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# THE EXPRESS

VOLUME 7 EDITION 14 THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2020

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Stay home

Tergesen's General Store in Gimli, which is closed until further notice due to COVID-19, put up signs urging everyone to go home and stay home. See story on pg. 3.

EXPRESS PHOTO BY ANDY BLICO

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# Family of Betel Home resident ask why all residents and staff weren't tested for COVID

By Patricia Barrett

The family of a Betel Home resident are calling for the province to test all residents of the 80-bed personal care home after a health-care worker last week was thought to be infected with COVID-19 and nine residents were showing respiratory symptoms.

Health authorities said last Thursday the health-care worker tested positive for the highly infectious and deadly virus but announced Sunday it had been a false positive. Tests carried out on the nine residents came back negative.

The province said March 26 (see COVID-19 Bulletin #32) that testing criteria had been expanded to include groups of people living settings such as long-term care homes, residential facilities and correctional facilities.

Testing at Betel Home seemingly fell short of that expanded criteria and doesn't sit well with Tanis Benson, whose 95-year-old dad Harvey is in Betel with compromised lungs. He had not been tested.

"Why aren't all residents at Betel being tested if the province said it extended testing to long-term care?" said Benson last Friday afternoon when it was believed the worker was infected. "We're living in the COVID-19 era now. Are you just going to do a wait-and-see? And why wasn't every resident isolated?"

In addition to resident testing, other preventative measures should be taken, she said, such as staff testing and taking their temperature when they arrive at work. Elevated temperature is a sign of the body fighting an infection.

"Every person on the frontline needs to be tested and the rest of us need to stay home," said Benson.

She and her family received little in-



EXPRESS PHOTO BY TANIS BENSON  
Eric Benson and his dad Harvey.

formation about what protective measures are being taken at Betel other than that staff are "following infection control rules," she said. The family has had to ask her dad by phone what's been going on.

She said he told her brother, Eric, he's seen three or four people sitting at one table in the dining area and no one is wearing masks.

"And my dad told me they're still having their meals in the common room, and I told him he should be staying in his room as much as possible," said Benson. "They didn't give him a mask so my brother Eric and I advocated for that and next thing you know my dad had a mask. But other residents don't have a mask. So I want to know from Betel what measures they're taking."

Presumably, anyone coming into contact with a person suspected of being or determined to be infected with COVID-19 would be tested regardless of whether they live in a long-term care facility. The province's expanded testing announcement suggested it was a proactive step to protect vulnerable groups. The subsequent failure to test all Betel residents have Benson and her family very concerned.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY ANDY BLICQ

Gimli's Betel Home was on lock down last week after a health care worker was thought to be infected with COVID-19.

Various family members reached out to both the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority (IERHA) and the province for answers but haven't yet received a response, said Benson.

The *Express* asked the province for comment about its bulletin and why mass testing didn't happen at Betel but received no reply by deadline.

IERHA CEO Ron Van Denakker said Friday that Betel residents "showing symptoms" were tested immediately and isolated "in their own room." It's also common to see influenza outbreaks several times a year in personal care homes.

When asked why all Betel residents had not been tested for COVID-19 as per the province's bulletin, Van Denakker said: "We're following the direction of the medical officer of health on this. I know exactly what you're saying in terms of the groupings they talked about, but I think because the way the containment was in this personal care home, it wasn't necessary to test all 80 beds."

As far as group meals and other group activities at Betel, Van Denakker said they're "adhering to social and physical distancing. We're ensuring that nobody is beside one another. It's the two-metre distance."

After Sunday's announcement of the health-care worker being a false positive, Benson's sister, Sherry Benson-Podolchuk, said that was good news, but residents or staff could be asymptomatic because they haven't all been tested.

"Even though we have the all-clear that doesn't mean it can't happen again or that [COVID] is not already there. We just don't know," she said. "We dodged a bullet, but it doesn't mean it's safe."

The virus can be brought into the facility at any time as staff go about their business in the community, go home to their families and come back to Betel for a shift, and the "patients

are completely vulnerable," she said.

She'll be raising her and her family's concerns with Interlake-Gimli MLA Derek Johnson. She doesn't want to see Manitobans deal with a "tremendous tragic loss" of patients and staff as have other provinces.

At the 65-bed Pinecrest Nursing Home in Bobcaygeon, Ont., for instance, 22 residents (between March 18 and April 4) infected with COVID died and one third of the health-care staff are self-isolating. Of great concern was a leaked "let-them-die" health directive, which said seniors shouldn't be taken to the hospital as "there's little that can be done beyond comforting measures." Palliative support should be given instead to ease their suffering as they die.

As she watched various long-term care scenarios unfold, Benson-Podolchuk said she's thought, "Oh my God, you can't even be with them when they're dying. You're alone, frightened and dying and no one [is there] to touch your hand and say, 'I'm here with you.' That must be the ultimate horror."

In addition to speaking with her dad on the phone, she said she's been going in person to Betel to see him. She stands outside the care home and either yells through his closed bedroom window or holds up a sign with a message.

"I haven't touched my dad. One thing he really misses, and a lot of clients miss, is a nice hug from a family member," said Benson-Podolchuk.

In Manitoba, 204 people have been infected with COVID-19, two have died and 11 have been hospitalized as of Monday afternoon. Ten of the cases are in the Interlake-Eastern region.

The virus has infected 16,500 people in Canada. Worldwide, it has infected over 1.3 million people and killed almost 74,000 people in 184 countries, according to data as of Monday afternoon from Johns Hopkins University.

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# Stay home. Stay home. Stay home: IERHA says COVID-19 spreading in the community

By Patricia Barrett

Ron Van Denakker, CEO of the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority, has been holding conference calls with media once a week to provide updates on the continuing spread of the highly infectious coronavirus, COVID-19, and what measures the RHA is taking to help contain and manage it. The following are updates from April 3.

- Stay home. COVID is now circulating in the community.

"You need to assume that everybody around you could have COVID or there could be COVID droplets on surfaces, counters and so forth. You need to assume that," said Van Denakker. "Stay home. That's the safest thing to do. If you have to go out, practise physical distancing and frequent hand-washing."

- Contact tracing relating to a Selkirk health-care worker who tested positive for COVID has been completed.

"I can't get into too much detail on that other than to indicate that all contact tracing took place for not only community members/patients that were in the emergency room, but also for staff," said Van Denakker. "To date, absolutely nobody has tested positive from the results we have received,

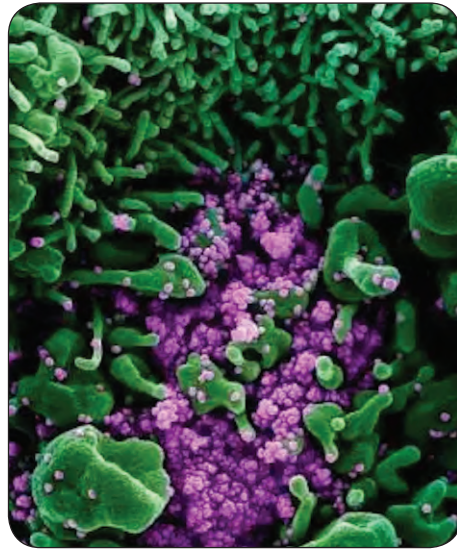


IMAGE COURTESY OF REUTERS

This colourized image shows a cell (in green) infected by COVID-19 (in purple).

[but] we don't have all the results back yet."

- IERHA staff that are in isolation because of COVID exposure or suspected COVID exposure are impacting IERHA service delivery.

"We are prioritising our services and moving staff to places where [services] absolutely have to be maintained," said Van Denakker.



PHOTO BY ANDY BLICO

Homeowners on Sixth Avenue in Gimli created an art installation in their front yard last week during a mini-snowstorm to provide a bit of moral support to fellow residents as COVID-19 continues to spread in Manitoba.

- Van Denakker said reaction from the Gimli community to the news that a Betel Home health-care worker was diagnosed with COVID last Thursday was "a little bit disturbing." (Note: on Sunday the province said that result was a false positive).

"I do plan on speaking to the mayor about this so we can get some communication out to the community,"

said Van Denakker. "Family members and staff have been somewhat ostracized. The community has been really, really upset so I think I'd like to provide some clarity to the community once we get through this. If this was influenza, you wouldn't get that hysteria. But because we're talking about

Continued on page 4

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Given the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Government of Manitoba's prohibition on gatherings of more than 50 people, Red River Co-op will be rescheduling their Annual General Meeting, originally scheduled for April 23, 2020. No rescheduled date has been set, but notices will be posted when a new date is set.

The postponement does not affect the election results for the board of directors. The results of this election will be communicated to members and candidates at the postponed AGM. The current members of the board of directors will continue to serve in their roles until the completion of the AGM on its rescheduled date.

All members can still vote for their board either online or by-mail by 4:00 PM April 13, 2020. Instructions are included in their mailed member packages.



# Interlake businesses feeling the financial bind

By Evan Matthews

Though the call to restrict non-essential business came last week, many Interlake businesses have been proactive but are feeling the effects of COVID-19 closures.

Two Interlake business owners discussed the state of Manitoba's current business sector and economy and the challenging realities many are facing.

## McLeod Tea House and Gift Shop

Jon Billings, co-owner of McLeod House Tearoom and Gift Shop with his wife Joy, said the family is using the pandemic as an opportunity to do renovations that have been put off.

The business has been closed for two full weeks, as they proactively closed its doors on March 23.

"Before things got really bad, we had seen our reservations and bookings drop by over 60 per cent," said Billings.

"We had several conversations about the situation and how to act. The way we saw it, from the get-go ... we tried as best we could to look at this as a positive in doing some renovations

and further making this business our own," he said, adding he wants the building to last another 100 years.

The couple took ownership of the business in September 2019, and with no prior restaurant ownership experience, Billings said it's been a steep learning curve.

But as nice as the opportunity for renovations is, he said the loss of income is highly stressful.

"We have an extreme financial obligation, and the question becomes 'How do we potentially recover from this?' We're not a business that has been around for 20 years and has resources available to us in the bank," said Billings, adding that while the financial situation is dire, there isn't a thing anyone can do to change it.

Billings said factoring in the business has \$0 in revenue coming in, while doing renovations to the business and continuing to manage a household, the family business is losing upwards of \$15,000 a month.

"We rely on our business to support

Continued on page 5



PHOTO SUBMITTED  
McLeod Tea House and Gift Shop owners Joy and Jon Billings.



PHOTO SUBMITTED  
Scott Allan, co-owner of inMotion Network (Quarry Physiotherapy), at a 2019 trade show.

## > IERHA, FROM PG. 3

COVID, the community was quite agitated."

- The IERHA has no plans to treat COVID patients in an off-site facility after Italian health experts warned countries that Italy's biggest mistake was treating COVID patients in hospitals where it spread to other patients and staff.

"The [province's] incident command planning team ... did take that into consideration, but I think they felt that wasn't going to be a practical approach to how we'd approach things," said Van Denakker. "We've taken the approach of creating COVID-isolated units at existing hospitals as opposed to creating other facilities."

The Selkirk hospital has a dedicated site within the building where COVID patients not requiring intensive care are/will be treated.

- The province issued a call for retired nurses to come back to work. Van Denakker said nurses won't be asked to work the COVID frontlines but to backfill for staff dedicated to COVID care. Retired nurses are asked to contact the College of Registered Nurses.

- A toll-free line is now available for residents seeking testing during inclement weather. Call 1-855-347-8500

and press 1 to get updated testing hours.

Eriksdale's drive-thru COVID testing site will be closed Good Friday, April 10. Selkirk's drive-thru will remain unaffected.

"It's really important for people to know that they will be called with their test results, so please don't attend testing sites for results as they won't have that information," said Van Denakker.

- Manitoba health authorities have been practically "begging" people to stay home and to adhere to social distancing if they absolutely must go out.

"If you listen to [Manitoba chief public health officer] Dr. [Brent] Roussin and count how many times he says physical or social distancing ... it's between 16 and 20 times," said Van Denakker. "How many more times do people have to hear this?"

Mayor of Pinawa Blair Skinner and council closed to the public the beach and pool, the suspension bridge, picnic tables, all walking trails and other facilities to deter locals and people from away who seemingly don't understand why it's important to stay home during a pandemic that's killed over 74,000 people worldwide (data as of Monday evening), including Manitobans.

COVID-19 needs a host to survive. Deprive it of a host and it will die.

"It's a clever virus," said Van Denakker, "cleverer than garden variety viruses."

Take care of details so they don't have to. *Just ask Ken.*

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### STAY HOME – STAY SAFE – TAKE CARE

Our lives and our world have changed, and we are facing unprecedented times with the COVID-19 pandemic. It is extremely important we follow healthcare directives, keep updated as the situation changes and support each other to stay safe and healthy. At the end of the day, "We are all in this together".

On behalf of the RM of Armstrong council and staff, we want to stay connected with our residents during this difficult time. We are all in uncharted territory and have been told how very important it is to take care of ourselves. We need to stay home wherever possible, practice frequent hand-washing and social distancing and follow the provincial health regulations and protocols which we ask you adhere to. We are asking each of you to personally adhere to these policies at all times.

The RM of Armstrong is following all protocols set in place by the Province of Manitoba and adhering to social distancing, closures of non-essential services, closure of our municipal office to the public, additional cleaning and all other measures imposed under the Provincial State of Emergency. We are committed to Public Safety and we will continue to follow all guidelines, policies and recommendations from the province.

Communication is key and we know people appreciate a phone call from someone checking in on them. Please reach out to help or check on a friend or neighbor or someone who lives alone or is sick. Being isolated is much harder on some people than others. Please show your community spirit by reaching out to help others and don't hesitate to ask for assistance when you need it. Our lives have been turned upside down and everyone has been impacted. We are all doing what we can do to contain COVID-19. Council is still working, and the municipality is still operating as we move forward together for a safer tomorrow. We encourage you to contact us with any questions or concerns and let us know how we may assist you 204-278-3377.

We would like to acknowledge and personally thank the RM of Armstrong EMO Team, Firefighters/Emergency Responders, Local Businesses/ Workers/Community Volunteers/ Residents Ratepayers, Friends and Neighbours for your tremendous community support, spirit and service every day – to each of you our most sincere gratitude and appreciation. Globally to our World/Political Leaders, Healthcare Professionals/Experts, all Front Line and Support Workers and the countless others for your unwavering commitment, dedication and professionalism shown, we thank you and appreciate the difficult job you have ahead of you.

Please stay home – stay safe – take care. Truly we are all in this together and as they say, "This too shall pass."

Due to concerns surrounding the coronavirus the RM of Armstrong Office is CLOSED to the public until further notice. Staff are still working. If you need to contact us please call our office at 204-278-3377 or email [cao@rmofarmstrong.com](mailto:cao@rmofarmstrong.com)

Sincerely, RM of Armstrong Reeve Susan Smerchanski and Council



## > INTERLAKE BUSINESSES, FROM PG. 5

our family.

"We have some ideas for new products — launching lines related to our salad dressings and frozen options with our desserts — so in that regard it's exciting. We get to re-think what the McLeod House is for Stonewall, and for us going forward," he said.

Billings said he isn't sold on many of the government's plans for loans, deferrals and tax breaks because even if it's interest free, in four to six months the financial obligation of any business is even greater.

"I hope it's not prolonging the inevitable for many businesses, as opposed to really thinking about how the business can operate," said Billings.

"If we can find ways to reduce cost, like switching to a local supplier (as an example), and help boost community business as a whole, maybe we can be even more successful."

Hoping it could be earlier, Billings said the aim is to open up come late June or early July.

### Quarry Physiotherapy Clinics

Scott Allan is part of the inMotion Network ownership group, which owns an array of Manitoba physiotherapy and multi-disciplinary clinics including Quarry Physiotherapy in Stonewall, Arborg and Gimli (and an additional location in Gillam).

As of March 17, the inMotion Network closed all of its doors prior to the provincial order, as Allan said the group decided to keep the clinics open would be unsafe to staff and the public.

"We work in close proximity with patients. Collectively, we had to make the decision," said Allan, adding the company's revenue stream sits at zero per cent.

"Unfortunately, we had to lay off over 70 people. It was the hardest day of my life, to have to lay off that number of people. You feel like you've let them down."

Allan said his hope is that once the federal government's 75 per cent wage subsidy kicks in, and owners actually have the money in their pockets, inMotion Network can re-hire many of its currently laid-off staff.

The latest public health order deems

physiotherapy an essential service for urgent or emergent conditions. Urgent and emergent, according to Allan, means patients who are post-operative or patients who have complications and challenges or are high-risk.

Allan said the inMotion Network is planning to make select clinics available — Stonewall being one of them — open with limited hours and adequate social distancing measures.

"We're also going to have to implement strict screening access measures, as well as ensuring we're dealing with patients who are in dire straits," said Allan, adding if it were not for physiotherapy intervention, they would end up back in hospital admissions or emergency departments.

"We're going to be rolling out a program with a select number of clinics, ensuring access will ensure the safety of our staff as well as our safety," he said, elaborating to say the clinic will minimize encroachment on social distancing and engage in as much hands-off physio without being negligent in terms of accurately and professionally treating patients.

Limiting patients in the clinic and emphasizing cleaning measures will be of the utmost importance, too, he said.

"We provide a service essential to people's well-being. We want to do our part in reducing the number of individuals taxing the health-care system more than it already is," said Allan.

"If we can limit the number of people accessing our health-care system and emergency departments, then we're providing a necessary service."

Allan also said the inMotion Network is connecting with patients via telephone and plans to unveil a telehealth and virtual therapy program in the next week or so to help guide patients currently part of the business' case load.

### Background on business restrictions

On March 30, the chief provincial public health officer Dr. Brent Roussin issued orders under the Public Health Act restricting operations of non-critical business.

The orders included restaurants (excluding take-out and delivery), as well as businesses not on the list of critical services (though not prohibiting them from operating remotely).

"We are seeing what is happening in other jurisdictions, and the time to act is now. We must continue to adapt to the situation and change our day-to-day lives to prevent unnecessary illness and further tragedies in Manitoba," said Roussin.

"These measures will help us reduce

the risk and protect all Manitobans during the ongoing pandemic."

Manitoba is currently under a state of emergency, with numbers in the Province totalling a combined 204 confirmed positive and presumptive positive cases at presstime, two resulting in death.

The Interlake-Eastern region has seen 10 total cases.

## National Wildlife Week



PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

Each year National Wildlife Week falls around April 10, the birthday of "Wild Goose Jack," (the late Jack Miner) who helped restore the Canada goose population after it was on the brink of extinction in the early 1900s. You can celebrate #NationalWildlifeWeek by stepping outside your door and enjoying the early days of the northern migration here in Manitoba. This pair of Canada Geese were spotted at Oak Hammock Marsh last Sunday.

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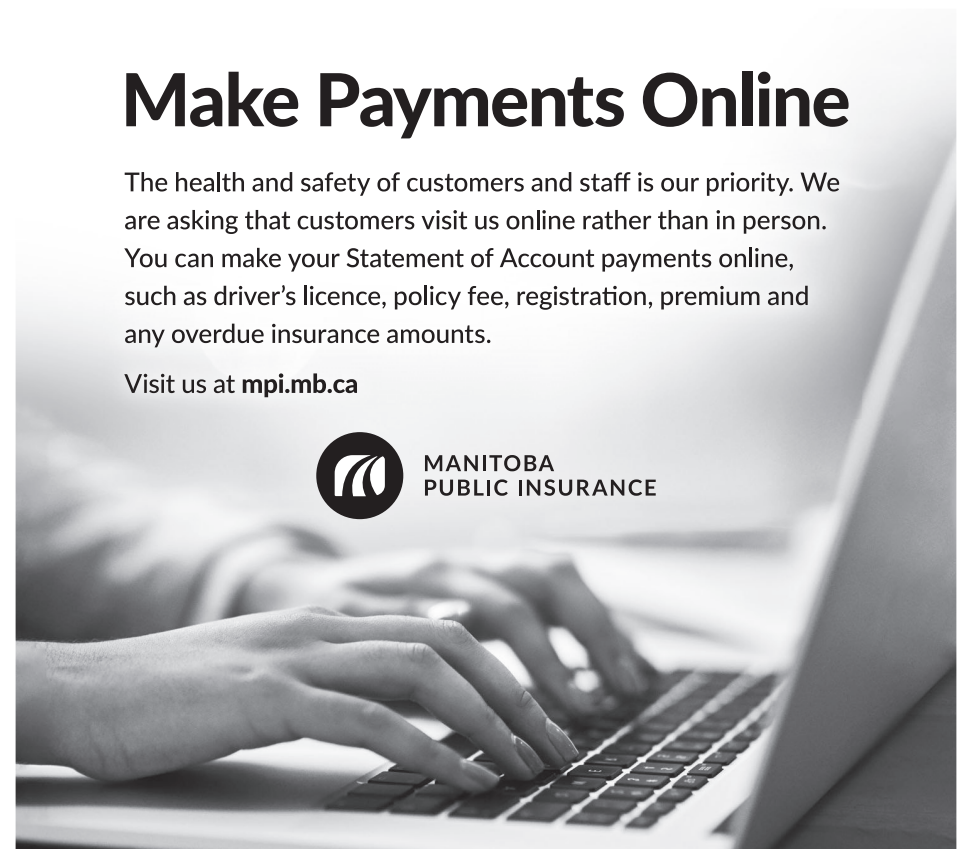
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## Connecting people to build stronger communities

By Evan Matthews

Last week's editorial discussed pandemic positivity and profundity, so let's keep going with those themes.

This week, an Interlaker told me, "We are living history right now. This pandemic has forced us to sacrifice what we love most: spending time together."

How true.

We are all struggling with changes to our routines, to our financial situations, to the way we interact with one another and much more. The list goes on and on.

As is everyone else, your community newspapers are facing struggles of their own. For example, having reporters connect with communities has become a challenge in itself.

Reporters, similar to everyone else, are being encouraged to self-isolate and social distance where possible.

All to say, when the job requires one to be covering events (that are no longer happening) and cultivating relationships (that cannot take place in person) within our communities, the job becomes difficult. Finding stories, especially positive ones, becomes more difficult.

That's why this week's editorial, as opposed to providing commentary on a subject, is a call to action for our people living throughout our Interlake communities.

Everybody knows our Interlake community is going through a tough time, but we also see so many examples of people rising to the occasion and doing good things.

But as this week's newspaper points out, we are seeing people adapt in ways we may not have anticipated.

Places of worship continue to reach out to the people who used to fill the pews. Some churches have shifted

their sermons online.

Local supporters of arts and culture have found ways to connect via technology to share projects, ideas and messages of support.

Community leaders are taking time to record themselves reading children's books and sharing them online.

But there have to be more examples the newspaper isn't covering.

As a newspaper, we want to share positive stories and highlight all the good going on in our communities, no matter how bleak things can get. We'll cover that, too, but we know there are good people doing good things out there.

Our mission is to connect people

through stories to build stronger communities.

Right now, you can help us on that mission. We cannot cover what we do not know.

If you know of someone providing value, doing something special or making a difference in the community, now more than ever is the time to contact our paper.

We want to hear from you, and we want to share those stories. Let us know.

In a time when things might not seem to be going all that well, let's cultivate community.

We hope to hear from you.

News tips can be emailed to [evan@expressweeklynews.ca](mailto:evan@expressweeklynews.ca).

## Historical gas prices

Gas prices one year ago, right photo, were \$119.10/litre and last week they hit a 20-year low at \$66.90/litre. Gas prices are down to levels we haven't seen since the early 2000s. Gas price-watchers note the irony in the fact that Canadian consumers are enjoying the most affordable gas prices at a time when cars are parked in driveways and commuters work from home or have been laid off due to COVID-19. The cost of crude oil accounts for about half the price of gas, with provincial and federal taxes comprising about another 30 per cent, and refining and marketing costs accounting for the rest.

A petroleum analyst for GasBuddy who follows the retail market in Canada said that prices would



PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

typically rise through May as refineries switch over production to cleaner-burning, more expensive summer blends and as demand for fuel picks up with the approaching summer driving season.

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# Technology and a few feet of floor space have Arborg dancers on their toes

By Patricia Barrett

All it takes is technology and a bit of floor space and you can continue taking dance classes while locked down during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Gemma Orbanski, Sydney Burak and Kiera Chwaliboga, who perform with Arborg's Reechka Dance Club as well as with Winnipeg-based Kids Etc Youth Movement Company, refuse to let COVID interfere with what they love.

Although they're cooped up at home, they're glad they can still train while they wait out the virus.

"The best thing about dancing at home is not having to drive almost two hours to get to the studio," said Gemma. "Also just getting to dance is awesome."

Each dancer has claimed floor space in her respective home for practise. Gemma uses her bedroom or space outside the living room. Sydney uses her bedroom or the living room and Kiera uses the living room.

"Right now [we practise] 45 minutes to two hours," said Gemma. "On April 14 we will continue with regular classes virtually, which could be six to seven hours. Originally, we danced two hours each on Wednesdays and on Saturdays for five and a half hours."

The dancers log into Zoom, a screen-sharing app with audio and video, where Kids' instructors Ana Cole, Marilee Schroeder and Savane Boisliveau take them through their paces.

The online classes help the dancers stay in peak form, maintain their skill set and keep them motivated.

"For me, it is definitely keeping me motivated," said Gemma. "We can almost do everything we do in class."

At the moment, they're working on exercises and ballet barre classes, said Kiera.

"There are separate classes where dancers can practise their solos and



Like her friends, Sydney Burak has claimed space at home for dance practice.

more with their teachers privately," she added.

Because of space restrictions at home, Sydney said they can't quite do everything they'd normally do in class, but online is "better than not dancing at all. Keeps me in shape, too!"

The technology comes with a few glitches that sometimes interrupt the flow of their lessons, but as any performer knows, you just press on.

Gemma said her laptop often shuts down and she has to reboot it, which is a "hassle," and it also freezes.

"Asking questions can also be a challenge sometimes because while we are doing these classes, they ask that we mute ourselves," she said. "To ask a question you have to unmute and then mute again."

Sydney said her practice space is a bit problematic along with distractions and the need to adjust her computer screen in order to see everything.



EXPRESS PHOTOS COURTESY OF SHERRI ORBANSKI

Kiera Chwaliboga practises in her living room using her laptop to connect virtually where she receives her dance lessons weekly.



Gemma Orbanski shows that you can practise anywhere, even the foyer.

But what she misses the most is dancing with her friends because they could push each other harder when they were in a regular class.

Kiera said she too has experienced technical difficulties, having to stop to adjust her screen a few times so that the instructor can see what she's doing.

After they complete their exercise and ballet barre classes, the dancers will move on to virtual dance classes through CLI Studios in mid-April.

"I am just glad we have dance to do, especially since all of our competitions have been postponed or cancelled at this time," said Sydney.

## letter to the editor

Letters to the Editor:  
letters@expressweeklynews.ca

### Snowbirds encouraged to self-isolate

A big Thank You to Patricia Barrett for her article "Snowbirds shopping in Gimli rather than self-isolating" and the same to Bill Buckels for providing information and for his efforts to convince local politicians to declare a local state of emergency.

It is both sad and maddening that there are individuals in our community who are knowingly putting everybody at risk by not observing and following self-isolation rules.

Such behaviour shows a total disregard for the health and safety of fellow citizens.

I have no problem with anyone who wants to put himself or herself at risk but if such behaviour impacts others, then we must not allow it.

Snowbirds and other travellers might carry the COVID-19 virus, even though they do not show any symptoms. For that reason they MUST practise self-isolation for two

weeks.

Unfortunately, the guidelines in regards to self-isolation issued by the province do not mention penalties for those who do not follow them. There are jurisdictions where self-isolation rules are enforced by the police or even the military. Perhaps it is time to tighten the rules in Manitoba and to impose penalties.

I am not sure what kind of powers our local politicians could wield if a local state of emergency was declared but I am sure it would help to keep irresponsible citizens off the

streets and out of the stores.

Another way of "motivating" those who must self-isolate is social shaming.

By making public the names of those who put us at risk, it will hopefully encourage others to follow the rules.

Let's hope that the irresponsible ones among us come to their senses and start behaving in a way that will make Gimli and the rest of Manitoba a safer place to be.

Fred Veldink  
Silver Harbour



# Arborg's Miss B Haven Boutique on a roll with reusable toilet paper

By Patricia Barrett

Despite a limit on how much toilet paper customers can now buy after a COVID-19-induced shopping frenzy last month left shelves bare in the city and rural towns, it's still hard to get one's hands on the white stuff.

Enter Arborg-based entrepreneur Christine Sutyla. She's currently on a roll selling reusable cloth toilet rolls.

Sutyla runs Miss B Haven Boutique, making a wide variety of reusable cloth products, including menstrual and incontinence pads, tea towels, dishcloths and baby wipes, that she sells around the world.

She said she started making reusable toilet rolls seven years ago despite a few naysayers predicting it just wouldn't fly. But fly it did, primarily to customers in the U.K. and Australia. It's really taking off at present.

"As you can imagine the reusable industry is alive and well right now," said Sutyla, taking a much-needed break from cutting and stitching what's quickly becoming a must-have household item. "I got tons and tons

of orders from people stocking up on the reusable rolls because they can't find any toilet paper at the stores."

In hardscrabble times when toilet rolls didn't grow on trees, people found novel ways to "tidy up" after a call of nature.

The ancient Romans may have used a vinegar-soaked sponge attached to a long stick (definitive archaeological evidence is lacking; it could have been the Roman equivalent of a toilet-cleaning brush). People in medieval times made good use of moss. The French invented the bidet in the 17th century. Some people resorted to corncobs, pages torn out of the Sears catalogue or newspapers cut into neat little squares. Some people just used their hands.

Sutyla's reusable toilet roll is a much more hygienic approach to the present toilet paper dilemma. After use, just pop the cloth wipes into a special receptacle then toss them in the washing machine.

The wipes come in quantities ranging from two to 100, and people are

free to order them loose in any quantity.

"I have people buying quantities of 100. That's where my shop gets super busy," said Sutyla, who juggles a full-time job and running her shop. "My mom has been helping with the wipes. I've been dropping off fabric to her because making 500 is just so many. Even if a toilet roll was all I had to make, 500 in a couple weeks is a very heavy workload."

Sutyla said people are starting to realize just how precarious certain items can become in extraordinary times.

"People from across Canada and the U.S. that hadn't been considering it are now considering it and buying it because COVID probably made them realize that they rely on the store too much," she said. "With reusables, they'll have a stock at home and they won't need to go to the store."

To view and purchase a reusable toilet roll and other products, visit Miss B Haven Boutique on etsy.com or on Facebook.



EXPRESS PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRISTINE SUTYLA

Christine Sutyla makes reusable toilet rolls in brown, black, white and fetching patterns to brighten up a bathroom.

## Churches changing praise practices

By Evan Matthews

Normally one would find an altar at a church, but with the province restricting public gatherings due to COVID-19, Interlake churches are altering their praise practices to find you.

As of March 30, the province limited public gatherings to no more than 10 people, which includes places of worship.

As a result, churches have temporarily closed their doors to prohibit the spread of the novel COVID-19.

However, it doesn't mean Interlakers can't get their typical dose of Sunday faith.

"We have a 14-year-old boy in our congregation, Kean Sarb — he's a technological genius — who has set up a church YouTube channel for us. It's virtual church," said Teulon New Life Church's interim pastor Henry Ozirney.

The congregation could get as large as 70 people on any given Sunday prior to the closures, he added.

Though now an interim pastor, that was not always the case since Ozirney spent 44 years as the founding pastor at New Life Church in Stonewall.

"Over the last (few) weeks, (Sarb) and I go to the church and he videotapes me doing my monologue messages. Then he posts it online," he said.

The videos posted online now have a collective 1,000 views. Ozirney said the numbers are indicative of the fact

that the messages are extending past the church's typical congregation.

To add a creative element to his monologues, Ozirney draws cartoon aids to help deliver his message. He said the creative element helps to draw in younger viewers.

"I was hoping for 50 views," said Ozirney. "We've had young families email us and tell us how much more engaged their kids — as young as five — are with our message."

So far, Ozirney said many of his messages have touched on the themes of coping with anxiety and fear. He said with the COVID-19 pandemic, it's hard for people to not feel those emotions.

Having titled his first three messages, "A Biblical response to the Coronavirus Pandemic," "Why does God allow COVID-19?" and "Peace in the midst of a pandemic," Ozirney said it is his mission to provide insight on these issues that are upsetting people greatly.

"Somebody has to address the anxiety and fear in our society," said Ozirney.

"My philosophy, the way I look at life, is that there is a personal God who is in absolute control of everything. I communicate to the congregation, whatever happens, it doesn't just happen by chance.

"There is a divine, ruling component to this. I call it the sovereignty of God,"



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Pastor Henry Ozirney, top left, can be seen delivering a monologue on the Teulon New Life Church's YouTube Channel. As the monologue progresses, cartoons and graphics can be seen where the photo of the church is in this photo.

he said.

To find Pastor Ozirney's messages, search New Life Church Teulon on YouTube.

### Ashern Gospel Church

Luke Tully, interim pastor at Ashern Gospel Church, said his congregation is experiencing similar challenges.

In unison with the rest of the province, everything from regular services to Bible studies have been cancelled, he said.

"It's been really difficult. We have a lot of people who are pretty remote. Some don't even have internet," said Tully.

"It's the challenge of reaching those people. At the end of the day, you spend more time talking to people

on the phone and checking on them ... We want people to know we're still here for them."

For those who do have internet, Tully has been posting audio clips to its Ashern Gospel Chapel Facebook page. Because his church hasn't had much of an online presence to date, Tully said his posts have audio but lack video for now.

For a fully immersed, virtual Sunday service, Tully encouraged his congregation to not only listen to his message but to visit Teulon New Life Church's YouTube channel as well.

"Churches are here to help people," said Tully.

"Right now, there are a lot of people who need help."



# Province prescribes changes to how pharmacies do business

By Evan Matthews

The province has prescribed changes to pharmacies, which has been a hard pill to swallow in some ways for customers and staff alike.

Tammy Ciemny, manager of Arborg's Guardian Pharmacy, said the business has had to make a number of changes in order to keep its staff and the public as safe as possible.

"We're offering curb-side delivery for our customers, so if they either are not healthy or just do not want to enter the store, we can bring it out to them on Main Street or in the back lane," said Ciemny.

"We're putting payments through manually or over the counter with Visa or Mastercard. So far, it's been working for people."

In addition, similar to other businesses, stickers and tape mark appropriate social distancing measures for those who choose to enter, Ciemny said.

Shields have been put up at the pharmacy's dispensary doors, as well as at the tills, she said.

"We want to have a bit of a barrier in place, just in case," said Ciemny, noting employees are wearing gloves, and hand sanitizer is available for customers.

"We're wiping down doors, debit machines, counters, everything we can as much as we can."

The photo kiosk has also been shut down as a precautionary measure, she added. This kiosk seemed to be the one area of the store in which cus-

tomers continued to gather, according to Ciemny. Based on its location, Ciemny said it created challenges for people to maintain social distancing measures while in the photo kiosk's general area.

Aside from the aforementioned measures, one Guardian staff member was unfortunately laid off due to a compromised immune system, which has left the pharmacy slightly short-staffed.

"It's been a bit difficult to keep our store stocked. Customers have been a little bit upset due to shortages. It's due to product allocation and our wholesaler limiting the number of products we can buy, so we can only bring so many products so often," said Ciemny.

"Otherwise we're focusing on respecting social distancing measures and keeping our space, even in our lunchroom. In our dispensary, we only ever have a pharmacist and a tech, so it's been relatively easy to watch our spacing and making sure we're cleaning everything."

## Gimli Pharmasave takes comparable measures

Melissa Jacobs, Gimli Pharmasave's store operator, said her store is taking similar measures.

Customers have likely noticed changes to the store's esthetics, she said, as management has installed vapour barriers around the pharmacy's dispensary and front checkout, and plexiglass around its cosmetic coun-



EXPRESS PHOTO BY TAMMY CIEMNY

Arborg's Guardian Pharmacy has installed plexiglass to protect pharmacists and technicians against COVID-19 transmission.

ter.

"We're only letting a certain number of customers in at a time. We're decreasing the number from six to even less," said Jacobs.

"We're encouraging customers to have an organized visit, only one family member come in, and to have it very planned as to what you need and why you're coming in.

"We're also having a staff member help customers shop so they can find exactly what they need and cash out, allowing the next customer to come

in," she said, adding protecting the community is priority one.

Many of the other changes at Gimli Pharmasave are in line with other stores, including those mentioned in regards to Arborg's Guardian Pharmacy.

Other changes go back to March, when Manitoba's chief provincial public health officer Dr. Brent Roussin called for pharmacies to limit prescriptions to a one-month supply for clients in order to avoid stockpiling.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY MELISSA JACOBS

Gimli Pharmasave has installed vapour barriers as a way of preventing the transmission of COVID-19.

# Here to Help

Manitoba Health Links

1-888-315-9257

Coronavirus Hotline

1-833-784-4397

24/7 emergency watch and response number (and Global Affairs)

1-613-996-8885

JAMES BEZAN MP

SELKIRK—INTERLAKE—EASTMAN

EI/CERB

1-833-381-2725

CRA

www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency

## Lake St. Martin First Nation restricting access

Submitted

Lake St. Martin First Nation security will be enforcing this measure by referring to the band list, checking all vehicles, and recording licence plates, recording departure and return times of community members who leave the community.

Community members should not leave the community unless it's an

emergency.

As of April 2 at approximately 9 a.m., 167 cases of COVID-19 had been reported in Manitoba.

In case of an emergency, please contact the ambulance at 204-659-2500.

Thank you, Lake St. Martin Chief and council.

228 Manitoba Avenue, Selkirk, MB R1A 0Y5  
office@jamesbezan.com - jamesbezan.com - 204-785-6151



# Mining company proposes to barge frack sand across Lake Winnipeg to Dunnottar

By Patricia Barrett

An Alberta-based sand fracking company is proposing to ship silica sand across Lake Winnipeg by barge from its mine near Hollow Water First Nation, on the east side of the lake, to a pier and processing facility it wants to build in the Dunnottar-St. Andrews area.

Canadian Premium Sand (CPS) obtained a licence from the provincial government in 2019 to remove silica sand from its Wanipigow open-pit mine near the First Nation.

The company released an updated preliminary feasibility study March 20, proposing to barge the sand, dry it and transport it to the railway line owned by Lake Line Railroad, which currently serves the Diageo distillery in Gimli.

Don Sullivan, former executive director of the Boreal Forest Network and member of an east side citizen group that mounted strong opposition to the mine a few years ago, said CPS had announced a few months ago that it had decided to re-jig its operation to save costs, and the updated feasibility study represents its new plan.

The company, which has a three-year licence, will be harvesting over a million tonnes of frack sand a year from the Wanipigow mine, he said. But rather than have 200 trucks barrelling down highways 304 and 59 on the east side of the lake as originally proposed, the company wants to barge it about 92 kilometres across the lake on two barges, each about 263 feet long by 80 feet wide, that will be supplied by a company from Burlington, Ont.

Two barges a day over the course of a 190-day period (or until freeze-up) will deliver sand to the proposed facility near Dunnottar, he said. And CPS will have to build a dock to receive the barges.

"It will be a shorter distance to truck the sand [from the lake to the railway line], but it still means traffic in cottage communities," said Sullivan. "I don't even want to venture what property values are going to be once people start clicking in."

Because the frack sand will be stockpiled at the drying facility, Sullivan said there's a potential for it

to get blown around.

"You can cover these mounds with tarps, but if you're using a bulldozer to load it on a hopper then you'll have sand blowing around," he said. "Frack sand can cause silicosis among other respiratory illnesses."

In its feasibility study, the company states there's a 60-acre site "near" the RM of St. Andrews where the new facility could be built, and also included a very low-resolution map showing an area that looks to be between the town of Winnipeg Beach and Ponemah.

"It should be noted that the desired parcel of land near the Rural Municipality of St. Andrews is in preliminary stages of being secured (leased/purchased) and that a definitive agreement has not been completed," states the study. "If an agreement is not secured on this parcel, there are several additional options in the area with similar logistics."

Town of Dunnottar Mayor Rick Gamble said he has no idea exactly what land the company is scoping out for the proposed facility, but he doesn't want it in the neighbourhood.

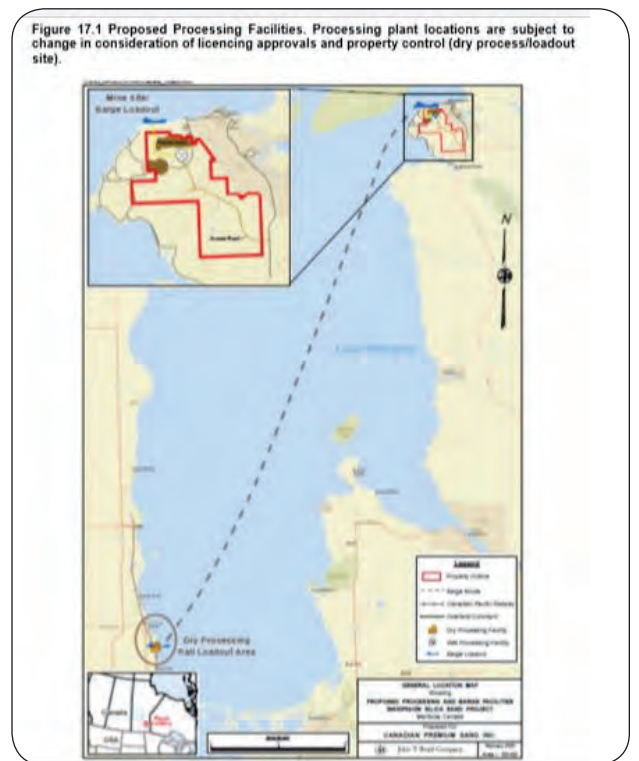
"There's no way we want it in this area," he said, "and I can't imagine anybody else wanting it."

Gamble said more fossil fuel is "yesterday's technology," and the province could invest in clean energy such as hydrogen. He also has concerns about trucks hauling sand in cottage country.

"We don't know where the province is on this because the report just came out," said Gamble. "The government says they care about the lake, but if they allow these types of things to go on ...."

Lake Winnipeg commercial fisher Bill Buckels also doesn't want the company to barge sand across the lake as there's a potential to interfere with nets.

"There are too many commercial nets in the way, and this is also a risky exercise in navigation," said Buckels. "Historically, when this same sand was barged to Pine Falls, then transported by train, the barge could flip over and lose all its cargo. Back then, if the barge got blown around, it would make



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Canadian Premium Sand is proposing to barge silica sand across Lake Winnipeg to Dunnottar.

a hell of a mess of commercial nets."

The safer alternative would be to ship the sand from Pine Falls by Cando rail, he said.

"The guy who runs Cando told me they quit going to Pine Falls when the paper mill closed and now go only as far as Selkirk. But the tracks are still there," he said.

If the company were to barge to the Dunnottar area, he said they'd have to dredge the area where they build a pier as the bottom is too shallow.

"It's a stupid idea. The cottagers will oppose it," said Buckels. "The best option is rail transport from Pine Falls — that's the way it was always done when men were smarter."

## RCMP make liquor and drug seizures in two dry northern communities

Submitted by RCMP

On March 27 and 28, Norway House RCMP, along with First Nation Safety Officers, conducted numerous checkpoints and roving patrols in the community to ensure compliance with local band council resolutions that prohibit alcohol in the community.

This led to officers seizing over 1,000 cans of beer and issuing over \$7,000 in fines under the Highway Traffic Act and the Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Authority of Manitoba.

On March 29, in a joint effort, Poplar River RCMP and Berens River RCMP initiated a traffic stop of four vehicles on the winter road.

Officers located and seized approximately 74 bottles of spir-

its, 24 cans of beer, 36 grams of cocaine and over 1,500 grams of cannabis.

A 27-year-old female from Poplar River First Nation was arrested and will be facing charges of possession of cannabis for the purpose of selling, possession of cannabis for the purpose of distributing, and failing to comply with a probation order. She is scheduled to appear in court on May 12.

RCMP continue to investigate and four other suspects may also be facing charges.

RCMP would like to thank the community members in Norway House Cree Nation, Berens River First Nation and Poplar River First Nation for their assistance in these matters.



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Poplar River RCMP and Berens River RCMP seized approximately 74 bottles of spirits, 24 cans of beer, 36 grams of cocaine and over 1,500 grams of cannabis during a traffic stop.



# GAAC launches online outlet

By Evan Matthews

A Teulon organization is working to bring people together in an effort to build community and creativity in a time where people are forced to be apart.

As of March 28, Green Acres Art Centre has launched "Together While We're Apart," which is a Facebook group designed to be a supportive space for individuals to share their artistic ideas and projects.

"We feel the arts can play a vital role in helping people of all ages manage the extra pressures and challenges associated with this pandemic," said president Lana Knor.

"GAAC recognized the need to extend support beyond our own members and to provide an outlet for the community and its surrounding areas. ... This was the best option to keep us connected."

The idea struck after news of the three-week school suspension broke, Knor said, She and vice-president Lori Cook created a committee that includes GAAC board member Niki Struck, GAAC event co-ordinator

Stacey Burse and local artist Heidi Hunter (Runs with Scissors Studio).

While brainstorming ways to alleviate community stress and anxiety during the school suspension, Hunter said the concept for Together While We're Apart was born.

"In joining this group, people in our community can celebrate and nurture a feeling of belonging, while being encouraged to express their own personal experience through different art forms," said Hunter, adding there is no limit to creative forms, which can include journaling, drawing or learning something new.

"This can be a wonderful outlet for healing, support and getting through this together. We can use this time not only to connect with others but also develop a relationship with our own creative voice, a voice we maybe never knew we had."

To date, Knor said some examples of artistic ideas and projects being shared with the group include sketching and drawing, painting with watercolours, creative cooking with kids, musical projects, crafting, quilting, as



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Krista Ford's children Jacob Keck, 10, and Allyson Keck, 8, have been enjoying following step-by-step YouTube tutorials for watercolour painting.

well as dance and yoga.

Another overarching project within the group, co-ordinated by Hunter, is a memory sketchbook. She said she's inviting everyone in the group to make an "Art While We're Apart" memory sketchbook from materials found around the house like old envelopes, recycled greeting cards and scrap paper.

As time goes, Hunter said she'll provide content suggestions for the book, hoping people enjoy the project through drawing, journaling and doc-

umenting memories from a time the community came together in spirit while forced to be apart.

"We want to boost spirits. This group will provide the opportunity to connect and interact," said Knor.

"We're encouraging people to keep busy, try to learn new things. ... Maybe this is the time to create art with your children or simply for yourself."

To join GAAC's Together While We're Apart online projects, visit the Green Acres Art Centre Inc. Facebook page.

## Manitoba schools remain closed indefinitely

By Evan Matthews

Last week the province's chief public health officer announced Manitoba would suspend classroom learning from kindergarten to Grade 12 indefinitely to help flatten the COVID-19 curve.

But Don Nikkel, Lakeshore School Division's superintendent of HR and alternative program director, said it doesn't necessarily mean school won't come back at all prior to summer break.

"There is still a chance classes will resume this school year, but it really depends on the trajectory of COVID-19 and the decision of our chief public health officer," said Nikkel.

"Obviously, there isn't a known return date at this point, and we have not had to manage a pandemic like COVID-19 in recent history, so this is new ground for everyone and it's hard to know how long these measures will be needed.

"Our hope is that we will return to regular classroom learning as soon as possible, but we are also putting in place a remote learning plan that extends beyond the next few weeks and perhaps until the end of the school year in June," he said.

Originally, the province had announced classes would be suspended from March 23 through April 10, but the new step to extend the suspension is being taken with the interests

of students, educators and, ultimately, all Manitobans, according to the premier.

Nikkel said the division has been working to develop its technological capacity for a number of years and has been leveraging the resources for its students.

"We currently have laptops available for all students Grade 5 and up, and we're looking into expanding that to other grades, too," said Nikkel.

"We have an opportunity to improve how we use these resources and anticipate there will be long-term benefits in honing these skills."

The province has stated no student would be held back due to the pandemic, but students must continue to actively engage in learning.

"The efforts and success Manitoba teachers and educators have displayed during this public health pandemic has been inspiring," said Education Minister Kelvin Goertzen.

"I join all Manitobans in asking educators to continue doing all they can to use remote and innovative methods to teach students through the remainder of this school year.

"Our government is asking for an all-hands-on-deck approach — with their assistance and with that of parents, caregivers, principals, trustees and superintendents — for the benefit of all students."

Childcare centres located in schools

continue to operate under current conditions set out by the chief provincial public health officer, according to the province, with the overall plan oriented toward the future.

Provincially, the modernization to education is happening through the response to the COVID-19 situation, according to Goertzen, who added combined efforts are geared toward the re-opening of classrooms as well as multifaceted ways to teach and learn after the pandemic.

### Graduation

At this point in time, Nikkel said graduation ceremonies have neither been cancelled nor postponed.

The division continues to carefully monitor the evolving situation, he said, and will provide notice well in advance of graduation.

"It is worth noting we are only a few weeks into the COVID-19 response in North America," said Nikkel.

"Graduation is still months away, and the situation is evolving rapidly."

### CHANGE TO SERVICE

**Unscheduled drop-in services are not available at this time**

**West Interlake Watershed District** is taking proactive measures to help manage and minimize the spread of COVID-19, including social-distancing measures.

Please use one of the following ways to access our programs and services.

**Call this local office at 204-762-5850 or email at [wiwcd@mts.net](mailto:wiwcd@mts.net)**  
**For in-person service, call 204-762-5850 or 204-280 0181**

### NEW FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES!

**Find out if you qualify to receive financial assistance through GROWING OUTCOMES IN WATERSHEDS PROGRAM (GROW) and THE CONSERVATION TRUST**

If you have land or operating a farm within West Interlake Watershed District boundaries, We may be able to help!

Seeding cover/intercrops or perennial crops, extended and rotational grazing, restoring marginal and sensitive land, planting shelterbelts or establishing buffer strips, installing off-site or alternative watering systems, enhancing and conserving wetlands, riparian management areas conservation and restoration and etc. are practices that may be eligible for financial assistance.

**(please call 204-762-5850 or email: [wiwcd@mts.net](mailto:wiwcd@mts.net))**





# Disinfecting, cleaning business thriving during coronavirus pandemic

By Jennifer McFee

While many businesses are struggling to keep afloat, one local company is scrambling to keep up with the demand.

Dis In Fect Products Ltd., a Balmoral-based business, launched in 2016 to offer environmentally friendly cleaning and disinfecting products for the agriculture industry. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, demand for these products continues to rise.

"I'm just so busy. I do bigger agriculture-based loads all across Canada with four stores now. I have hand sanitizers and disinfectants for the producer in the agriculture business across Canada, as well as water treatment," said Darren Ruchkall, president of product development and sales.

"I mainly do everything myself, and it's big orders like sending to Maple Leaf Foods for its RWA program (raised without antibiotics water treatments program). It's been a busy time."

For Ruchkall, his interest in eco-friendly agricultural products stems from knowledge he gleaned by working in the industry.

"I worked at a turkey farm in the north for 16 years and I used harsh chemicals to wash barns," he said.

"I wanted to find something that the producer could get on his skin and in his eyes and not harm him yet do the job. That's when we started developing this four years ago now and it's taken off really



PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER  
Darren Ruchkall is seeing an increased demand for items from Dis In Fect Products Ltd.

well."

Ruchkall is no stranger to taking extra safety precautions when delivering products. To avoid the spread of PED at hog farms, he got in the practice of arriving in full protection gear.

"I've been basically meeting at the farm gates and wearing the gloves and mask and bio-suit. That's what I've done for years and years, so for me it's not a big stretch. But for others, I could see that they

might not be used to it," he said.

"I always carry ample supply, but we sell more by bulk in 20-litre pails and four-litre jugs."

Some families are buying four-litre jugs of Durell hand disinfectant or Healthy Hands anti-bacterial soap to divide among relatives, he added. The highly concentrated products are made in Canada and approved by Health Canada as well as Agriculture Canada.

"I started this business selling earth-friendly products. It's all food grade so it's a lot easier for the aquasystem to take these chemicals. All my products are sold at hospital level too," Ruchkall said.

"My company has exploded each year with a 40 to 50 per cent gain in each market in Canada from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and eventually to B.C."

Dis In Fect products are available at Masterfeeds in Winnipeg and Ruchkall also operates from an office in Headingley. In addition, he recently signed a three-year deal with Proveta Nutrition Ltd., which will bring his products to various locations in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

"We're getting big truckloads out there," he said. "Timing is everything."

For more information about Dis In Fect Products Ltd., visit [www.disinfectproducts.com](http://www.disinfectproducts.com) or email [disinfectproductsltd@gmail.com](mailto:disinfectproductsltd@gmail.com).

## Woodlands' farmer-vets watching over their flocks during COVID crisis

By Patricia Barrett

Farmers and pet owners experiencing an animal emergency or needing an essential service can rely on their veterinarians to be there for them during the COVID-19 outbreak in Manitoba.

Veterinarians are considered an essential service, but they — like dentists — have temporarily postponed non-essential services on the recommendation of their professional association.

The owners of the Woodlands Veterinary Clinic are pulling triple duty during the COVID crisis, attending to livestock and pet patients, taking care of their own sheep — half of which recently lambed — and adhering to a rigid regime of social distancing and disinfecting their clinic.

"Our business doesn't stop because of COVID. We're still out and about and going onto farms," said veterinary technician Jennifer Reesink, who works alongside her veterinarian husband, Carel. "We're being as safe as we can, adhering to social distancing. But cows still calf and sheep still lamb. And they're still getting sick so we're providing vet services to those farmers."

In Manitoba most cow-calf operations have winter calving where calves are born in the January to March period. This system is more conducive to mixed farming operations and pure bred operations where the cow/calf enterprise doesn't interfere with the cropping. And people still require care for their pets.

Because of the importance of social distancing in helping prevent the spread of the highly contagious virus that's infected over 200 people in Manitoba as of last Sunday, the clinic has scaled back services that can wait.

"We're still open because we're an emergency clinic," said Reesink. "We're still seeing sick animals



PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER  
Nine-year-old Annika Reesink helps on the family farm.

and animals that have to be vaccinated to prevent them from getting other viruses and sicknesses. But we're using our best judgment over the phone as to what needs to be seen now and what can wait."

She's encouraging people to use their best judgment about what non-essential services (e.g., annual exams, nail trims, shaves, etc.) can be put off. If people can stay home, that will help the clinic a "tremendous amount," said Reesink.

For those who must bring their pet into the clinic, social distancing is a must. The vets and staff are also carrying out enhanced cleaning as a preventative measure.

"We are always very clean because there are viruses and whatnot that can be spread at any given time," said Reesink. "But we've majorly upped our cleaning with COVID going on to try to reduce that

transmission should it make its way into the clinic."

To make matters a bit more challenging, the Reesinks have 77 lambs to watch over on their Woodlands-area farm. About half of their 70-strong ewe flock delivered at the end of January. The other half is expected to deliver near the end of May.

"I have two flocks going. It's something that we changed last year," said Reesink. "We have some a little bit earlier to hit some different markets."

The Reesinks' nine-year-old daughter Annika is a third pair of trusty hands at home to help with the sheep. Having grown up around sheep and learned first-hand from her parents how to properly care for animals, Annika is almost like a veterinarian-in-training.

"She helps feed the sheep and helps do chores," said Reesink. "She's in there like a dirty sock. If a ewe is having trouble lambing, she will stick her hand in and pull the lamb out."

Annika also earns an "informal" wage. Profits from the wool the Reesinks sell goes into her piggy bank.

Given the disruption of the virus to the markets, sales of lamb meat may take a hit, especially at Easter.

"Definitely the market is going to go down, but I'm hoping some people will still buy lamb meat," said Reesink. "They may not be able to have the big family gatherings they typically have, but they'll still want to have lamb for their Easter dinners."

The Woodlands Veterinary Clinic's Facebook page provides a brief overview of what services are currently being offered and those that have been temporarily suspended.

Customers are urged to call the clinic at 204-383-5065 if they're uncertain about whether something can be delayed or need more information about services.



# MMJHL is as strong as ever after 50 years

By Brian Bowman

The Manitoba Major Junior Hockey League celebrated its 50th anniversary this past season.

And they expect to be around much, much longer.

The 10-team league — which includes the Stonewall Jets — is as strong as ever.

“When you look back at the history and the pioneers that got us to where we are it’s amazing how the league has lasted 50 years,” said MMJHL president Kerry Lines last Friday afternoon. “We’re probably as strong as we have ever been. Ownership is strong and the competitive balance (is good). We’re liking the future, that’s for sure.”

There was a lot of parity in the league this past season. Any team could beat another on any given night.

In fact, just 13 points separated six teams in the middle of the standings.

“I look at (last place) River East, and they have struggled the last couple of years but they have a young core and the games that they are losing, they are losing in a lot of cases by one goal against some pretty competitive teams,” Lines noted.

The quality of play in the MMJHL is also as good as it’s ever been.

“It’s very fast, not what it used to be,” Lines said. “It’s not as rough and tumble but there’s still strong play along the boards and it’s very fast. It’s been fun to sit back and watch this thing develop over the



FILE PHOTO BY LANA MEIER

The Stonewall Jets are members of the 10-team Manitoba Major Junior Hockey League.

last number of years to more of a speed game.”

The league allows players to play close to home while juggling university or starting a career. Many players choose the MMJHL over having to move away from home to play Junior “A” hockey.

Like all of the other leagues in Canada, the MMJHL was not able to complete its season due to Hockey Canada’s decision to cancel all leagues last month due to the coronavirus pandemic.

“The night it happened, I was travelling in the states and I gave the green light for the game to happen on the Thursday night,” Lines recalled. “Fans were in the building, players on both teams

had taken the pre-game warmup, and then Hockey Manitoba through Hockey Canada (shut it down). It was not so much us, but it was the officials that first got notified and you obviously can’t play without officials.”

The decision by Hockey Canada proved to be the right one as the coronavirus has spread across the world.

“At the beginning, I think there was a little bit of hope that it would be a pause like the NHL,” Lines said. “Day by day, you can see the devastation in the community, not just here but right across Canada and the world. We would have liked to continue but on the other hand we have to be socially responsible in doing what’s right in our community to make sure our teams and fans and those that support us are safe and their families are safe.

“That was totally the right decision as we look back and all we can do is look forward to what’s coming up next year.”

A lot of individuals do a lot of great things to keep this league strong.

“I want to thank our fan base and our sponsors that have supported us all year,” Lines said. “It’s unfortunate what’s going on in the world today but we’ll come back stronger for it next year. A big thank you, not only to the fans and sponsors, but the volunteers in all of the communities that make this league as great as it is.”

## Christensen commits to University of Windsor Lancers

Staff

Logan Christensen is taking his hockey skills to southern Ontario.

Christensen, a Lundar product, has committed to attend school and play hockey for the University of Windsor Lancers.

“I’ve never been out to see that part of the country so I thought that would be a good opportunity,” said Christensen on the Portage Terriers’ website.

“They have a great school and a great program. I felt it would be a great place to go and further my education and play hockey.”

Christensen, who is hoping to study

kinesiology, is really looking forward to going to a Lancers’ program that finished last season with an 18-19 record.

“I talked to the coach (and) he said he liked me when he watched me play,” Christensen said. “He isn’t sure if he is going to play me on the wing or at centre, so I’m not sure where I’ll play but I’m excited.”

In Windsor, Christensen will be joining former Terriers’ goaltender Noah Giesbrecht who also committed to the Lancers.

Christensen really enjoyed his time in Portage.

“It was great,” he said. “It was a good

place with great billets. It was tough that our season had to come to an end when it did.”

Christensen played three full seasons with the Western Hockey League’s Saskatoon Blades and then suited up for 13 more games in 2018-19. He finished that season by playing in 54 games with the Medicine Hat Tigers.

The talented forward was acquired by the Terriers to add experience as Portage prepared to host the 2020 Centennial Cup.

Christensen played well in Portage, scoring 14 goals and collecting 33 points in 42 regular-season games.



Logan Christensen

## Baseball Manitoba continues to work towards governing a season

Submitted by Baseball Manitoba

As we navigate these unprecedented times, please know that Baseball Manitoba continues to work towards governing a baseball season, in some format, in 2020.

All potential start dates and season lengths are being considered. Staff and volunteers remain hopeful that baseball will be played, and memorable experiences will be made this season. It is too early to tell when this may happen, so we are purposely not

giving any target dates or timelines at this time.

Baseball Manitoba has made the difficult decision to cease operations related to online registration through RAMP Interactive and player training programs — including all virtual or online training for players.

As of last Friday, RAMP Interactive online registrations have been closed and the deadline for registration (normally May 15) has been postponed. A new deadline will be provided.

Also as of last Friday, members will not be covered for accidental claims under our third-party liability insurance program. This is not a permanent decision — insurance will be provided to our members when a baseball season resumes.

Please note that Baseball Manitoba may continue to post (on their website and social media) baseball-related drills or activities for baseball players and coaches to use, if they wish.

If people choose to do those activi-

ties, it will be at their own risk. Also, in conjunction with Baseball Canada, Baseball Manitoba may be operating NCCP (coach) and NOCP (umpire) virtual clinics to prepare coaches and umpires for a season in 2020. More information will be communicated about these programs as they become available.

Baseball Manitoba appreciates all efforts and continued patience from the baseball community.



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**Curbside Waste Collection Change**

**No Good Friday Service Regular collection on Thursday, April, 9**

Regular Schedule will resume next week.



The Town of Teulon has **closed** its Civic Centre to the Public to reduce exposure to our front-line workers and our residents. Teulon Waste Disposal site remains open on summer hours with a supervised gate.

**Payments May Be Made To:** The Town of Teulon either by mail to P.O. Box 69, Teulon Manitoba ROC 3B0 or online through electronic banking. Contact your financial institution to register your account. Council meetings when and if held, remain open to public. All delegations to Council have been postponed until further notice. Any Public Hearings that may be required will be advertised with the appropriate notices. We thank everyone for their understanding.

We would like to remind you to please support our local businesses as they need our support as much as we need the services and products, they supply to us now in our greatest time of need.

On behalf of the Mayor, Councillors and our staff of the Town of Teulon we thank our residents for their understanding and patience as we adapt to the ever-changing operational requirements. Given the rapidly evolving situation regarding COVID-19 we are navigating through unprecedented times. We only ask that you continue to follow the direction provided by health officials with respect to social distancing increased hand washing, and staying home as much as possible.

We all need to work together to overcome these difficult times right now.



**RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ROSSER**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**2020 FINANCIAL PLAN**

In accordance with Section 162(2) of The Municipal Act the Council of the Rural Municipality of Rosser will hold a **PUBLIC HEARING** to present the 2020 Financial Plan for the Municipality at:

**7:30 P.M.**

**Tuesday, APRIL 21, 2020**

**ROSSER MUNICIPAL OFFICE**

The Rural Municipality of Rosser 2020 Financial Plan consists of:

- 1) the 2020 Operating Budget,
- 2) the 2020 Capital Budget,
- 3) an estimate of the operating revenue and expenditure for the 2021 fiscal year, and
- 4) a five year Capital Expenditure Program (2021-2025).

At this time the Council will present the proposed 2020 financial plan for the Municipality. The presentation will provide an overview of the proposed financial plan followed by a forum for questions and comments from the public. The purpose of the hearing is to allow any interested person to make a representation, ask questions or register an objection.

Copies of the proposed financial plan are available upon request at the Municipal Office, 77 E PR 221 in Rosser, Manitoba during regular office hours Monday to Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Larry Wandowich  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Rural Municipality of Rosser

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

**HELP WANTED**

Rockwood Victoria Co-op Ltd. is looking for a P/T Class 1 driver, Stonewall area. Someone who is retired from their work and would like a few days throughout the year for something to do to make a few extra dollars. Ph Ted 204-461-2038.

Evening part time janitorial job available in Stonewall area. Phone 204-979-0926.

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Prairie Bookkeeping offers bookkeeping solutions to small business 204-998-4789.

**INCOME TAX**

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**TOWN OF STONEWALL**

**2020 FINANCIAL PLAN PUBLIC HEARING**

In accordance with Section 162(2) of The Municipal Act the Town of Stonewall shall hold a **PUBLIC HEARING** to present the 2020 Financial Plan for the Town on:

**Wednesday, April 22, 2020 at 6:30 PM**

**Sunova Room, Quarry Park Heritage Arts Centre**  
**166 Main St, Stonewall, MB**

**PLEASE NOTE ADHERANCE TO SOCIAL DISTANCING WILL BE REQUIRED**

The Town of Stonewall 2020 Financial Plan consists of:

1. The 2020 Operating Budget
2. The 2020 Capital Budget
3. An estimate of the Operating Revenue and Expenditures for the following fiscal year (2021), and
4. A five (5) year Capital Expenditure Program (2021-2025)

The purpose of the **PUBLIC HEARING** is to allow any interested person to make representation ask questions or register an objection in respect of the Town of Stonewall 2020 Financial Plan.

Copies of the financial plan will be available for review and may be examined by any person on the Town of Stonewall website at [www.stonewall.ca](http://www.stonewall.ca) on April 3, 2020.

Dated this 1st day of April, 2020

Wally R. Melnyk, CMMA, CPA, CGA  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Town of Stonewall



# Classifieds Announcements

## CARD OF THANKS

Thank you to all who came to visit, call or text, sent food, flowers, cards of sympathy, and have continued to keep in touch with us following the passing of our mother, mother-in-law, grandmother, great-grandmother, and sister-in-law, Mina Peltz. Thank you to those who donated to the Warren United Church and the Selkirk Regional Health Centre in her memory.

A special thank you to Faye Mason for the beautiful memory tribute, and to Shirley Williams for her comforting words and wonderful service. We would also like to thank the staff at Selkirk Regional Health Centre, we truly appreciate everything you did for mom and our family while she was in your care. Thank you to MacKenzie Funeral Home for their kindness and service, to Stonewall Florists for the beautiful flowers, and to Brackendale Luncheon Specialties for catering the luncheon at Quarry Park Interpretive Centre. A special thank you to Lana, we truly appreciate everything you have done for us.

-Mark and Lisa, Jason, Ryan  
Nicole and Ben, Robyn and Frank  
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Ashley, Lachlan  
Keegan and Samara, Sophia

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### RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI PUBLIC NOTICE

## DUST CONTROL

The Municipality has implemented a policy to address the procedures and responsibilities for the application of dust control on municipal roads that benefit private residences and/or businesses.

For more information concerning the Dust control policy please visit our website at [www.gimli.ca](http://www.gimli.ca).



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### PUBLIC NOTICE

#### PROPOSED BELL MOBILITY RADIOCOMMUNICATIONS FACILITY TELECOMMUNICATION TOWER

BellMITS is committed to providing Canadian communities high speed wireless voice and data service. To improve service, BellMITS is proposing to construct a 107.2 metre guyed tower with ancillary radio equipment including a shelter approximately 3m x 3m at the base of the tower with a perimeter fence restricting public access. As part of the public consultation process as required by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED), formerly Industry Canada, BellMITS' regulator under the Radiocommunications Act, BellMITS is inviting the public to comment on the proposed tower location before date in compliance with ISED' public notification policy. This tower is fully compliant with ISED's guidelines, as found under the CPC.

**TOWER LOCATION:** The proposed tower is located approximately 10km North West of the intersection of HWY 6 and HWY 68

**COORDINATES:** Lat: 51.024472 ° N, Long: -98.229805 ° W

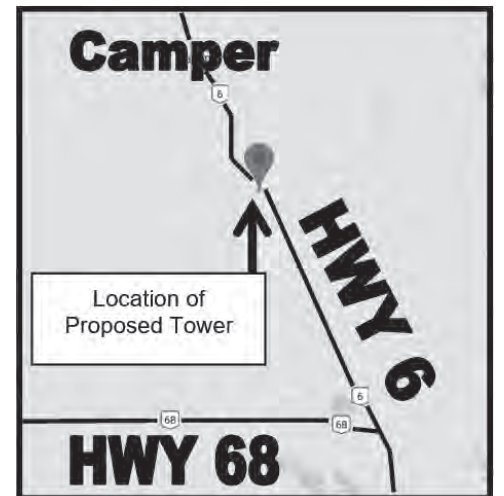
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**ANY PERSON MAY** comment by close of business day on May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 with respect to this matter.

#### BELLMITS CONTACT:

Marshall Rasmussen  
Medallion Wireless  
Consultants for BellMITS  
2417 Main Street  
West Kelowna, BC, V4T 2H8  
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## DEALER DAY SPECIALS

**MS 170**  
GAS CHAIN SAW  
30.1 CC • 1.3 KW • 3.9 KG/8.6 LB ①



SAVE \$90  
**\$199<sup>95</sup>**

MSRP \$289.95 with 16" bar

**MS 180 C-BE**  
GAS CHAIN SAW  
31.8 CC • 1.5 KW • 4.2 KG/9.3 LB ①



Easy 2 Start



SAVE \$80  
**\$299<sup>95</sup>**

MSRP \$379.95 with 16" bar

**MS 250**  
GAS CHAIN SAW  
45.4 CC • 2.3 KW • 4.6 KG/10.1 LB ①



SAVE \$60  
**\$399<sup>95</sup>**

MSRP \$459.95 with 16" bar

**MS 271**  
GAS CHAIN SAW  
50.2 CC • 2.6 KW • 5.6 KG/12.3 LB ①



SAVE \$70  
**\$499<sup>95</sup>**

MSRP \$569.95 with 16" bar

**MS 291 C-BE**  
GAS CHAIN SAW  
55.5 CC • 2.8 KW • 6.2 KG/13.7 LB ①



Easy 2 Start



SAVE \$50  
**\$599<sup>95</sup>**

MSRP \$649.95 with 16" bar

**MS 362 C-M**  
GAS CHAIN SAW  
59.0 CC • 3.5 KW • 5.6 KG/12.3 LB ①



STIHL  
M-Frame



SAVE \$90  
**\$899<sup>95</sup>**

MSRP \$989.95 with 16" bar

Dealers may sell for less. Pricing on all chain saws and blowers will remain in effect until June 30, 2020. Pricing on all other power tools and accessories will remain in effect until July 31, 2020. Illustrations and descriptions are as accurate as known at the time of publication and are subject to change without notice. STIHL Limited is not responsible for a printing error, the local STIHL Dealer has the final authority to set product pricing. Pricing valid at participating dealers only.  
① Weight with powerhead only.

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[WWW.STIHL.CA](http://WWW.STIHL.CA)



# STIHL

# SHACHTAY

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