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EXPRESS

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WEEKLY NEWS



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Ho-Ho-Ho Merry Christmas

EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Santa Claus made a surprise visit to the Alf Cuthbert Grades 1 and 2 class the week before Christmas break.

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WISHING YOU

Happy Holidays

AND A WONDERFUL NEW YEAR

Buried shark meat likely to make the cut for upcoming Ice Vikings Series 3

By Patricia Barrett

There were obviously some hard decisions to make between shark meat buried for months in a pit and Lake Winnipeg whitefish with its omega-rich buttery flesh sliding out of your frypan.

But some of the Lake Winnipeg commercial fishers who spent a week in Iceland last month to film part of the upcoming *Ice Vikings Series 3* television show aren't saying whether they preferred the fish they catch at home or Iceland's national dish, which is called hakarl.

Chris Kristjanson, who lives near Gimli and is reprising his role on the reality TV show, was somewhat coy when asked what fermented shark tastes like.

"I think you'll find that people who've travelled to Iceland return many times again to get the full flavour," said Chris, who got to visit a shark-drying shack at the Bjarnarhofn Shark Museum on the west coast of Iceland, north of Reykjavik. "You can't get the true taste of Iceland in just one bite."

Hakarl typically consists of Greenland shark whose flesh is poisonous because of a high concentration of urea. Icelanders cure it through fermentation. The shark is first dressed (headed and gutted) then buried in



EXPRESS PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRIS KRISTJANSON

Robert T. Kristjanson, with his granddaughter Leila, spent eight days in Iceland filming part of a new series of *Ice Vikings*.

a shallow hole dug in sand. It is covered with a layer sand and gravel and heavy stones to squeeze out the poisonous fluids. It's then cut into strips and hung to dry from the rafters for several months.

It sounds like an acquired taste, according to some of the world's top chefs. Gordon Ramsay, for instance,

Continued on page 14



EXPRESS PHOTOS COURTESY OF FARPOINT FILMS, CHRIS CHARNEY

Lake Winnipeg's commercial fishers got a taste of hakarl, or fermented shark meat, at a shark-drying shack.

Some of the fishers took part in sea fishing near Keflavik, a town on the southwest coast of Iceland.



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Season's Greetings from the Christmas Elves of Gimli



EXPRESS PHOTOS KAREN SIMPSON DEBRAGA FACEBOOK

The Christmas Elves of Gimli (volunteers who helped decorate the town) are thanking Melanie and Jim Norbury of Winnipeg's House of Silk and their former employee Karen Debraga for a donation of decorations, which left the town "truly feeling the magic of the holiday season." They're also grateful to the RM of Gimli's public works department, community members who donated items and their time and space, and all the elves, including Susan Holfeuer, Karen Bittner and Karen Debraga, who spent many hours outdoors decorating Gimli.



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Fisher Branch students sharing their love



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Fisher Branch Early Years School spent the weeks leading up to the holidays with several activity days. Featured here are kindergarten students festively dressed, kindergarten to Grade 4 students making holiday cards for the local personal care home and Grade 1 students collecting socks and food for the school's Christmas hamper.



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WE HAVE INVENTORY

Yule Lads descend on Gimli for the festive season



Stubby likes to sneak around the kitchen to scrape leftovers from pots.



The first Yule Lad steals milk from sheep or the fridge on Dec. 11.



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY THE NEW ICELANDIC HERITAGE MUSEUM
Karen Johanson created 16 soft sculptures of the 13 Yule Lads, their mother, step-father and the Yule Cat in 2012.

By Nicole Brownlee

Icelanders stroll into the holiday season guided by 13 Yule Lads with mischievous tendencies.

The New Iceland Heritage Museum has been showcasing these 13 pranksters, also known as Jólaveinar, on their Facebook page and hidden around the museum since Dec. 11.

"Icelanders don't have Santa Claus; they have these elves that come down from the mountains, and they come for the 13 days before Christmas," said Julianna Roberts, executive di-

rector of the museum.

To help illustrate the mythology, the museum has 16 soft sculptures of the 13 Yule Lads; their mother, Gryla; their stepfather, Leppalúdi; and the yule cat, Jólakötturinn, created by Icelandic artist Karen Johanson.

Johanson made the cloth puppets over the year in 2012 for the Icelandic Club, the Icelandic Canadian Frón, at the Scandinavian Cultural Centre in Winnipeg.

"It's an old Icelandic Christmas sto-

Continued on page 11

Warmest wishes to our many best friends at this joyous time of year!

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Stricter pandemic restrictions now in effect

By Ashleigh Viveiros

New public health orders went into effect Tuesday morning in an attempt to stem the expected tide of the more contagious omicron variant of COVID-19 in Manitoba.

"Rising COVID-19 transmission, case counts, and the introduction of the omicron into the province means we need to introduce new measures and introduce them now," Health Minister Audrey Gordon said at a late afternoon press conference in Winnipeg on Friday. "We need to delay the emergence of omicron to give all Manitobans time to get their third dose and reduce the demands on our health care system as much as possible."

"Case counts and hospitalizations are rising and we must be proactive in protecting our health care system. We need to be sure that we have hospital beds available to provide care for patients in need."

In Monday's COVID-19 update, the number of Manitobans in hospital with the virus was at 137. Twenty-seven of those were in intensive care.

Health officials also announced that the number of omicron cases in the province had risen to 17—up 12 from a week earlier.

"We've continuously urged Manitobans to get vaccinated, whether that be their first, second, and now their third dose," said Dr. Brent Roussin, chief provincial public health officer. "At this point, from what we see on

the significant increase in transmission of the omicron variant, we need to go further."

Roussin lamented the need for further restrictions, especially days before the holidays, but stressed the toll omicron is having on other jurisdictions makes it clear "decisive actions" must be taken before community transmission of this strain gains a footing in Manitoba.

"We know that no one wants to hear news of new public health orders, but as we enter this holiday season we must work together as Manitobans to slow the spread of omicron," he said. "This is to protect our health care system, to protect those Manitobans most at risk of severe outcomes."

The new restrictions include:

- private indoor gatherings are limited to 10 additional people plus the household if all are fully vaccinated (youth ages 12 and under are exempt from needing to be fully vaccinated);
- private indoor gatherings are limited to five additional people plus the household if any of the individuals ages 12 year and older are unvaccinated (youth ages 12 and under are exempt from needing to be fully vaccinated);
- outdoor gatherings at a private residence are limited to 20 additional people plus the household if all are fully vaccinated (youth ages 12 and under are exempt from needing to be fully vaccinated);
- outdoor gatherings held on public

property are limited to 50 per cent of the usual capacity if all in attendance are fully vaccinated (youth ages 12 and under are exempt from needing to be fully vaccinated), and 50 persons total if anyone present is unvaccinated (youth ages 12 and under are exempt from needing to be fully vaccinated);

• indoor and outdoor sporting and recreation capacity is reduced to 50 per cent for spectators, games and practices can continue but no tournaments will be permitted;

outdoor ticketed performing arts events, indoor recreational businesses, seasonal facilities and events, group instructional classes and bingos, casinos and VLTs are limited to 50 per cent capacity and must continue to restrict admission to those who are fully vaccinated (youth ages 12 and under are exempt);

• day camps are limited to no more than 25 campers and camper groups must be cohorted, overnight camps are prohibited under these orders;

• gyms, movie theatres, museums and libraries are limited to 50 per cent capacity with proof of immunization required everywhere except libraries;

• restaurants and licensed premises are limited to 50 per cent capacity with a maximum of 10 people per table and proof of immunization required, and members of the public are required to be seated except when travelling to get food or beverages or engaging in sporting activities; and

• faith-based gatherings are limited

to 50 per cent capacity with proof of vaccination or 25 per cent capacity or a total of 25 people, whichever is lower, when proof of vaccination is not required and cohorts may be implemented where groups can be physically divided up to a maximum of 10 cohorts or 250 people.

All other public health orders not listed above remain the same as before. The restrictions remain in effect until Jan. 11.

"It's absolutely frustrating to be here again, for all Manitobans," Roussin said after announcing the changes. "But we've been here before, we've stepped up before ... we'll get through this one, but we need to do so together."

Asked whether Manitobans should still gather for the holidays, Roussin urged people to give the matter serious thought.

"My thoughts are that everyone, in addition to these restrictions, need to take into consideration their personal risk assessment," he said. "If you or someone you love is at high risk of a severe outcome, then you need to reconsider just how many people need to be in your bubble."

On Monday, Manitoba's COVID-19 case count was at 2,183. The death toll has hit 1,366, with several new deaths reported over the weekend. The five-day test positivity rate provincially has jumped to eight per cent—up from 5.7 per cent the week before.

Phone surveyors misrepresenting as RHA affiliates

Submitted by IERHA

Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority has learned that a resident in the region has received a phone call from an individual misrepresenting himself as a surveyor working on behalf of the regional health authority. The caller had a 905 area code.

The resident said the caller asked for a personal health information including date of birth, marital status and personal health identification number.

Interlake-Eastern RHA does not undertake phone surveys of the public to seek personal health information or details on health conditions and/or medications being taken.

Members of the public are advised that personal health information should only be discussed with trusted family members and known care providers. Divulging personal health information over the phone to unknown callers is not advised at any time. This includes providing informa-

tion about health conditions, providing Manitoba Health card information and offering any details about medications being taken.

If you should receive any calls from individuals identifying they are from or working with a regional health authority, or from any other organization/company, and if that call leads to requests to divulge personal health information, please hang up immediately.

You can advise the RCMP of this fraudulent activity by calling the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre at 1-888-495-8501 or visiting www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca and clicking on the tab "Report fraud."

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Steps taken to strengthen pension plans and the pension regulatory system

Submitted by Manitoba government

The Manitoba government has amended the Pension Benefits Regulation, the Solvency Exemption for Public Sector Pension Plans Regulation and the Solvency Exemption for Specified Non-Profit Sector Pension Plans Regulation to strengthen pension plans and the pension regulatory system, Finance Minister Scott Fielding announced Monday.

"These amendments will provide funding relief to pension plans and strengthen the pension regulatory system, while ensuring a strong pension framework in Manitoba," said Fielding.

The minister said these changes to the Pension Benefits Regulation establish new rules for funding of private-sector defined benefit pension plans. Specifically, the amendments reduce the solvency deficiency threshold at which special payments must be made to 85 per cent from 100 per cent, while requiring plans be better funded on a going concern basis by adding a provision for adverse deviation (PfAD) and shortening the amortization period for unfunded liabilities. This change will bring Manitoba in line with what several other jurisdictions have already done.

The amendments also change how plan surpluses can be utilized, including surplus funds held within a solvency reserve account, and allow for re-amortization of solvency deficiencies and unfunded liabilities

after each plan valuation. The lower threshold for solvency payments is intended to help lessen the volatility of required payments that must be made by employers in times of market downturns or reduced government bond rates, while the shorter amortization period for unfunded liabilities and new PfAD requirements will ensure workers' pensions continue to be protected, noted the minister.

"As a not-for-profit focused on conservation and managing North America's wetlands, Ducks Unlimited Canada welcomes the funding changes to the Manitoba Pension Benefits Regulation," said Marcy Sullivan, chief financial officer, Ducks Unlimited Canada.

"The changes to the solvency funding requirements will reduce the funding volatility of our pension plan. This will assist our planning and budgeting process and will improve management of cash flows that will enable the organization to continue our mission. The enhanced going concern funding requirements and the introduction of solvency reserve accounts will continue to ensure pension benefit security for our plan members."

"The changes to the Manitoba Pension Benefits Regulation are welcome updates, helping align our operations in a competitive business environment while providing retirement security for our valued employees," said Ann Evans, chief financial and operating officer, Canadian Kraft Paper.

"We support the move to increase going concern funding requirements while reducing the emphasis on solvency funding. This change and the consolidation of special payments allows our company to better manage cash flows and budgeting, supporting employment in the region while ensuring assets are available to provide the pension benefits promised. The modernization of the Pension Benefits Act strikes a strong balance between protecting retirement benefits for members and making defined benefit pension plans affordable for employers on an ongoing basis."

The changes to the Pension Benefits Regulation take effect today to ensure plans that have a valuation report completed as of Dec. 31 will be able to benefit from the new rules.

Proclamation of relevant sections of Bill 8 – the Pension Benefits Amendment Act, which received royal assent earlier this year, and related amendments to the Solvency Exemption for Public Sector Pension Plans Regulation and the Solvency Exemption for Specified Non-Profit Sector Pension Plans Regulation also occurs today.

The amendments to both the act and regulations have been made in response to recommendations made by the Pension Commission of Manitoba, which is supportive of the changes, following public consultations that concluded in 2018 where more than 1,800 Manitobans provided feedback.

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Manitoba hoping for a cold, snowy winter

By Ashleigh Viveiros

It's too early to say what the winter and spring will bring in terms of precipitation or flooding, but it's clear Manitoba headed into the winter in a pretty dry state in many areas.

Infrastructure Minister Ron Schuler unveiled the findings of Manitoba Infrastructure's Hydrologic Forecast Centre's 2021 Fall Conditions Report at a press conference in Winnipeg last Thursday.

"Soil moisture in most Manitoba basins is near normal to below normal, with the exception of some portions of the Red River Basin in the United States. That has a normal to slightly above normal soil moisture," Schuler said.

"Base flows on most Manitoba rivers are normal to below normal for this time of year, with the exception of Northern Manitoba, which has normal to above normal base flows," he continued.

"As of Dec. 10, 2021, the Red River at Emerson, Manitoba, is at 1,800 CFS, or cubic feet per second. Normal for

this time of year would be 1,522 CFS, which means the Red River is currently flowing slightly above normal," Schuler said, attributing the increase to weather events south of the border. "Conversely, the Assiniboine River at Headingley is at 400 CFS, which normally runs at 679 CFS."

Meanwhile, most major lakes in the province are at below normal to well below normal levels for this time of the year.

"Lake Manitoba continues to be at 810.2 feet — near an historic low for this time of the year," Schuler said. "Normal would be 811.9 feet. Not since 1942 has Lake Manitoba been this low."

Lake Winnipeg is also seeing incredible lows — it's currently at 711.9 feet. Normal for this time of year is 713.2 feet.

"Keep in mind, that is more than a foot difference on a very large body of water," Schuler pointed out.

Still, Lake Winnipeg has nothing on Morden's Lake Minnewasta, which is a full nine feet below its normal level

of 1,079 feet.

Meanwhile, Lake St. Martin and Lake Winnipegosis are both below normal while Dauphin Lake and Lake Wahtopanah are just at or slight above normal levels.

The Whiteshell lakes are faring better thanks to dam regulation and fall precipitation, putting them at "optimal levels for this time of year," Schuler said.

Projections for the winter favour normal to below-normal precipitation for most of Manitoba. In a normal winter, Manitoba sees an average of about 100 centimeters (40 inches) of snow.

"Good for this year would be 100 centimetres of snow to a high of 130 centimetres of snow," Schuler said.

"If we get low snowfall, lots of above-average, warmer temperatures and lots of sunshine, which could cause snow sublimation, Manitoba could see a very difficult growing season for 2022," the minister said.

He noted the provincial government is already working with producers

to see how they might provide assistance, should it be necessary.

Asked whether other parts of Manitoba might find themselves under water-use restrictions next summer, as Morden was this year, Schuler said it is a distinct possibility.

"If we end up with warm temperatures ... if we get a lot of sunshine ... if we don't get a lot of moisture, we could be coming back with some pretty dire reporting. And then there's going to have to be some pretty serious conversations insofar as water conservation is concerned.

"Let's hope that we get a very normal prairie winter and then we don't have to have these discussions with Manitobans," Schuler said, adding that the ideal for the months ahead would be "very cold — normal for Manitoba — lots of snow, minimal sunshine and a normal melt ... that would be best for what we might be facing in spring."

The province will start releasing flood outlooks in February.

Manitoba could see 1,000 new cases a day thanks to omicron

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Manitoba could be in for a rough start to 2022 thanks to the omicron variant of COVID-19.

Chief provincial public health officer Dr. Brent Roussin released some sobering projections for the next few weeks at a news conference Dec. 15.

While this variant is not yet the primary form of COVID-19 in Manitoba (at press time Monday, there were 17 confirmed cases, the delta strain still remaining the dominant one), it's clear from other jurisdictions that it's only a matter of time.

"We know definitely it is much more transmissible than the delta variant," Roussin said, noting research is still being done on the severity of illness it causes and the impact omicron may have on vaccine efficacy, but the fact it spreads much more rapidly is clear. "We need to be very prepared for an exponential growth of omicron throughout Canada, including Manitoba."

Looking at what's happening in other parts of Canada and in the United Kingdom, where omicron has a 35 per cent daily growth rate, Manitoba is on track to start seeing 223 cases a day by Christmas and over 1,000 new cases daily in the new year.

To put that in perspective, last Thursday Manitoba reported 218 new COVID-19 cases. It was the highest daily

count in six months. It then reported 239 new cases the next day.

The data shows omicron's reproduction number is four times that of delta's. The virus in Ontario has also been shown to double every three days. Delta, in comparison, has a doubling rate of 34 days.

"We know, from other jurisdictions, once we see this spreading in the community, we are weeks away from it being our dominant strain," Roussin said. "We need to act now to decrease the impact of this very concerning variant in Manitoba."

To that end, Roussin urged Manitobans to get vaccinated and, if you've already been fully vaccinated, to go for a booster shot as soon as you're eligible.

"We know that our best protection against this variant or any of the other variants that are circulating is to be vaccinated," he said, pointing out unvaccinated people are five times more likely to contract COVID-19 than those who are fully vaccinated and 18 times more likely to end up in intensive care.

Manitobans who received their second shot six months ago may see a decrease in protection as the immunity begins to wane. There are also some eligible Manitobans — about 16 per cent — who have yet to go for their first dose.

"So we're making that plea to Manitobans to do whatever we can to get as many eligible people vaccinated," Roussin said. "If that means your first or second dose, we need that. And if it means you're eligible now for your third dose, we need as many eligible Manitobans to get that vaccine in the next two weeks, before what we know is going to be a large amount of gathering during our holiday season, before we have widespread community transmission of omicron, which we also know is on its way here."

Roussin also urged people to be

cautious over the holidays, especially when it comes to those with a higher risk of severe outcomes if they contract COVID-19 — people over 60 or with underlying medical conditions.

"You need to be very, very careful about your plans to gather," he stressed, encouraging people not to host large gatherings and to avoid coming into contact with too many people from outside your household.

"If you have higher-risk people at those gatherings, you're putting people you care about at risk."

letter to the editor

Letters to the Editor:
letters@expressweeklynews.ca

Abandoned pets

I read in the Nov. 4 issue of *Express Weekly News* from Cindy Salamandyk of the Gimli Humane Society about how some people abandon pets on the side of the road with no regard to what might happen to them. About how some people throw kittens out the window of a vehicle. What is wrong with those people? What did those creatures ever do to deserve such cruel punishment? If somebody does not want or can't look after a pet, then they should take them

to a shelter, be it Gimli, Winnipeg or wherever. Don't just dump it as if it was trash. Pets have feelings too. They give us love. I have five cats and I love them so much.

I read an article once about Twigs and Tango. Twigs was an abandoned kitten hiding in some twigs. Tango was a mother dog that lost her pups and was not the same until she sniffed out the kitten and she accepted it as one of her own. It did not take long for them to become inseparable.

Respectfully yours,
Peter Pilatyk

Province's patient-transfer protocol lacks support in Arborg as seniors transferred out

By Patricia Barrett

The mayor of Arborg is questioning a cavalier attitude towards seniors who are being shipped out of Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority (IERHA) hospitals to other health regions across the province.

Mayor Peter Dueck said he has been fielding calls from Arborg families whose loved ones have been or are scheduled to be transferred to hospitals hundreds of kilometres away.

The provincial government made patient transfers mandatory in October to free up acute care bed space for people infected with COVID, for those with other acute care needs and for surgeries. It gave hospital clinical teams the responsibility for selecting patients for transfer. The IERHA is at the upper limits of acute bed capacity and has had to transfer a few dozen patients to other health regions.

Among the transfers was a 76-year-old Arborg resident, who was sent last month to the Morris hospital 184 kilometres away. The man been waiting for a bed to open at the Arborg Personal Care Home after suffering a stroke. And Dueck said he was told last week that a 94-year-old blind, hard-of-hearing patient has been slated for transfer out of the Arborg hospital even though the facility had beds available.

He said the transfer protocol is a "travesty that must stop."

"I think we need to pay attention to the level of respect and care our seniors receive," said Dueck. "We treat criminals better than our patients. Criminals have the ability to appeal decisions and get legal aid to advocate for them. Hospital patients have no recourse."

He knows that freed beds are designated for people in great need, but those patients haven't been coming in, he said. Furthermore, when Arborg has no doctor on call and no lab or X-ray staff, it would make no sense to send those types of patients to Arborg.

"What's frustrating, I think, to the residents here is we can't understand the strategy behind this. The only thing we're hearing is they [IERHA] can't make exceptions about who gets sent away because then every case would be an exception," said Dueck. "That sounds to us as though everyone is being treated like a Manitoba Health card number."

After the past few patient transfers, Dueck said he asked IERHA management to keep seniors in the Arborg hospital until it runs out of beds. He was told it "wasn't that simple."

Support in Arborg for the transfer protocol is probably at zero per cent,

said the mayor, and he thinks less than three per cent of the general voting public support sending seniors away.

Patients could be repatriated to Arborg should space at the local PCH open up, he said, but the problem is there's little capacity there. The Arborg Seniors Housing Corporation began lobbying the province for more PCH beds in 2014 to accommodate the region's aging seniors and a growing need for long-term care. The corporation has had to resubmit applications since its first proposal for an 80-bed facility. It doesn't know where it currently stands as regards a request for a 40-bed PCH.

"If we had those extra 40 beds, they would've absolutely solved this issue and there would have been no need to transfer our seniors out," said Dueck. "We are anxiously waiting for an answer and hope the IERHA is actively advocating for the Arborg proposal with the health minister."

IERHA chief executive officer Dr. David Matear said the patients being transferred out of the region don't require hospital care or acute care but are still occupying a hospital bed. They require an "appropriate level of care" in other facilities such as PCHs or assisted-living facilities. But the region doesn't have enough capacity in those facilities.

"Personal care homes are close to 100 per cent occupancy. We're using all the beds. People waiting for a PCH bed are eligible to be transferred from an acute care facility [under the protocol]. The only option is to send them out of the region as an interim measure," said Matear last Thursday.

He understands the hardships the transfer protocol is having on patients and families, he said. He has personally spoken with affected families to discuss the protocol and other options such as having patients being cared for at home or whether there may be supportive housing available.

"We need to have other options available so that we can match patient needs to an appropriate level of care, and which doesn't just focus on acute care or PCH beds," said Matear. "In our system, currently, we don't have all those pieces in place."

The request for a new PCH in Arborg was submitted to the government, he said. It is looking at the proposal but it also realized there's a need for "other levels of care" that have to be expanded.

"The government is looking at how the health-care system needs to be restructured. That's the basis of the system transformation and the Clinical and Preventive Services Plan. [The

government] is attempting to reorganize the health-care system to more effectively meet patient needs," said Matear. "The PCH RFP [request for proposal] is not off the table. A decision has to be made and we haven't had the result of that RFP announced. We are following up and it's certainly part of the system transformation."

Patients not needing acute care are being transferred out of the Arborg hospital even though there may be bed space available for them, said Matear. The IERHA is part of a province-wide response to the pandemic and it's crucial to create and have bed space open at the hospital for COVID patients or for other patients needing acute care.

Bed space cannot be instantly created when there's a sudden need. It has to be found ahead of time and be at the ready in order to deal with emergencies such as traffic collisions, a sudden influx of people infected with COVID, cardiac events or people recovering from surgery.

"If we look at the figures as of noon today [Dec. 16], our region is at 96 per cent occupancy right across the board. You ought not to be in any acute care environment operating above the optimal level: 85 per cent is the rule of thumb," said Matear. "If you're operating towards 100 per cent, you've got no capacity in your health-care system to deal with any incoming patient that requires acute care ... such as a traffic accident. We can't on the spur of the moment find beds if we don't have capacity in the system."

Beds also need to be available to repatriate lower acuity IERHA patients that had been sent to Winnipeg for medical treatment. If there is no capacity, the region can't take them back.

"How do we help the provincial health-care system? How do we help Winnipeg where the more highly specialized care is being provided?" said Matear. "We need to create capacity here so that they have capacity in Winnipeg to admit patients. And they're at a very high occupancy as well. We have to have this movement in the health-care system."

Manitoba's chief public health officer Dr. Brent Roussin said last week the highly transmissible omicron variant could push new infections to over 1,000 a day in the new year should people fail to reduce their contacts, and that could put further stress on the health-care system.

The IERHA is seeking to fill nurse vacancies to ensure the region has acute care capacity. It, in fact, recently hired an Arborg-area nurse who had contacted the health authority to re-



FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT
Arborg Mayor Peter Dueck said sending the community's seniors hundreds of kilometres away to other hospitals must stop.

quest a full-time rotation, said Matear.

"We need as many nursing hours as we can make available without overtaxing our nursing staff. We don't want to burn them out," he said.

A spokesperson for Shared Health was unable to provide data on how many patients 65 years of age and older have been transferred out of the IERHA since the patient-transfer protocol was implemented on Oct. 8.

But as of Dec. 13, 79 patients from the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority and the IERHA have been moved under the protocol to the Prairie Mountain, Southern and Northern regional health authorities. Of those 79 patients, 24 were from the IERHA, he said. The first patient was moved on Oct. 23.

"While we recognize these transfers can be disruptive for both patients and their families, transferred patients continue to receive high-quality care at their receiving site," said the spokesperson.

Hospitals continue to see increased volumes of COVID patients, he said, the majority of whom are unvaccinated.

"We're asking all Manitobans to make every effort to reduce their risk of serious illness from COVID-19," he said. "Get vaccinated with two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine and a third booster dose as soon as they're eligible. Stay home when they're sick. Get tested if they have symptoms of COVID-19."

To book a COVID vaccine appointment, call the province's toll-free line at 1-844-626-8222.

Former pilot and local leader hangs up his wings

By Nicole Brownlee

Long-time chair and champion of the Bifrost Airport Commission is stepping down at 81 years old.

Frank Fiarchuk was a part of the team that started the commission and the Arborg Flying Club in the late 1970s.

"There was good interest in the area in flying," said Fiarchuk.

The commission launched in 1979 to help the Arborg Airport access provincial grants after the Flying Club was established one year earlier.

"Everybody was pretty keen on the airport improvements and having an airport in our community," said Fiarchuk.

"All the members really supported the Flying Club very well and the airport commission."

The Flying Club started with 18 members who fundraised with dances, raffles and 50/50 ticket sales to purchase land for the Arborg Airport. The airport was built in 1980 with the help of three construction companies who donated their time and equipment, said Fiarchuk.

"I'm glad that it was developed as well as it is," said Fiarchuk.

"Pilots love it. It's a well-respected airport."

The Flying Club helps operate and maintain the airport voluntarily. The club currently has 10 members.

Fiarchuk led the Flying Club and the commission for several years while working with Manitoba Pool Elevators, a grain trade company founded

in 1924. Fiarchuk worked with the elevators since 1965 and retired in 2001.

While working in western Manitoba, Fiarchuk met a flying instructor from Virden while buying grain in Russell.

"He took me up on some flights and let me fly it, and I just continued with it," said Fiarchuk.

"I love to fly, and I'd still be (flying) if I was younger."

Fiarchuk secured his flying licence in 1972 and his commercial licence 10 years later.

The commission has two council representatives from the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton, the Town of Arborg and two community members from the municipality and the town.

"(Fiarchuk) has basically been the biggest push at the airport for the last

40 years," said Lorne Johnson, secretary and treasurer of the commission.

"He's the one that's put more pressure on us young guys to keep it going."

Johnson, operator of Johnson Farms, joined the commission around 10 years ago but has been a member of the Flying Club for 40 years.

The BAC recently secured a Building Sustainable Communities grant from the province to upgrade the signage near the airport and the floors in the airport terminal building. The province and the municipality shared the cost of the project, totalling around \$10,000.

"It has become costly to operate the airport," said Johnson.

Around five years ago, the municipi-

"I LOVE TO FLY,
AND I'D STILL
BE (FLYING) IF I
WAS YOUNGER."



EXPRESS PHOTO SUPPLIED BY JORDAN WILLNER.

Frank Fiarchuk, soon-to-be former chair of the Bifrost Airport Commission, stands beside the commission secretary and treasurer Lorne Johnson in front of the sign, which shows one of Fiarchuk's old planes at the Arborg Airport.

pality bought the airport from the Flying Club, but the club continues to maintain and operate the facility.

The new signs will help identify the airport, which is consistently used by local flyers, flying instructors and the STARS Air Ambulance team.

"We are a licensed airport. ... Anybody is free to use it," said Johnson.

"It's become very important for local area farmers to have a facility for them to use."

Maintaining the airport also helps support the local community by attracting new residents, visitors and recreation projects, said Jordan Willner, the municipality's chief administrative officer.

"We're always looking for new members to join (the Flying Club)," said Johnson.

"It's costly, but there's always a way to find a way of getting into it."

> YULE LADS, FROM PG. 6

ry of these lads," said Johanson.

"They have evolved over the centuries. At first, they were truly evil, but they've become kind of cute."

Children leave their shoes on their windowsill each night before Christmas to be rewarded with a small toy or punished with a potato by a lad.

"We've created a scavenger hunt (at the museum) for kids to come in and for them to find the Yule Lads, their names, their Icelandic name and what trick they play," said Roberts.

Each character has a distinct personality conveyed through their outfits created by Johanson, but they still have a family resemblance.

The first Yule Lad, Stekkjastaur, The

Sheep Worrier, sneaks into barns and steals milk from the sheep. If there are no sheep, he happily sneaks into your home to steal milk from the fridge.

Another lad, Stúfur, Stubby, is small and likes to hide. Stubby scrapes leftovers from pots and might need a stool to reach children's shoes to leave a gift.

Huroaskellir, Door-Slammer, makes his presence known by creeping around at night and banging doors as loudly as he can. The museum notes on their Facebook page that he is one of two brothers who aren't obsessed with food.

Gryla is a hideous ogre who eats naughty, lazy and rude children. Leppalúdi is Gryla's third husband, who is known for being lazy. The Yule Cat also eats people who don't receive new clothes before Christ-

mas Eve. The museum notes, "In Iceland, it's important that everyone gets a new pair of socks or gloves at Christmas — just in case."

"After Christmas Eve, then (the Yule Lads) go back to the mountains one at a time," said Roberts.

The last of the Yule Lads leaves on Jan. 6, which is a holiday in Iceland celebrated with family dinners, bonfires and fireworks.

"We really strive very hard to promote and preserve the Icelandic heritage and cultural aspects within the community," said Roberts.

"The Icelanders that come, they all say they've never felt so Icelandic as they do when they're in Manitoba."

The museum is open until Dec. 24 for families to find the Yule Lads and their companions. The museum will reopen on Jan. 2.

RECYCLING NOTICE FOR JANUARY/2022

Riverdale Place Workshop Inc. **will not** be picking up recycling on the **below mentioned dates** due to the small group of workers available.

Mon. Jan. 3/2022 at Riverton business places
Tues. Jan. 4 at Arborg curbside pickup
Weds. Jan. 5 at Arborg business places
Thurs. Jan. 6 at Riverton business places

Mon. Jan. 17 at Riverton business places
Tues. Jan. 18 at Arborg curbside pickup
Weds. Jan. 19 at Arborg business places
Thurs. Jan. 20 at Riverton curbside pickup
Mon. Jan. 31 at Riverton business places

Christmas wrapping paper is not recycling
Please rinse you containers

The workshop will be closed
Monday January 3/2022

Enjoy the holidays
Thank You for recycling

COVID outbreaks at Selkirk hospital and Arborg PCH declared over

By Patricia Barrett

COVID-19 outbreaks that occurred in November at the Selkirk Regional Health Centre and at the Arborg Personal Care Home were declared over last week.

The Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority gave the all-clear on Dec. 13.

"As of today, the medical officer of health has declared the outbreaks over at Arborg Personal Care Home and on the medicine unit at Selkirk Regional Health Centre," said an IERHA spokesperson.

The outbreak at the 40-bed Arborg PCH was declared on Nov. 16 with eight residents at that time having been infected with the virus. By the time the outbreak occurred, a majority of residents had had their third dose of a COVID vaccine, and one of the IERHA's directors of long-term care said that likely mitigated the onset of severe illness.

The medical officer of health had declared the outbreak at Selkirk hospital on Nov. 30 on the medicine unit, a 30-

bed unit that's divided between acute care beds and surgical care beds. IERHA CEO Dr. David Matear said in early December that six patients had been infected. Other hospital services such as the ER, diagnostic imaging, cancer care and dialysis had not been affected.

As of Dec. 17 (the provincial government provides updates of new COVID infections and deaths only from Monday to Friday), 1,360 Manitobans had died from the virus.

Manitoba's chief public health officer Dr. Brent Roussin said last week that new daily infections could rise significantly to 1,000 a day in the new year as the highly infectious omicron variant makes its way through the population. Omicron's reproduction rate is much higher than the delta strain, doubling about every three days compared to about a month it takes delta to double.

Roussin advised Manitobans to get a COVID vaccine and refrain from gathering over the holidays with anyone over 60 years of age and/or those



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

The Selkirk Regional Health Centre's emergency entrance is shown here. The COVID outbreak at the hospital affected only the acute care and surgical unit.

with underlying health conditions.

Selkirk has a supersite for COVID-19 and flu vaccinations located at 100 Easton Dr. It also has a COVID testing site at the same location (in the former hospital) that's open Monday to Saturday.

Manitobans are encouraged to get

tested if they experience symptoms. To make an appointment at a testing site, call 1-855-268-4318. People who are eligible for their third dose of a COVID vaccine can reserve an appointment on the province's online booking site or call 1-844-626-8222 (1-844-MAN-VACC).

Champagne bubbles with excitement and new trip opportunity

By Nicole Brownlee

A Fisher Branch man who migrated to California and Florida to start his production and event business is returning with promises of big announcements and tickets to a Canada Soccer's men's national team game.

Rodger Champagne visited his former high school Fisher Branch Collegiate in June 2019, unveiling a scholarship for students to fly to Los Angeles to watch a soccer match between Argentina and Chile on Sept. 5. Hit Song Productions, the company Champagne co-owns and operates, was set to host the soccer game at the L.A. Memorial Coliseum.

Champagne said the students couldn't fly to Los Angeles to see the game, so they were paid the amount the trip would have equated to.

"We called it the Courage to Compete award, so we're still going to carry on with that," said Champagne.

Champagne is back with another pair of tickets and the help of his new company, Red Dog Sports & Entertainment, and a new sponsor, Cherry Bo2mb, a wellness products producer.

"We are so incredibly honoured and proud to be working with the Canadian national soccer team," said Champagne.

Champagne said Red Dog Sports & Entertainment also secured a deal with Disney for the television rights for ESPN to broadcast the Jan. 22, 2022, game versus the Guatemala national football team at the DRV PNK Stadium in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, at 6:30 p.m.

The production company is also working with Uniglobe Specialty Travel, a Western Canada travel management service, which is giving away a trip for two to see the game.

"You'll come and see the game. Stay with the Canadian team and cheer on Canada," said Champagne.

Cherry Bo2mb will post more information about the giveaway on their Instagram page, @cherry-bo2mb.

"I THINK IT'S A PERFECT FIT. BOTH OUR COMPANIES PROMOTE HEALTHY, ACTIVE LIFESTYLES,"

"I think it's a perfect fit. Both our companies promote healthy, active lifestyles," said Allan Klassen, vice-president of business development and marketing with Cherry Bo2mb.

"I'm also super excited that we can be part of Canada's national soccer team and their journey to success."

The companies also plan on hosting more giveaways for tickets and merchandise leading up to the game.

"Shirts, soccer balls and Cherry Bo2mb have been very generous. The first few people will get free

products," said Champagne.

Champagne also hinted at an announcement following the Jan. 22 soccer game that will connect to the Interlake.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a major impact on Champagne's production companies, but he feels secure with the new sponsors and opportunities the companies are working on, he said.

"We've turned around what I thought was going to be a total meltdown for our companies," said



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Red Dog Sport & Entertainment is giving away a trip for two to see Canada play Guatemala in soccer on Jan. 22, 2022, in Florida.

Champagne.

To learn more about the upcoming giveaway, visit the Cherry Bo2mb Instagram page.

Talking about colon health is about to blow up

Giant inflatable colon makes learning fun for entire family

By Katelyn Boulanger

Last week a giant inflatable colon made its debut in Selkirk. Residents could see the latest initiative to increase colorectal cancer screening awareness in our local communities. The inflatable colon is 20 feet long, 10 feet high and 13 feet wide.

Tracy Abraham and Laryssa Sawchuk, project co-leads, kicked off the event by explaining the project.

"In 2014, the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority actually put out a community health assessment and one of the things that was identified by a number of the key stakeholders within the First Nations communities was actually lower than expected or lower than wanted (was) colorectal cancer screening rates. And so they identified this at their three collaboration tables as a priority for something to move forward with improving," said Sawchuk.

In 2016, a cancer screening working group started visiting our local First Nations communities to discuss how to get information to people and make improvements.

"In late 2019, there was an opportunity for the group to put forward an expression of interest to work on a project. The project was around devel-

oping strategies to increase colorectal screening, awareness and underserved populations through community engagement," said Sawchuk.

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 made public engagement for the project more difficult. Still, the determination of the group and the hard work of Donna Anderson, the community engagement liaison in Interlake-Eastern RHA, meant that she had about 80 phone conversations with community members.

"Some of the things that we found when we had these discussions and what led us to this event here today and our future events is we heard from community members that, when talking about colon cancer, talking about poop in their colon, they wanted it to be light-hearted. It's a really funny topic," said Sawchuk.

The information they will be giving out when they bring the program to communities will be intergenerational with colouring books and simple language. This will hopefully help kids, parents and grandparents get over any awkwardness and discuss.

Of course, the main event will be the setting up of the giant inflatable colon in indoor spaces in residents' communities, bringing health education clos-



EXPRESS PHOTO BY KATELYN BOULANGER

Laryssa Sawchuk, project co-lead with the giant inflatable colon that was set up at the Canalta Hotel on Dec. 16 to raise awareness of colon cancer screening amongst Indigenous people in Interlake-Eastern RHA.

er to home. The colon is enormous, easily accommodating a few adults at a time in its arch with plenty of space for social distancing. On the inside, where you would walk through, there's information and depictions of things you may need to know about colon health.

Between 2005 and 2015, colon cancer was the highest diagnosed cancer among First Nations people in Mani-

toba. As of 2015, First Nations people in the Interlake Region had lower screening rates than all other Manitobans in the region.

The plan is for the giant colon to make its way to 17 communities in 2022.

The current colon cancer screening recommendation is that Manitobans aged 50 to 74 complete a home screening test every two years.

CLI to host Marketplace Village; exhibitors and vendors wanted

By Jennifer McFee

The two-month countdown has begun for the Climate + Sport Initiative event, and community interest is growing.

From Feb. 18 to 20, 2022, Kinsmen Lake will transform into an outdoor hockey rink for the much-anticipated pond hockey event, which uses sport as a platform to educate, engage and empower Canadians to protect our environment for future generations.

Amid the excitement, Association of Community Living Interlake will host a sustainable marketplace as a fundraising opportunity for the organization, which supports adults who live with intellectual disabilities.

Lisa Highmoor is Community Living Interlake's fundraising chair, and she's working alongside a fundraising committee made up of board chair Ila Buchanan as well as Sherri-Ann Allen, Stephanie Penelton, Robin Searle and Lisa Tully.

"When we realized that this event would be putting a national spotlight on the Town of Stonewall and surrounding area, we just had to get involved," Highmoor said.

Like many organizations, the pandemic has impacted Community Living Interlake.

"Over the past two years, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the adults that Community Living Interlake supports have not been able to participate in many of the typical activities and job training that would normally happen throughout the year. In addition, typical fundraising events like the fashion show, which included our clients and other community members, have had to be postponed," Highmoor said.

"But, despite these challenges, Community Living Interlake continues to receive many gracious donations from individuals, groups and businesses. We are most grateful for the support and encouragement."

The organization is proud to host the Hockey and Sustainable Items Marketplace in a 50-foot by 100-foot heated inflatable tent that will be set up on snow.

"It is the goal of the board of CLI that our clients take part in working and volunteering and to be recognized and supported as valued members of the community. So, with the help of our clients and other community volunteers, CLI will be hosting the Marketplace Village," Highmoor said.

"Selected vendors will have the chance to showcase their sustainable products or practices including sport such as hockey, healthy living, wellness, food, agriculture, as well as environmental and climate initiatives."

Highmoor also encourages non-profit organizations connected to climate and sustainability to apply since space might be available at a reduced rate to groups that meet the criteria.

"Any interested exhibitors or ven-

dors need to register and will be required to submit a list or description of their exhibit," she said, "including a sustainability and climate statement as well as follow the event's waste and footprint reduction priority."

Randy Frykas, chair of the Save Pond Hockey event committee, expressed appreciation for the involvement of Community Living Interlake.

"We are very happy to have CLI on our team as they are helping take our planning to the next level," he said.

"The main pillars of this event are climate, community and sport — and the Marketplace Village is the perfect example of all three."

The Marketplace Village will be open to the public Friday evening, Saturday all day and evening, and Sunday all day during the Feb. 18 to 20 event.

Interested exhibitors or vendors can contact Lisa Highmoor for a Marketplace Village exhibitor registration form at ldhighmoor@gmail.com.

Pfizer's COVID pill found to reduce risk of hospitalization, death by 89%

By Patricia Barrett

Pfizer's COVID-19 oral treatment, Paxlovid, has been found to substantially reduce the risk of severe disease and death, according to a statement issued last week by the company.

The drug also has the potential to inhibit the omicron variant, which has been found to multiply 70 times faster than other COVID strains and is currently sprinting through countries around the world.

Paxlovid, which consists of Pfizer-developed nirmatrelvir (a protease inhibitor) and ritonavir (another protease inhibitor used to treat HIV), showed about a 10-fold reduction in viral load in high-risk patients, decreasing their risk of hospitalization and death.

"In the final analysis of the primary endpoint from all patients enrolled in EPIC-HR, an 89 per cent reduction in COVID-19-related hospitalization or death from any cause compared to placebo in patients treated within three days of symptom onset was observed, consistent with the interim

analysis," states a Dec. 14 Pfizer news release.

Pfizer enrolled 2,246 high-risk adults (those likely to be hospitalized or die from COVID) from trial sites in North and South America, Europe, Africa and Asia, with 41 per cent of the patients located in the U.S.

Paxlovid works by suppressing an enzyme called protease that the COVID virus needs to replicate.

The pharmaceutical company first began conducting a series of protease-inhibition studies in July and has submitted results to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for emergency use authorization. Paxlovid has yet to be approved.

Interim results from another Pfizer study with 673 adults considered at standard-risk (a low risk of hospitalization and death) showed that Paxlovid has a 70 per cent reduction in hospitalization and death. That study enrolled 1,140 adults from North and South America, Africa, Asia and Europe. Final results with all the partici-

pants are forthcoming.

Paxlovid also shows the "potential" to maintain "robust antiviral activity" against omicron and other COVID variants of concern, as well as other kinds of coronaviruses, said the company.

"Nirmatrelvir has shown consistent in vitro antiviral activity against the previously identified variants of concerns (i.e., alpha, beta, delta, gamma, lambda, and mu). In addition, nirmatrelvir potentially inhibited the 3CL protease associated with Omicron in an in vitro biochemical assay. This indicates nirmatrelvir's potential to maintain robust antiviral activity against Omicron," states the release.

If authorized, Paxlovid will be administered in doses consisting of two 150 mg tablets of nirmatrelvir and one 100 mg tablet of ritonavir, twice daily for five days.

Most of the treatment's side effects were found to be "mild in intensity," but there were also serious adverse events. Those weren't listed in the

news release.

Full study data are expected to be released later this month and submitted to a peer-reviewed publication.

"This news provides further corroboration that our oral antiviral candidate, if authorized or approved, could have a meaningful impact on the lives of many, as the data further support the efficacy of Paxlovid in reducing hospitalization and death and show a substantial decrease in viral load. This underscores the treatment candidate's potential to save the lives of patients around the world," said Pfizer chair and CEO Albert Bourla in the news release. "Emerging variants of concern, like Omicron, have exacerbated the need for accessible treatment options"

Pharmaceutical company Merck has also made a COVID-19 pill, but the FDA has yet to authorize it for use as it was found to be less effective than first thought and safety concerns have been raised over a risk that the drug can cause mutations in human DNA.

> BURIED SHARK MEAT, FROM PG. 2

on a visit to Iceland, rudely spit it out. Undeterred, his hosts offered to cut him a smaller piece.

What most impressed Chris about the trip to the land of his ancestors was its landscape and the way it changes with every mile travelled.

"The time we spent in Iceland truly was not enough," said Chris, whose father and son came on the trip and are featured in the show. "Once you got away from the coastline and drove the interior, you could see how extreme the island truly is; it's not like taking a day trip to Hecla. There was so much flowing water wherever you went."

Chris' dad, Robert T. Kristjanson,

said seeing how shark meat is cured was among the many highlights of his trip.

"We had driven a whole day, way out to where [his wife] Sigurros' family came from," said Robert, who lives in Gimli. "In that area there was a museum and about five tonnes of shark meat hanging under the roof of a building. They cut a little piece for each one of us."

What did it taste like?

"The man cut just a sliver off for us," Robert responded. "We were featured in a newspaper, the *Morgunbladid* [morning paper]."

The trip included a stay in Reykjavik, a voyage on the sea for the younger Lake Winnipeg fishers, visits with relations and a visit with an old friend who used to live in Gimli and edit its local Icelandic newspaper.

Robert said he's not sure exactly what will make the cut for the third series of the show.

Made by Farpoint Films and broadcast on Canada's Cottage Life channel, *Ice Vikings* gives viewers an inside look at Lake Winnipeg's commercial winter fishery in which the descendants of 19th-century Icelandic settlers pit their lives against shifting ice, blinding blizzards and bombardier breakdowns in order to make a livelihood and supply the North American market and other worldwide markets with freshwater fish.

Series 1 in 2020 introduced the fish-



Lake Winnipeg fishers took part in sea fishing.

ers. Series 2, which aired this year, featured more in-depth aspects of their lives and economic pursuits.

Series 3 will showcase a "deeper connection" to fishing history in the Gimli area and the connection to Icelanders and Western Icelanders, said producer Chris Charney. It will document the "Viking spirit of hard work, exploration and inventiveness" that had been depicted in the previous two seasons.

The visit to Iceland gave local fish-

ers an opportunity to connect with their heritage and learn new things, he said.

"Just by setting foot on the island, it deepened the bond between fathers and sons and family who share a rich fishing history," said Charney. "Culture and history were suddenly tangible and we were lucky enough to be there alongside them filming."

Ice Vikings Series 3 premieres in March 2022.

Community Support Service

Al-Anon Gimli and Winnipeg Beach

Meeting place
17B North Colonization Rd.
Gimli (Next to the New Horizons)

**Meetings are Wednesdays
between 7 and 8 p.m.**

Contact 204-389-4777

AA Winnipeg Beach

Lady of the Lake RC Church
Corner of Hwy. 9 and Lake Ave.,
Winnipeg Beach

**Meetings are Saturdays
between 7 and 8 p.m.**

Contact 204-340-1855

Over 200 turkeys donated to Interlake food banks

By Nicole Brownlee

Interlake food banks are getting an extra serving before the holidays with the help of Manitoba Turkey Producers and Exceldor Cooperative.

The two organizations donated 275 turkeys, valued approximately at \$8,000, to five food banks and Christmas Cheer Boards across the region on Dec. 8 and 9 to give back to the communities where many of their partners live.

"The Interlake region has a fairly large amount of turkey producers," said Rachelle Brown, chair of Manitoba Turkey Producers.

"Food banks have definitely been feeling the weight of this pandemic, so we hope that these donations to different areas is going to help those who are in need."

Stonewall's Interlake Food Bank and Gimli's Evergreen Basic Needs both received 40 turkeys, while Teulon & District Food Bank and Christmas Cheer Board received 36. The Riverton & District Friendship Centre received 60 turkeys and the Selkirk Food Bank received 100 turkeys.

"We've been doing donations yearly, but not always to this extent," said Brown.

"We try to get the rural food banks or Cheer Boards at Christmas time."

Manitoba Turkey Producers annually donate turkeys around Thanksgiving and Christmas and have made several monetary or frozen turkey donations to food banks across the province.

In early December, Manitoba Turkey Producers also donated 20 Butterball turkey roasts to the Salvation Army food bank in Portage la Prairie and 20 whole birds to the West Central Women's Resource Centre in Winnipeg.

"This year we've managed to be able to donate to a variety of different groups," said Brown.

The turkey producer donated more turkeys than usual in the past two years because of their giving partnership with Exceldor Cooperative.

"(Our processor) matched our donations, so between the two of us, we've been able to give more," said Brown.



EXPRESS PHOTO SUPPLIED BY MANITOBA TURKEY PRODUCERS.

Rachelle Brown, chair of Manitoba Turkey Producers, hand delivered turkey donations to Amy Waluk and Amanda Hepples from the Teulon & District Christmas Cheer Board on Dec. 9.

"We're all in the same industry and our goals are the same. ... We're definitely happy to partner up and give."

The turkey donations came as a welcome surprise, said Karen Chaboyer, chair of the Interlake Food Bank.

"It's really good because we don't often get meat donations," said Chaboyer.

The Interlake Food Bank serves 40 families. The turkey producer's donations help the food bank distribute food to all families who use their service.

"If people don't donate, then I have to just give to people with big families because I don't have enough, so this is awesome. Everybody will get one," said Chaboyer.

The donation of 40 turkeys to the Gimli food bank made a huge impact on their Christmas hamper program, said Karen Bowman, co-executive director of Evergreen Basic Needs.

"(This donation) will allow our families to have what everyone else usually has at Christmas," said Bowman.

"It will allow some normalcy at this time of year when it's difficult for many people to get through the season."

Evergreen has prepared 160 Christmas hampers with the help of several donations.

Merry Christmas & HAPPY NEW YEAR

Thank you to all our customers for your continued support!!

See you in 2022.

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Tidings of Comfort & Joy

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FIRST SPECIAL	\$136.00 +
BONANZA	\$10,758.00 +
LUCKY 7	\$1,055.00 +
STAR	\$0 +
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(Estimated amounts at time of publication)

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Lic # LGA 318-RF

Tickets sold 5:00 - 7:00 PM

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\$2.00/ticket Current Accumulator - \$1,451.00+

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INFORMATION - 204-642-9392 or 204-643-5541 or www.fraserwoodhall.com

Attn: Landowners

GROW YOUR BOTTOM LINE

eiwd
East Interlake Watershed District

For more information, call or visit us online: **1.204.642.7578 eastinterlake.ca**




EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED
From left: Connor, Kate, Charlee, Daniel and Easton showed off their Christmas sweaters.

Eriskdale School



From top left, Kalya, Freya, Troy, Arianna, Alex, Roman and Taryn are painting a sleigh for their Christmas concert, *A Penguin Christmas*.

HAVE A
blessed
CHRISTMAS



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Dashing Through the Snow



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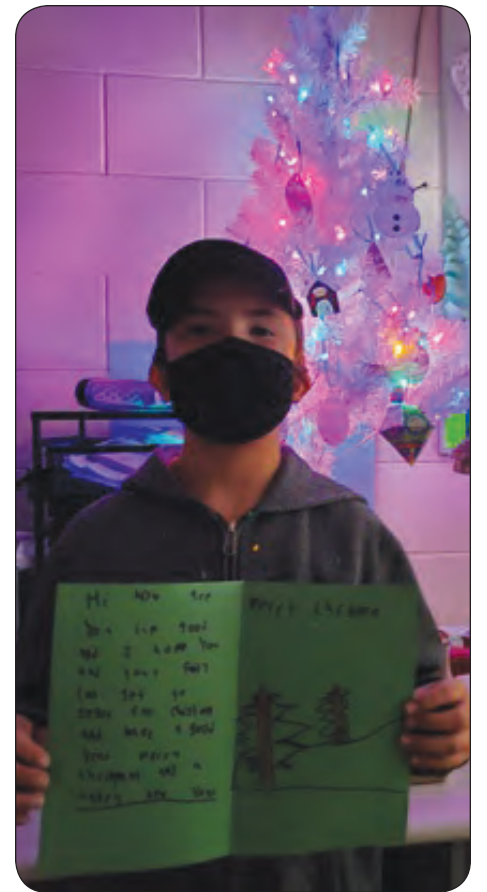
Wishing your family a beautiful holiday season.

Your Lakeside Realtor®

Counting down til Christmas



Eriksdale School students, from left, Claire, Wayde, Izak, Khloe, Elijah, Myah, Emily and Molly posed in their Christmas sweaters.



Joey posed with the Christmas card he made for a local senior.



Left: Kyleigh working hard on her Christmas art.



GARRIOCK INSURANCE

HOLIDAY HOURS

HAPPY Holidays

	GIMLI	WPG BEACH
DEC. 24	9-1	9-1
DEC. 28	9-5:30	9-5
DEC. 29	9-5:30	9-5
DEC. 30	9-5:30	9-5
DEC. 31	9-3	9-3

BOTH OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED
DEC. 25, 26, 27 & JAN. 1, 2, 3

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Down-Home Holiday Wishes

May your season be filled with the people and traditions that bring a smile to your face and joy to your heart.

Merry Christmas!

Rural Municipality of Armstrong

Attn: Landowners

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

STEPS TO COMPLETE A PROJECT

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

What type of projects does EIWD do?

- Well sealing
- Wetland enhancement
- Water retention
- Buffer strips
- Exclusion fencing
- Shelterbelts
- Riparian enhancement
- Upland enhancement
- Conservation contracts
- Protection payments
- Soil enhancement
- And more!

Manitoba **GROW** **THE CONSERVATION & GROW TRUSTS**

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This project was undertaken with the financial support of:
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de:

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For more information, Call or visit us online: 1.204.642.7578 eastinterlake.ca

*A Wish for You
at the Holidays*



210 St. Phillips Dr., Arborg
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"A Proud Past, A Strong Future"

*Many Thanks
& Merry Wishes*

May this festive season lift your
spirits with enough joy to carry
you through the new year!




MERRY CHRISTMAS

We'd like to thank our friends so dear
for choosing us and stopping here.
At Christmastime and all year through,
we owe our success to all of you!

We hope your
Christmas holiday
is simply perfect
in every way.
Best wishes!



Gimli and Rockwood **rona.ca**

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Gimli 204.642.9688

Sending hugs to seniors for the holidays

Long Term & Continuing Care Association of MB wants virtual hugs

Staff

The Long Term & Continuing Care Association of MB is giving residents a way to send virtual hugs to seniors in personal care homes this holiday season.

Their Virtual Hugs for the Holidays campaign lets anyone record a message for personal care home residents and staff this holiday season.

This project aims to create a COVID-19 safe way of connecting this year and recordings of all kinds including audio, video or written greetings can be submitted.

The LTCAM says on their website, "Don't be afraid to send your favourite holiday song! Staff and residents will easily access the website and enjoy your messages of cheer this holiday season. For those care homes with limited access to the internet, we will send these warm and tender messages on a flash drive."

This initiative intends to let seniors in care homes know that they are being thought of this festive season as the past two years of COVID-19 restrictions has affected them more than others.

This combats the loneliness and social isolation that these seniors may feel. It also will be a welcome message of hope and cheer to staff, who have as front line workers been essential during this pandemic.

Continued on page 19

Wishing all of our
Clients, Volunteers & Workers
a wonderful holiday season
and a New Year of peace,
health and happiness.

**Gimli Seniors
Resource Council & Staff**



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from Les & Jane
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May this holiday season fill you with
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Thank you for letting us be a
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**MERRY
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*From our Family to Yours
May your Christmas be
calm and the New Year be
smooth sailing!*



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Holidays*

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2021 like last year has been
a challenging year for all.
Let's all enjoy the holidays safely and
be thankful for family and friends.
Enjoy the season and all the best in
the New Year from our entire team!

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inmotionnetwork.ca



**QUARRY
PHYSIOTHERAPY**
AN *inMotion* CLINIC

Community tree decorating



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Alf Cuthbert's Grade 5 and 6 students decorated a tree for the RM of Grahamdale.

> SENDING HUGS, FROM PG. 18

The LTCAM website says that this isn't just an opportunity for people who know seniors in care.

"You may not know anyone in care or who works in care, but you don't need to be a stranger! You can still make a connection!

"There is no easy solution when it comes to the challenge of social isolation among seniors, but raising awareness is a vital first step," said LTCAM executive director Jan Legeros. "This is an important conversation. When people are not at liberty to celebrate the festive season with loved ones, this is the best time to let them know we are thinking of them. And the greatest part of this is everyone can participate whether you have a loved one in care or not, whether you know a staff member or not. Everyone can send greetings this holiday season."

Throughout this pandemic, many of us have come to understand the stress to mental health that having to be without some of our close personal connections creates.

"There is indeed a growing awareness among our political leaders of the cost of social isolation in seniors and the heavy burden staff have been carrying throughout the pandemic," said Legeros. "However, we know there are benefits in investing in initiatives such as this, that enhance the quality of life among seniors and staff."

There are two ways to send your Virtual Hug: go to the LTCAM website and submit it at <https://www.ltcam.mb.ca/virtualhugsfortheholidays> and complete the form to send your greeting or send your virtual hugs to virtualhugsfortheholidays@ltcam.mb.ca.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

We want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

You're at home here.

MOOSEHORN COOP CHRISTMAS HOURS

December 24, 2021: • Grocery (9:00 am – 4:00 pm) • Hardware (8:00 am – 4:00 pm) Dec 25, 26, 27 CLOSED Dec 28, 29, • Grocery (9:00am – 6:00pm) • Hardware (8:00am – 6:00pm)	Dec 30 • Grocery (9:00am – 7:00pm) • Hardware (8:00am – 6:00pm) Dec 31 • Grocery (9:00am – 5:00pm) • Hardware (8:00am – 5:00pm) Jan 1, 2022 (closed)
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ASHERN BRANCH CHRISTMAS HOURS

December 24, 2021: • Grocery (9:00 am – 4:00 pm) Dec 25, 26, 27 CLOSED Dec 28, 29, • Grocery (9:00am – 6:00pm) • Hardware (8:00am – 6:00pm)	Dec 30 • Grocery (9:00am – 7:00pm) Dec 31 • Grocery (9:00am – 5:00pm) Jan 1, 2022 (closed)
---	--

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CREDIT UNION

Peace On Earth

As we reflect on 2021 we know more than ever the importance of "Peace on earth, good will to men." May you and your family experience health, joy, hope, and especially peace this Christmas season. May we celebrate our diversity and may our differences unite us rather than divide. May we hear the bells "more loud and deep. God is not dead, nor doth He sleep. Peace on Earth. The wrong shall fail, the right prevail. With peace on earth, good will to men". Thank you for your kindness to others during this difficult year!

*Wishing you joy and peace.
Merry Christmas from Vidir Solutions*

VIDIR
vertical storage solutions

Fisher Branch calling for Frosty the Snowman

By Nicole Brownlee

Cindy Obszarski remembers the tradition of making snowmen surrounded by her family, friends and neighbours fondly.

They would pack snow into balls, rolling them to collect as much snow as possible and stacking them to create a snowy friend. Buttons, carrots and other household trinkets would be used to add detail.

Seeing snow people to this day reminds her of childhood memories of a simpler time, said Obszarski. This wholesome reasoning encouraged her and her husband Robert to sponsor Fisher Branch's snowman contest.

"I grew up on the farm, and we al-

ways made snowmen," said Obszarski.

"We had to make our own fun."

This isn't the first event the Obszarski's has spearheaded, hoping to bring some festive cheer to the community. The couple created a magical pumpkin patch for community members to wander through in the fall.

"After the pumpkins, we needed to do something," said Obszarski.

Families can enter three categories, including the largest snowperson, best-dressed snowperson and the best snowperson family that replicates your own.

"I'm hoping to encourage families to spend time together by getting out-

side and having fun," said Obszarski.

"You can just use whatever you have at home to dress your snowperson. ... Let your imagination soar."

Each category will have one winner who will receive a \$25 gift certificate for a local business.

The registration deadline has been extended to Dec. 30, and judging will take place on Dec. 31.

"We wanted to wait until the kids get off school," said Obszarski.

To enter the snowman contest, contact the RM of Fisher by calling 204-372-6393 or email your name, phone number, address, and category you're entering to fishercao@mymts.net.

Fisher Branch residents can also en-

ter the holiday lights decorating contest by Dec. 23. Judges will tour the town on Dec. 24.

First, second and third place gift baskets and gift cards will be awarded to winners.



#6 Quality Repair

Merry Christmas and thank you to our customers for trusting us to help you "kick up some dirt"

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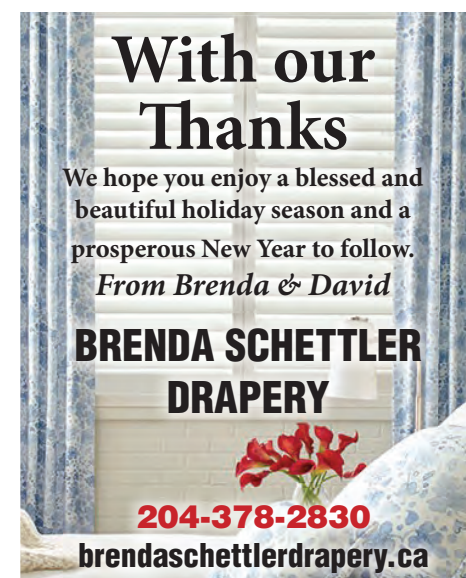
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Lighthouse Accounting



With our Thanks

We hope you enjoy a blessed and beautiful holiday season and a prosperous New Year to follow.

From Brenda & David

BRENDA SCHETTLER DRAPERY

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Best Wishes in the Holiday Season!

Thank you for your support over the past year. We look forward to continuing to serve our communities and focus on learning in 2022!


LAKESHORE SCHOOL DIVISION



May the Peace of the Season be with You and Yours

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

MacKenzie
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Greetings of the Season

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Eriksdale lighting up with the holiday spirit

By Nicole Brownlee

The Eriksdale Chamber of Commerce is raising money to continue replacing the outdated pole lights in the community to lift community spirits.

"It's been many years, so the chamber thought it would be appropriate and a good idea to get some new ones," said Dolly Lindell, secretary and treasurer of the local chamber.

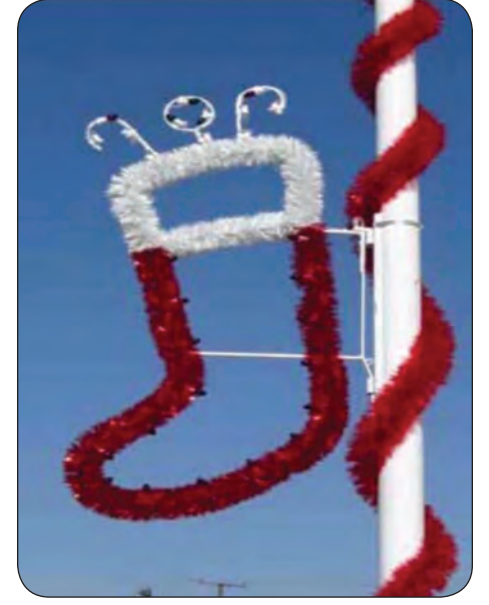
The current lights the RM of West Interlake uses to brighten the community are at least 20 years old, said Lindell.

"The style that we picked, they also have a garland on them, so during the daytime, they're still attractive and it's not just a metal pole."

The pole lights are wrapped in vibrant garlands to make them stand out during the day. At night, they glow with bright bulbs.

The chamber replaced 11 lights during the 2020 Christmas season and has ordered stockings, poinsettias and stars from Dekra-lite and CLG Displays to join the luminescent decorations.

"With COVID hitting, and last Christmas especially, everybody was



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

The Eriksdale Chamber of Commerce is continuing their fundraiser to replace the over 20 year old Christmas pole lights in the community. These three fixtures are new additions to Eriksdale's festive decorations.

so down," said Lindell.

"People's spirits needed some lifting."

After shipping, each light cost around \$900. Eriksdale annually decorates 32 light posts lining Railway Avenue, Main Street, Vimy Avenue and 1st Avenue with festive lights.

The chamber has raised around \$8,000 to pay for a portion of the lights.

"Until we get them all replaced, we will just keep on going," said Lindell.

To try to raise spirits last year when public health restrictions barred people from gathering, the chamber joined the Eriksdale fire department

to tour the community.

"We walked, I think, like seven miles," said Lindell.

Instead of community members meeting in town to watch the Santa Claus parade, the fire department

Continued on page 25

Wishing You Every Happiness

This Christmas

Deck the halls and trim the tree, wrap the gifts and share the glee.
The holidays are in full swing and on our list is one last thing:
A note of thanks and our warm wishes too for peace,
joy and friendship to last the year through!

Rita, Mike, Louise, Ty, Lyla

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Dennis, Miles, Donny,
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Susie, Arlene, Lenore, Birdeen,
Jocelyn, Megan, Susanna

Arborg artist carves a curling rink

By Nicole Brownlee

A snowbird stuck in Canada for another winter has built a curling rink, making the most out of his interrupted plans.

"We've been snowbirds for probably the better part of 15 years," said Jerry Maryniuk.

"We decided we're going to stay home again because of the pandemic. So, hence the spare time for a curling

rink in our yard."

The social aspect of curling also drew Maryniuk to the project.

"We've all been cooped up, and this is a way to still do something fun while you're outside social distancing."

Maryniuk constructed the 23-metre by four-metre rink after 30 hours of work on the family's eight-acre lot northwest of Arborg. He used the space to create a combination curling



Derek Johnson
MLA for Interlake-Gimli
interlakegimlimla@gmail.com
Gimli 204-641-8525 | Arborg 204-376-3401



PHOTO SUPPLIED BY JERRY MARYNIUK

Jerry Maryniuk has built a backyard curling rink at his home just outside of Arborg.

May you have the GIFT OF
FAITH the blessing of HOPE
and the Peace of his Love!
Merry Christmas

*Interlake Cremation
& Memorial Services*

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rink and shuffleboard to his home. shuffleboard in our fam-
mirror the board within "We have a regulation ily room," said Maryni-
uk.

"It was pretty easy to do, so I just created a shuffleboard at the same time."

In the past, Maryniuk created a curling rink on the Icelandic River near his home and used modified barbell weights as curling stones. This year, he used excess wood from maple trees to mould into the stones.

"They're heavy, solid," said Maryniuk.

To accommodate people with less mobility who can't slide with the stone, Maryniuk created long sticks from repurposed brooms, hockey sticks, paddleboards and

Continued
on page 23



Joy to the World!

With wishes for peace, joy and good fortune to you and yours at Christmastime, we'd like to say thanks for blessing our year with your friendship. Your support means so much to us, and we look forward to making new memories with all of you in the year to come.

FISHER REPAIR 


FISHER POWERSPORTS

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204.372.6648

> CURLING RINK, FROM PG. 22



Maryniuk has added Christmas lights and a fire pit to his homemade curling rink and shuffleboard in Arborg.

badminton rackets to push the rock instead.

"I'm 68, so although I was an avid curler and so was my wife Sharon, our

days of sliding out on the ice are long gone," said Maryniuk.

Continued on page 24

MERRY



May your holiday be happy
and your year filled with joy!

Thanks for hanging out with us this year.
We really appreciate your support.



Rural Municipality of
FISHER

Celebrating the gifts of friendship & community

Town of Arborg
Mayor, Council
& Staff

<p>Friday, December 24th – Closed at Noon</p> <p>Monday, December 27th – Closed</p> <p>Tuesday, December 28th – Closed</p> <p>Wednesday, December 29th – Open 8:30 am-4:30 pm</p> <p>Thursday, December 30th – Open 8:30 am-4:30 pm</p> <p>Friday, December 31st – Closed at Noon</p> <p>Monday, January 3rd - Closed</p>	<p>Friday, December 24th – Closed at Noon</p> <p>Monday, December 27th – Closed</p> <p>Tuesday, December 28th – Closed</p> <p>Wednesday, December 29th – Open 8:30 am-4:30 pm</p> <p>Thursday, December 30th – Open 8:30 am-4:30 pm</p> <p>Friday, December 31st – Closed at Noon</p> <p>Monday, January 3rd - Closed</p>
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**RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF
WEST INTERLAKE**

*Reeve, Council and Staff
would like to wish everyone
a Merry Christmas and a
safe and Happy New Year!*

HOLIDAY HOURS

**Municipal offices will be closed Friday, December 24th at
noon and we will re-open Tuesday, January 4th, 2022**

Ashern – 204-768-2641 & Eriksdale – 204-739-2666

My First Christmas in Heaven

I see the countless Christmas trees around the world below
 With tiny lights, like Heaven's stars, reflecting on the snow
 The sight is so spectacular, please wipe away the tear
 For I am spending Christmas with Jesus Christ this year.
 I hear the many Christmas songs that people hold so dear
 But the sounds of music can't compare
 with the Christmas choir up here.
 I have no words to tell you, the joy their voices bring,
 For it is beyond description, to hear the angels sing.
 I know how much you miss me, I see the pain inside your heart.
 But I am not so far away, We really aren't apart.
 So be happy for me, dear ones, You know I hold you dear.
 And be glad I'm spending Christmas with Jesus Christ this year.
 I sent you each a special gift, from my heavenly home above.
 I sent you each a memory of my undying love.
 After all, love is a gift more precious than pure gold.
 It was always most important in the stories Jesus told.
 Please love and keep each other, as my Father said to do.
 For I can't count the blessing or love He has for each of you.
 So have a Merry Christmas and wipe away that tear.
 Remember, I am spending Christmas with Jesus Christ this year.

Fisher Funeral Home Inc.

BLESSINGS FROM OUR FAMILY TO YOURS
MAY THE PEACE & BEAUTY OF THIS SEASON BE WITH YOU & YOURS
WE WISH YOU THE BEST IN 2022
Gordie, Tracy, Owen & Luke Wevursky

*Our most HEARTFELT THANK YOU to all of the families
 who entrusted us with the privilege of taking care of your
 loved ones. May you find comfort in your memories,
 until you are together again.*

Gord Wevursky Licensed Funeral Director
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wevursky@mts.net

204-372-6803

> CURLING RINK, FROM PG. 23

Fashioning the rink on land instead of the river made the project more challenging because Maryniuk's property is uneven.

"As flat as the Interlake is, we're sort of on the edge of the river, so everything kind of slopes toward the river."

Adding boards to surround the rink helped Maryniuk smooth and flatten

the ice.

"On the riverside, the ice is a foot thick, and on the hillside, the other side, it's only six inches thick."

Maryniuk was so meticulous in flooding the rink to make sure the ice was even, he buried the painted curling rings and had to repaint them and reflood the rink.

"It's been a lot of work, but I kind of liken it to my art," said Maryniuk.

After retiring from the police force as a forensic artist, Maryniuk turned to artwork. Maryniuk works with several media, but some of his most popular work is troll scenes he carves from gourds he grows.

"People might say, 'Wow, you did a troll that took you, what? Forty hours?'" said Maryniuk.

Bringing his troll work outside, Maryniuk is also carving a snow sculpture of a curling troll near the rink.

Maryniuk first started creating trolls in 2008 when his oldest son was diag-

nosed with terminal brain cancer. His son passed away in 2013, and Maryniuk turned to art and the snowbird lifestyle to help cope in 2014.

"I know he would have wanted us to carry on doing things like this," said Maryniuk.

"He was still alive when I did my first curling rink."

It wasn't uncommon to have over 30 kids from the community playing hockey in his backyard, said Maryniuk.

"Making rinks and sharing it with others is part of being a friendly Manitoban."



Merry Christmas

*Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace,
good will toward men.*

Luke 2:14

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> HOLIDAY SPIRIT, FROM PG. 21

and chamber brought the parade to the community.

"We needed to put a little light in life here," said Lindell.

This year, the chamber encourages community members to participate in their Christmas Light Contest.

Two prizes will be awarded to the best displays in town and the rural area. Winners receive \$100 gift certificates to chamber member businesses.

"The chamber is always looking for new members," said Lindell.

The deadline to enter the lights contest is Dec. 20. Judging will take place on Dec. 22.

To donate with a cheque to the Christmas pole light fundraiser, funds can be made to the RM of West Interlake. In the memo section, state "Chamber of Commerce light project." All donators will receive an income tax receipt.

For more information, email eriks-dalechamber21@gmail.com.



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Gift-giving marks departure from childhood

By Mark Kihn

I don't recall much about December 1968 as a Manitoba farm boy at Basswood. I was busy trying to ace Grade 3. Girls held no allure yet — I couldn't even spell puberty. And I had little money. However, as Christmas approached, I zeroed in on one goal — polish my image in the quest for that extra gift or two.

Santa held minimal cache for me anymore — a commercial creation of Coca-Cola in 1931. He had disappointed me in the past. He was a false hope. I wanted a sure bet.

That's what it was all about in the mind of an eight-year old — getting a gift, right? The word "giving" was a foreign concept. Self and selfishness reigned.

Yet occasionally the "light bulb" clicked on in my head. Short periods of analytical thinking enlightened me with another thought. Gifts were great, however, people enjoyed giving too. That meant taking hard-earned money, discerning what somebody might want, buying it for them and then giving it away for their enjoyment. Which kid does that?

So I turned on as much charm as I could muster. I chose my two older



Mark Kihn learned a lesson about Christmas giving when he was about eight years old.



PHOTOS SUBMITTED

The gift of giving at Christmas is better than receiving.

sisters, Helga and Linda, as subjects. I knew them — they loved their four younger brothers, they were gener-

Continued on page 27

Greetings of the Season

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from the
Arborg & District Multicultural Heritage Village.

Heartfelt thanks to all our wonderful volunteers & to all
those who so generously donated to the Heritage Village!

Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

Wishing everyone a
wonderful holiday season
and a happy, healthy 2022!

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Remembering*

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Forgiveness. It's for you, not them

By Shawna Howard CLC

2022 is here! And with the new year upon us, let's think about our heart condition. I don't mean medically; I mean spiritually, which I suppose if left unchecked and in an unhealthy state could eventually become a medical issue.

For me, the last few months have been rough, to say the least. Through it, I've had to make a choice. That choice was: do I forgive? Or do I hang on to the hurt, the rejection, the offense because I think they aren't deserving of my forgiveness? I tried the latter and it nearly destroyed me. I tried the former (in my own strength) and that didn't last. I found myself angry and reliving the offenses over and over. So what are we to do when those we love deeply hurt us and it seems like it's impossible to forgive what we can't forget?

This isn't my first major forgiveness lesson. Isn't life funny that way? We

think we've covered a base and then, POP! Someone crosses a line and we get to practise what we've learned at a whole new, deeper level.

So, let's attempt to answer the following:

- What does it mean to forgive?
- How is forgiving a power move for me?
- What stops us from taking steps forward when we've been so deeply hurt?
- How can we avoid the rollercoaster of "I forgive them. ... I forgive them NOT!"

The truth ...

When someone hurts us deeply, we don't need to stay there. What was said and done is real but, I say this with the utmost compassion, we've got to choose to no longer be the victim. It's a dead end. We were created to rise up! You are an overcomer in Christ. I knew this truth, but the steps to forgiveness weren't easy.

I went through the "forgive, can't forgive" for months. I struggled, up and down. I searched my soul, my spirit, the scriptures. I tried so hard, and then I'd remember and fall back into the slippery pit of brokenness and anger. I had something to learn in all of this.

I'm typically gracious, not easily offended. But the biggies, like betrayal, neglect, rejection, spiteful actions from those I love and trust ... oh no! Now I'm angry. How dare they? What right do they have? How could I deserve this? Why don't they care? These attitudes led to awful turmoil in my life. Sleepless nights, anxiety, irritability, loss of ambition and no sense of peace. In hanging on to the pain, I was giving up my power and handing it right back to them. Sound familiar?

In my devotions, I read the story in the bible about Cain and Abel. I didn't want my anger and bitterness to control me. I needed to master it. I

read the story of the lame man laying by the pool of Bethesda for 38 years, waiting for his miracle. I needed to make the decision to be well without depending on anyone else. Our healing cannot depend upon whether they realize their wrongs, say sorry or even want our forgiveness. You see, by waiting for them to admit their wrongs, or pay them back by withholding our forgiveness, we're only living through the turmoil twice or 20 times or for the rest of our lives. It'll become our prison and it'll change who we are.

My mistakes ...

- I was holding them accountable for my pain. (God is our vindicator.)
- I thought I needed them to admit their wrongs before I could forgive and move forward. (God sees everything and He's always working for our good. Our decision to forgive does not require their participation.)

Continued on page 28

> GIFT-GIVING, FROM PG. 26

ous and, more importantly, they were earning ready cash from babysitting stints with the neighbours.

Linda said she made \$0.50 per hour for three children. Older sister Helga made \$0.30 per hour handling two. That was big money in my calculations.

And so I decided I would help best I could with sisters' household chores: set the table, fold laundry, help with dishes and do cleaning. Also, I'd readily join in with any of their Christmas baking. Puffed wheat squares, anyone?

However, I didn't know about my strategy. There were no progress reports. An occasional platitude of "thank you" or "good work" was lobbed my way. Maybe, though, that was just to keep me working for the next day or week when everything seemed to repeat. Plus I had my own chores to do — mainly outside with Dad and those hungry cows. And with three brothers, I still needed time and energy to play. I'd often flop into bed, so tired.

My inspiration came from a materialistic source. Our b/w TV delivered one channel. Our family would gather around it sporadically and take in whatever it offered. A show I remember, *Julia*, featured a single mother in New York City living in a high-rise apartment with her child. A Calgary buddy says Diahan Carroll was the star, she of an unusual spelling.

In the weeks before Christmas, Julia's tree featured a huge mound of gifts. The cone shape heap underneath matched the cone tree shape. I couldn't believe it. It would take me a day to unwrap them. And I'd need hot chocolate breaks to rest up. Is that how the wide world operated at Christmas? Gifts galore!

My "nice brother" plan continued, though. Meanwhile, I scratched through a small chocolate box stashed in my dresser drawer. It had a few marbles, a couple of sparkly stones (with yellow flecks — likely gold), a new pen, "Popsicle Pete" coupons and several coins. I may have found those coins on the schoolyard, and maybe a kind uncle gave me a dime. The sum was about 40 cents. That's not exactly Christmas budget money to spend in small-town Minnedosa.

Then the unexpected happened. A sister gave me a dollar bill, explaining briefly that maybe I needed cash. She claimed she had a little extra. She hinted too that the cash was my Christmas gift.

OK, now what to do? My strategy worked to garner that added gift, but my conscience nagged me with that axiom that "it is better to give to receive."

On about Dec. 22, Mom had to make the 12-mile trip to Minnedosa. A few of her beloved urchins piled into the Chevy Biscayne, including myself. I shoved all my money into my pocket.

I had no ideas, no plans for it, only a thought that candy would make my brothers jealous.

We ended up at Macleod's. The place was a unique combination of hardware supplies, toys and clothes — especially at Christmas. It wasn't quite hammers mixed together with chicken eggs, but close.

Then I spotted it. A simple 500-piece puzzle featured a countryside scene, much like you could see on our own farm. There were trees on a hill, an open blue creek with bull rushes alongside, drifted snow and an endless sky. There was no time to neither dither nor debate this \$0.99 cash outlay. I almost ran to the cash register lady and handed over the dollar. She needed five cents more for tax — whatever that was. I fished in my pocket and got a nickel. A brown bag protected my stealth purchase.

Soon we were headed home. The clandestine package was safely tucked under my winter jacket. I forgot about buying candy, although the Basswood General Store offered MoJos cheap, two for a cent. You can't beat that.

Then something happened. I began to feel good inside — happy, without laughing. I knew the entire family loved doing puzzles together during the holiday season. I would give this to the whole family. I hoped they would enjoy it.

Christmas morning came and, unnoticed, I slid the box under the tree. I had found paper that said "Noel," and my wrapping efforts were decent. I

kept my identity secret by pencilling in that the giver was "St. Nick," but Mom told others later that it was from Mark. She knew her children's printing.

As we unwrapped our Christmas gifts, my gift drew "oohs, ahhs," and later that day, a sister spread it out on our games table. The family dived in. The puzzling began. Chattering and laughter filled the living room. A \$1 gift had delivered joy.

I recall that the puzzle itself had pieces that did not interlock well, had too much "white" (matching snow and sky), and the picture itself was slightly fuzzy. Where it ended up with my parents' three major moves, nobody knows.

I do know the gesture made the gift giver happy, this poor little boy. He had somehow learned the joy of giving with that first-ever Christmas gift. The \$1 price tag even made for an inexpensive lesson.

In my 50 years since, I have given and received many Christmas gifts — expensive, thrifty, handmade or regifted. I remember a few of them.

What matters, though, is that puzzle gift helped make that a happier 1968 Christmas for six children — the five who received it, plus the one who gave it. Incredibly, I left much of my "me, me" childhood behind with that innocent purchase. Others now mattered.

I rarely match the wonderful benevolent feeling of giving that long ago first-time gift. I may never, really.

Threats, violence against doctors on the rise

By Lorne Stelmach

The level of abuse, threats and harassment being directed at medical professionals in the midst of the pandemic is reaching alarming levels, so health-care representatives made an appeal this week for kindness, respect and understanding towards them.

Their appeal was backed up by the results of a new survey that found that nearly six in 10 doctors have experienced incidents of mistreatment over the last month alone including verbal abuse, threats, online bullying and physical assault.

The escalation in mistreatment is adding to stress and burnout that was already reaching concerning levels earlier this year, Dr. Kristjan Thompson, president of Doctors Manitoba, said Monday as part of a noon-hour news conference that also included Dr. Katharine Smart, president of the Canadian Medical Association, and Dr. Don Klassen, a rural family physician from Winkler.

"It seems bizarre that we even have to talk about this," said Thompson, whose sentiment was echoed by Klassen.

"Until two years ago, I might have said it was impossible that we'd be having this press conference and calling for respect and civility," he said. "In my 40-plus years of medical practice, I have not witnessed the degree of mistreatment referred to in this survey until relatively recently."

Doctors Manitoba conducted a survey of physicians over the last several weeks and found 57 per cent experienced incidents of mistreatment over the previous month.

More than half of incidents — 52 per cent — appear to be linked to the pandemic in some way, and incidents are happening more frequently than a year ago, with 59 per cent of physicians reporting increased frequency.

Most incidents occurred in doctors' offices or hospitals, though there were some on social media, in public places and at physicians' homes.

Incidents appear to occur more frequently among physicians who are women, BIPOC (black, Indigenous and people of colour) or working in family medicine.

The survey also showed physicians located in rural communities experienced mistreatment more frequently than their urban counterparts.

In light of these findings, Doctors Manitoba's message is that COVID-19 has been hard for everyone, so whether you are frustrated with pandemic restrictions or facing long wait times to get a medical test or surgery, please don't take it out on the doctors who care about your well-being and are advocating for you.

Klassen noted he has heard from several physicians who are considering early retirement or relocation at least in part because of threats and verbal abuse.

"We are aware of several physicians who plan to leave next spring/summer, and I think that at least in part it has to do with the current environment. ... To be fair, I don't think it's totally that, but I think at least in part there's that dynamic," he said.

"The other side of that is to replace those three physicians and perhaps add another three becomes increasingly hard and more difficult in this kind of environment," Klassen added. "I think it will be more challenging than it has been in the recent past."

Klassen noted he himself had not personally experienced direct physical abuse but did make reference to one message that suggested somebody could put a gun to his head. He has otherwise mainly received literature that revolves around misinformation.

"I really feel for my younger colleagues ... who don't understand how this could be happening," said Klassen, who also offered a plea. "We're all humans with families and lives. ... We experience the same stresses related to the pandemic. ... We all want this pandemic to end, and we all need to be in this together."

"We need to keep our health-care systems functional," he stressed. "Let's remember, as well, that we really can believe the science. Please be aware of and avoid misinformation."

Smart noted that the survey results from Manitoba echo the stories of harassment, intimidation and abuse being heard from physicians across Canada, and she said this kind of hateful behaviour is unacceptable in our health system.

"We already have a huge challenge with primary care in this country," she said.

"It is incredibly disheartening in these very difficult times. We also understand that people are tired of this pandemic. We're also tired of it, but we're not through this yet, and our goal is to care for Canadians."

It's taking a very significant toll and it needs to stop, added Thompson, who noted the rates of harassment were higher in the Northern, Interlake and Southern Health regions.

"I think there was a trend towards increased incidences of these types of threats and abuse in rural settings compared to urban settings," Thompson said.

"Anecdotally, we are aware of physicians, nurses, other health-care professionals who have transferred into other specialties. Certainly, some of the ER nurses that I work with, who are experiencing high levels of stress and burnout, have left to work in other jurisdictions and other health-care settings."

"I don't blame those who have left because they're feeling burnt out," Thompson said. "This is absolutely a critical issue that needs to be addressed because it is contributing to burnout. ... It is very important that we take care of one another and support one another because we are here to help and to heal."

Doctors Manitoba had joined the Canadian Medical Association in pressing for legislative action following a growing number of incidents and protests earlier this year, and they all were very encouraged by the recent passage of Bill C-3 in Ottawa that will protect health workers and patients from threats, violence and harassment.

The new legislation amends the Criminal Code of Canada to make it illegal for people to intimidate health-care workers, impede access to medical facilities or intimidate people accessing health services, including COVID-19 vaccinations, and the new offences carry a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison.

"We are also calling on the provincial government and health system leaders to reinforce the need for respect and safety in medical facilities," added Thompson.

"The legislation passed by the federal government last week was unfortunately required to ensure the safety of health workers," said Smart. "That's been a huge positive for us to feel like the government sees us and that we have that support."

"We greatly appreciate the support and kindness of the great majority of Canadians who understand how hard we are working to provide care to our patients."

> FORGIVENESS, FROM PG. 27

- I was trying to forgive in my own strength. (With Christ, I can do all things.)

- I thought if I forgave, that meant I was weak. But, in fact, forgiving is what the strongest hearts choose to do in order to move forward in freedom.

Dear friend, do you see what I see?

You can forgive. You can take your power back and be better on the other side of this! Don't let another day go by where you let someone

else's poor decisions keep you in prison. Freedom and healing are one choice away and it's so good! I may not be completely out of my storm, but I can once again feel the sunshine on my face.

Some coaching questions for you:

1. How's your heart condition?
2. Is there someone or something you need to forgive, in order to take back your life?
3. What steps could you take today to start the journey to freedom in

forgiveness?

4. Imagine the peace in letting go. Journal about what this could mean for your future.

Thank you for reading! Send your questions and comments to daretosoarlifecoaching@gmail.com. Please forward to family and friends who may need this message! Let's inspire hope into others, together.

Have courage,
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No shut-down of Riverton Early Middle School despite high number of COVID infections

By Patricia Barrett

Riverton Early Middle School (REMS) in the Evergreen School Division was fighting a spate of COVID infections over the past three or so weeks that saw families inform the division they were pulling their children out of class to protect them after the province determined there was no need to shut down the school.

The province confirmed 15 COVID cases at REMS prior to Dec. 12. It also confirmed two cases at Riverton Collegiate and one case at Arborg Early Middle School prior to the same date, according to its COVID dashboard showing school-aged cases.

It's unclear whether any of the cases were the omicron variant, which has extremely high transmissibility.

ESD Supt. Roza Gray said they've now had 19 COVID infections at REMS since Nov. 29. Most of the cases were related to transmission in families or social contacts outside school.

"In checking [for the second time] with the medical office of health (MOH), no change to the status of the school was advised," said Gray by email on Dec. 18.

And she said she had also asked MOH earlier to consider closing REMS when cases were identified.

"I did request consideration for closure. The MOH looked into it and indicated that the circumstances did not meet the criteria to move to remote learning," she said. "The criteria require three cases of in-school transmission within 14 days to warrant closing the school and moving to remote learning."

She made a decision to offer remote learning for a week to families who wanted to keep their children at home "at the time when cases peaked in the community," she said. Public health agreed with that proposal. REMS remained open to families with childcare concerns or to those with other reasons for wanting to have their child attend school.

Gray had sent out letters over the

course of the continuing infections to advise parents and staff of what was happening in the schools.

"Public Health has informed the Division that a team has reviewed the COVID cases in the Riverton Schools and did not find evidence to declare an outbreak in the schools at this time," wrote Gray in a Dec. 7 letter. "Many families" subsequently informed the division they would keep their children home for the remainder of that week [Dec. 8-10].

Another letter from Gray dated Dec. 11 said that over the past two weeks [Nov. 29 to Dec. 10], the division had been informed by public health about "a number of cases in the community of Riverton, and more recently at Arborg Elementary School [Arborg Early Middle School]."

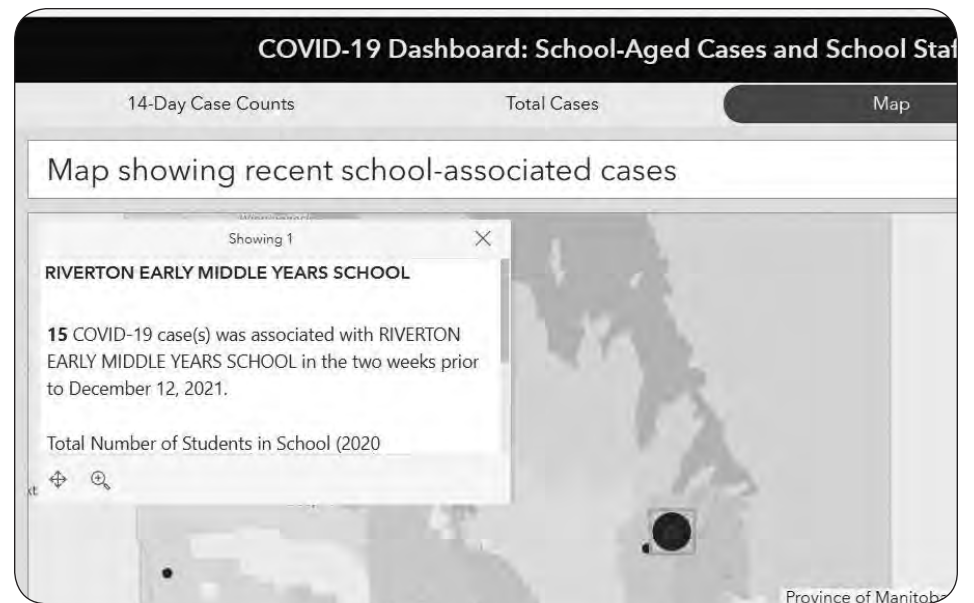
Public health told the division that an "emphasis on the fundamentals is critical at this time" and that students should stay home if they feel sick.

On its website the province states that in the 2020-21 school year "transmission of the virus in schools remained low." And in September 2021, the province slotted schools under the yellow (caution) level on the pandemic response system and students were returned to full-time, in-class learning.

But there were thousands of COVID cases in schools despite "low" transmission. Data from the province's COVID dashboard for school-aged cases (the data is no longer available online) showed that as of mid-April 2021 there had been 2,650 cases of COVID in schools since Sept. 1, 2020, the majority of them in students.

There have been 2,071 cases of COVID in schools since Sept. 7, 2021, according to the province's dashboard. Of those, 1,775 cases have been in students and 296 in staff.

The province announced last week it will distribute rapid COVID tests (antigen tests) it received from the federal government to schools in First Nations for use by kindergarten to Grade



The province identified 15 COVID infections at Riverton Early Middle School (data viewed Dec. 14). The Evergreen School Division said it has had 19 infections at the school as of Dec. 17.

6 students.

"Given supply limitations, the distribution will begin with First Nations schools and expand to other school divisions as additional supplies are received," states the province in a Dec. 17 news release.

The kits contain five tests, which will allow families to test their child/children every three or four days when they return to school.

Quebec began distributing rapid tests to all preschools and elementary schools in "worrisome" regions starting Dec. 6. And New Brunswick, where almost half the cases are in people under 19, is making rapid tests available to parents of all school-aged children when those children are identified as a close contact of a confirmed COVID case.

At the beginning of December, Gray praised the efforts of Evergreen teachers and staff as they continued to remain vigilant against preventing the spread of COVID in their schools.

"The pandemic has revealed to our community how exceptional our staff is. As we move into the homestretch

towards the holidays, it is important to both acknowledge how challenging this year has been, and to seek additional ways to support one another," Gray wrote.

In efforts to reduce exposure to the virus, the division pre-recorded holiday concerts and parents were sent a link to view them.

In its December 2021 "Pandemic Return to School Plan," the division encouraged parents to get their children inoculated against the virus. Children aged 5 to 11 are eligible for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID vaccine. Several community pop-up clinics were offered throughout December as well as an in-school vaccination clinic at Winnipeg Beach School.

The vaccine is available at select local pharmacies, medical clinics or pop-up vaccine clinics. View the province's online vaccine-finder map for a location or call your local health provider or pharmacy.

Access Credit Union, Noventis Credit Union and Sunova Credit Union approve amalgamation agreement

Submitted

Back in September, the boards of directors for Access Credit Union, Noventis Credit Union and Sunova Credit Union announced that merger discussions were underway thanks to a shared vision and collective commitment to growth and sustainability between all three organizations.

After completion of the due diligence and a careful review of the business case for this proposed endeavour, the boards for all three organizations have signed an amalgamation agree-

ment that formalizes the intentions to merge. Therefore, the three respective credit union memberships will have an opportunity to vote on the merger Jan. 25-27, 2022.

Leading up to the membership vote, members of all three credit unions will have the opportunity to continue asking questions, attend virtual member forums in early January and gather information.

"Throughout this process, we made a commitment to engage with our members and employees, to gather

feedback and answer questions. The feedback from these groups is highly valuable and critical to this process," said Kevin Beresford, board chair for Sunova Credit Union.

From the beginning, the involved credit unions knew that aligning with like-minded partners was key to the potential mergers' success. With rich histories and values that are rooted in community and relationships, alongside a drive to ensure longevity, growth, and exceptional service experiences for members and commu-

nities, each of the credit unions are confident that this partnership offers tremendous benefit and opportunity for all.

Memberships of each credit union will benefit from potentially enhanced offerings, such as highly competitive rates and fees, streamlined account package options and a flexible patronage program designed to thank members with cash rewards for their loyalty. Members will also enjoy

Arborg Curling Rink getting wheelchair lift in honour of avid curler

By Patricia Barrett

The Arborg Curling Rink will be getting a wheelchair lift thanks to a donation from the family of Philip Bauernhuber, who passed away Oct. 30 after a short battle with cancer.

Phil's friends, fellow curlers and community members also stepped up with money for other accessibility upgrades at the rink to honour Phil, who was a stalwart community fundraiser.

Phil's wife, Susan Bauernhuber, said he would have greatly appreciated the project because he loved to curl and had in the past broached the issue of accessibility at the rink.

"I know Phil would be very happy with this because he was such an avid curler and he liked to help the community," said Bauernhuber.

Phil was born and raised in Geysir, about 12 kilometres east of Arborg. He worked at Noventis Credit Union for 40 years. He was well known in the community, pitching in to help various community fundraisers, including Arborg's Terry Fox Run, and making strides to improve the quality of life for everyone in the community.

After she and the family discussed providing money for a wheelchair lift, Bauernhuber said she reached out to the Arborg-Bifrost Parks and Recreation Commission.

"Phil ended up being in a wheelchair for a while. We often talked about accessibility at the curling rink. The issue had been brought up when he was on the rec commission's board that there was no way anybody in a wheelchair or using a walker could get down to the rink," said Bauernhuber. "There are a set of stairs going up and down to the ice surface. This also affects people using walkers or who have difficulty using stairs. Grandparents wanting to watch their grandkids play or watch their sons or daughters play can't get down there."

In addition to installing a wheel-

chair lift, Bauernhuber said she spoke with a couple of friends — including one who curled with Phil — and they thought the fundraiser was a great idea. They, in turn, approached other curlers to help raise more funds, which will go towards making a wheelchair-accessible bathroom and upgrading the building's doors to accommodate those with assistive devices.

"We've already had some donations made in Phil's honour," said Bauernhuber. "And our friends talked about making sure a plaque will be put up at the rink in Phil's honour because he was a very big curler and loved the sport. He and his team travelled all over. He curled with the legion for provincial competitions and other bonspiels."

The recreation commission created a Philip Bauernhuber Accessibility Fund to help make facilities user-friendly for people with mobility issues.

"Phil and his family want to have a lasting impact on our community by making recreation facilities accessible in his memory," said recreation director Tom Chwaliboga by email. "Accessibility was important to Phil as he had family members that struggle with accessibility issues and saw first-hand how improving accessibility will have a dramatic and positive impact on their lives, their families and the community."

Phil was a tireless volunteer in the community, Chwaliboga said, and was involved with and served as chair of the rec commission for over 15 years.

"The Accessibility Fund is a fitting tribute to Phil that will help people for generations and keep him in our hearts and memory," said Chwaliboga.

Bauernhuber said a company is scheduled this week to assess how a wheelchair lift can be installed in the curling rink. The upgrades are ex-



EXPRESS PHOTO COURTESY OF SUSAN BAUERNHUBER

Phil Bauernhuber loved curling. He took part in numerous curling bonspiels. Phil Bauernhuber (second from right) took part in the Manitoba Credit Union championship in 2018.



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Phil Bauernhuber (left), with Albert Foster, volunteered to flip burgers for hungry runners at Arborg's 37th Annual Terry Fox Run in 2017.

pected to be completed for next year's curling season.

"I'd be thrilled to see them start working on it in 2022 and have it ready for the next curling season," she said.

People wishing to contribute to the Philip Bauernhuber Accessibility Fund can send a cheque to: Arborg Bifrost Parks and Recreation Commission, Box 555, Arborg, MB, R0C 0A0.

> AMALGAMATION, FROM PG. 29

an expanded branch network within Winnipeg and rural Manitoba, an expanded virtual presence, enhanced online banking solutions and investment in new technology.

"Our members make us who we are, and it is our goal to put their best interests at the forefront of the decisions we make," shared Ingrid Loewen, board chair from Access Credit Union.

The current employees of all three credit unions are guaranteed a position within the merged credit union, will enjoy a competitive benefits package, and will have new oppor-

tunities for career development and advancement. This means that the familiar and smiling faces the members are used to seeing in their branches will still be there to continue offering exceptional service.

All three credit unions are passionate about our commitment to community, and that will continue to be prioritized by the new organization moving forward. This will include offering increased support for local businesses, strengthened community support and engagement and broadened financial and volunteer support for local charities and organizations.

"Credit Unions are built on the foundation of community, and we are committed to continuing to build strong community in our expanded area," noted Paul Cuthbert, board chair of Noventis Credit Union.

The member vote is scheduled to take place virtually, from Jan. 25-27, 2022. If the members vote in favour, the newly merged credit union will begin to integrate their operations as Access Credit Union effective July 1, 2022.

Access Credit Union was incorporated in 2020 following a merger with Crosstown Civic Credit Union. The current assets exceed \$6 billion. The credit union serves 92,000 members

through 26 service delivery offices spread across southern Manitoba and Winnipeg. Access is currently the second largest credit union in Manitoba.

Noventis was incorporated in 2010 following a series of mergers and currently serves 28,000 members with \$1.14 billion in assets across 12 branches through out the Interlake and west of Winnipeg. Noventis is the 10th largest credit union in Manitoba.

Sunova was incorporated in 1955 and has grown to serve 49,700 members with \$2.3 billion in assets across 14 branches located in Winnipeg, eastern Manitoba and southern Interlake region. Sunova is the fifth largest credit union in Manitoba.

Welcoming new Canadians to the community

Red River Churches Refugee Team bring fourth family to Selkirk

By Katelyn Boulanger

The Red River Churches Refugee Team can celebrate another successful venture despite the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic presented as they've come together to bring the Nelson family to Canada.

Sania and Shonail Nelson and their two school-aged children have officially made their journey and isolated through the mandatory COVID-19 isolation period to enjoy everything that our community has to offer.

The RRCRT is a group of 26 churches that banded together in 2016 to support and bring refugee families to our communities. According to The UN Refugee Agency, with over 84 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, every family they bring helps.

"It all started back with the Syrian crisis when people were bringing Syrians into Canada," said Don Forfar, chair of the RRCRT and former Selkirk mayor.

Back in 2016, the group was inspired by a similar group of churches from Dauphin that came together to help people. That year our local group was able to sponsor two families.

About a year or so later, they brought over their third family, but they've been dormant since then, primarily due to COVID-19 making the process more complicated.

"We got to get busy and raise money [now]. There have been 26 churches that have actively supported us all most of the time. We'll see how many are still active. The good thing about the organization is its people from all the dominations in this town and area," said Forfar.

Though the group has initially been helping refugees from Syria, they decided to now open their doors to refugees from other parts of the world that need help, such as the Nelson family who started their journey in Pakistan.

Sania and Shonail Nelson's story of getting to Canada started years ago when they met and fell in love. They decided to get married in secret, and she converted. But because he was Christian and she was Muslim when they met, their marriage was deemed illegal in Pakistan. It is, however, legal for a Muslim man to marry a Christian woman.



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY KATELYN BOULANGER

The Nelson family outside of Christ Church Anglican in Selkirk.

Unfortunately, though the punishment for an interfaith marriage like theirs is prison time, honour killings often occur in these circumstances. For their safety, the Nelsons travelled to Thailand where they hoped they could get refugee status. Unfortunately, this didn't work out for them because of the limited number of refugees that Thailand accepts.

"It turns out [there were] different problems because when we tried to apply for a visa, there were many other conditions [and] we could not fulfill all the conditions. For example, they were told you have to go back to your country and come back again, then you might have some visa, but that wasn't a 100 per cent certainty that we'll get a visa," said Sania Nelson.

Because of this, the family was constantly threatened to be raided in Thailand. They had to leave their home regularly without grabbing any of their possessions.

"There were many times when we had, like, no food at home because if you're running from one place to another, you have to start over again. And, [that happened many] times, and that's why I hated moving. I want to live a normal life where we won't have any fear of getting arrested," she said.

Despite their difficulties, the Nelsons made a life in Thailand, running

a food service business. Previously, Shonail Nelson worked in marketing in Pakistan, and Sania Nelson worked as a teacher.

One of the significant changes that the family will be experiencing shortly is having their children take part in school for the first time, as in Thailand Nelson had to homeschool her children.

"They're very, very excited. My daughter was asking me when it was the second or third day. 'When am I going to go to school?'" Sania said.

She hopes that Canadians continue to sponsor refugees like them to come here to be safe.

"For now, we just [want to have] a peaceful life, and we really hope that people here in Canada will sponsor many, many other refugees and other people who are in trouble because they have sponsored us and saved our lives," she said.

She also is very thankful to the RRCRT.

"They really put the effort to save our family and they're successful in that. So we are very, very grateful for them," she said.

For Forfar and other members of this group, the benefits of helping people come to our community are great.

"I believe we're doing good work. The side benefit is the new relationships. I can think of two women in

particular; one's a Catholic [and] one's a Lutheran who never knew each other, even though they lived in our community forever. They're now best friends. So what [the Red River Churches Refugee Team's] done is it's put people of different denominations together working together, and to me, that's been just a wonderful side benefit," said Forfar.

Though they have made it to Canada, the family will still have some expenses related to their move that the churches wish to help them with, so they've created a fundraising campaign online https://fundrazr.com/71v5F3?ref=ab_4Apzp2_ab_0nMiwKyfRtD0nMiwKyfRtD. Donations can also be made to the RRCRT, which will support this and future families coming to St. Clements Anglican, Christ Church Anglican, Cloverdale United, St. George Wakefield, Good Shepherd Lutheran, Little Britain United, St. Peter Dynevor Anglican, Selkirk Community Church Mennonite Brethren, Selkirk Evangelical Lutheran, Selkirk United Church, Youth for Christ, Notre Dame Roman Catholic Church, Knox Presbyterian, and Rosedale Blessed Virgin Mary Protectress Ukrainian Catholic Church. If donating at these churches, please make the donation Attn: Red River Churches Refugee Team.

get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



Cheesy Spinach Ravioli

To make dough: Place 2 1/2 cups flour in bowl and make hole in center. Add salt, garlic powder, olive oil, eggs and egg yolks to hole. Slowly bring flour into middle and knead into ball. Cover with bowl and let rest 20 minutes.

To make filling: In pan over medium heat, add olive oil; add spinach, salt and pepper then saute until spinach is wilted. Let cool then mix in ricotta cheese; set aside.

Cut dough in half. Sprinkle remaining flour on large cutting board and roll dough to 1/8-inch thickness. Cut into rectangle then cut into 2-3-inch squares. Set scraps aside. Brush water on squares then spoon 1 teaspoon spinach-ricotta filling in center of every other square. Top with remaining squares. Use fork to crimp edges. Repeat with remaining dough. Form scraps into ball and repeat.

Put ravioli in boiling water, 8-10 minutes; they will rise to top when done.

In saucepan over medium heat, heat sauce until simmering.

Place ravioli on plate and top with warm sauce, mozzarella cheese, basil and rosemary. Grate Parmesan cheese on top, if desired.

Prep time: 10 minutes
Total time: about 1 hour
Yield: 17-20 ravioli

Dough:

3 cups all-purpose flour, divided
1 pinch salt
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon olive oil
4 whole eggs
2 egg yolks
water

Filling:

1/2 teaspoon olive oil
2 cups chopped spinach, fresh or frozen
1 pinch salt
1 pinch pepper
1 container (15 ounces) ricotta cheese

Toppings:

1 jar (24 ounces) Spaghetti Sauce
shredded mozzarella cheese
2 chopped basil leaves
2 chopped sprigs rosemary
grated Parmesan cheese (optional)



Baked Camembert Wreath with Navel Orange and Cranberry

Add jellied cranberry sauce and red pepper flakes; mix. Store in airtight container in refrigerator until ready to use.

Cover baking sheet or round pizza stone with parchment paper.

Using cheese wheel as guide in center, arrange rolls around cheese leaving about 1/4-inch space between rolls.

Create two concentric circles of rolls around cheese then place cheese back in refrigerator and let dough rise 2 hours.

Heat oven to 325 F.

Remove top of rind from cheese wheel and place in center of dough. Bake 7-8 minutes.

Remove from oven and add orange cranberry sauce. Bake 7-8 minutes until bread is golden and cheese is melted and bubbly.

Garnish with sprigs of rosemary and thyme.

Recipe courtesy of Brandi Milloy on behalf of Sunkist

Prep time: 2 hours
Cook time: 15 minutes
Servings: 6

1 Sunkist Navel orange
1 can (8 ounces) jellied cranberry sauce
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1 camembert cheese wheel
1 bag (25 ounces) frozen Parker House style rolls, thawed
sprigs rosemary, for garnish
sprigs thyme, for garnish
In bowl, add zest and juice from orange.



Christine Ibbotson

Dear Money Lady, could you tell me how I could leave a legacy for my grandchildren when I die. Peter

Dear Peter,

There really are so many ways to leave a legacy. A legacy is something that is either monetary or meaningful and represents a single person. It speaks to what that person believes in and should reflect all their values over a lifetime, ensuring that their memory has a positive and lasting impression long after they have passed away.

I have written in the past about creating a legacy for grandchildren through the purchase of whole life participating insurance, but today, since you've asked, let's look at all the other ways Canadians can create a legacy, whether it be monetary or meaningful. So here we go.

1. Leadership Legacies: This is a named legacy that supports a public cause. This may be something that you setup in your community to motivate others to evoke change and create goodwill. You most likely would have invested great time, effort, and monetary gifts toward this endeavor before you passed away.

2. Charitable Gifts: There are so many organizations that rely solely on the generosity of people leaving a portion or all their estate to a charity when they die. In Canada, there are just over 85,000 registered charities.

3. Physical Legacies: This type of legacy involves an actual physical location. For example, a farm home or property that has passed on through each generation, never being sold and always staying within the family.

4. Business Legacies: Rather than selling a business at retirement, business owners will change the structure to either have their children carry on the company or even have their employees take over the business.

5. Reflective Legacies: This is your opportunity to tell your story – literally. Reflective legacies are usually done by video, voice recording, or as a written journal to capture the history and life story of the person(s) to be remembered. This can be done by adult children, capturing their parents in conversations that describe their parent's lives as children, how



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they met, and all the experiences they had during their lifetime.

6. Community Legacies: This legacy is built around a cause you believe in or a community goal you support. For example, you may decide to leave a portion of your estate to a worthy cause. This could be based on a family member that has suffered, a special need child or even to support a beloved pet.

7. Gift of Life Legacies: This legacy is done by donating your organs or your body to either another person or to Canadian science.

8. Memory Legacies: This type of legacy is to be done while you are living and should be a shared memory with those you love. For example, you may want to take all your family, on a European cruise. This could really be anything that you as the legacy giver want to share with your family such as: a trip to your birth place/country, a picnic that you have catered for all your family (with it being mandatory for all to attend), a weekend get away at a small country inn, a wine tour, a horse ride, etc. Pick something that you would like to do; an event that represent you, and of course something that gives your family a lasting memory.

9. Monetary Legacies: There are many different types of legacy building products that you can setup for your family or grandchildren. These would include RESPs, Non-Registered Investment Accounts, Trusts, or life insurance.

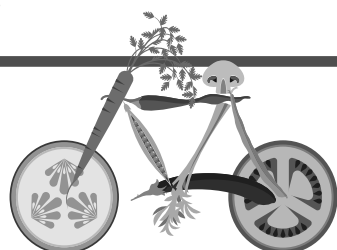
*Whole-Life Participating Life Insurance can be purchased for a grandchild. It comes with a guaranteed level premium paid up usually within 5-10 years, and has a guaranteed compounded growth through dividends. A grandchild can also usually have access to the CSV within the policy to access money if needed throughout their lifetime.

Everyone should live their life in a way that creates lasting memories to become a meaningful legacy to their family. Planning for your death is a necessity. Please remember that you must have a Will and two Powers of Attorney because you should want to ensure you have your say over your life and your assets. If you die without an estate plan, the Canadian government will make one for you – guaranteed to not be the way you would have wanted.

Good Luck & Best Wishes,
ATML - Christine Ibbotson

Written by Christine Ibbotson, Author of 3 finance books and the Canadian Best-Selling Book "How to Retire Debt Free & Wealthy" www.askthemoneylady.ca or send a question to info@askthemoneylady.ca

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Nice save



EXPRESS PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

Warren Mercs' goaltender Hayden Dola of Winnipeg Beach makes a great save against the Carman Beavers last Friday. Warren won the South Eastern Manitoba Hockey League game 7-0.

Ice Dawgs fly past Falcons

Staff

Noah Johnson netted a hat trick and Kalen Guimond added a pair of goals to lead the Arborg Ice Dawgs to an 8-2 victory over the Lundar Falcons in Capital Region Junior Hockey League action on Saturday.

Jack Einarson had another strong game for Arborg with a goal and four assists while Ben Danielson and Austin Adair each had a goal and an assist.

Carson Gudmundson and Cody Procter replied for Lundar.

Brandon Kowalchuk stopped 25 Lundar shots for the win.

On Friday, the Ice Dawgs lost 5-3 to the Warriors in St. Malo.

Guimond led Arborg with two goals and an assist while Dixon Moneas also tallied.

Einarson had two assists.

St. Malo goals were scored by

Ashton Dubois (two), Cole Holdnick, Evan Wuerch and Braeden McFarlane.

Arborg netminder Tre Strachan made 31 saves.

The Ice Dawgs will host the Warriors on Jan. 2. Game time is 2:30 p.m.

The Falcons, meanwhile, lost 5-4 to the North Winnipeg Satellites on Friday in Lundar.

Bryce Allary scored a pair of goals for Lundar while Ryan Gleich and Riley Wirgau also tallied.

North Winnipeg goals were scored by Aden Asham, Nicolas Andrews, Troy Gutowski, Conner Klassen and Alex Loudfoot.

Dylan Rapinchuk stopped 26 North Winnipeg shots.

The Falcons will resume league play Jan. 8 when they host the Selkirk Fishermen.

Peguis in first place at holiday break

Staff

The Peguis Juniors head into the holiday season in first place in the Keystone Junior Hockey League standings.

Peguis defeated the OCN Storm 9-4 on Sunday afternoon. The Juniors broke the game open with six second-period goals.

Sundance Paul led Peguis with three

goals and three assists while Nathaniel Murdock also had a hat trick and two assists.

Keelian Levasseur also had a strong game with two goals and three assists. Brodie McPherson also scored for Peguis to go along with an assist.

Roger Houle Jr. had a hat trick for OCN while Rowan Fenner also tallied.

Tyrese Bear made 16 saves for the

win.

On Saturday, the Storm stopped the Juniors 5-3.

Paul and Murdock each had a goal and an assist for Peguis while Dorion Cameron also tallied.

OCN goals were scored by Chavez Constant (two), Justice Sinclair, Houle Jr. and Conroy Halcrow.

Constant had four points in the

game.

Bear made 26 saves in the losing cause.

Peguis, now 11-4-0-1, will be in Norway House to take on the last-place North Stars on Jan. 1 (7:30 p.m.) and Jan. 2 (1:30 p.m.).

Yellowhead Chiefs sweep U18 Interlake Lightning

By Brian Bowman

The U18 "AAA" Interlake Lightning's offence was nowhere to be found last weekend.

Interlake scored just one goal in two losses to the Yellowhead Chiefs in Teulon last weekend.

The Chiefs earned the two-game sweep with a 3-1 victory on Saturday.

Alexander Kaczorowski scored Interlake's goal in the first period.

Cole Topham, with a pair, and Rylan Gage replied for Yellowhead.

Ty Hogue stopped 25 Chiefs' shots.

On Friday, the Chiefs blanked the Lightning 4-0. Jase Warham stopped 42 Interlake shots for the shutout.

Ben Roullette scored a first-period goal and then Foxx McColl made it 2-0 with a power-play marker in the second.

Ty Kirk added a shorthanded goal in

the third and then Topham closed out the scoring midway in the period.

Zach Meadows made 38 saves for the Lightning.

Interlake's next action is Jan. 5 when it plays the Winnipeg Bruins at Southdale.

In U18 "AAA" female action, Interlake lost 2-1 to the Eastman Selects on Sunday in Niverville.

Mackenzie Waddell scored for the

Lightning in the second period to tie the score at 1-1.

Janique LaBossiere and Bethany Wielgosh had Eastman's goals.

Lightning goaltender Katelyn Dorsch made 36 saves.

Interlake will play the Westman Wildcats on Jan. 8 in Hartney.

Nick Giasson netted a first-period goal for the Bruins and then team-

Interlake will resume league play

Trailing 3-2 in the third period, Hogg scored a power-play goal at 13:47 and then the Lightning's Gavin Holod tallied with the man advantage at 15:59

Interlake's next league game is Jan. 4 when it plays the Winnipeg Wild Gold at the Bell MTS Iceplex.

34. Life form
35. Painful contractions
36. Glowing
39. Press against lightly
40. Melancholic
43. Something you can be under
44. Of the mind
46. E. Indian cereal grass
47. Couple
49. Sharpshoot
51. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
54. ___ Blyton, children's author
59. Human gene
60. Data mining methodology (abbr.)
61. Examines animals
62. Mineral
64. Cools your home

The **FABULOUS TALES** of Mount Christmas

A scare at the skating rink

By Sarah Beauregard

Once upon a time, in the town of Mount Christmas, there was a talented team of figure skaters. The boys and girls of various ages worked hard at every practice, and they always encouraged each other to do their best. This is what made them a successful team and the pride of the town.

Every year, the troupe would put on a Christmas show at the local outdoor rink. The soloists would spin, the pairs would pirouette and the group would perform lively choreographed acts in front of a cheering crowd. But one day, during the final rehearsal, things didn't go according to plan.

While skaters glided across the ice, reviewing their closing number, shouts rose from the stands. Confused, Coach Daniel, who was a retired Olympic champion, signaled for someone to stop the music. As his students skidded to a halt, Daniel heard the warnings of onlooking parents.

"Get out of the way," shouted one.

"It's the Zamboni," cried another. "Quick, run!"

Daniel spun on his heels and immediately spotted the source of the commotion. The machine used to smooth the ice was headed right for the rink — without a driver! Natalie, who should have been behind the wheel, was frantically chasing the rogue Zamboni.

"Everyone, head for the stands, now!" Daniel shouted, but it was too late. The vehicle had already reached the ice. The young skaters screamed and fled in every direction.

Springing into action, the coach guided everyone to safety as the vehicle spun and made figure eights in the middle of the rink.

How am I going to stop this thing? Daniel didn't know what he was going to do.

As he and Natalie tried to come up with a plan, the Zamboni suddenly stopped. Stunned and relieved, Daniel noticed a bright red cardinal sitting on the vehicle's control panel. It was Octave, the magical bird that watched over the residents of Mount Christmas.

The cardinal took to the air and landed on the shoulder of young Jacob, whose brother was on the team.

"We all make mistakes," Octave whispered in Jacob's ear. "But it's best to admit them right away. I'm sure everyone will understand that it was an accident."

Jacob nodded sheepishly and, as the team gathered at the edge of the rink, he spoke up.

"It's my fault," Jacob admitted, his voice trembling. "I just wanted to look at the Zamboni, but I spilled hot chocolate all over the buttons. I should have told a grown-up."

"If you had said something sooner, this incident might have been avoided," Natalie said. "But it was an accident that could have hap-



pened to anyone, including me. Now I know that the control panel needs a protective cover."

"It's a good thing Octave was here to save the day," Natalie continued. "For a second, I thought the Zamboni had come to life!"

At that, a few people giggled.

With the danger gone and no one hurt, soon everyone was laughing. Natalie returned the Zamboni to the storage shed, and the rehearsal resumed under Octave's watchful eye. One thing was certain: the Christmas performance would be unforgettable this year.



A surprise at the store

By Johannie Dufour

Once upon a time, in the town of Mount Christmas, there was a quaint little general store where all the residents went to shop. The owner, Lucy, was well known for her kind heart and generous spirit. In fact, she often donated food and toys to charities in the area.

One early morning in December, as Lucy prepared to open the store, she noticed dozens of customers lined up outside. It was an unusually large crowd, especially since she hadn't announced any big sales that week.

As soon as Lucy unlocked the door, customers flooded into the store. They all headed straight for the decoration aisle.

With Christmas just around the corner, I guess they want to make sure their homes look festive, Lucy thought.

Strangely though, everyone seemed to be interested in only one type of decoration. Lucy watched as residents bought strand after strand of garlands. She also noticed that many of her customers were giggling and whispering to each other as they left.

This is very odd, Lucy thought, but she didn't ask any questions. She preferred to respect the privacy of her fellow citizens.

However, the store owner soon began to worry that she would run out of the popular garlands. Lucy asked her young cashier to keep an eye on the shop, then she rushed to the storage room.

Lucy searched and searched for the boxes of extra

garlands, but they were nowhere to be found.

"Where did I put them?" she wondered out loud.

That's when she heard a familiar chirp. It was Octave, the magical cardinal that watched over the town of Mount Christmas.

From his perch atop a shelf, the bird cheerfully sang: "Your treasure awaits, near the skis and skates!"

"Of course," Lucy exclaimed. She'd put all the extra Christmas decorations alongside the sporting goods last year.

"Thank you, my feathered friend," she said. Lucy quickly gathered up the boxes of garlands and went to restock the shelves.

By the time she headed home that evening, Lucy was tired but happy that she'd had enough supplies for all of her customers. When she pulled into the driveway, her jaw dropped. Lucy rubbed her eyes to make sure she wasn't dreaming.

"Is this my house?" she exclaimed. All the garlands she'd sold that day now lined the roof, encircled the windows and embellished the front door of her home. Even the fence and trees were twinkling with tinsel. "It's so beautiful! But who put these here?"

Suddenly, dozens of people emerged from behind the hedges, cheering and clapping. Right away, Lucy recognized the familiar faces of her loyal customers.

"You did this?" she asked. "But why?"

An elderly gentleman stepped forward and hand-



ed Lucy a bouquet of flowers.

"Dearest Lucy," he said, "since your store is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, we wanted to thank you for your hard work and generosity. We know how much you love the holidays, but you never have time to decorate your home. So, we decided to do it for you!"

"Don't worry," the man added with a chuckle, "we'll come take them down for you after New Year's Day."

As Lucy hugged each of her customers and thanked them for this wonderful surprise, Octave watched from a nearby tree, his red plumage shimmering like tinsel in the moonlight.

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

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

The applicant should possess the following skills:

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

Job Description:

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

Hours and wages are negotiable with experience and qualifications.

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

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

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SATURDAY JANUARY 1, 2022
SUNDAY JANUARY 2, 2022

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January 3rd,
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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Ice Road & Skating Trail Open Area Construction & Maintenance 2021/2022 SEASON

Gimli Harbour Ice Road, Skating Trail & Open Area

Please include type of equipment used, total cost for construction, hourly rate to maintain and any other information that would be relevant to the RFP.

Sealed submissions addressed to Community Development Corporation marked Ice Roads can be mailed to Box 1246, Gimli, MB, R0C 1B0 or dropped off at the Municipal Office at 62-2nd Avenue in Gimli.

Deadline for submission will be:

4:30 p.m. on January 6th, 2022

General Inquiries to:

Councillor Richard Petrowski
Phone: 204-642-3237

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RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI Gimli Harbour Lake Access CLOSED For the Season

Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Small Craft Harbours Branch, will be undertaking work at Gimli Harbour during the winter 2022.

The construction is planned to occur from December 2021 to March 2022. The timelines are subject to weather conditions and the results of the tendering process.

The project includes the demolition of the existing concrete launch ramp and the construction of a new concrete launch ramp.

During construction the launch ramp will be closed to the general public. Lake ice access via the launch ramp / harbour will be closed for the duration of the project.

There will be access to the lake via Goldfield for the 2022 winter season.



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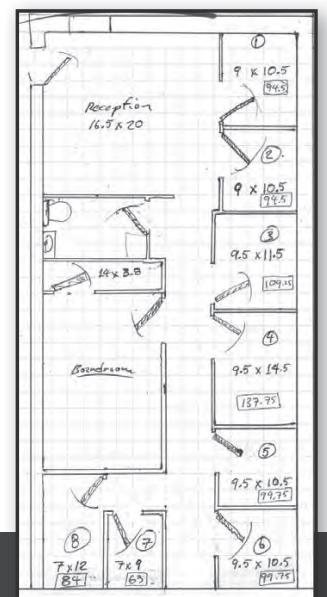
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Thank you to everyone who purchased bulls and to those who showed interest by coming down and calling. Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and all the best in 2022!

-KLCC Charolais,
Ken and Linda Cherepak, Arborg

CARD OF THANKS

Many thanks for all the calls, visits, cards, and flowers we received and the Westshore Foundation donations in Ralph's name. We are grateful for the compassion and care given to Ralph and our family at Johnson Memorial Hospital, from Home Care, especially Crystal and Toni, from Dr. S.V. Patel over many years, as well as Mona and Eirik at Neil Bardal Inc.

-Connie Magnusson and family

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IN MEMORIAM



Walter Kaminski

April 1, 1922 – December 31, 2011

It has been 10 years since your passing,
And though we miss you,
You live in our hearts,
We think of you every day.

-Lots of love,
Linda,
Jane and Ken
Wally and Audra
Derek, Nicole, Sienna and Athena

OBITUARY

Gerald Nelson (Gerry) Law

May 17, 1959 – December 10, 2021

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Gerald (Gerry) Law of Lundar, Manitoba.

Gerald leaves to mourn his loving wife Lorna; his children Kathy (Jim) Desjarlais, Klint (Justine), Katelynn (James) and grandchildren Corbyn, Alyvea, Konnor, Kinnley, Kamryn, Milah; eldest daughter Krystal (Mike) Patton and grandchildren Mackenzie, Joseph, Emma and Devon in Alberta; mother-in-law Judy Monkman; siblings Bruce (Brenda), Donald (Darlene), Margaret (Wayne) Richmond and Vernon; brothers and sisters-in-law Lynda (Ron) Capner, Randy (Michelle), Ricky (Joyce), Robby (Patty) and Lanna (Darcy) Mason as well as numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

Gerald was predeceased by his parents Les and Alice Law and father-in-law Albert (Butch) Monkman.



Gerald was born in Winnipeg and moved to Lundar in the spring of 1964 where his parents purchased a farm. Gerald developed a great fondness for farming and machinery and he was always looking to improve the farm that he shared with his family. He spent several years working on construction mainly in Saskatchewan. The last few years he worked locally operating heavy equipment and spending time on the farm with the cattle and his John Deere tractors. Gerald was always willing to help his neighbours and friends with whatever task was needed.

As per Gerald's wishes a private ceremony and interment has taken place.

For those who wish to make donations in Gerald's name, they may be made to CancerCare Manitoba Foundation Inc., 675 McDermot Ave., Room ON 1160, Winnipeg, MB R3E 0V9 www.cancercare.mb.ca or phone 1-866-561-1026.

Arrangements by:
ARNASON FUNERAL HOME
Ashern - Lundar
1.204.768.2072
1.866.323.3593

OBITUARY

Clair Herbert Gregory

1928 - 2021

With gratitude for both a long life well lived and a peaceful passing we said goodbye to a husband, father and grandfather, Clair Gregory on December 9, 2021.

Dad was predeceased by his parents, Russell and Mae, and brother Garry. Dad is survived by his wife of 67 years, Bernice; five children, Lee (Kathy), Paul (Anita), Ian (Maggie), Ann (Lawrence Prendville), and Eric (Tina Douvris); 12 grandchildren, Adam (Meghan), Jenna (Jessie), Bradley (Ashley), Sean (Daniella), Aaron (Tasha), Karlen, Jacklyn (Leo), Kalyn (Justin), Michelle, Campbell, Evan and Seth; 12 great-grandchildren; and sisters Joan and Arlene.



Dad grew up in St. James and went on to complete his Diploma in Agriculture at the University of Manitoba in 1947. Dad then farmed with his father on Turnbull Drive south of St. Norbert where they tried their hand at turkeys and dairy cows but eventually settled on managing a commercial mink ranch. When the fur industry was no longer viable, Dad went on to work for the provincial Department of Agriculture in Rural Water Services until it was shut down in 1977. Shortly thereafter and with several business partners he launched Prairie Water Services Ltd., which was successfully operated until he retired in 1990. In retirement Dad and Mom were fortunate to be able to winter in Texas and always looked forward to rejoining the community of friends they had there.

Dad introduced us to fishing, hunting and skiing. He was an avid golfer and curler and a charter member at the Pembina Curling Club serving as president in 1970/71. Dad was also a founding member of the St. Norbert United Church which eventually moved to Fort Richmond and became Trinity United Church where he worshipped and served faithfully for many years.

We are blessed to have so many memories of family, good friends, and neighbours that we shared with Dad in the past and we all hope that we can be as fine a parent as to what Dad was to us.

Dad you will be missed.

A family service will be held in the future at his final resting place at Norris Lake cemetery. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to your favourite charity.

Your memory will live forever Engraved within our hearts

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OBITUARY

Cyril (Jim) Henderson Craig

With deep sorrow we announce the passing of our loving father and grandfather, Cyril (Jim) Henderson Craig, on December 31, 2020, in Gimli, MB.

Jim was born February 5, 1929, in Northern Ireland. He was predeceased by his wife, Agnes. He will be sadly missed by his daughter Louise, her husband Andrew and their daughter Kate, and his son Jim, his wife Melissa and children Olivia, Jacob and Zachary. Jim treasured his friendships over the years, especially most recently with Kathy, Roger and Barb, Dan, and Lazlo.

A virtual memorial service will be held on Friday, December 31 at 11:00 a.m. at the Gilbert Funeral Chapel in Selkirk, Manitoba. A link will be provided on his obituary at www.gilbartfuneralhome.com

Gilbart Funeral Home, Selkirk in care of arrangements.



OBITUARY

Roger George Gaida

Peacefully, on Sunday, December 19, 2021 at the Gimli Community Health Centre, Roger Gaida, aged 72 years of Gimli, MB, beloved husband of Josie, passed away.

In keeping with his wishes, cremation has taken place and a service will be held at a later date. Full obituary to follow.

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

Gilbart Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



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