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EXPRESS PHOTO BY RAYME THOMSON
Aurora Recovery Centre staff and friends had a very colourful and brightly lit float for Gimli's Santa Claus parade last Saturday. The annual Christmas light parade drew hundreds of cheerful onlookers.

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Matlock Recreation Club sees 420 people for breakfast with Santa

By Patricia Barrett

The Matlock Recreation Club is going to need a bigger hall if it keeps on organizing wildly successful free breakfasts with Santa every year.

The club, its volunteers and firefighters from the Matlock Fire Department threw a whopping big party last Saturday that had 420 people from across the Interlake attend. The event included a free breakfast, visits and photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus and free gifts and goody bags for the kids. Last year's event had just over 300 people.

The club's board president Brenda-Lee Walker said that in her three years of service this has been the highest number of people she's seen attend the event.

"This event is a club tradition. We're carrying on what the past board and club members have done for years and years. Coming out of COVID, we had to find ways to work around that and we did, and it's been growing and growing every year," said Walker. "It's so huge now that we actually had to have a cap in order to accommodate all the people who pre-registered. Next year we'll figure out how to get more people in."

Firefighters took over the club's

Continued on page 3



This is Ellie's third year helping the club distribute gifts to children



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Residents from St. Andrews enjoy breakfast.



Club volunteers with the sweet stuff.



Kids from the Inwood area told Santa and Mrs. Claus they were nice this year.

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Riley (left) and Sophia with their mom came from Gimli to visit Santa



Koldan from the Matlock area is hoping to see a freeze dryer under the Christmas tree



From left Andrea, Emily, Oaklee and Connor from Matlock.

> BREAKFAST, FROM PG. 2

kitchen to cook and serve pancakes and sausages. "This is the third time the fire department has volunteered for this event. We like to give back to the community and help the recreation club," said fire chief Seth Johnson, who was joined by about 12 firefighters.

The club's ability to provide the free breakfast and free gifts comes down to the generosity of the community and area businesses, which donated items the club raffled off at its October and November Bingo games. The proceeds from those games, which are coordinated by Denyse Stewner, fund the breakfast.

Stewner said the Village of Dunnottar is in need of Christmas hampers for people struggling with inflation, and she organized the 1st Annual Toonie Hamper Tree fundraiser at the breakfast. People were invited to donate a toonie and pick an ornament to decorate the club's Christmas tree.

"All the proceeds go to the village for hampers, and the fire department is delivering the hampers," said Stewner.

The club is hosting a number of upcoming events, including an ugly Christmas sweater contest on Dec. 15. Visit Matlock Recreation Club - MRC on Facebook.

Clarification

In the story titled "Province invites feedback on new colony's proposed lagoon in Armstrong" in the Nov. 16 edition of the *Express Weekly News*, it was reported that the sale of land to the Crystal Spring Hutterite colony in the Rural Municipality of Armstrong was undertaken by the previous council, serving for the 2018-2022 term. New information provided to the *Express* indicates that the sale of the land to the colony was a private matter by local landowners and that the RM and former council had nothing to do with the sale.



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Arborg lights up the night with town tree

By Patricia Barrett

Arborg put a lot of light in people's lives last Friday night with the town's first annual tree-lighting ceremony near the Icelandic River, some festive sing-a-long carols and other events to kick off the Christmas season.

Town of Arborg councillor Ron Johnston said council sourced a 30-foot-high tree and installed it at the corner of Main Street and River Road, just over the bridge into town.

"We decided as a town council that we'd like to do a tree-lighting ceremony every year. We drilled an 18-inch hole six feet in the ground by the foot of the bridge near the water treatment plant and put a steel casing in it. Then we sourced a 30-foot tree and brought that to town. We trimmed the base of the tree and installed it in the hole, put lights on and had a star made by Swivel manufacturing."

A number of local businesses contributed to the organization and set up of the tree.

"Weik Construction donated transportation so that we could bring the tree from two miles outside town. Home Hardware donated the equipment to drill the hole. Vidir Storage Solutions made the steel casing for the hole. And the Creative Cocoon, our arts group, did a lot of work designing the lights that went on the water treatment plant. That's a new addition this year," said Johnston.



In addition to the town's tree-lighting celebration, there were a number of other events last Friday night that kept people occupied, he said.

The Riverton & District Friendship Centre hosted a craft sale at the Arborg Hall and a Gimli-based choir, the Westshore Singers, performed a selection of seasonal favourites at a local church. There was also a hockey game.

Johnston said the town will reach out to the Central Interlake Chamber of Commerce and local businesses to encourage them to make use of the tree.

"Local businesses are welcome to use the tree from now until Christmas to hold outdoor events. Businesses like Home Hardware or Co-op could host an event under the tree or one of the churches might want to use it," said Johnston. "Businesses can bring people together by having a fire and offer hot chocolate and sing carols."



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY CINDY STANSELL AND DONNA GISLASON

Arborg held its first annual tree-lighting ceremony last Friday near the Icelandic River.

NDP government outlines priorities in first throne speech

By Patricia Barrett

The provincial NDP government released its first throne speech Nov. 21 to open Manitoba's 43rd legislature, promising to address long wait times for surgeries and diagnostic MRIs, reduce hospital backlogs, grow the economy, help Manitobans cope with the cost-of-living crisis and work with Indigenous and municipal partners.

The NDP won the October provincial election with a strong focus on fixing Manitoba's broken health-care system.

The throne speech sets out a course to address the "immediate crisis" in health care and reduce wait times by opening additional surgical slates [operating schedule] at the Grace hospital and expanding spinal surgery capacity at the Health Sciences Centre, Concordia Hospital and the Brandon Regional Health Centre.

"In one of our first acts, we reached out directly to Manitobans working in our health-care system today. We committed to being a listening government and shared our plan to reset the relationship with health-care staff on the front lines. Our team is launching a health-care listening tour, which will hear from the staff at the bedside across the province. We will hear directly from Manitobans who care for you at the bedside," states the speech.

The government promises to take care of health-care workers by fostering open and transparent communication, reducing burnout and holding management accountable to improve the working lives of health-care staff.

To improve retention and recruitment of health-care workers, the NDP will create a culture that will empower workers and let them make decisions.

The NDP will restore emergency care services as it works to "staff up our health-care system" by opening new ERs at the Victoria Hospital in Winnipeg and the Eriksdale Hospital.

The government also promises to protect and provide access to abortion services, as well as provide free birth control.

To help Manitobans cope with high inflation, the NDP promises to put a temporary hold on the provincial gas tax and freeze hydro rates.

"At the start of the new year, our government has a plan to give you a break at the pump — we have a plan to pause the provincial gas tax, saving you 14 cents per litre every time you fill up," states the speech.

The gas tax reduction is expected to start on Jan. 1, 2024.

The speech says a "significant" new policy to lower costs for agricultural

producers and ranchers is forthcoming, and that the government will partner with the agriculture industry to invest in "agricultural science, innovation, resilience and sustainability."

To help address the climate crisis, the NDP promises to focus on the environmental impacts of government policies and bring in measures to help families afford hybrids and electric vehicles, as well as make their homes more efficient with geothermal heat pumps.

In partnership with the federal government, the province will use \$500 million in new investment to expand the electricity grid and deliver low-carbon affordable electricity.

"Today we are proud to announce that we have a commitment from the federal government to work with us on our plan to help families make the switch to affordable geothermal home energy," states the speech. "This collaborative approach will help us deliver on our commitments to reduce emissions, lower costs for families and create more low-carbon jobs."

About 5,000 homes would be converted to geothermal energy over the course of four years.

The new government will also focus on working together with Indigenous governments, the Manitoba Métis Federation and municipalities.

To advance reconciliation, the government will introduce legislation to recognize Louis Riel as the first premier of Manitoba and make Sept. 30, Orange Shirt Day, a statutory holiday. It will strengthen municipal economies by providing infrastructure, services and multi-year funding.

The Manitoba Association of Health Care Professionals' president Jason Linklater said the organization is encouraged by the new government's commitment to fix the health-care system.

"MAHCP is encouraged by changes we are hearing and seeing, in tone, in approach, in government's willingness to listen and work with us," said Linklater in a statement. "Steering away from for-profit care, reinvesting

in staffing and implementing ground-up solutions are what health care needs. Allied health professionals are waiting to see that change translate to the front line, where they are still dealing



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

The rotunda outside the chamber at the Manitoba legislature.

with short staffing and unmanageable workloads. The staffing crisis hasn't gone away, and patients are seeing it in unacceptable wait times for ERs, scans and ambulances."

Interlake-Gimli MLA and former agriculture minister Derek Johnson, whose Progressive Conservative party now sits as the official Opposition, said there are a lot of promises in the NDP's throne speech that will have to be balanced with fiscal reality.

"It will be a matter of fitting those promises into the budget while keeping our provincial coffers from going into debt," said Johnson. "It's like a credit card: you can only spend so much on it before the interest becomes overwhelming."

In response to the NDP's claim that Manitoba faces fiscal challenges because of unsustainable commitments the PCs made, Johnson said he thinks that refers to the \$1.5-billion commitment the former government made to rebuild the central core of the Health Sciences Centre over a period of six years and invest in health care. The funding for HSC had already been approved by the government's Treasury Board, on which he used to sit.

"I'm guessing the new government

has to look at that [commitment] because they have different priorities from what our government did," he said. "As PCs, we thought that was a great investment in our health-care system. The Health Sciences Centre

Continued on page 6

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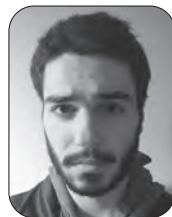
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Call Patricia Barrett
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WCF generates more than \$27K

By Becca Myskiw

This year's Endow Manitoba Giving Challenge was the best yet for the Westshore Community Foundation (WCF).

The 10th annual giving challenge went from Nov. 13 to 19. People were encouraged to donate to their local community foundation for the entire week because the Winnipeg Foundation and the Government of Manitoba donated \$1 each. For every \$5, the foundation got up to a maximum of \$2,000 each (a maximum of an extra \$4,000). So, when the foundation gets a \$5 donation, they get \$7.

All funds generated from the challenge go to the foundation's community funds. Last year, Manitobans raised more than \$1.68 million for community foundations.

WCF received \$27,430 in donations and stretched funds during this year's

Endow Manitoba Giving Challenge, with \$2,100 going to funds other than the community fund. Last year, they raised \$27,375.

"I thought it was fantastic given the current economic state," said WCF president David Douglas.

The foundation's community fund grants money to local organizations and groups in Dunnotar, Gimli, Riverton, and surrounding areas. Last year, WCF granted \$59,137 to 18 local charitable organizations. Over the years, they've granted out more than \$265,000.

WCF has granted money to various heritage projects, including the train station in Riverton, has bought numerous pieces of equipment for the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority, has assisted local churches with equipment and replacement ar-

ticles and has granted money to Evergreen Basic Needs for many projects, including the replacement of their floor.

"It's a wide range of different projects," said Douglas. "Organizations probably wouldn't be able to do it without getting assistance from us. We leave a large footprint in the community."

The Endow Manitoba Giving Challenge is so important to community foundations — it generates funds to send back into the community. Douglas said it gives them extra funds to work with each year, and they rely on the Giving Challenge Week as a major fundraiser each year. With more money in the community fund, it generates more interest, which also goes into granting money to local organizations in need.

> THRONE SPEECH, FROM PG. 5

serves not just Manitoba but north-western Ontario and Nunavut. It's the main trauma centre for them. And STARS [air ambulance] flies trauma patients directly to HSC. The building in the centre of the hospital is over 100 years old and it needs investment, which includes bringing everything up to a new standard for ventilation to reduce the risk of having respiratory illnesses like COVID being transferred from room to room."

As far as the government's commitment to retention and recruitment of health-care staff, Johnson said the PCs

had always encouraged employees in all sectors to come forward with ideas to help improve their industries and had introduced an innovation fund to encourage the generation of new ideas.

The NDP's promise to lower costs for agricultural producers and ranchers falls short, said Johnson, because the PCs had promised in their campaign to reduce the cost of agricultural Crown land by 50 per cent to help producers cope with the drought of 2021 and overland flooding in 2022. And the gas tax reduction coming in

the new year won't benefit farmers. "The NDP's gas tax holiday won't be giving a break to farmers," said Johnson. "They're not reducing the price for fuel per litre for farmers and producers who use purple fuel; they're not getting the same reduction as the rest of the population. The NDP is talking about inputs being high for farmers yet they're not doing anything for them with this gas tax holiday."

The throne speech is available on the government's website at www.gov.mb.ca/thronespeech

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letter to the editor

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Suspend the wastewater lagoon project indefinitely

I submitted a letter of objection a few weeks ago to the environmental approvals branch of the Manitoba department of environment and climate change, asking the government to suspend a wastewater lagoon project that the Crystal Spring Hutterite Colony is proposing to build in the RM of Armstrong on the border of the RM of Gimli.

This project should be suspended indefinitely while alternatives are explored or it should be cancelled altogether, which would be preferable. This project is not in the public interests and is a threat to the health

of Lake Winnipeg, fish habitat and to our drinking water and surrounding land. The health, safety and interests of the residents of Gimli and surrounding municipalities are at stake.

The government's request for public feedback to the proposed lagoon stated the lagoon will treat slaughter waste (presumably from chickens) and human waste from 250 people.

A basic sewage lagoon is the least effective form of waste treatment, and the one proposed will likely have high output of the nutrients nitrogen and phosphorus due to waste from animal slaughter. Furthermore, the location of this lagoon is very close to Lake Winnipeg (about five miles away), offering less opportunity for the dilution of these harmful nutrients and possible pathogens.

The time to mitigate nutrient problems on Lake Winnipeg is now, with

new facilities proposing and using modern treatment methods and effective treatment plants to reduce the risk of adding to our problems instead of merely dumping waste into the environment whenever the lagoon overflows or leaks, or when a flood or weather event occurs; this will add to the inappropriate runoff and seepage that already occurs in this watershed from agricultural facilities along the same ditches from Armstrong into Gimli and directly into upstream spawning grounds along the shores of Lake Winnipeg by Willow Creek.

The RM of Gimli sewage treatment plant and other facilities like the City of Winnipeg treatment facilities, while not perfect, offer more advanced treatment of waste than that of a basic lagoon and offer a future improvement path that is apparently

far beyond this proposal.

Thank you for your immediate attention to my request to stop this threat to our environment and the aquifer that provides our drinking water. The proposal in question is not consistent with our community values and to our way of life. It is also an existential threat to our local and regional economy. This factory project threatens private individual and small family businesses, as well as nearby residences, which all must meet the criteria for higher standards competing against the deflated costs of shortcuts like this project. The proposed project is a threat to future generations of our residents and constituents.

- William James (Bill) Buckels
Lake Winnipeg commercial fisher,
Gimli

Red River North RCMP make arrests

By Lana Meier

At approximately 4:45 a.m. on Nov. 30, Red River North RCMP were heading to an alarm call when they encountered a suspicious vehicle on Emes Road in the RM of West St. Paul.

There were two people in the car, and they seemed to be asleep. After waking them, it was discovered that the male driver had multiple outstanding warrants. The female passenger was also violating her conditions, and as a result, both individuals were taken into custody by the officer and arrested.

The VIN on the vehicle was checked and it was determined the vehicle had been stolen out of Ashern.

Upon searching the vehicle, 19 grams of methamphetamine, prescription drugs and other drug paraphernalia were seized.

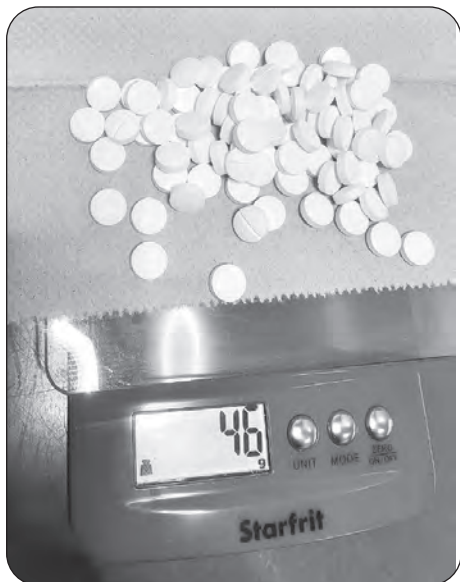
Hannah Rosnagel, 30, was charged

with possession for the purpose of trafficking, possession of property obtained by crime and fail to comply. She was later released from custody on a release order.

Sean Houlahan, age 37, is facing charges of possession for the purpose

of trafficking, possession of property obtained by crime, operation of a motor vehicle while prohibited and fail to comply. He was remanded into custody.

Red River North RCMP continue to investigate.



RCMP lay charges for possession for the purpose of trafficking after encountering a suspicious vehicle in West St. Paul.

Winnipeg Beach Clinic now accepting non-urgent same day appointments on Friday afternoons

Starting Friday, Dec. 8, clinic health care staff can help you with health issues such as:

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- birth control

Call the clinic at 204-389-3649 as early as 8:30 a.m. on Fridays to make a same day appointment for that afternoon between 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

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Interlake-Eastern
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Phone: 1-800-378-5106

Email: bcd@eastinterlake.com or gm@eastinterlake.com

www.eastinterlake.com



EXPRESS PHOTO BY BEN HEWSON

As hunting season came to close last Sunday, deer can safely venture out again. Last Monday the hoarfrost made a beautiful backdrop for these white-tailed deer north of Gimli. Hoarfrost is the deposit of ice crystals on objects exposed to the free air, such as grass blades, tree branches or leaves. The recorded temperature for Gimli on Dec. 4 was -4 degrees C. Help the Express record the weather of the week and send in your photos of friends or family enjoying the outdoors. Email: news@expressweeklynews.ca.

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Ornaments for Oww-ies fundraiser for Children's Hospital

By Patricia Barrett

A Gimli girl who started an Ornaments for Oww-ies fundraiser several years ago to help children in the hospital raised \$600 this year during her seventh annual event and saw the donation tripled by an anonymous donor.

Ruby, who's a member of the Kiwanis-led Terrific Kids Club at Sigurbjorg Stefansson Early School and who had help from her friends to make Christmas tree ornaments, wound up with an \$1,800 donation for the Children's Hospital Research Institute of Manitoba, as well as additional funds for the Gimli and Selkirk hospitals.

Ruby's mom, Stephanie, said the family is so proud of her and her brother for their willingness and initiative to help other kids and the local community.

"We're extremely proud. Both of our kids love helping others. And it's amazing to watch them take ownership and see other kids get involved and want to help others," said Stephanie.

An anonymous donor through the Children's Hospital's annual Giving Tuesday event tripled the \$600 donation to \$1,800, said Stephanie.

"And Ruby also has \$150 for the Sel-



Ruby (centre), her brother and her friend Anna.

kirk hospital and \$150 to buy stuffies for the Gimli ambulance," she said. "When kids are taken by ambulance to the hospital, the paramedics have little stuffies for them."

This year Ruby made ornaments using cookie cutters, and she and her friends in Terrific Kids made over 100 painted wooded ornaments. They got to set up a table at the New Iceland Heritage Museum's Christmas Craft Market a few weeks ago after Gimli resident Elva Sigmundsson stepped in to sponsor the cost of the table.



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY THORA PALSON

Ruby (in beige turtleneck) and her friends in the Kiwanis-led Terrific Kids Club made Christmas ornaments they sold at NIHM's Christmas craft sale. Gimli Kiwanis member Frances Petrowski (back left) and Ruby's mom, Stephanie, helped out at the sale.

Commercial fisher Kevin Palson, whose daughter Anna is in Terrific Kids, donated Christmas trees that the kids sold in addition to the ornaments they made.

"Kevin cut some trees and put them in wooden bases with a hole where people can water the tree," said Stephanie, "and the kids were able to sell those as well."

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Lakeshore General Hospital expansion focusing on patient-centred health care

Capacity, quality of care paramount for health officials

By Becca Myskiw

Lakeshore General Hospital is expanding, and with it, the possibilities of better care.

Construction on Ashern's hospital started at the beginning of 2023 and will continue until the spring of 2025 when the project is expected to finish. The expansions will add 12 new inpatient beds to the facility, for a total of 26; make each patient room a single-bed room; create an enhanced palliative care room with an attached family room; add a reverse pressure isolation room that can accommodate bariatric patients; add a dedicated spiritual space; add a rehabilitation

assessment room; create a central care station; add a new tub and bathing room for bariatric patients; and redevelop the emergency department to have 13 working spaces instead of the current six.

Candace Blahey, Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority (IERHA) director of health services, said they can't properly service the many communities in their catchment area with 14 inpatient beds, so they saw the need to add more.

Paul Bernard, IERHA executive implementation lead of the Clinical and Preventive Services Plan, said with people returning to their homes in the area after the flood displaced them, the population has risen considerably, and the growth in population has effects for the health-care system.

"Twelve new beds will allow for more inpatient admissions and being able to care for more people closer to their home," said Blahey.

Changing every room at Lakeshore General Hospital into a single-bed room will give each patient at the hospital the privacy they need. Blahey said having one bed per room will decrease the movement in the facility for those needing isolation. Plus, each room in the hospital will have a window, giving each patient the natural light that can brighten their stay.

"One of the lessons COVID has taught us as well is single-bed rooms help (decrease) the spread of illness," said Bernard.

Lakeshore General Hospital already has a palliative care room with an attached room for family. The new one, however, will be more spacious and have more amenities so more family members can be comfortably present



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Lakeshore General Hospital's expansion will add more inpatient beds and emergency room spaces, among other things.

while their loved one receives end-of-life care.

"This allows for that end-of-life connection and for everyone to be there," said Blahey.

IERHA currently only has two reverse pressure isolation rooms — one in Beausejour and one in Selkirk. Blahey said the reverse pressure room is a space where someone at high risk or with a highly contagious illness can be safely. The environment is safe and air controlled, giving the patient and the medical staff a safe outcome.

The new space in Ashern's hospital will also be able to accommodate bariatric patients, meaning they'll have more space in it.

"Having a bariatric space is really important in terms of dignity and pa-

tient-centred care," said Bernard.

For bariatric patients, the hospital is also adding a bathing room with a larger tub where they can sit and enjoy their bath instead of having a sponge bath or a shower.

To build on patient-centred care, the health authority is adding a spiritual space to the hospital, something Blahey and Bernard said is extremely important to have.

"You want to be inclusive," said Blahey. "You want all the communities to feel safe when admitted to the hospital or visiting family members. It helps with the holistic approach and promotes healing."

Bernard added that spiritual healing is becoming part of the entire health

Continued on page 14

Community Support Service

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Time: 6-7pm Fridays

Starting Friday March 3rd.

Location: #11 2nd Ave North

-Pioneer Manor

(beside the main door entrance of Pioneer Manor)

Contact AAMBCO@mts.net

AA Eriksdale

Eriksdale United Church building

#7 Main Street, Eriksdale (side door)

Meetings are Mondays

at 6:30 p.m.

AA Winnipeg Beach

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

Meetings are Saturdays
between 7 and 8 p.m.

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Arborg & District Christmas Cheer Board

Once again, the Arborg & District Christmas Cheer Board is preparing Christmas hampers. To request a Christmas hamper, please contact Courtney at 431-272-0035.

The deadline for requests is Thursday, December 14th and the Christmas hampers will be available for pick up or delivery on Thursday, December 21st.

Monetary donations can be sent by e-transfer to ADcheerboard@gmail.com, mailed to Box 185 Arborg MB R0C 0A0, or may be deposited at the Arborg branches of Access Credit Union or CIBC. Non-perishable food items and new toys can be dropped off at participating local businesses.

Thank you for your support.

Express Weekly News recognized as one of Manitoba's best newspapers

By Lana Meier

The *Express Weekly News* won a number of Premiere awards along with General Excellence at the 103rd annual Manitoba Community Newspaper Association Better Newspaper Competition held in Winnipeg over the weekend. The awards were the first ones held since the COVID pandemic and are for the 2021 newspapers.

The Premiere awards are judged against writers from newspapers all across the province.

The *Express Weekly News* placed first in General Excellence for circulation 3,600-9,999 for its front page and third in the Best in Class in the same circulation size.

Reporter Patricia Barrett received several Premiere writing awards: First - Best column or Feature Article on a Business Topic, 'Gimli pub gets \$5,000 fine after inspector characterizes staff as members'; First - Best Education story, 'ESD unsure how schools will be supported given education property tax cut'; First - Best News, 'Interlake livestock farmers using winter feed; province, federal assistance a Band-Aid solution'; Second - Best Health, 'Interlake paramedics put in 'dangerous and dire' situation';

and Third - Best Habitat Conservation, 'Farming and water retention go hand in hand in Poplarfield'.

The *Express Weekly News* is part of the independently and community owned newspaper chain Big and Colourful Printing and Publishing, which also owns and operates Interlake Graphics, the *Stonewall Teulon Tribune*, *Winkler Morden Voice*, *Selkirk Record*, *Altona Rhineland Voice* and the *Carman Dufferin Standard*.

Our sister papers also received multiple honours for the year.

The *Tribune* placed first in Best in Class, second in Best Layout and Design, and second in Best Front Page in the General Excellence circulation 3600-9,999 category.

The *Tribune* also won a number of Premiere writing awards: first in the Best Health Story, 'Stonewall woman, 100 forced to give up hospital bed' by Patricia Barrett; first in the Best Arts & Culture, 'Local craftsman replicates traditional Red River cart' by Tyler Searle; second in Best Agriculture Story, 'Let's talk turkey - June is Turkey Month in Manitoba' by Tyler Searle; second in Best Feature, 'Hearing Aids open 'a whole new world' for Teulon girl', by Iris Dyck; second - Best Edi-



EXPRESS PHOTO BY JEFF MEIER

The *Express Weekly News* staff, along with their sister publications, were recognized for their hard work and excellent writing and photography skills at the annual Better Newspaper Competition over the weekend.

torial by Evan Matthews and third in Best Photo Essay, Remembrance Day by Lana Meier.

The *Winkler Morden Voice* won Best All Around Newspaper for the province and several General Excellence and Premiere writing awards.

The *Voice* also won first in Best in Class in the General Excellence 10,000 plus circulation and first in Best Editorial Page.

In the Premiere writing category, the *Voice* received third in the Best News Story, 'It can feel a little bit like a slap in the face,' by Ashleigh Viveiros; third in Best Health Story, 'People need to know we have limited capacity,' by Ashleigh Viveiros; third in Best Education Story, 'Trustees reeling in wake of planned education changes

Continued on page 18



Celebrate responsibly. Arrive safely.

END IMPAIRED DRIVING



Every year, the festive season is sadly overshadowed by car accidents that could have been avoided. A large percentage of collisions involve drivers who have been drinking over the legal limit or taking drugs.

BE PREPARED
It's widely known that drugs and alcohol impair your judgment. Despite this reality, some individuals who've consumed these substances may believe they're fit to drive when actually they're not. In short, if you've had any amount of alcohol or smoked or ingested cannabis, it's not safe to rely on your own judgment.

Plan ahead! No one wants to be part of another statistic or have someone's death on their conscience for the rest of their life. In 2023, there are no excuses for driving under the influence. You have plenty of choices to avoid putting your own safety and that of others at risk.


Here are a few options to consider for a safe holiday season and new year:

- Use public transportation
- Arrange to sleep at the party venue or stay somewhere within walking distance
- Call a taxi
- Use a designated driver service
- Designate a non-drinking person to drive you home


Have a happy and safe holiday season!



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Arborg, Fisher Branch residents volunteer at Operation Christmas Child's warehouse

By Patricia Barrett

Arborg and Fisher Branch residents travelled to Calgary last week to help Samaritan's Purse Canada pack shoeboxes full of gifts and necessities for children living in Global South countries.

The organization's annual Operation Christmas Child gift drive took place Canada-wide from Nov. 13 to 19, and donated gifts were sent to a central processing centre in Calgary, Alta., where volunteers sort and pack them for distribution overseas.

Kim Friesen and her parents Dan and Martha Reimer from Arborg, along with her uncle and aunt John and Sara Plett from Fisher Branch, flew to Calgary and spent three days volunteering at the warehouse to ensure that children — some of whom having never before received a gift — had something to open on Christmas day.

Friesen said she and her family have been collecting and packing Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes for 15 years and it's become an annual family tradition. This year they packed 175 boxes. It was Friesen's first time volunteering at the Calgary processing centre.

"It's nice to follow the trail of these

boxes," said Friesen in a statement shared by Samaritan's Purse. "I love the Christmas music in the warehouse and I'm so excited about seeing so many volunteers."

It was also the first time Friesen's parents volunteered at the processing centre and the fourth time for her aunt and uncle.

Operation Christmas Child helps bring joy to children living through war, poverty, famine or disaster through the provision of gift-filled shoeboxes to remind them they are not forgotten, according to Samaritan's Purse's website. The collection drive is spearheaded by church partners with about 300 drop-off locations across Canada. It also operates in other countries.

"Not only is Operation Christmas Child Canada-wide, it also operates in the U.S., U.K., Australia, Germany and South Korea," said Samaritan's Purse news media relations manager Frank King. "Those are countries where boxes are collected from generous people, who pack them with school supplies, hygiene items and toys, then take them to a nearby drop-off location."

Continued on page 18



EXPRESS PHOTO BY KIM FRIESEN

From left: Sara and John Plett, Kim Friesen and Martha and Dan Reimer in the Samaritan's Purse warehouse in Calgary.



EXPRESS PHOTO COURTESY OF FRANK KING, SAMARITAN'S PURSE CANADA

Children in Senegal are shown with their Canadian-packed Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes.



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The Interlake Handmade Boutique showcases local talent

By Gloria Thomas

Step into the world of local artisans and talented vendors at the Interlake Handmade Boutique, a hidden gem nestled within Gimli's Lakeview Resort on First Avenue.

This cozy and inviting space is a haven for local artists, vendors and small businesses to showcase their talents and creations. It's the brainchild of Anita McAlinden, a passionate individual who recognized the need for a year-round market to support vendors from local outdoor markets.

This boutique is a testament to the creativity and craftsmanship found right here in our own backyard. McAlinden and her husband Robert purchased their future retirement home in the area in 2013 and moved here permanently in 2016 from Winnipeg. They enjoyed attending local farmers markets and came to know many of the vendors over the next few years. Although the vendors were able to sell their wares throughout the summer months, as soon as the school year began, the markets began to dismantle and many vendors were left to their own devices until the Christmas market began. Having a year-round place to sell their products all week long rather than just on weekends made perfect sense to McAlinden, and therefore she created the Interlake Handmade Boutique.

The Interlake Handmade Boutique opened its doors in November 2020, welcoming around 20-25 dedicated vendors eager to share their crafts with customers far and wide. However, just days after its grand opening came unexpected restrictions due to COVID-19. But McAlinden didn't let that deter her passion or commitment to supporting local artisans.

Adapting swiftly, she turned towards Facebook advertising as a means of reaching customers during this challenging time. Curbside pickup became the norm while free delivery options were extended even as far as Winnipeg.

"I still worked in the city so this was an option," explained McAlinden.

"In January of 2021, we were able to open the shop with restrictions in place. Our capacity was normally 19 at the time when the shop was half its size. With the restrictions in place, only two people were allowed in to shop at one time, but somehow we made it work."

Linda Weshnoweski was one of the first vendors on board with the idea of a year-round shop to sell her homemade preserves and jams. Weshnoweski grew up on a farm and has been gardening and canning for over 50



Homemade jams and preserves From Linda's Kitchen.



Etch N Ideas offers laser engraving on personal items.

years.

"My 'From Linda's Kitchen' preserves and jams are all garden to table or made with hand-picked wild berries and berries grown in my own garden," said Weshnoweski.

"My biggest sellers are my diabetic jams that I make with monk sugar and my Million Dollar Relish. However, I don't do it for profit; I do it out of love of the process."

Everybody needs to have this type of shop in their communities, she added.

Marlane Lillian Mazur, known as the Coffee Shop Writer, wrote her first book entitled *101 Blessings in 2016*.

"I just decided I wanted to write about all the good things that hap-



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY GLORIA THOMAS

Anita McAlinden inside her store Interlake Handmade Boutique.

pened to me." Mazur said. In 2019, Mazur wrote her second book, *101 Promises*.

"Interlake Handmade Boutique approached me two years ago and I now have my books and paintings for sale in their store. Rob suggested a trilogy, and so I wrote *101 Roads*, which will be out this month. Rob has made me a lot more outgoing. He would call me over to the store and say 'Someone wants to meet you,' and so I would go," said Mazur.

Etch N Ideas is a local small business that offers laser engraving on slate,

Continued on page 14



Marlane Lillian Mazur holding her books and standing near her paintings.



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> **EXPANSION, FROM PG. 10**

journey, so having a dedicated space for it will benefit everyone in the hospital.

The new rehabilitation assessment room is exactly what it sounds like: a dedicated space for medical professionals to get patients back to their baseline or to determine their new one. There, patients can complete their rehabilitation in privacy, no lon-

ger having to do it in the hallway or their hospital room.

Bernard said rehabilitation is becoming an alternative to opioid and narcotic prescriptions, meaning this room could reduce prescription numbers as well.

The largest part of the Lakeshore General Hospital expansion is the emergency department renovation.

"Currently, the emergency room is

way too small for the number of people it sees," said Blahey.

There are six spaces to care for patients there currently — the renovation will make that number 13.

"Hopefully this will allow us to take the stretcher out of the hallway and be able to promote a more private environment for patients," she said. "We're looking forward to the delivery of more care in the community and surrounding communities."

Bernard added this addition will help the hospital to recruit and retain emergency department experienced

nurses and physicians, which will allow them to provide more care for community members.

"When there are local patients that are in a Winnipeg hospital post-surgery or post-acute illness and they're ready to be discharged to another hospital, these new beds allow them to come home sooner and be closer to their family and community."

To stay up to date with the progress of the Lakeshore General Hospital expansion, go to www.ierha.ca/about-us/capital-construction-projects.

> **HANDMADE BOUTIQUE, FROM PG. 13**

wood and glass, as well as many other surfaces. Some products include gold tee tags, pet bowls, cutting boards and keychains.

McAlinden said they have grown to have over 70 different vendors and needed more space so they added the shop next door and took out the wall.

Although the shop was run by McAlinden while her husband worked elsewhere, he often offered to work on Sundays so she was able to catch up with other tasks.

"These days became known as 'his

days' at the shop," said McAlinden.

Sadly, Robert McAlinden passed away on June 25 of this year at the age of 52.

"I recently realized that this is where I was supposed to be when I lost him," said McAlinden.

"The support from the vendors, business owners, customers and towns people has been incredible. They have given me the strength I need to move forward most days when I felt I could not."



2023 Holiday Events

Mon. Dec. 11	Riverton Early Middle School Winter Concert	1:50pm and 7:00pm
Wed. Dec. 13	Gimli High School Winter Concert	7:00pm
Thurs. Dec. 14	Sigurbjorg Stefansson Early School Winter Concert	1:45pm and 7:00pm
Thurs. Dec. 14	Winter Band Concert – Riverton Hall Arborg Collegiate & Early Middle School Riverton Collegiate & Early Middle School	7:00pm
Thurs. Dec. 14	Alf Cuthbert School Christmas Concert Moosehorn	7:00pm
Mon. Dec. 18	Sigurbjorg Stefansson Early School Winter Concert Gimli	1:45pm and 7:00pm
Mon. Dec. 18	Ashern Central School Christmas Concert	7:00pm
Tues. Dec. 19	Ashern Early Years School Christmas Concert Ashern Centennial Hall	7:00pm
Tues. Dec. 19	Inwood School	6:30pm
Tues. Dec. 19	Dr. George Johnson Middle School Winter Concert Gimli	2:00pm and 7:00pm
Tues. Dec. 19	Arborg Early Middle School Winter Concert	6:00pm
Wed. Dec. 20	Fisher Branch Early Years School Christmas Concert	1:30pm and 7:00pm
Wed. Dec. 20	Lundar Early Years School Christmas Concert	6:30pm
Wed. Dec. 20	Winnipeg Beach School Holiday Concert	1:30pm and 7:00pm
Wed. Dec. 20	Arborg Early Middle School Winter Concert Kindergarten – Grade 2	6:00pm
Thurs. Dec. 21	Eriksdale School Christmas Concert	7:00pm

Help fill the sleigh



EXPRESS PHOTO BY DONNA GISLASON

Red Apple Arborg store employee Amber Bjornson invites the community to help Fill the Sleigh for their annual toy drive. The store will give away candy canes and have face painting and a bake sale on Saturday, Dec. 9 from 2 to 5 p.m. There will also be a surprise visit from Santa from 3 to 5 p.m. Five per cent of all sales on Saturday will go towards the Arborg and Riverton Christmas Cheer Board. The store is collecting cash along with toy donations. (All \$5 donations are entered to win a gift basket valued at \$40, while \$10 donations get entered to win a gift basket valued at \$70). This Saturday is the last day to donate.

Annual Christmas parade rolls through Gimli



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY RAYME THOMSON

Gimli's annual Christmas Parade was a colourful and magical experience. A large crowd gathered along the street while friends and family enjoyed the above average temperatures.



Arborg Collegiate's Girls Talk event empowers female students

By Patricia Barrett

Arborg Collegiate hosted a Girls Talk program last Wednesday in conjunction with Creative Community Promotions to address a number of challenges facing girls in high school.

Arborg Collegiate principal Krista Borgfjord said the school's first-ever Girls Talk event was tailored to the needs of their female students. And the school plans to continue holding smaller sessions throughout the year.

"Myself and two of my teachers, guidance counsellor Rachel Orbanski and resource teacher Haley Fisher, recognized there was a need for some support to the female students in our school," said Borgfjord. "We decided to begin with a one-day event to kick things off and follow up with mini-sessions throughout the year."

The school launched a Girls Talk program after seeing an increase in mental health concerns and concerns with female peer relationships.

"Rachel, Haley and I had concerns about positive peer relationships within female social groups in our school. We also have noticed a trend over the past few years of increased mental health concerns in our student population," said Borgfjord. "As women ourselves, we recognize that girls and women often do not take the time to take care of themselves. Through personal experiences we also know the importance of strong personal support systems and women supporting women."

Some of the challenges faced by high school girls include balancing academic work with extracurricular activities, jobs and family commitments, said Borgfjord, as well as being "constantly being bombarded by social media pressures," social media negativity and trying to figure out who they are as young women.

All female student in grades 9-12 were invited to attend the one-day session, which was held at the Arborg Community Hall.

Borgfjord said she and her two teaching colleagues were involved in planning the day, but they hired



Samantha Hampton, owner and creative director of Creative Community Promotions, to co-ordinate the guest speakers and come up with questions for them.

Hampton said being a girl in high school is "tough," and everyone she asked to participate agreed that there are so many pressures on girls as they try to figure out what lies ahead.

"I reached out to my entire female network to say we need to come together for the high school girls," said Hampton, who also moderated the panel discussions. "Each of the speakers brought something different to the discussion."

Hampton also invited the owner of Gimli's Hidden Treasures to do an art workshop with the students to let them express themselves. Other workshops included a yoga session and a self-care workshop that was offered by a Gimli resident with previous experience working with youth.

The students heard presentations from three speakers: former RCMP officer and professional consultant and coach Sherry Benson-Podolchuk, social worker and therapist Sarah Pincsent-Bardarson, and Canadian-Métis curler and women's national champion Kerry Einarson.

The three women also took part in a panel discussion, answering ques-



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY RAYME THOMSON

Arborg Collegiate grades 9-12 female students were invited to attend the Girls Talk one-day session to address a number of challenges facing girls in high school.



tions such as how challenges can be turned into opportunities for growth, how to overcome setbacks, what a personal support system can look like, how to encourage open communication, how to resolve conflict, how to promote diversity and inclusion, how to cultivate leadership skills, how to accept one's body and the benefits of working with a team.

After the event, Borgfjord shared some feedback from the students. They said they learned about self-care and coping mechanisms, about other people's personal experiences and how they dealt with problems, breathing and yoga calming, and ways to express themselves. What they found most motivating was watching and listening to others be passionate and vulnerable, sitting beside and interacting with girls they didn't normally talk to and listening to the speakers who made it easy to share feelings and thoughts.

"The goals of our event were to create a positive and empowering environment for teenage girls, to promote unity and bolster a more supportive and inclusive peer environment, to foster personal growth and to provide



education to our young women," said Borgfjord.

The school recognizes that male students face struggles similar to female students but generally don't want to talk about these challenges.

"We do hope to plan an event for the male students at some point this year, though it will look different than our Girls Talk day," said Borgfjord. "We will need to get some input from our male population before planning an event that is meaningful for them."



sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

U18 AAA female Lightning defeat Hawks in a shootout

By Brian Bowman

The Interlake Lightning picked up a great win over the Pembina Valley Hawks in U18 AAA Manitoba Female Hockey League action Sunday afternoon in Morden.

Interlake won 3-2 in a shootout.

Emily Gagne, Claire Hudson, and Robyn Klassen scored for the Lightning.

Chase Braun and Delaney Darby replied for Pembina Valley.

Jane Sugimoto was very good in goal, stopping 36 Hawks' shots for the win.

Interlake, now 4-7-1 with an overtime loss, will host the Winnipeg Avros on Dec. 15 at the Veterans Memorial Sports Complex. Game time is 7:30 p.m.

The U18 AAA Interlake Lightning male hockey team, meanwhile, will hit the road this week for three games. Interlake will battle the Eastman Se-



The Lightning's Vayda Rigaux battles the Hawks' Jessica Anderson for the puck.

lects on Wednesday (8 p.m.) and then the Yellowhead Chiefs on Saturday (7:30 p.m.) and Sunday (1 p.m.).



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY RICK HIEBERT

Interlake's Emily Gagne attempts to tip a point shot in the Lightning's 3-2 win against the Pembina Valley Hawks last Sunday.

Team Foster advances



EXPRESS PHOTO BY BRETT MITCHELL

Team Foster from the Arborg Curling Club competed Nov. 24 to 26 in the Seagram's Whiskey Curling Club East Regionals at the Selkirk Curling Club and qualified for the Seagram's Whiskey Curling Club Provincial Championships, which will take place April 4 to 7, 2024, at the Gimli Curling Club.

Ice Dawgs defeat Warriors

By Brian Bowman

The Arborg Ice Dawgs scored three first-period goals in a solid 5-2 home victory over the St. Malo Warriors in CRJHL action last Friday.

Tyson Barylski, Michael Crave and Harris Dankochik scored for the Ice Dawgs in the first period. Kobe Murdoch-Sanderson made it 4-0 in the second before St. Malo responded with goals from Reece Unrau and Teagan Fillion in the middle frame.

Arborg's Mitchell Wilson closed out the scoring with an empty-net goal in the third.

Barylski had three points in the game while

Dylan Johnson made 37 saves for the

win.

The Ice Dawgs played the North Winnipeg Satellites this past Tuesday in Warren and then will host the Lunder Falcons on Friday (8 p.m.) and the Beausejour Comets Saturday (7 p.m.).

The Falcons, meanwhile, were edged 1-0 by the Selkirk Fishermen at home last Saturday.

Jordan Donald scored the game winner in the third period.

Kennedy Kerr was very good in goal for Lunder, making 46 saves in the losing cause.

The Falcons will hit the road on Sunday to take on the Fishermen. Puck drop is 3 p.m.

To see more photos of your favourite Interlake Athletes

GO TO Stonewall Teulon Tribune | flickr

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Open Mixed Doubles Super Series Champs



EXPRESS PHOTO FACEBOOK

Gimli's Kadriana Lott was back on the ice this past weekend at the Winnipeg Open Mixed Doubles Super Series held at the Fort Rouge Curling Club. Lott was asked to spare for Saskatchewan's Chaelynn Kitz and her partner Brayden Stewart. The team competed in five round robin games, finishing with a 3-2 record advancing them to the quarterfinals. Team Lott/Stewart defeated Team Martin/Laycock 8-4, sending them to the semi-finals. Lott/Stewart met the American Team Anderson/Stopera and had a convincing 8-3 win punching their ticket to the championship round. The final was a tight-knit match against Saskatchewan and Alberta's Walker/Muyers. Walker/Muyers had a 4-3 lead after five ends. Lott/Stewart had a multiple score brewing and were able to get four and take control of the game in the sixth end. Walker/Muyers scored a single in the seventh and stole one in the eighth. Team Lott/Stewart won the event 7-6.

Winnipeg Police Service and RCMP launch holiday Checkstop program

By Lana Meier

The 2023 holiday Checkstop program was launched in Headingley by a joint effort between the Winnipeg Police Service and the Manitoba RCMP. While police focus on road safety year-round, the influx of travellers during this season highlights the need for enforcement methods such as checkstops.

In 2023, the number of fatalities on Manitoba roads has been distressingly high. According to both the RCMP and WPS, there have been a total of 109 deaths in collision incidents. The most prevalent factor in these fatal collisions is impaired driving. Looking at the past five years within RCMP jurisdiction alone, there have been a total of 143 fatal collisions related to impairment.

The recurring issue of dangerous driving habits — specifically impaired driving, speeding, failure to use seatbelts and distracted driving — has resulted in numerous fatalities and severe injuries on our roads. This has been an ongoing concern for quite some time. Measures to combat these behaviours include methods like checkstops and mandatory alcohol screening.

According to Insp. Michael Gagliardi, officer in charge of RCMP traffic services, avoidable deaths and life-altering injuries are being witnessed on the roadways. The solution is simply a matter of choice. By choosing to not drive impaired, speed or neglect safety measures like buckling up and paying attention, lives can be spared. To aid in this effort, officers will be carrying out checkstops.

In addition to impaired driving, checkstops also aim to prevent other illegal behaviour and high-risk driving habits in order to promote safety for all on the road.

According to Insp. Marc Philippot of the WPS Central Traffic Division, ensuring road safety involves more than just enforcement. It is a collective effort that begins with individuals making the proactive decision to always have a safe ride home. Let's all do our part this holiday season.

Minister of Justice Matt Wiebe reminded the public that zero drinks is the only sure way to stay safe while driving. He urged everyone to make responsible decisions this holiday season and find alter-



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Winnipeg Police Service and the Manitoba RCMP joined forces to launch the 2023 holiday Checkstop program in Headingley.

native ways of getting home without driving impaired. Options include calling a cab or Operation Red Nose, taking the bus or staying the night. Let's work together to ensure the safety of Manitobans on our roads.

Trevor Ens, president of MADD Manitoba, affirms the organization's support for police checkstop programs as effective means of quickly stopping impaired drivers. These efforts are vital in preserving life and promoting safer roads, especially during the holiday season.

MPI has been working closely with police agencies to address the increasing issue of impaired driving. Annually, there are tragic fatalities and numerous severe injuries among Manitobans due to the reckless decisions of individuals who choose to drive while impaired.

According to Satvir Jatana, chief customer officer at MPI, their message is clear: never drink and drive, as even one or two drinks are too many. They urge all Manitobans to arrange a safe ride home during this festive season.

The checkstop initiative will be in effect for the entire month of December, and the respective law enforcement departments will release their final findings upon completion of the program.

> WAREHOUSE, FROM PG. 12

Donated gifts include toys, "wow" items such as soccer balls or stuffed animals, school supplies and personal care items for girls and boys aged 2 to 14 years. Donors are also encouraged to include a personal note and a photo and make a \$10 donation to help the Christian organization cover shipping costs overseas.

The organization offers people a chance to volunteer at its Calgary processing centre after Canada's national collection week wraps up.

"We typically get several thousand volunteers, over several weeks, in the Samaritan's Purse

Calgary warehouse. They inspect every shoebox to ensure there's nothing inside that could scare or harm a child or stop shoeboxes from passing through customs," said King. "Then they pack the boxes into cartons and we ship them — usually by boat or plane — to countries in Central America, French-speaking West Africa, Philippines and Ukraine. There, more volunteers get them through customs and work with churches to organize shoebox distribution events and invite children in need to attend and receive a gift-filled box."

Visit www.SamaritansPurse.ca for more information about Operation Christmas Child and how to donate.

> AWARDS, FROM PG. 11

by Lorne Stelmach; and third in the Best Environmental Story category, 'Shoring up Dead Horse Creek' by Lorne Stelmach.

The *Selkirk Record* won second in Best in Class in the General Excellence circulation 10,000 plus

along with second for its Front Page and third in Best Layout and Design and Best Front Editorial Page.

The *Record's* Brett Mitchell placed second for Photographer of the year and won third for Best Sports Photo.

get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



Baked Brie with Pecans and Cranberry Orange Chutney

cone baking mat.

In medium saucepan over medium-high heat, bring cranberries (reserving some for garnish), 1/2 cup maple syrup and water to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook, stirring occasionally, until cranberries pop and mixture thickens, 8-10 minutes.

Remove cranberry mixture from heat and stir in orange zest, orange juice, 1 teaspoon thyme, rosemary and bourbon, if desired.

Place brie on parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake 5-7 minutes, or until inside of cheese softens while outside remains intact.

Transfer brie to serving platter and top with chutney and toasted pecans. Drizzle remaining maple syrup over brie and garnish with remaining fresh thyme and reserved cranberries. Serve with crackers, toasted bread and apple slices.

Recipe courtesy of the American Pecan Promotion Board
 Cook time: 24 minutes
 Servings: 8
 1 bag (12 ounces) fresh cranberries
 1/2 cup maple syrup, plus 1 teaspoon for garnish, divided
 1/2 cup water
 1 orange, zest and juice only
 1 teaspoon freshly chopped thyme, plus additional for garnish, divided
 1 teaspoon freshly chopped rosemary
 1 tablespoon bourbon (optional)
 1 round brie (13.4 ounces)
 1/2 cup roasted pecan pieces
 crackers
 toasted bread
 apple slices
 Preheat oven to 350 F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper or sili-



Pecan Snack Mix with Cranberries and Chocolate

add butter, brown sugar, maple syrup, salt and nutmeg. Microwave butter mixture 1-2 minutes until melted then pour over dry mix. Toss well to combine.

Microwave snack mix in 45-second intervals, about 4-5 intervals total, until mix is fragrant, golden and toasty.

Cool mix completely then stir in cranberries and dark chocolate chips.

Recipe courtesy of Jess Larson and the American Pecan Promotion Board

Prep time: 10 minutes
 Cook time: 5 minutes, plus 10 minutes cooling time
 1 cup pecan halves
 1 cup rice squares cereal (wheat or cinnamon)
 1/2 cup pretzels
 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
 1 tablespoon brown sugar
 1 1/2 tablespoons pure maple syrup
 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
 1/2 cup dried cranberries
 1/2 cup dark chocolate chips
 In large, microwave-safe bowl, add pecans, rice squares cereal and pretzels. In small, microwave-safe bowl,

Jingle Balls



Yield: 12 cups
 Nonstick cooking spray
 12 cups popped popcorn
 6 tablespoons butter or margarine
 3 cups mini marshmallows
 1/2 teaspoon peppermint extract

Expert patient here to help!



Susie Schwartz

By Susie Schwartz

It's Christmastime! If you're healthy and happy, it means jingle bells and gingerbread smells (Sorry, Batman. Not this time.) and singing all the way.

But if you're sick or in pain, it might mean missed gatherings, food you can't eat, and decorations seen only at your doctor's office.

I get it. With all the hype around this season, it can be more than disappointing to be in bed often, cancel plans, and keep up with appointments.

On a practical level, I can give tips on using technology to get the most from Christmas: video calls with friends and family, ordering gifts online, and sending e-cards. But you probably know these tricks already.

As far as your (Christmas) spirit, I have a few other suggestions: re-watch all your favourite Christmas movies (And no shame if they're cheesy!); blast the Pogues, Maria Carey, and Suschwa tunes (Shameless plug, there, ha!). Don't worry if

your neighbours are home. Spread the joy; buy yourself the softest, cuddliest bathrobe as a present. (Or another puppy. Chihuahuas are soft and cuddly. Just sayin'.)

I know Christmas can be hard when we're sick. We need to do everything we can to make it memorable... if you want it to be special. Some folks in a hard spot prefer to skip the month of December altogether. That's okay, too. (But take the gifts, ha!)

Here's my wish(es): First, as you read this, that you and yours are healthy. And if you are, please don't forget about those who aren't this season. Second, if you don't have your health, I hope you can find joy in a simpler Christmas, like a desk-sized Christmas tree, eating a mandarin orange first thing, or waking up in a new pair of pjs you bought for yourself.

And if you just can't stomach Christmas this year, may you feel a liberating freedom to just rest at home. It's okay if you watch 'A Star is Born', which has nothing to do with Christmas even though the title might suggest otherwise. Listen to yacht rock or Brian Adams and forget Jingle Bells. I hope you can find peace from your symptoms to gain strength for the next hard thing.

Christmas wishes. These are mine for you.

Less health stress, yes?

A published author and musician, Susie currently lives in the UK. Find her on Instagram @medicalmiss_stress, and at www.lesshealthstress.com Sign up there for her writer's substack. Her book, 'Help the Doctor Help You' is available on Amazon.

White Chocolate Peppermint Popcorn Bark

Yield: 1 pound
 5 cups popped popcorn
 12 ounces white chocolate baking chips, chopped white chocolate or white candy coating
 1 cup crushed hard candy peppermints



Cover baking pan with foil or wax paper; set aside. Place popcorn in large bowl; set aside.

In double boiler over barely simmering water, melt chocolate, stirring until smooth, or melt according to package directions. Stir in crushed peppermints.

Pour chocolate mixture over popcorn mixture and stir to coat. Spread onto prepared pan; cool completely.

When chocolate is cooled and set, break into chunks for serving.

Store in airtight container at room temperature.

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If you believe yourself a good fit for this position, please submit your resume with 3 references to dsmith@freedomwestinsurance.com by Dec. 31, 2023.

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MORTGAGE SALE ADVERTISEMENT

The land and building known as 11053 Road 122 NE, RM of Armstrong, Manitoba as described in Certificate of Title No. 2737153/1 will be sold at auction on Wednesday, the 10th day of January, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. The auction sale will be held by way of video or teleconference. There will be no in-person attendees at the auction.

In order to participate in the auction sale, you must pre-register at least 24 hours prior to the auction by contacting Sonia at 204-957-6437 or by email at sruppel@ltglc.ca.

The Vendor is informed that the property is approximately 85.65 acres in size, consisting primarily of bush and hay pasture with a residential yard and residence. The residence is a 1 story, 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom house built in 2015 with vinyl plank and tile flooring throughout. The house has approximately 1,428 square feet of living space, with a full basement with 9 foot ceilings. The house has electric forced air heating, an electric hot water tank, air conditioning and a fireplace. The exterior has a wood deck. There is a double attached garage located on the property which is approximately 380 square feet.

The property is located about 11 km South of Arborg. Head South from Arborg on Highway 7 for about 11 km. Turn East onto Road 324 and head East for about 2.5 km. The property is on the North side of Road 324.

TERMS: Deposit of \$25,000.00 by certified cheque, bank/credit union draft or solicitor's trust cheque to Levene Tadman Golub Law Corporation, or cash (the cash component of the deposit not to exceed \$7,500.00) to be provided within 24 hours of the date and time of auction and the balance in accordance with the conditions to be announced at sale.

The Property is sold subject to a RESERVE BID of \$319,531.56 plus such other additional and incidental costs which may be incurred by the Lender from the day of 20th day of November, 2023 to the date of auction and which costs will be announced prior to the commencement of the Sale.

Property Taxes are paid to December 31, 2021.

Purchaser to be responsible for payment of any outstanding water accounts owing by the Mortgagor.

Property is subject to Mortgage 5435073/1.

The auction sale will be conducted pursuant to an Order for Sale issued by the District Registrar. Certain parties may be prohibited from purchasing the property, including but not limited to, parties who by virtue of their employment or relationship to a person involved in the sale process would have special knowledge of the circumstances pertaining to the sale. For more information and a list of prohibited purchasers please visit: www.teranetmanitoba.ca

Further information and copies of Conditions of Sale may be obtained from:

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Stanley Firman

March 05, 1934 - December 08, 2022

No matter how life changes,
No matter what we do;
A special place within our hearts,
Is always kept for you.
Love you and miss you, Shirley
Ron and Angie, Sheri and Bob, Tracy and Ray
Curtis and Courtney, Joel, Hunter and Ryan,
and Brooke

OBITUARY



Wayne Otis Thage

January 29, 1951 - November 30, 2023

In the comfort of his home, Wayne passed away on November 30, 2023.

A Celebration of his life will be held at a come-and-go gathering and luncheon from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 17, 2023 in the Ashern Legion Hall with Gerald Bankert officiating.

Arrangements by:

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OBITUARY



Lillian Yanciw

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Lillian Yanciw in her 100th year.

Lillian is survived by her daughters Marion, Linda and Barbara; grandchildren Mike, Greg, Tammy, Brandi (Danny), Jeremy (Karen), Jessica (Grant), Stephanie and Sammy; and her pride and joy her great-grandchildren Lily, Robson, Hudson, Arlen, Elliot and Ashton who fondly called her GG. Mom also leaves behind her youngest brother Ron (Charlotte), brother-in-law Bill, and numerous family and friends.

Lillian was predeceased by her husband Peter, son David; brothers Louie, Art, Albert, Roy, Gordon, and Kenny; in-laws Met, Marg, Diane, Eileen and her son-in-law Nelson.

Lillian was well known for her amazing cooking and canning skills. She loved knitting and crocheting, and her family were all recipients of many pairs of mitts, slippers, afghans and quilts. She enjoyed playing Kinsmen Bingo, watching Jeopardy and doing crossword and word search puzzles.

We are so happy that we were able to celebrate her 100th birthday in September where she was able to visit with all her close family and friends.

A big thank you to all the staff at Gimli Community Health Center, Teulon Hunter Memorial Hospital, and Gimli Betel for the care and compassion shown towards Lillian.

In keeping with her wishes, cremation has taken place and a celebration of Mom's life will be held at a later date.

Tributes: www.gilbartfuneralhome.com

Gilbart Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



OBITUARY



Jack Pemkowski

It is with great sorrow that we announce the peaceful passing of Jack, age 76, on Monday, November 27, 2023 at Gimli Community Health Centre after a short battle with cancer.

Jack was predeceased by his wife Marie, parents Peter and Helen, in-laws Bill and Ethel Cullen and brother-in-law Tony.

Dad will be deeply missed by his four sons, Trevor (Joanne), Tracy, Kevin (Sheri) and Terry (Joanne); grandchildren Desiree, Ryan, Kael, Destiny, Emily, Kaelyn, and Halle; great-grandchildren Abigail, Bentley, Chloe, Cassie and Ivy.

Jack is survived by sister Linda Machado, brothers-in-law Bob, John (Betty), Larry (Wendy), Loyd (Eileen) Price, Godson Tony, and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

Jack was born in Gimli on August 3, 1947 and spent his whole life in Winnipeg Beach. He attended Prout School.

He worked at North American Lumber and Selkirk Lumber in Winnipeg Beach. While on lunch breaks, he frequently ate at Dorothy's Café where he met Marie. They were married May 4, 1968. They quickly started their family and had their four boys within five years. During this time, he went on to work for River Side Gravel as a heavy equipment operator that took him to job sites all over Manitoba. After many years of being away from his family for long periods, he wanted to be closer to home so he got a job with the RM of St. Andrews as a grader operator and retired after 26 years.

Jack loved going for drives in the country and spent many Saturdays at auction sales with Kevin, Ryan and friend Art Franks. He loved driving his Minneapolis tractors to cut hay, disc the field, and plow snow. He was always there to help babysit the grandchildren and spent many hours driving around with Ryan to pick cans and then take them into recycling in Winnipeg. Dad spent lots of time driving his quad around the farm and enjoyed watching TV, especially football and hockey with his soup bowl of vanilla ice-cream.

Dad was a wonderful caregiver to Mom when she was battling cancer. He was always by her side and took her to every appointment. He kept the house neat and tidy and always annoyed Mom by burning the newspapers before she had a chance to look at them.

Special thanks to Dr. Ludwig, the nurses and health care aids at Gimli Hospital for looking after Dad for the last few months.

Graveside service will be held on December 4, 2023 at Holy Rosary Cemetery at 10:00 a.m.

In lieu of flowers donations can be made to Holy Rosary Cemetery, Box 226, Winnipeg Beach, MB, R0C 3G0, or to CancerCare Manitoba.

Tributes: www.gilbartfuneralhome.com

Gilbart Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



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OBITUARY



Daniel David Sigmundson

February 1, 1942, to November 26, 2023

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of our father, Daniel Sigmundson. Dan passed away peacefully with his children by his side at the Gimli hospital.

Left to cherish his memory are his three children Melanie Specula, Danny-Jo Sigmundson (Kristine) and Jason Sigmundson and their mother Marion Nisbet; his siblings Tammy Axelsson and Gisli Sigmundson (Joan); his grandchildren Tyler (Christianna), Megan (Corey), Alex, Kaylie (Brett), Ryan (Iris), Dylan, Jude and Zen; great-grandchildren Johannah, Arika, Layla, Cameryn, Hudson and Brody. He will also live on in the memory of many nieces, nephews, extended family members and friends.

He was predeceased by his parents Daniel and Lillian Sigmundson.

Dad was a born entrepreneur who started out working at his father's construction company. Eventually Dan and his brother Gisli took over and expanded the company. Dan's children enjoy fond memories of getting to ride in the construction vehicles and visiting "the pits." It was during this time he was very active in his community serving on the Town Council and enjoying many years as a member of the Kinsmen Club of Gimli.

Dan's true passion in life was aviation, getting his pilot license at the age of 16. He eventually started a flight training school called Interlake Aviation, which at its peak was the third largest flying school in the world. Pilots from across the globe would come to Gimli to train at Dad's school. This endeavour allowed him to explore many countries and experience incredible adventures – the kind you see in movies.

He was the true patriarch of our family, embodying the patience, kindness and nurturing love that we should all strive for. He was incredibly reliable, caring and had an amazing sense of humour – still cracking jokes in his final days. Dan was so deeply loved and we miss him so much.

Fly high Dad. Find peace and serenity among the clouds. Thank you for giving us wings.

A special thank you to the Gimli Hospital staff for taking such good care of our dad.

The family will hold a private Celebration of Life on December 10th, 2023.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Interlake Eastern Health Foundation.



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OBITUARY



Marie Evelyn Ivy Letexier

On Tuesday, November 21st, 2023, at the age of 83, Mom left us to go be with Dad.

Ivy was predeceased by her husband John B. Letexier; her parents Joe and Mary Lane (nee Clairmont); her siblings Una Gregoire, Lorraine LaRocque, Douglas Lane, Lindsay Lane; and her granddaughters Justine Murdock and Amanda O'Tennadzahe.

Ivy is survived by her brother Terry Lane; her sons Warren (Angie), Gerald (Sheena), Kelly (Lisa), and Stuart (Mary); her grandchildren Jason, Darrien, Andrietta, and Simon; Kate, and Lauren; Holly, and Shauna; Brianna; and great-grandchildren.

Ivy was raised on a farm near Fisher Branch, she attended the Marble Ridge School which was a one-room schoolhouse.

Ivy met John at a dance at the Red Rose Hall. They were married on October 26, 1963 and enjoyed 44 years together. They raised

their four sons on the farm. Mom enjoyed cooking, gardening, and canning which provided for holiday feasts which she always took pride in.

Mom had a great love for animals with pet geese, cats, a donkey, goats, sheep, and rumour has it—an orphan deer residing on the farm over the years. In her later years, she enjoyed several little house dogs. Mom was also musically inclined, she could play the guitar, accordion, banjo, and harmonica. Many good times were had jamming with family and friends. Mom and Dad enjoyed camping in their motorhome, especially when there were grandkids involved. Mom enjoyed spoiling her grandkids.

In retirement Mom and Dad spent time living in Mission, BC where they got to spend time with Mom's side of the family. In her senior years, Mom really enjoyed beating other people at cribbage. Mom had some good laughs with her dear friend Rose at the care home as they were always joking around and having fun.

The family would like to extend special thanks to the staff of Fisher Branch Personal Care Home for taking such good care of Mom over the last six years. Thanks also goes out to our family and friends for their love and support. Thank you to laypersons John Harper and Joanne Kon for officiating the funeral service and Fisher Funeral Home for Mom's funeral arrangements.

A private family service has been held. Mom has been laid to rest at the Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic Cemetery in Fisher Branch, Manitoba.

FISHER FUNERAL HOME INC.
In care of arrangements.
204-372-6803 or 204-372-6271

OBITUARY



Albert Glenn Sutyla

On November 25, 2023, Albert Glenn Sutyla, aged 59, passed away with family close by, sharing his last moments with his soulmate, best friend, teammate and wife, Jodi. Also heartbroken by this loss are his children Christine (Stan), Sandra and Alex, his granddaughter Kathryn, and his furry friend Tynan.

Albert was born December 5, 1963, the youngest of Tony and Betty Sutyla's five children. He met Jodi Slater of Teulon in January of 1986; he gave her a promise ring in June, and proposed in December. They were wed on October 3, 1987. Al and Jodi considered living in a few different locations, but his heart was tied to his childhood home in Ledwyn, so that is where they built their life and raised their family.

Al was, to put it simply, an extremely smart guy. He was an avid reader and absorbed information with ease. This gave him an advantage over Jodi when competing in their household tradition of playing Jeopardy. He had a talent for thinking outside of the box. He used this talent in every job throughout his lifetime, including autobody, HVAC, R&D, and maintenance. He applied his skills and vast knowledge when working on home projects, fixing yard sale and auction finds, and helping others. He enjoyed thrifting, couponing, and entering contests. His biggest win of \$10,000 got the Library Bandstand build underway, which was completed with community donations and volunteers. He was so proud to see this happen and to see it being used. Al was also a member of the Interlake Road Huggers Car Club, Riverton Chamber of Commerce, and Toastmasters. He liked to attend the meat draws and support other Arborg Legion events.

Al treated his property like a sanctuary for wildlife, and thoroughly enjoyed quiet country living. Summers were spent foraging morels, saskatoons, raspberries, and anything else the land provided. In winters Al would drop trees and gather firewood to heat his workshop, where he spent time tinkering on smaller projects.

Al loved to spend time with his kiddos. He liked to do puzzles and play board games with them. He would wake them up in the middle of the night to watch meteor showers, the northern lights, and thunderstorms. As they grew up, they all developed their own special shared interests with Dad. His oldest daughter Christine picked up his taste in music and TV, with Buddy Holly and Star Trek being their favorites. They shared a keen interest in old hobby cars and thrifting for antiques. His second daughter Sandra shared common interests in yard sales and contests. She recently won them a special Father's Day hot air balloon ride, an experience she will cherish forever. His favorite (only) son Alex inherited his passion of learning to fix things rather than replace them. Dad was more than willing to share his tools and knowledge in the restoration of Alex's first project car. Although his kids weren't always able to visit Dad on the farm, he was always happy to receive a phone call from them.

Throughout Al and Jodi's marriage, any ordinary occasion would be turned into a date, like dump runs, making pizza, or picking up the mail, but the best dates were simply cuddling on the couch. In more recent years, you could spot them in the convertible they restored, cruising throughout the Interlake, and sometimes in local parades. He was hard to miss, donning one of his Hawaiian shirts when it was warm, and his denim jacket when it cooled off.

He touched many lives and will be dearly missed by his family and friends.

A private celebration of life will be held at a later date.



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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE MATTER OF the Estate of **IRENE CHYZY**, late of Arborg, in the Province of Manitoba, Deceased.

All claims against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration must be filed with the undersigned at **320 Queen Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3J 1L1**, on or before the **5th day of February, 2024**.

DATED at the City of Winnipeg, in the Province of Manitoba, this **4th day of December, 2023**.

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: **ANDREW JOSEPH YABLONSKI**, late of the R.M. of Gimli, in Manitoba, Deceased. ALL claims against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at their offices, 72A Centre Street, P.O. Box 6500, Gimli, Manitoba, R0C 1B0, on or before the 6th day of January, 2024. DATED at Gimli, Manitoba, this 6th day of December, 2023. **BAKER LAW CORPORATION SOLICITORS FOR HE EXECUTORS** Attention: Grant D. Baker

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