	11	2 31	99	97	Interlake	21	5	16
Winnipeg Blues	29	13	12	3 30	102	111	Norman	24	1	22
Neepawa Natives	30	14	14	2 30	111	111				
Swan Valley Stampede	26	11	12	3 25	74	92				
Dauphin Kings	30	6	22	1 14	71	138				
Waywayseacappo Wolverines	32	4	25	2 11	70	195				
KEYSTONE HOCKEY LEAGUE										
Central Division										
	GP	W	L	OTLPTS	GF	GA				
Peguis Juniors	13	12	1	0 24	94	26				
Arborg Ice Dawgs	15	11	3	1 23	69	44				
Fisher River Hawks	18	1	17	0 2	35	158				
North Division										
	GP	W	L	OTLPTS	GF	GA				
OCN Storm	16	11	4	1 23	130	62				
Norway House North Stars	15	2	12	1 5	48	166				
Cross Lake Islanders	16	7	9	0 14	107	78				
South Division										
	GP	W	L	OTLPTS	GF	GA				
Selkirk Fishermen	16	12	1	3 27	87	45				
Lundar Falcons	16	8	5	3 19	72	67				
St. Malo Warriors	15	7	5	3 17	62	49				
North Winnipeg Satellites	16	7	9	0 14	65	74				
AAA MIDGET HOCKEY LEAGUE										
	GP	W	L	OTLPTS	GF	GA				
Brandon	23	21	2	0 42	127	54				
Wild	22	18	2	1 38	126	48				
Eastman	23	17	5	1 35	102	67				
Bruins	22	16	5	1 33	88	65				
Thrashers	27	14	12	1 29	91	104				
Pembina Valley	22	12	8	1 26	72	71				
AAA CITY MIDGET HOCKEY LEAGUE										
	GP	W	L	OTLPTS	GF	GA				
Monarchs	15	15	0	0 30	110	23				
Selects	13	9	4	0 18	71	45				
Hawks	14	9	5	0 18	76	49				
Sharks	11	5	5	1 11	33	45				
Warriors	15	5	10	0 10	45	72				
Lightning	18	0	18	0 0	23	124				
AAA BANTAM HOCKEY LEAGUE										
	GP	W	L	OTLPTS	GF	GA				
Monarchs	18	15	2	1 31	106	44				
Hawks	19	15	4	0 30	140	54				
Sharks	16	13	2	0 27	85	38				
Selects	13	10	3	0 20	83	28				
Lightning	20	6	14	0 12	61	117				
Warriors	15	0	14	0 1	27	94				
MANITOBA FEMALE MIDGET HOCKEY LEAGUE										
	GP	Reg W	Reg L	T	OTW	OTL	Pts			
Winnipeg Avros	15	8	4	-	3	-	22			
Westman Wildcats	15	8	4	-	1	2	20			
Yellowhead Chiefs	14	9	4	-	-	1	19			
PV Hawks	15	7	6	-	1	1	17			
Eastman Selects	14	7	6	-	-	1	15			
Central Plains	15	5	7	-	1	2	14			
Interlake Lightning	14	-	13	-	1	-	2			
STATS AS OF TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5										

By Brian Bowman
After a six-game losing streak was snapped with a victory, the Interlake Lightning are back again at their losing ways.
Interlake’s new losing streak is now at four games after a pair of Manitoba AAA Midget Hockey League losses last weekend.
The Lightning lost 3-0 to the Yellowhead Chiefs on Friday and then was blanked 6-0 by the Pembina Valley Hawks in Morden on Saturday evening.
In Saturday’s loss, Sven Schefer and Nathan Ayotte scored for Pembina Valley in the first period and then Tristan Day, on the power play, and Jayden McCarthy tallied in the second.

The third period saw Travis Penner and Ayotte score for the Hawks.
The Lightning started the weekend with the three-goal home loss to Yellowhead. All three Chiefs’ goals were scored in the first period.
Owen Warham scored two of those goals, the first one coming just 1:12 in the game.
Jake Poole added a shorthanded marker for the Chiefs, who outshot Interlake 44-30.
The Lightning (5-16) will now be home for three games in the next few days.
Interlake will host first-place Brandon Friday (7 p.m.), Central Plains Sunday (2 p.m.) and the Winnipeg Thrashers next Wednesday (7:30 p.m.).

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UPCOMING EVENTS

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RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI SENIOR ELECTION OFFICIAL

Applications are being accepted for the position of Senior Election Official (S.E.O.) for the Rural Municipality of Gimli. The S.E.O. is responsible for the overall municipal election process and must be able to interpret and understand all aspects of legislation pertaining to the municipal election process and provide consistent advice to his/her election officials and to the general public.

Duties will include:

- appointing an assistant S.E.O. and other election officials as required
- providing effective leadership to this team
- assisting with preparation of required budget
- establishing and maintaining the voters list
- giving public notice of nominations
- establishing and equipping the voting stations
- giving public notice of elections
- printing the ballots
- overseeing all aspects of the election on election day and
- all other duties as established in The Municipal Councils and School Boards Election Act.

In the years when a general election is not required the S.E.O. will be responsible to conduct a by-election if required.

Hourly remuneration and mileage expense to be negotiated. Reimbursement will be provided for office supplies and phone calls and meals allowance for election day(s) and training sessions.

The successful applicant must have computer experience, strong communication and interpersonal skills. Management and previous election experience would be a definite asset. Applicant must be willing to attend election training sessions.

Written applications are to be submitted, complete with resume in a sealed envelope marked "SEO Application", and must be received at the office of the Rural Municipality of Gimli by December 22, 2017 to:

Joann King, CAO
Rural Municipality of Gimli
62 2nd Ave, Box 1246
Gimli, MB. R0C 1B0

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PUBLIC NOTICE RM OF GIMLI ATTENTION CHRISTMAS TREE HUNTERS

Reminder that the RM of Gimli does not allow the cutting of trees on Municipal Land, inclusive of road allowances and ditches, without the permission of Council.

Any person removing trees from Municipal or Private property without permission is guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted.

Council reminds all Christmas Tree Hunters to respect the rights of private property owners and do not remove trees without the permission of the private property owner.

Persons interested in cutting trees on Municipal Property can request permission from the Municipal Office at 62 2nd Ave, Gimli, Manitoba. Tel: 204-642-6650

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> GAMES

SUDOKU

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

Fun By The Numbers

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

Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:

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

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

Sudoku Answer

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

Crossword Answer



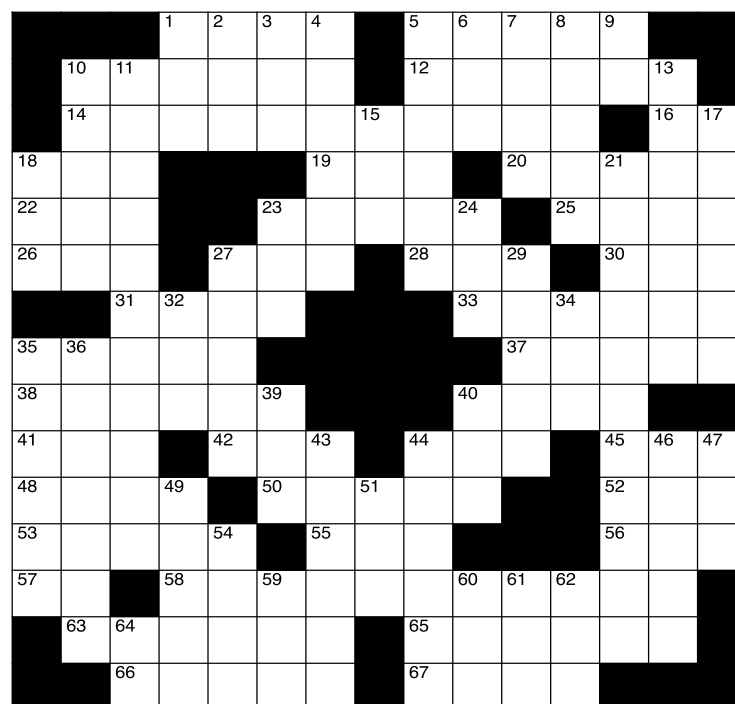
CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

1. Large jug
5. Anwar __, Egyptian statesman
10. Punjab province capital
12. Evoke
14. Data
16. Exists
18. Supervises flying
19. Having eight
20. Right-handed page
22. NHL great Bobby
23. German municipality
25. Negotiate
26. Keyboard key
27. Youngster
28. Medical decision (abbr.)
30. Ribonucleic acid
31. One-time Levi's chairman
Walter
33. Cold region
35. Type of plywood
37. A way to unfreeze
38. Winter melon
40. Dispute
41. An expression of imagination
42. Human gene
44. Touch lightly
45. Computer giant
48. Garlands
50. Franz van __, German diplomat
52. Vineyard
53. Elk or moose
55. Moved quickly
56. Swiss river
57. Rhode Island
58. Fall into disrepair
63. Ancient Roman virtue
65. Removes
66. Slovenly women
67. Comedian Rogen

CLUES DOWN

1. Extremely high frequency
2. Court



3. Make a mistake
4. Change the appearance of
5. Long-haired dog
6. The Greatest of All Time
7. Designer Christian
8. Blemished
9. Atlanta-based rapper
10. Deceivers
11. One who supports disorder
13. Colossal
15. A team's best pitcher
17. Comfort in a time of sadness
18. Opponent
21. Professionals might need one
23. Captures geographical data
(abbr.)
24. Senior officer
27. Sacred Islamic site
29. Egyptian unit of capacity
32. Comedienne Gasteyer

34. Performer __ Lo Green
35. Having only magnitude, not direction
36. Cleft lip
39. Payroll company
40. Prohibit
43. Stroke
44. Does not acknowledge
46. Hillsides
47. Austrian river
49. Passover feast and ceremony
51. Golf score
54. Hair-like structure
59. Check
60. Extract metal from this
61. Tell on
62. Powdery residue
64. A part of the mind

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OBITUARY

Frank Swark

Peacefully on Thursday, November 30, 2017 surrounded by loved ones, Frank Swark aged 94 years of Ashern, MB (formerly of Hodgson, MB) quietly passed from this earth at the Lakeshore General Hospital in Ashern, MB.

A memorial service and celebration honouring Frank's life will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 9, 2017 at the Ashern Legion Hall with Dawn Tober officiating. Luncheon will follow in the hall. A private family interment will be held in the Grace Lutheran Cemetery.

Thank you to Dr. Kashur, nurses and staff of the Lakeshore General Hospital for their loving and compassionate care and to John and Karen Gray of Arnason Funeral Home. Special thanks to Helen Webster.

Arrangements by:
ARNASON FUNERAL HOME
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OBITUARY

Mike Rawluk

August 14, 1918 – November 28, 2017

It is with great sadness that we announce Mike's peaceful passing on November 28th at the Fisher Personal Care Home. Mike was born August 15, 1918 in Eriksdale and celebrated his 99th birthday this summer.

Left to mourn his passing are his sons, Cecil (Alanna) and Dennis (Gary); grandchildren: Drew, and Gage (Simone) – great-granddaughter Willow; Allen, Katie (Bobby) – great-grandsons Connor and Dawson; Andy (Shaelyn), and Jake (Laura) and sister-in-law Elsie.

Mike was predeceased by his parents, John and Sophie; his loving wife, Mary, of 59 years and his brothers Nick (Annie), Fred (Polly), Joe (Mary) and Dan.

Mike's childhood was spent on the pioneer family farm in St.

Martin. As a young man Mike ranched with his brothers on Peonan Point. He met Mary Borowetz in Winnipeg and they were married in June 1951. After several years in Winnipeg where they owned an apartment block and then a corner grocery store, they decided to move to New Home where they farmed for many years. Mike and Mary raised their two sons, Cecil and Dennis, on the farm where they raised Herford cattle. Mike's passion for the cattle industry is being carried on by his grandchildren as they continue to raise show cattle.

Mike's strong sense of community was evident by his role on many boards of directors including the Co-op, Credit Union, vet, area development and school boards. Mike and Mary's strong work ethic has been passed on to their sons and grandchildren.

After Mary's passing Mike lived in his home for five years before moving to the Fisher Personal Care Home.

We extend our most heartfelt thanks to the home care staff who made it possible for Mike to live in his own home for so many years, and then to the very caring staff in Fisher Branch who took such good care of him for his last years.

Funeral service was held on Sunday, December 3rd at 2 p.m. (with viewing at 1:00) at Moosehorn Community Hall, followed by interment at RM of Grahamdale Cemetery. Pallbearers were his six grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers if you so desire, a donation could be made to the Lakeshore Hospital Guild c/o Julie Bergner, Box 721, Ashern ROC 0E0 or to a charity of your choice.

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