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THE EXPRESS

VOLUME 8 EDITION 1 THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2021

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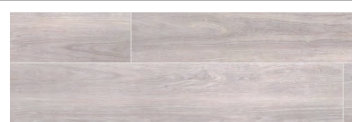

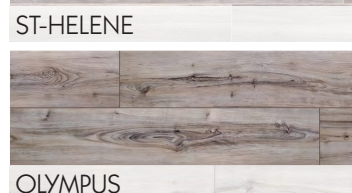
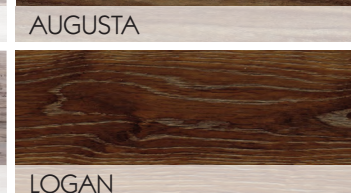
A Winnipeg Beach School student investigates a mysterious mailbox that was found in the forest near their school.

EXPRESS PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMIE GILBART

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Okno's Evergreen Store can't keep up with customers and in-demand items

By Patricia Barrett

Evergreen Store in the village of Okno has been struggling with an unusual problem since COVID-19 struck the province last spring: it has gained more customers than ever.

Owner Edward Penner runs the country store with his wife, daughter and few part-time staff members. He said he has had trouble keeping up with an "expanded customer base" over much of 2020 and demand for what became hot-ticket pandemic items.

"It has been a challenge to manage the increase in business and keep the shelves stocked," said Penner by phone a few days before Christmas. "Our customer base has certainly grown throughout the year."

With the first round of provincial public health emergency measures announced last spring after COVID cases started inching up in Manitoba, Penner said the store suddenly became "very busy" as people began to look closer to home for supplies and stopped travelling long distances to bigger stores. And with the second round of lockdown measures this winter, people seemed to embrace shopping locally. That resulted in a

"great boost" to his business.

"We're out in the country so it was an attractive place for people to go instead of to larger stores with crowds and where the spread of the virus would be a greater risk than out here," said Penner. "Being more secluded was an advantage, I think. It brought many more people to our store."

In addition to customers from small communities nearby and from larger centres such as Arborg and Riverton, Penner said the store has seen a "major increase of customers" from the north, including Peguis and Fisher River First Nations. Peguis band members, for instance, had been subjected to travel restrictions within a certain radius of the reserve, and that included the Okno area.

"The restrictions brought a lot of people from the north to our store and they keep coming back," said Penner. "And I'm really grateful for that."

Located on Road 139N in the RM of Bifrost-Riverton, the store is practically a one-stop shop that stocks fresh produce, canned goods, snacks, spices, household cleaning supplies, vitamins, gifts and toys and has a large second-storey Christian bookstore. It also sells bulk food items and imports



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY EDWARD PENNER

Rynelle Penner serving customers at the Evergreen Store in Okno.



The Evergreen Store in Okno has seen an increase in customers over 2020.

BLESSED
Christmas
GREETINGS
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JAMES BEZAN MP
SELKIRK—INTERLAKE—EASTMAN

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specialty foods for area Mennonites who've emigrated from countries such as Belize and Mexico.

The reconstruction and paving of PR326 — the major highway to Okno — last year made travel north of Arborg a lot easier.

"We got new customers coming out of Arborg," said Penner. "Not by the droves, but people did come out here for some of the unique items we sell and aren't available in larger stores."

That included Mexican food, dried beans and bulk sugar and salt in 50-pound bags.

But hands-down, the hot-ticket items in 2020 were canning supplies. With COVID continuing to spread uncertainty throughout the province, customers turned to self-sustaining food practices and long-term food storage. Penner said canning jars flew off his shelves during harvest in August and September.

"Canning, especially in the fall time, was very busy. A lot more folks were looking for canning supplies. Even back in the spring when things were uncertain and there were shortages in stores, I think more people planted their own vegetable gardens. And there was more gardening happening this summer," he said. "People didn't travel and spent more time at home."

He had a hard time getting the items from his suppliers because everyone

was running short, he said. There were also other supply interruptions that resulted in his not being able to stock certain items — and even city stores experienced shortages — but it was "nothing major."

To help his customers get items the store doesn't carry, Penner said he took a fair number of special orders and picked them up in the city when he did a regular supply run.

Provincial restrictions on selling non-essential items such as toys and books was challenging for them, said Penner, and they had to rope off shelves of items and close the second-floor bookstore that houses Bibles, books and school supplies. In compliance with public health restrictions, the store started offering curbside pickup like other businesses across the province.

Despite more people shopping at Evergreen, Penner said it's not crowded. His capacity under provincial health orders is 10 customers (25 per cent).

"I hardly ever have anyone waiting outside so we're not a crowded place, but a very steady place," he said. "And from what I gather from our customers, they like coming here."

For more information about Evergreen, visit the store on Facebook or its website at evergreenstore.ca or call 204-378-2209.

Calendar flipping to 2021 especially exciting for Stony Mountain family

Submitted

On New Year's Day, many were happy to close the door on 2020 and celebrate the start of a new year filled with hope, as vaccines for the coronavirus pandemic have started to roll out.

Jonie and Kelvin Kleinsasser from Stony Mountain had an extra reason to celebrate because their son Hudson arrived into the world on Jan. 1, 2021, at 7:22 p.m. Hudson is the first baby born in the Interlake-Eastern health region.

Hudson was born eight pounds, nine ounces, and 20.5 inches long in Selkirk Regional Health Centre's family birthing unit, the region's only birth centre. Attending the birth was Dr. Andrea Fulmore and nurses from the unit.

"We are thankful we got to give birth in a smaller hospital during the coronavirus pandemic," said Jonie Kleinsasser. "The staff were welcoming and did an amazing job taking care of us. Thank you!"

Prior to the family's departure from hospital, they were gifted a playpen, sleepers and diapers from the Selkirk & District General Hospital Ladies Auxiliary. Every year, the auxiliary cel-

brates the hospital's first baby of the year with gifts that provide comfort and help extend the care received at the hospital into the baby's home. The auxiliary, who operate the gift shop at Selkirk Regional Health Centre, has also provided several significant donations to the hospital over the years, to help improve the comfort, care and well-being of patients.

"We've been celebrating New Year's babies since the hospital was located on Eveline Street," said Betty Milkowski, president of the auxiliary. "We're honoured to help parents with their new additions in this way. Congratulations to the Kleinsasser family!"

According to Victoria Wilgosh, clinical team manager for the birthing unit, 330 babies were delivered at the birthing centre in 2020.

"Our family birthing unit opened in the summer of 2017, and we are happy to have a great facility with amazing staff serving moms across the Interlake-Eastern region," said Wilgosh.

"One thing we would like people to know is that we do offer epidurals at the centre. We encourage anyone who is expecting and has any questions to



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Kelvin and Jonie Kleinsasser welcomed baby Hudson into the world at 7:22 p.m. on Jan. 1, making their son the first baby of 2021 born in the Interlake-Eastern Health region.

contact the hospital and ask for the family birthing unit. We're always happy to help and feel privileged

to play a role in this special time for families."

Fisher Branch RCMP seize drugs and cash

Staff

Fisher Branch RCMP along with East District Crime Reduction Enforcement Support Team, executed a search warrant at a residence on Peguis First Nation on Dec. 29.

Officers seized approximately 38 grams of cocaine, cash and drug paraphernalia.

Three adult males aged, 56, 33, 30 and one adult female, 54, all from Peguis First Nation, have been arrested and are facing charges of possession for the purpose of trafficking. They have been released with a court date of March 16, 2021.

Fisher Branch RCMP continue to investigate.



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Four Peguis First Nation adults were arrested and are facing charges of possession for the purpose of trafficking on Dec. 29.

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Winnipeg Beach School students' startling discovery: North Pole mailbox in forest

By Patricia Barrett

Students at Winnipeg Beach School were in for a jolly big surprise just before the holiday break a few weeks ago after they stumbled upon a mysterious mailbox in the forest near their school.

Teacher Shannon Torcia's kindergarten students and teacher Michelle Hainsworth's grades 1 and 2 students had been taking part in a nature exploration when they came across the mailbox. It turned out to be one of Santa Claus's elaborately disguised high-tech communication systems.

Principal Jamie Gilbert said some "holiday magic" occurred at that point for the youngsters.

"They came across a magical mailbox in the forest that had North Pole written on it," he said. "Our students decided to write letters to Santa and place them in the mailbox."

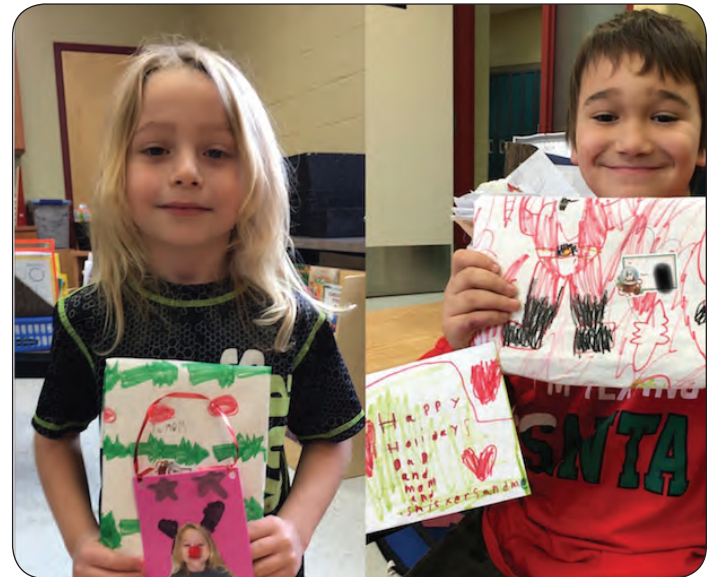
Well, lo and behold, the students received a swift reply directly from the jolly man the following week. And he also thoughtfully stuffed the mailbox with candy canes for each student.

"Your kind hearts are inspiring," wrote Santa in his letter and informed them he had received their Christmas wishes.

"This was a special moment that they will have as a memory forever," said Gilbert.

Mrs. Adrian's grades 2 and 3 students were also in for a bit of a surprise after a special package from the North Pole arrived at the school and Gilbert took it straight to their class.

"When Mrs. Adrian opened the box, she found personalized letters for every student in the class. The letters had been written by many different elves who all live in the North Pole with Santa," said Gilbert. "One student was heard saying, 'I told you that elves are real.' The excitement in the classroom grew as Mrs. Adrian handed out the special letters to the students."



EXPRESS PHOTOS COURTESY OF JAMIE GILBERT

Students in Erin Brunen's grades 1 and 2 class made cards for mom and dad and other loved ones.

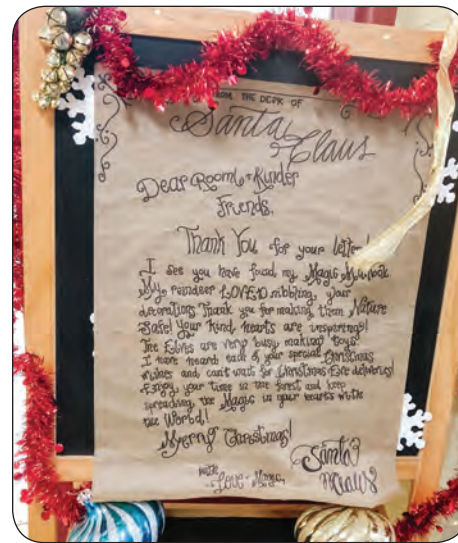
The elves described their daily tasks, what they did for fun on the weekend and answered students' questions about how Santa's global operation runs.

"Hey Keegan! It's me, PomPom, a junior elf in training," wrote one of Santa's elves on his first day on the job in the letter-writing office. "Now you may be surprised to know that there is only one vehicle here at the North Pole, and that is Santa's sleigh."

Gilbert said there were other "magical" activities teachers did with their students in the lead-up to the holiday break, and the grades 7 and 8 students organized a holiday spirit week (Dec. 14-18) for the entire kindergarten to Grade 8 school.

Students took part in a series of theme days where they got to wear their clothes inside out, pyjamas and holiday sweaters, held a daily holiday trivia contest with "yummy" prizes, and staged a holiday colouring contest with \$15 gift certificates donated by the Winnipeg Beach General Store.

Middle years students helped early years students brush up on their lit-



Santa took time out of his busy schedule to write to the students.

eracy skills by hosting virtual reading sessions during the school's daily snack breaks.

Students in Erin Brunen's grades 1 and 2 class made gifts for loved ones and designed their own cards and wrapping paper.

To cap off the week, the school watched the Winnipeg Beach School



Santa clandestinely installed one of his high-tech communication systems in the forest near the school.

Holiday Video, an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at the activities and projects the students participated in to celebrate the holiday season.

They released it on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=XLHQ-qMT-N4A>

Despite pandemic, Viterra wraps generous STARS calendar campaign

Submitted by STARS

In a holiday season that is anything but normal, STARS is receiving an extraordinary \$42,000 gift of support from Viterra's customers.

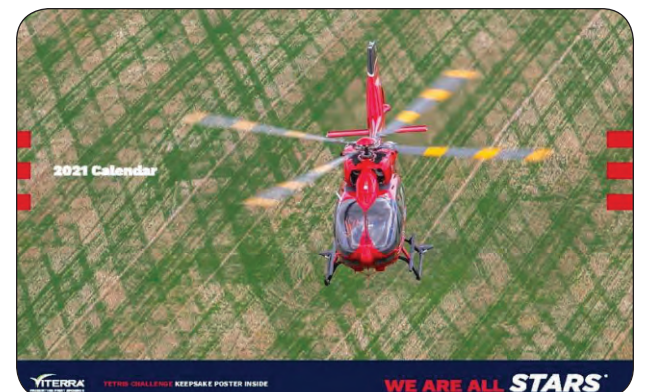
The world-leading agriculture network just wrapped its annual program to sell STARS calendars — nearly 1,000 in total this year — from its grain handling and marketing facilities across the Prairies on behalf of the non-profit air ambulance organization.

Since 2015, Viterra has supported STARS' popular calendar program as its print sponsor, helping the charity share its mission stories of rescue and recovery through patients' eyes. With bases across Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta, funds raised

through calendar sales help keep STARS in the sky.

"STARS provides such an important service, and our annual calendar campaign shows how communities will come together to support a worthy cause," said Nikki Deobald-Churchman, facility sales and admin at Viterra Rosetown.

"We continue to support STARS because they go above and beyond for those who need it most, and we see the difference that it makes in our communities," said Jeff Cockwill, VP of corporate affairs for Viterra North America. "Despite the unusual circumstances presented to us by the pandemic, our employees and customers demonstrated their giving spirit and made a significant and positive im-



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Viterra donated \$42,000 to STARS from the sales of the annual calendar campaign.

Continued on page 5

New markets for Lake Winnipeg whitefish needed

By Patricia Barrett

Although pickerel may have been sidelined because of COVID-19 and the subsequent collapse of the American restaurant and hospitality markets last spring, whitefish from Lake Winnipeg has stepped up to the plate and fishers are hoping new markets can be found.

Long-time Lake Winnipeg commercial fisher Robert T. Kristjanson, who got out on the ice last month when the winter fishing season opened, said more should be done to promote whitefish.

"Whitefish has become abundant. It is migrating south [to the channel area from the north basin of the lake] and we're fishing it," said Kristjanson by phone from his processing shed in Gimli. "With this pandemic continuing, there isn't a market for pickerel but there is a market for whitefish."

All the major fishing families in Gimli are currently "doing an awful lot of whitefish production," he said, and that fish is destined for markets in New York, Chicago, Minneapolis and other American centres. "And we're not talking about nickels and dimes here."

He said the government could be doing more to help promote wild-caught Lake Winnipeg whitefish and Manitoba's freshwater fishery, which is the second largest inland fishery by volume in North America after the Great Lakes' fishery.

The loss of their whitefish market in Russia about five or so years ago was the result of a retaliatory measure, he said, after a number of federal politicians, including Manitoba's Conservative MP James Bezan, criticized Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea, a long-disputed peninsula on the Black Sea that is internationally recognized as belonging to Ukraine.

"We had huge sales to Russia. Russia wanted every pound of whitefish we could produce for the marketing board [Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation]. Then they invaded [Crimea] and Canada stood up and said you can't do that. In response, Russia said we're not buying your fish," said Kristjanson. "Our Conservative government didn't say to the fishermen here that they were sorry about that. They said you can go sell somewhere else."

Kristjanson said the fishers need senior levels

of government to help them find new markets for whitefish.

"With the pandemic, our pickerel [as fillets] can't be sold in restaurants anymore because they've closed down. What has saved us is whitefish. People still want a round fish."

He said he doesn't really expect any help from the provincial Conservative government, which is focused on promoting angling rather than the commercial fishery and which did "every single solitary thing in their power to try and get rid of the marketing board."

But he thinks the federal government has a role to play, he said. With its clout in the global marketplace, the feds can promote Canadian fish products and create opportunities for Canadians to easily buy domestically caught fish. Supermarkets are brimming with imported fish.

Kristjanson said over the years people quit eating whole fish, demanding filleted fish instead, and that's when pickerel became immensely popular. But whitefish is just what the doctor ordered, so to speak, in term of its nutrient content. And that's been backed by scientific investigation.

In 2015 researchers from the University of Manitoba and the St. Boniface Hospital Research Centre extracted lipids from fillets of arctic char, pickerel, suckerfish and whitefish and found they "contained significantly less amounts of fat as compared to those from salmon samples."

The study, titled "Lipid analyses of four types of fish from Manitoba lakes," also found that Manitoba fish species contained a beneficial fatty acid called docosahexaenoic acid (DHA).

Kristjanson said whitefish is the "perfect fish" and many people "don't realize what we have here on Lake Winnipeg."

The local market for whitefish — meaning close Gimli and across the province — isn't big enough for whitefish, said Kristjanson. That's why markets across Canada and overseas are needed.

The *Express* reached out to the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation, which buys the majority of Manitoba's commercially caught fish, for comment on whitefish but did not receive a response by press time.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY CHRIS KRISTJANSON
Robert T. Kristjanson has been fishing on Lake Winnipeg for over 70 years and says whitefish is everything you could want in a fish, nutritionally speaking.

In Freshwater's annual report for 2019, the corporation notes Finland as the sole purchaser of Lake Winnipeg whitefish and whitefish caviar.

While pickerel is off the menu, Kristjanson said it's a good opportunity to explore markets for whitefish. And that includes encouraging people to "eat what we have here."

Whitefish is vital to Lake Winnipeg fishing families; generation after generation have fished it, he said.

"We're putting a staple fish on the market, the highest grade fish you can buy," he said. "We're getting a fair amount of money for it. It went through a cycle and it's now king of the fish. The Great Lakes are down on their whitefish because of what's happening with the pollution in their water. Our whitefish is at a premium now."

> STARS, FROM PG. 6

pact to this year's campaign."

Over the years, STARS has touched the lives of Viterra employees, customers and their families. This partnership helps ensure that STARS can continue to provide immediate medical attention in critical situations.

"Almost everyone on the Prairies knows someone whose life has been impacted by STARS," said Wanda Marchewka, facility sales and admin at Viterra North Battleford. "It's comforting to know that the service is available to all of us if we ever need it."

In addition to Viterra's very generous print sponsorship, its employees have contributed to an additional \$300,000 in calendar and merchandise sales and collected donations over the past six years.

"In a year of uncertainty, Viterra and its dedicated employees has never once wavered in their commitment to STARS, and in true grassroots spirit, they have found new and innovative ways to continue supporting our mission," said Andrea Robertson, STARS president and CEO.

"We are so grateful for the role that Viterra plays year in and year out, helping to keep us on the cutting edge of critical medical care and making sure that we can be there for the next patient who needs us," said Robertson.

The calendar campaign is in its 28th year, and while it has always been a significant source of revenue for STARS, it is particularly important this year when so many fundraisers have had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A limited quantity of calendars are still available for purchase online at starscalendar.ca.

THE EXPRESS WEEKLY NEWS



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Evaluating election priorities

By Evan Matthews

We've rung in the new year. We've said goodbye to 2020 and hello to 2021; so many were eager to turn the page.

An old saying suggests during the worst time in your life, you get to see the true colours of the people who say they care for you.

Such has been the mantra of the Manitoba government throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

We've heard things like, "We're in this together" or "We all need to do our part" and "We're all part of Team Manitoba."

Health-care workers are first in line for vaccines, with more and more being administered every day. While we aren't at a point in which every citizen has been immunized just yet, there is definite reason for optimism as we look forward to 2021 and a safer environment (as it relates to COVID-19).

But when it comes to politics, people have short memories. The next provincial election will not occur until 2023, likely, though the possibility of an early election exists.

But we don't need to listen to the campaign speeches to understand our individual political perspectives.

It's important to evaluate election priorities sooner rather than later because when 2022 rolls around, we'll

start to hear the same rhetoric we're used to hearing on the campaign trail: promised tax cuts (or freezes); emphasis on health care; emphasis on education; emphasis on social programming — the list will go on.

The reality is, we don't need to wait to listen to the campaign speeches to understand our individual political perspectives.

We can start asking these questions now because the proof is in the pudding; we've been navigating as tough a time as ever in recent memory.

How do you feel our provincial government handled the first wave of COVID-19, and then the second? Were the lockdowns and fines the right way to go, and timed appropriately?

Did the provincial government do a good job of prioritizing public health and citizen safety, as opposed to prioritizing economy and business?

Did the Province of Manitoba's previous cuts to education and health care better serve our communities during a pandemic hit? Did it help our wallets in the end?

These are personal questions, questions only you can answer for yourself.

However, it's becoming clearer that at least a portion of Manitobans are dissatisfied with this government's performance.



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The Angus Reid Institute — a non-profit commissioning research and opinion polls in Canada — recently found Manitoba to be the most critical province in the country of its government's handling of the pandemic.

Only about 30 per cent of Manitobans feel the provincial government is "doing a good job" in its pandemic response, compared to the national average, of which 66 per cent of Canadians feel their provincial government has done a good job.

Since losing power in 2016, the NDP government had not exceeded the Tories in popular (poll) support, but another research organization called Probe Research found in December that the NDP has more popular support at the moment.

Couple those polls with the fact that during a year-in-review interview with the Canadian Press, Premier Brian Pallister said he would see Manitoba through the COVID-19 pandemic but did not commit to finishing his term in office, and we begin to see an unstable political landscape.

So, the conversation gets thrown back to you, the reader; the citizen: How do you feel about things right now? What has gone well? What could have been done better?

Province provides \$5 million to support Manitoba restaurants

Submitted by Manitoba government

The Manitoba government is providing \$5 million to the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce to develop a program that provides financial relief to dine-in restaurants that have been affected financially by the province moving to Critical (red) on the #RestartMB Pandemic Response System and resulting public health orders, Premier Brian Pallister announced on

Dec. 22.

"Manitoba's restaurant community has made significant sacrifices in order to help halt the spread of this deadly virus and protect all Manitobans during this crucial time in our fight against COVID-19," said Pallister. "Many businesses have taken on additional costs to adapt their operations to comply with public health orders and safely provide Manitobans

with the services they rely on while supporting their efforts to stay home. Our government continues to work with the business community to identify industry needs and help target our support to help offset new expenses."

Based on a recommendation from business leadership and stakeholders, the \$5-million Dine-in Restaurant Relief Program will be delivered by the

Continued on page 7

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Interlake-Gimli MLA Derek Johnson reflects on 2020

Submitted by Heather Sigurdson

MLA Derek Johnson dedicates an immense amount of time to the constituency of Interlake-Gimli and the Manitoba legislature.

The first quarter of 2020 was especially busy with Treasury Board to prepare the budget and release it in March. He continues to serve on the Treasury Board, Legs & Regs, Legislative Assembly Management Commission and he is also PC Caucus Whip.

Johnson has found it enjoyable getting to know as many people as possible within the new boundaries of Interlake-Gimli despite of COVID-19 cancelling most of his public calendar events. The local fairs, festivals and rodeos of the region have been negatively affected. These have always been the top of Johnson's list to attend. The last few events that were still open to the public were the Gimli Ice Festival to celebrate Manitoba's 150. This was the last big event in 2020 before the COVID restrictions.

Interlake-Gimli constituents were proud to send Kerri Einarson off to the Scotties Tournament of Hearts with them leaving as Team Manitoba skipped by Kerri Einarson and returning as Team Canada ... congratu-

lations. The Falcons' commemorative hockey game was also a great event.

On behalf of MLA Jon Reyes, military envoy, Johnson presented a certificate to war veteran Joe Mazur in honour of his 97th birthday and to thank him for his service to the Canadian military.

A ribbon cutting of the opening of the new Road 326 locally known as the Jacob line, with Premier Pallister was well attended with Ron Schuler, minister of Infrastructure, and Blaine Pedersen, minister of Agriculture and Resource Development. Minister Pedersen also made time to meet with farmers throughout Interlake-Gimli to get feedback and input from the grassroots to help shape new policies and programs.

Johnson and Andrew Smith, legislative assistant to the minister of Sport Culture and Heritage, showcased Interlake-Gimli on social media to highlight some of the wonders of the Interlake region.

Our government met with local stakeholders/farmers throughout Interlake-Gimli to take part in roundtable discussions for Crown lands. Johnson said, "Our PC government has been exploring ways to improve BRM programs and increase access

to market opportunities." The government has heard directly from hundreds of farmers and is committed to bringing their voices forward.

The Government of Manitoba is proud to ensure the LPN course will be hosted in Arborg in a newly renovated teaching facility. The grants will help ensure the renovations are completed as scheduled. Congratulations to all the successful applicants.

Gudmundur Árni Stefánsson, the Council General of Iceland toured the New Icelandic Heritage Museum in Gimli as he introduced himself to the largest population of Icelanders outside of Iceland. It was a pleasure to meet and accompany Council General of Iceland.

Johnson presented a certificate on behalf of MLA Jon Reyes, military envoy, to war veteran Norman Shaw in honour of his 99th birthday and to thank him for his service to our country.

MLA Johnson was pleased to have Heather Stefanson, minister of Families, in attendance for a new \$12.9-million funding announcement for an affordable 55+ housing project. Thanks to the Gimli Seniors' Residence Group for all their hard work to bring



MLA Derek Johnson
Interlake-Gimli

this project to fruition.

Johnson and Minister Pedersen, minister of Agriculture and Resource Development, announced \$375,000 to Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium in support of the MV Namoa

Continued on page 8

Province announces consultation on nutrient targets for Lake Winnipeg

Submitted by Manitoba government

Consultations began Jan. 1 on a proposed nutrient targets regulation under the Water Protection Act, Agriculture and Resource Development Minister Blaine Pedersen announced last month.

"Lake Winnipeg is one of Manitoba's greatest treasures, and the Manitoba government remains committed to improving water quality and reducing the frequency and severity of algal blooms," said Pedersen. "The proposed nutrient targets will pro-

vide important guidance for nutrient reduction activities and establish benchmarks for measuring progress."

The Sustainable Watershed Act, which received royal assent in 2018, enabled the development of nutrient targets for Lake Winnipeg and its tributaries. The Made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan called for the development and implementation of targets for nutrient reduction including for the Lake Winnipeg watershed. The Made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan also committed to innova-

tive approaches such as water quality trading that would depend on the establishment of nutrient targets.

The minister noted that establishing and implementing nutrient objectives and targets is expected to help Manitoba's collective nutrient reduction efforts by helping guide future nutrient reduction activities, implementing best practices, identifying priorities and tracking progress over time.

The development of nutrient targets is a proactive approach to water management and will also improve the

co-ordination of watershed activities, enhance watershed plan development and implementation and make it easier for partners to allocate financial resources where they will provide the most benefit to the watershed, he added.

To learn more about the proposed nutrient targets regulation and to provide comments, visit the Manitoba Regulatory Consultation Portal at <https://reg.gov.mb.ca>. Comments are invited through Feb. 26.

> SUPPORT, FROM PG. 6

Manitoba Chambers of Commerce in partnership with the Manitoba Restaurant and Foodservices Association. The program will be designed to provide a rebate to dine-in restaurants across Manitoba that have shifted to a delivery model as a result of moving to Critical (red) and subsequent public health orders. The rebate will help offset additional costs related to food delivery services, whether a restaurant provides its own delivery service or uses a third-party delivery company.

"In a time when the restaurant industry in Manitoba has experienced significant revenue losses due to the

pandemic and code red restrictions, we are pleased to see our provincial government creating this initiative to ensure some of the additional expenses of operating during this unprecedented time are recognized," said Shaun Jeffrey, executive director, Manitoba Restaurant and Foodservices Association.

"We welcome this additional support to keep our restaurateurs' spirits up during this holiday season. We look forward to working with all the partners involved to get these supports to the businesses that need them the most while supporting them as they rely on this lone revenue stream to keep them viable in the future."

The Dine-in Restaurant Relief Pro-

gram is the second program rolled out from that \$50-million investment. On Dec. 3, the province announced a \$1.5-million commitment from the fund to help support business, and chambers of commerce throughout Manitoba in developing and promoting their community business. A portion of that funding was also allocated for the GoodLocal online shopping platform and delivery service in the capital region, which connects local makers and merchants with buyers at www.goodlocal.ca.

The Manitoba Bridge Grant provides an immediate one-time payment of \$5,000 to small and medium-sized businesses, not-for-profit and charitable organizations that were directly

ordered to temporarily cease operations or close their publicly accessible physical locations by Manitoba COVID-19 public-health orders in effect on Nov. 12. The province expanded the grant in December to include funding of up to \$5,000 for full-time Manitoba home-based businesses that have been affected by Manitoba COVID-19 public-health orders in effect as of Nov. 12. As of Dec. 21, the province has provided approximately \$43 million to 8,600 successful applicants.

More information on the Dine-in Restaurant Relief Program and how to apply will be available for restaurants in the weeks ahead.

letters to the editor

Letters to the Editor:
letters@expressweeklynews.ca

Might Humidity Cure COVID-19 epidemic?

Aerosol and Air Quality Research Journal (aaqr.org) has published a discussion of the role of relative humidity in the airborne transmission of COVID-19. Aerosol scientists concluded that if the relative humidity is below 40 per cent, the virus-laden small droplets exhaled from infected adult lungs will endure as small aerosols suspended in air, infecting others wherever the air circulates.

But if the relative humidity is increased above 40 per cent, the exhaled droplets will pick up more moisture from the wetter air, increase in size and fall from the air. This is similar to how dust particles in the atmosphere attract moisture from humid air to form clouds and then a cleansing rain.

Published in July 2020, this aerosol

research seems to not yet have been communicated to our public health officers, as they do not yet suggest >40 per cent RH to prevent enduring contagious aerosols of COVID-19.

World epidemiology appears to validate this. All small islands and humid coasts have less epidemic contagion (are never <40 per cent RH), yet all regions where air within buildings is now heated now have epidemics (often <40 per cent RH) — due to warm air being able to hold more water vapor than can cold air, and thus air becomes relatively drier when heated.

Aerosol scientists also advise to wear masks to increase the humidity that virus-laden droplets first encounter, and to halt the velocity of exhaled air.

Suggest, during viral epidemics:

- Via licensing require all public places be >50 per cent RH, and advise the public to not enter any building having <40 per cent RH.

- Advise keeping water on simmer until condensation forms on windows, and if COVID symptoms then contain forced air heat within basements to prevent aerosol circulation in homes.

- Require hands protection, such as loose mitts, if touching public-owned surfaces.

- Require masks or niqabs if persons are close or air is dry.

The lesson from COVID-19: We first learned to survive in cold regions by wearing furs. Then we learned to heat air and retain it in buildings. Now we learn to always add water to heated air to prevent aerosol viral epidemics.

Challenge: Let's use humidity,

masks and mitts to tame the epidemic ourselves, months before vaccines arrive.

I have supplied air humidifiers into my mother's seniors home.

- Grant Rigby, M.Sc.Food, farmer.
www.grantrigby.ca

Be patient and co-operative

To the complainers about post office lineups, I was at the post office yesterday to buy stamps.

As far as I'm concerned, everything was fine. I waited in line and had my turn. Everyone was co-operative.

This is a difficult time. Quit complaining. Be quiet and give everyone a break. I live out of town too.

- Nadia Bjorklund
Gimli

Outside mailboxes are COVID-free

Before the Liberals were elected, Mr. Trudeau promised to get rid of most of Canada Post outside mailboxes. Trudeau never kept his word.

"Thank the Lord" outside mailboxes are the best thing that ever happened. It gets people out of their homes and it's COVID-19 free.

In the Gimli area, there are 500 outside boxes; Camp Morton, 200; Aspen Park, 200; Shorepoint, 100. Another 200 boxes are in apartment blocks. Maybe, just maybe, we should all have outside mailboxes. The com-

plainers would have nothing to complain about: fresh air, COVID-19 free, snow drifts, 30 below.

The people at the post office are doing the best they can with the resources they have and the building they operate out of. Nobody in their right mind could have seen the horrendous amount of parcel volume.

The same as hospital being overwhelmed so, please, complainers, give them a break.

Thank you,
Norman Valgurdson

> JOHNSON, FROM PG. 7

and \$175,000 to Fish Futures Inc. to support the collection of data on Lake Winnipeg whitefish population.

Our veterans should be honoured every single day especially during a year when the in-person Remembrance Day Services had to be cancelled. MLA Jon Reyes, military envoy, toured the Royal Canadian Legions in the Interlake-Gimli riding. The St. Laurent Legion received a grant from the provincial government for upgrades for a new roof and handicap washrooms.

The Province of Manitoba has gone to great efforts to support the health of our watersheds including Lake Winnipeg. The provincial government has dedicated and forwarded hundreds of millions of dollars for projects including the City of Winnipeg's North End Water Pollution Control Centre to ensure that the health of Lake Winnipeg improves.

MLA Johnson's Bill 208 Receives Royal Assent, Removing Barriers for Landowners to Protect Property. The Wildlife Amendment Act (Protecting Property from Water & Wildlife Damage) Johnson said, "Addressing the significant administrative delays associated with requests for the removal of dams and lodges must be the priority when protecting property and landowners. In today's environment, it is critical that a timely and efficient solution is reached that respects both landowners interests and local municipal authorities while protecting our abundance of nature and wildlife."

This year of COVID-19 has brought much diversity in these very challenging and unprecedented times. Johnson's wish for everyone is that 2021 be a safe, healthy and prosperous. Happy New Year.

COVID-19 VACCINE

Manitoba's Immunization Team Needs You

Retired and future nurses and other health professionals – **apply today!**

The COVID-19 vaccine has arrived and will be available to every Manitoban who wants it.

Help protect your neighbour and be part of the biggest immunization campaign in Manitoba history.

We need retired nurses, students in health care professions and many others to join Team Manitoba.

You can be an immunizer if you are a:

retired nurse or health care worker	pharmacist midwife dentist	veterinarian technologist respiratory therapist
student in a medical profession	physiotherapist lab technologist veterinarian	occupational therapist

Training is available to help ensure everyone hired can give the vaccine safely. And, anyone administering the vaccine is also eligible to get the vaccine.

Learn more about becoming an immunizer and other jobs at manitoba.ca/vaccine

get informed

NEWS > VIEWS > GIMLI > ARBORG > HIGHWAY 6 > SURROUNDING AREAS

New Year's resolutions with Fierce Interlake Training

By Evan Matthews

A local businesswoman is helping Interlakers with their New Year's resolutions by also cultivating community in the COVID era.

Breanna Rae, owner of Fierce Interlake Training (FIT), was hosting in-person classes for the past few years in Eriksdale and Lundar.

In late February and early March, just prior to the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, Rae said she began to offer online classes as well. Talk about timing.

"I had just kind of started before COVID. ... But now everything is online. No in-person classes, but there are four in-person classes each week via Zoom," said Rae.

"It's been really well received. ... Not everybody knows about it yet, but we have people from Gypsumville, Fisher Branch, Warren, etc. People from all over the Interlake are participating," she said.

Rae runs what she calls "bootcamp classes," which involves a lot of circuit training.

Circuit training by definition is when participants alternate between a wide variety of exercises designed to target different muscle groups.

As participants move through the circuit's exercises, certain muscle groups are active and working, other muscles get to rest.

The training regimen has been welcomed by many Interlakers, as Rae said about 25 people attend each class. Of course, in-person gatherings of that size are not currently permitted by provincial COVID regulations.

"In a time of a lot of uncertainty and separation, FIT provides a safe way to gather together as a community and promotes physical and mental health and well-being. It's been wonderful to connect with friends through these online workouts," said Amanda Bouchard, a weekly participant.

"(Rae) is encouraging and provides an entry level for all ages. Our screens are often filled with people of all ages and from all walks of life. ... There's no better way to start my morning," she said.

Rae echoed the sentiment regarding all ages, as she said one of her favourite aspects to the online classes is when she sees families participating together, wives and husbands, kids and grandparents.

One lady who participates, according to Rae, is the caregiver for her



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Breanna Rae, owner of Fierce Interlake Training, poses with her class after leading a circuit.

mother. Of late, her Rae said the mother has been participating as well.

"It's so amazing to see the different dynamics. It seems crazy to think this is even possible, this type of community, thinking back two years ago," said Rae.

"But like so many other things in the

world, COVID has made it look a bit different."

Anyone interested in Fierce Interlake Training is encouraged to follow the Instagram or like the Facebook page of the same name or email fierceinterlaketraining@outlook.com.

Virtual fitness programs to be offered by Arborg-Bifrost recreation centre

By Patricia Barrett

The Arborg-Bifrost Parks and Recreation Commission is asking community members to continue to adhere to provincial public health orders by staying home but staying active.

"With current provincial health restrictions as they are, the recreation commission is planning on providing residents with many opportunities to continue or become active while at home," said recreation director Tom Chwaliboga by email.

Provincial public health orders that closed recreation facilities came into effect late last year to address the continuing spike in COVID-19 cases, including in the Interlake region. The orders will continue until Jan. 8 unless extended.

Even if public health restrictions are loosened, Chwaliboga said some peo-

ple may not feel comfortable exercising in group settings. Given the health benefits of exercise, fitness programs offered through video-conferencing software such as Zoom are "the next best thing."

To that end, recreation staff are currently in the process of planning programs with local fitness leaders.

"The goal is to have to have the programs begin near the end of January and continue for six weeks, possibly longer, with them ending in March," said Chwaliboga. "Our community has some great fitness leaders who want to share their enthusiasm for activity. We hope by offering the programs on Zoom it will remove a few potential barriers for people to participate."

The schedule is expected to be released early in the new year.



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Like every arena and community centre across Manitoba, the Arborg arena was forced to close last year under provincial public health orders to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Arborg's Loewen co-authors children's book

By Brian Bowman

Jermaine Loewen achieved his dream of playing professional hockey in 2020.

But he also did something else very impressive last year.

He co-authored a children's book.

"I'm very happy to have a book out there and it's an honour to be part of such a good cause," said Loewen from Kamloops, B.C., on Monday afternoon. "Having a story with such a deep meaning behind it. I'm just so grateful that I could share some of my experiences and put myself out there as being the bear in the story and the lion is the other character."

NHLPA agent Ray Petkau, the CEO of Alpha Hockey Inc., approached author/illustrator Thom van Dycke last spring with an idea for a series of hockey-themed children's books.

Ari The Lion Books is the result of the partnership. Loewen, a former Interlake Lightning and Kamloops Blazers' captain whose agent is Petkau, became involved in the project this past summer.

The result was the book titled *Ari's Awful Day/Mainer's Move*, which consists of two stories that start on opposite sides of the book and meet in the middle.

"Thomas did a great job putting the book together and Ray, my agent, also helped make things happen with the book," Loewen said. "Without those two, it wouldn't have come together but I had a lot of great ideas and they had some good ideas and we were able to formulate a great book."

Mainer, one of the book's main characters, is based



EXPRESS PHOTO ARITHELION.COM

Jermaine Loewen, right, and Thom Van Dycke co-authored the children's book *Ari's Awful Day/Mainer's Move*.

on Loewen. He's a black bear who has moved into a new area and joins a hockey team that includes Ari. At first, Ari did not accept Mainer.

The book, written for students in kindergarten through Grade 2, has some incredible lessons.

"Without some of my experiences and the things that I went through, I was able to have a great say with the book," Loewen said. "It's not experiences from a victim's side. It's about how things are ... and we wanted to shed light to it. There's been a lot of attention and a lot of separation with people in the last year. I think the book with *Ari's Awful Day* helps people understand that it doesn't matter if you disagree with everything someone says but just to live a life

of inclusiveness and try to live like that all of the time. You won't always agree with people but have an open mind and welcome people in."

The book series website — arithelion.com — includes resources for parents and teachers, along with activities for kids, who can sign up for Ari's Kindness Club.

Club subscribers receive a membership card, a gift in the mail and emails that will include kindness challenges and colouring pages. There is no cost to join.

Loewen is hopeful that a lot of people get an opportunity to read the book.

"It's starting to pick up a lot of steam," said Loewen, noting the book came out in late December. "We have this message and it's going to help young kids as they think about those topics. You just can't sit down and talk to a kid in Grade 1 and talk about racism. It's very mind-blowing stuff to process. Having them in the schools at a young age learning about that, as they get older they can remember the story and go on that (website) that we built."

As for hockey, Loewen is preparing for his second pro season. He will soon be attending the AHL's Henderson Silver Knights' training camp.

Last season, Loewen split time with the Chicago Wolves in the AHL and the Fort Wayne Komets in the ECHL.

He scored his lone AHL goal against the Manitoba Moose in Winnipeg in front of family, friends and supporters.

Loewen, who was picked by the Dallas Stars in the seventh round of the 2018 NHL Draft, will see his pro contract expire following this season.

"It's a huge year for me but I'm putting in the time," Loewen said. "I want to try to get another deal after this year. I just want to continue to develop as a player. Last year was a learning year for me in my hockey and development. I know that I can progress and I can do it."



The Arborg Bifrost Parks and Recreation Commission will be asking people to Stay at Home, but Be Active over the next few weeks. With current provincial health restrictions as they are, the Recreation Commission is planning on providing residents with many opportunities to continue or become active while at home. Even if restrictions are loosened, there will be individuals who will not feel comfortable in a group setting, but everyone needs to remain active and maintain a healthy lifestyle, so fitness programs on Zoom are the next best thing.

Planning is currently underway with local fitness leaders on what, how, and when programs can be offered along with the process of registering for each program. "The goal is to have the programs begin near the end of January and continue for 6 weeks, possibly longer, with them ending in March" says Recreation Director Tom Chwaliboga. "Our community has some great fitness leaders who want to share their enthusiasm for activity, we hope by offering the programs on Zoom it will remove a few potential barriers for people to participate."

The Arborg Bifrost Parks and Recreation Commission will provide additional information on registration and programs early in the New Year.

Withdrawal Management Services to receive additional funding

Submitted by Manitoba government

The Manitoba government will provide \$889,000 over three years for eight additional beds to support timely patient transfers from Rapid Access to Addictions Medicine (RAAM) clinics, Health, Seniors and Active Living Minister Cameron Friesen announced last Tuesday.

"The ability to seamlessly transfer patients to withdrawal management services when required is critical to the success and sustainability of RAAM clinics in Winnipeg," said Friesen. "These beds will support RAAM patients experiencing withdrawal issues, reducing barriers to care, shortening wait times and ensuring quicker access to substance-use disorder treatment."

RAAM clinics provide immediate counseling, prescribe appropriate addiction medication and connect patients to community treatment programs and primary care physicians in their community for ongoing care. Patients who

need help managing withdrawal symptoms are transferred to these withdrawal management services.

"We see people every day in RAAM clinics requiring various addiction support services," said Dr. Ginette Poulin, medical director with the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba and clinical lead for the RAAM clinics. "Withdrawal management is an important step in the process of substance use treatment for many individuals and increasing timely access can be critical for their recovery journey. By adding more non-medical withdrawal management beds in our system, we can better respond to patients needs and help offer more safe places to stabilize."

The eight additional community-residential withdrawal management beds will include four beds for men at Winnipeg's Main Street Project,

Winnipeg Beach Legion serves up 160 meals for veterans and seniors

By Patricia Barrett

The Winnipeg Beach Royal Canadian Legion Branch 61 cooked up a storm before Christmas in order to provide meals to community members unable to visit friends and family.

The legion and its volunteers made and delivered 160 meals for veterans and seniors living in the Winnipeg Beach Lake Lodge and the Isfeld Manor, as well as for others in the community.

"Although we have had to close our doors due to COVID-19, we still want to be active in our community," said Velma Darroux, the legion's second vice president, by email.

The meals were made possible by donations from legion members, the legion's Ladies Auxiliary and friends and community members, said Darroux.

"The meal was a turkey dinner with all the trimmings, meatballs, cabbage rolls and some homemade Christmas goodies for dessert," said Darroux.

Adhering to strict COVID-19 safety measures, volunteers prepared the meals in the kitchen at the legion.

The meals were delivered on Dec. 18 and 19 with help from members of the Winnipeg Beach Fire Department and the Ladies Auxiliary.



The legion prepared a full turkey dinner.

Although the province remains under code red on the pandemic response system, the hope is that COVID vaccine distribution will help ease public health restrictions sometime next year.

The legion is eager to see its members and the community, said Darroux.

"We look forward to seeing everyone when we open our doors again," she said. "The executive, legion members and the Ladies Auxiliary would like to wish everyone a safe and healthy 2021."

For more information about legion events, visit the legion on Facebook or its website at www.winnipegbeachlegion.ca.



EXPRESS PHOTOS COURTESY OF VELMA DARROUX

Legion and Ladies Auxiliary members with donated desserts and other goodies.



The legion delivered 160 meals to seniors and veterans. A legion member delivers a meal.



Winnipeg Beach Firefighters helped deliver the meals.

> FUNDING, FROM PG. 12

and four women's beds at the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba's (AFM) River Point Centre in Winnipeg. This will serve an estimated 300 people each year, the minister noted.

"Main Street Project is proud to be a part of the continuum of care in addition recovery," said Dawn Cumming, director of detoxification and stabilization, Main Street Project. "The addition of these eight RAAM beds will allow us to support clients with timely and critical access to detoxification services. We are pleased the province is investing in implementing the recommendations outlined in the VIRGO report."

Since August 2018, more than 4,000 patients have used RAAM services at locations in Winnipeg (Crisis Response Centre and AFM Riverpoint), as well as in Brandon, Selkirk, Thompson

and Portage la Prairie. This includes more than 2,100 people who have registered for RAAM services in the past year.

The minister noted the service expansion addresses recommendations from the VIRGO report including increasing capacity for opiate agonist therapy and increasing capacity for community-based treatment services.

Over the past year, more than \$42 million has been invested to support stronger mental health and addictions services in Manitoba. These initiatives are in direct response to recommendations from several reports and action plans, including VIRGO, the Illicit Drug Task Force, Tracia's Trust and the Community Wellness and Public Safety Alliance.

What's *Your* story?

We want to hear from you.

The Express Weekly News connects people through stories to build stronger communities.

Do you know someone who has a unique hobby? Will be recognized by a local organization for volunteer service?

A teacher that goes above and beyond? A hometown hero? A sports star? A business celebrating a milestone or expansion? A senior celebrating their 100th birthday?

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Please share your story ideas at

news@expressweeklynews.ca or Phone 204-467-5836

THE EXPRESS WEEKLY NEWS

Pancakes and PJs got Arborg Collegiate off to a good holiday start

By Patricia Barrett

Staff and students at Arborg Collegiate knew how to get into the festive holiday spirit by throwing a pyjama party and pancake breakfast on the last day of school before the Christmas break.

Several teachers were seconded for pancake duty, including Krista Borgfjord and Heida Simundsson, while educational assistant Charla Floyd mixed the batter. Principal Randy Semenek got into some comfy pyjama bottoms for the celebration.

To further spread the cheer, Grade 11 and 12 art students made festive door hangers for seniors living in the Arborg Personal Care Home. A week earlier students and staff collected over 200 food items and raised almost \$300 for the Arborg & District Christmas Cheer Board.



Arborg Collegiate principal Randy Semenek donned comfy PJ bottoms for the year-end party.



EXPRESSION PHOTOS COURTESY OF RANDY SEMENEK
Teachers Krista Borgfjord (left) and Heida Simundsson dished up pancakes, eggs and sausages.

Fisher Branch RCMP reminder regarding the use of off-road vehicles

Submitted by Chad Hnatiuk

The use of off-road vehicles (quads, side by sides, dirt bikes, snowmobiles, go carts, dune buggies, trikes, golf carts, etc.) is a fun and rewarding past time if you have an interest in back-country trails, exploration, hunting, fishing or you may find it useful for agricultural purposes.

During these troubling times of COVID-19, it is encouraged that people engage in outdoor activities such as this.

Any off-road vehicle (ORV) is simply that, an off-road vehicle. To date, the Rural Municipality of Fisher and the Fisher Branch RCMP have received numerous complaints of ORVs driving on local streets and destroying town property. Officers and town officials try to use discretion for ORVs providing operators are being safe and respectful.

Our concerns have grown as we have begun receiving complaints of erratic driving, which poses a threat to public safety and causes property damage. This can be identified as power turns, driving at high speeds, fast accelerations, skids, racing, causing unnecessary noise and trespassing on private property.

The purpose of this article is to serve as a warning to those who operate ORVs carelessly as the RCMP will be conducting additional enforcement under the Off-Road Vehicle Act. Elected town officials will also be forwarding received complaints to the RCMP. A list of current fines has been added below for your reference.

Depending on the severity of the offence(s), a seizure of the ORV will

also take place, on top of fines, in which the registered owner will be responsible for fees incurred as a result of the ORV being towed and impounded. The fines listed below are contrary to the Manitoba Off-Road Vehicles Act, O31. In addition, if an ORV has been identified causing damage to town, rural or private property, this could result in charges, including mischief, under the Criminal Code of Canada which could result in a monetary fine and/or jail term. Furthermore, any injuries caused by the erratic operation on an ORV will be subject to investigation and potential charges under the Criminal Code of Canada.

The RCMP would also like to remind the public that operating an ORV while under the influence of alcohol or drugs carries the same penalty as operating a motor vehicle while impaired contrary to the Criminal Code of Canada.

The Off-Road Vehicles Act (Set Fines)

- Operate an unregistered ORV - \$113.00
- Operate an ORV without displaying number plate - \$113
- Operate or permit the operation of an uninsured ORV - \$298
- Operate an ORV without a valid driver's license - \$298
- Fail to wear a helmet - \$174
- Operate an ORV on or across a roadway or shoulder - \$113
- Fail to comply with a peace officers order - \$298
- Fail to produce driver's license upon peace officers demand - \$174
- Operate an ORV carelessly -



EXPRESSION PHOTO SUBMITTED
Fisher Branch RCMP-GRC Const. Chad Hnatiuk is encouraging everyone to become familiar with the rules of the road when driving an off-road vehicle.

\$672

- Drive imprudently - \$203
- Operate an ORV where prohibited - \$237
- Fail to keep right of roadway and shoulder - \$113
- Disobey a traffic control device (stop sign) - \$203
- -Mischief Sec 430(4) Criminal Code of Canada - Everyone who commits mischief in relation to property,

- is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years; or
- is guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction (Martens Criminal Code 2020).

Any person who witnesses the erratic operation of an ORV is encouraged to contact the Fisher Branch RCMP at 204-372-8484 or the RM of Fisher Municipal office at 204-372-6393.

Manitoba Crime Stoppers unsolved 2020 crimes in Interlake

By Patricia Barrett

Manitoba Crime Stoppers' website posts unsolved crimes that occurred in rural areas of the province, including the Interlake. A number of crimes occurring in 2020 remain unsolved, including break and enters, theft and arson, and anyone with information can call the RCMP or the Crime Stoppers tip line.

The information provided on the website was viewed Jan. 2. Below is a select list of unsolved crimes in the Interlake region.

Municipality of Armstrong — A large theft occurred at a property in the RM of Armstrong between Feb. 29 and March 5. Stolen items include solar batteries, solar equipment, tools, a 2019 Kubota tractor, a gas-powered generator and a propane heater. Anyone with information can call the Arborg RCMP detachment at 204-376-5253.

Eriksdale — The Eriksdale Fire Department responded to a fire at the McMunn & Yates Building Centre on May 21 at approximately 4:30 a.m. The fire, which the Fire Commissioner's Office determined was deliberately set, gutted the entire building and its contents. Anyone with information is asked to call the Ashern RCMP detachment at 204-768-2322.



A green 2005 Yamaha Grizzly ATV was stolen from a residence in the RM of St. Andrews.

Fisher Branch — The Manitoba Infrastructure Fisher Branch Yard was broken into between July 31 and Aug. 4. Several items were stolen from the Fisher Branch Yard including a Miller mig welder, two cordless impact driver drills and one corded impact driver drill. Anyone with information can call the Fisher Branch RCMP detachment at 204-372-6329.

Hodgson — The Manitoba Hydro building south of Hodgson was broken into between July 31 and Aug. 4 with several items stolen, including



EXPRESS PHOTOS COURTESY OF MANITOBA CRIME STOPPERS
The Manitoba Infrastructure Yard in Fisher Branch was broken into and had several items stolen, including a welder and drills.

a 2018 Can Am Max 570 EFI (ATV), a 2013 Polaris Ranger (side by side) and a number of tools. Anyone with information can call the Fisher Branch RCMP detachment at 204-372-6329.

Peguis First Nation — Suspects gained entry to the Peguis Development Corporation office, which is attached to the band office, between July 28 and 29 (overnight) and stole a safe containing cheques and cash. It is believed the suspect(s) used a stolen master key to gain entry. Anyone with information can call the Fisher Branch RCMP detachment at 204-372-6329.

Municipality of St. Andrews — A green 2005 Yamaha Grizzly 660 was stolen from a residence in the RM of St. Andrews between the evening of May 16 and noon on May 17. Contact

the Selkirk RCMP at 204-482-1222 or submit an anonymous tip to Manitoba Crime Stoppers.

Municipality of St. Andrews — A trailer with a skid steer on it was stolen while it was parked on the shoulder of Highway 8 in the RM of St. Andrews between 8:30 p.m. on June 11 and 10 a.m. on June 12. The trailer was black and the skid steer was a 2014 yellow Caterpillar 247B3. Anyone with information can call the Selkirk RCMP at 204-482-1222 or submit an anonymous tip to Manitoba Crime Stoppers.

Contact Manitoba Crime Stoppers toll free tip line at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or visit online at manitobacrimestoppers.com.

Lakeshore Regional Wellness Commission looking for community input

By Evan Matthews

Keeping informed on community projects can be challenging, as things move so quickly, but the Lakeshore Regional Wellness Commission (LRWC) is working hard to keep you in the loop.

LRWC president Tim Cameron said the organization's first newsletter went out in early December. Roughly 1,500 newsletters went out in total.

"There are quite a number of residents in the area we'd like to communicate our intent with and have them know what we're up to," he said, including the RM of West Interlake, the RM of Grahamdale, Homebrook-Peonan Point and five First Nations communities in the region.

"It's happening; we're converting the Ashern Curling Rink into a wellness centre, a regional wellness centre, and we felt a newsletter would be a good way to let people know what's going on."

He emphasized the fact that the wellness centre will be a regional facility.

The newsletter goes through details about converting the Ashern Curling

Rink to the Lakeshore Regional Wellness Centre, sponsorship information, lifetime memberships and more.

Construction on the project has not yet started, according to Cameron. He said the LRWC will begin its capital campaign as the next part of the project.

There are no set timelines for each newsletter distribution, but Cameron said they'll go out as often as the LRWC has information to share. Cameron alluded to April being the next month in which a newsletter is issued.

While the LRWC has worked with architects and engineers on the centre's conceptual plan and design, the organization will now shift its focus to raising the funds needed to complete the project.

"We've had tremendous support so far from the public as well as the RM and the LUD," said Cameron.

"We appreciate all the support we're getting. This initiative is really for the community, so it's good to know the project is being welcomed."

With the LRWC creating a presence in the regional community, the orga-

nization has started other online initiatives to create engagement, such as Wellness Wednesdays.

Via its social media channels, the LRWC publishes a wellness article each Wednesday for community engagement.

Anyone with interest in the Ashern Curling Rink redevelopment project can contact the LRWC via its Facebook page, by emailing Cameron at tcameron@tcmsnet.com or call him at 204-302-1043.

Background

The Lakeshore Regional Wellness Centre's conceptual design boasts many amenities seen at modern gyms and wellness centres, including things like a multi-purpose gym to accommodate activities like shuffleboard, badminton, pickleball, ping pong, as well as indoor soccer or hockey; an exercise area with cardio, core strength and weight training equipment; a walking track around the perimeter of the centre, a circle room — a quiet place — to support mental wellness; and a fitness studio for activities like yoga, Zumba, boot camps, dance and

martial arts.

The basement would be used for change rooms, restrooms, showers, while also having a meeting room used for community clubs and organizations, as well as being utilized for programmed activities like jewelry making, quilt making and music practice.

The LRWC did a survey at the 2019 Ashern Rodeo in order to better understand the community's "wants" in a long-term recreation facility.

The LRWC used the survey from that weekend to garner a broader view of regional people's needs by surveying people who use Highway 6 as part of their regular personal and/or work environment.

The survey suggested things like gym equipment, a walking track, a space for people to play pickleball, McCudden said, as examples of using the space effectively.

McCudden said people working in both the trucking and transport industry suggested they could also use the facility, as well as construction employees.

'COVID puppies' in need of socialization

By Patricia Barrett

With the spread of COVID-19 forcing people to spend more time at home, many have turned to the company of our four-legged canine friends.

Adopting a dog during the pandemic, however, may have come with some unexpected drawbacks, including people returning their pets after the novelty wore off and fewer opportunities to properly socialize them.

Sammy Mar, who runs the Smart Dogs training facility, which offers behavioural assessments, training, doggy daycare and grooming, said the pandemic has negatively impacted dogs as well as people.

"People were lonely and went out and got themselves a dog, and even now we're seeing some of those dogs getting returned," said Mar by phone before Christmas. "People got a dog for the wrong reasons."

Pets such as cats and dogs — and even birds — have been a "saving grace" this year, she said, as provincial public health orders restricted gathering sizes, closed recreation facilities and provided limited opportunities for in-person shopping.

But there has been a downside to pandemic puppy adoptions — a lack of opportunity for dogs to meet other dogs and get comfortable around humans other than their owners.

"There are some behavioural aspects that have arose. What we call 'COVID puppies' are not being socialized because people aren't going anywhere or doing anything," said Mar, who

in addition to training is involved in rescue missions. "Dogs that don't get socialized can develop fear, which can lead to aggression issues."

Socialization is the "most important thing" for a dog, more so than learning basic commands because that's what "teaches them about the world," said Mar.

Becoming desensitized to situations involving other dogs and other people prevents them from getting excited or over-stimulated by activities or situations they haven't encountered before.

"Socialization is about desensitizing dogs to everything so they can stay calm, cool and collected," said Mar.

Statistics on dog adoptions in Manitoba are hard to come by other than through anecdotal evidence, including pandemic puppy price-gouging. But overall trends in household pet acquisitions between 2016 and 2018 point to the growing popularity of dogs. In 2016, there were 7.6 million pet dogs. That grew to 8.2 million in 2018, according to the Ontario-based Canadian Animal Health Institute.

Throughout the lockdown people were reaching out to Mar with concerns about training, she said. It was unclear whether training facilities were allowed to be open under provincial code red restrictions. Mar has been hosting virtual training classes.

"Although we've done some online classes, it's definitely not the same experience as being in a group class where dogs can meet other dogs and



Dogs unable to play with other dogs and learn socialization skills can develop behavioural issues.

other people and they get to go out every day," said Mar, who showcases her training at dog shows across America.

Mar shares different strategies with people to help them socialize their new pets. Those include taking their dog for a walk in a mall parking lot or a grocery store parking lot or other areas that have "traffic, lights, smells and people."

"A parking lot is not too overwhelming and you can respect the six-foot physical distancing," said Mar. "You might want to go to a different lot every day as opposed to walking around the same block. By changing the dog's environment, they can experience new things."

Another option to getting your new dog socialized is to enrol them in doggy daycare, which Mar is offering in



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY SAMMY MAR OF SMARTDOGS

Sammy Mar teaches dogs new tricks.

addition to grooming and boarding. "People can drop their dog off here for the day and that will allow them to play with 20 other dogs. That will teach them to be okay with other dogs. We play with them and train them," said Mar, who is a member of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers and the Professional Pet Guild. "The daycare program is something new we've started offering since COVID arrived."

Mar is experienced working with bully breeds and houses dogs that municipalities have had to impound. She's on a contract with the RM of Armstrong and has taken dogs from the Town of Winnipeg Beach, she said. She'd be willing to take dogs from the municipalities of Gimli and Rockwood.

For more information about Smart Dogs, call Sammy Mar at 204-793-3575. Her facility is located about 10 minutes west of Winnipeg Beach on PR229.

Local Kiwanis giving back to the community at Christmas



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Photos left to right: Kiwanis Club of Gimli & District Aktion Club member Gina Petrowski making a Christmas card, which she delivered, along with holiday baking, to Doreen Pendracs and Aarica Dann.

Submitted

Kiwanian Frances Petrowski and her daughter, Aktion Club member Gina, decided to take advantage of all the home time afforded by the

pandemic. So, together they created Christmas cards and holiday baking. Cards and goodies were distributed personally to shut-ins, friends, family and the church community. Gina

acknowledges the season with a big smile that even her mask can't hide. Thanks to the Petrowskis for infecting us with the Christmas spirit. Kiwanis Club of Gimli & District would also

like to take this opportunity to thank the community for their ongoing support and to wish one and all the best for the New Year!

Incredible Creatures: The surprising heroes behind chocolate production

By John Gavloski

It is well known that much of our food relies on insect pollinators. Without them, there would be much less food.

When you hear the word pollinator, what insects do you think of? If you said bees, that is a good answer, as for many food plants their role is critical. There are other plants, though that require insects other than bees, such as a moth or flies, for their pollination.

When you are enjoying a piece of chocolate, that experience would not be possible without an often unappreciated group of insects. In this month's Incredible Creatures, we will explore the role of insects in the production of chocolate.

Not your average flowers

Chocolate is produced in seeds that grow in pods on cacao trees, *Theobroma cacao*. Cacao trees are small tropical trees that grow in the shade of larger trees in Central America, South America, Africa and Asia. Flowers grow directly from the trunks and

lower branches of these trees and, when pollinated, produce the prized seed pods.

Cacao flowers are a bit different than what most of us think of as flowers. These flowers play hard to get. They're small white flowers that dangle vertically from the trunk of the cacao tree, and require tiny pollinators. And they are nearly odourless. At first glance, it may seem like they don't provide any nectar, but microscopic nectaries are found on the stems and base of the flowers. The pollen producing parts (anthers) are hidden by hoods and can only be accessed by tiny insects near the base of the flower. To reach that pollen, a honey bee would be useless. The flowers are not particularly attractive to pollinators, except some little flies.

No flies would mean no chocolate

The heroes of this story are a group of small flies collectively known as chocolate midges. Chocolate midges are very small flies (about one to three mm) that belong to a group (genus)

of midges called *Forcipomyia*. These small flies seem to be the only creatures that work their way into the intricate flowers to pollinate. They most actively pollinate at dusk and dawn, in sync with the cacao flowers, which fully open right before sunrise. Individual cacao trees cannot pollinate themselves. Therefore the flies have to visit some other tree's flower bits, then make its way over to another tree to have a chance at pollinating it.

It's actually amazing that these tiny flies can pollinate the flowers at all. These flies are bad at flying, and they can barely carry enough pollen to pollinate one flower. And each flower only typically lasts between 24 and 48 hours. Only one out of every 400-500 flowers produce fruit.

Like other flies that are closely related to mosquitoes, the egg and larval stages of chocolate midges are tied closely to moist areas, and they primarily breed in the rainy season. Depending on the species, some of these midges lay their eggs in the rotting cocoa husks in plantations while



PHOTO SUBMITTED
Cacao tree. Note the pods, and tiny flowers dangling from the trunk and branches.

others find animal dung the perfect food for their babies. Regardless of the menu, the food has to be wet and rotting.

So next time you are sitting back and enjoying a cup of hot chocolate, raise a toast for chocolate midges. Without these flies, there would be no chocolate!

Federal government launches vaccine injury support program

By Patricia Barrett

The federal Liberal government is introducing a no-fault vaccine injury support program for all vaccines approved by Health Canada and will be working in collaboration with the provinces and territories to implement the program.

The launch of the national program comes as COVID-19 continues to decimate populations and shatter economies across the globe, and as vaccines to fight the deadly virus are just being distributed.

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) made the announcement Dec. 10.

"This will be the first pan-Canadian vaccine injury support program (VISP) in Canada," said Health Canada senior media relations advisor Tammy Jarbeau by email after Christmas. "The intent of the program is to provide financial support to people in the rare event that they experience a serious permanent injury after receiving any vaccine authorized by Health Canada, including COVID-19 vaccines."

COVID has infected over 84.4 million people worldwide and killed more than 1.8 million. Almost 600,000 Canadian have been infected and over 15,000 have died (Data: Johns Hopkins University, Jan. 2).

Although Manitoba escaped the brunt of the virus over the summer, infections sprinted from the starting gate like a thoroughbred in the fall,

prompting the Manitoba government to lockdown the entire province in early November. COVID has killed 678 Manitobans (Data: Manitoba government, Jan. 2).

Quebec created its own vaccine injury support program in 1988 and is the only jurisdiction in Canada that has such a program. The new federal program will be modelled, where possible, on the Quebec government's program, said Jarbeau. The national program will be an ongoing program that will form part of Canada's broader vaccination strategy. It will also put the country on par with nations that already have support programs.

"With a major rollout of vaccine in the works, it is important that Canadians have the same support as citizens of G7 and other nations," said Jarbeau.

There have been growing calls over the years for Canada to create a support program, she added. In January 2020 a petition was initiated by Bob Martin of Victoria, B.C., gathering 792 signatures. British Columbia had the highest number of signatures at 277, followed by Ontario at 218. Manitoba had 19 signatures.

Whether the new federal program will lead to a greater willingness among Canadians to get a COVID-19 vaccine is unclear. Fewer than half of all adult Canadians get vaccinated for influenza each year, although the trend over the past five years shows those numbers increasing.

Statistics Canada's Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Coverage Survey

for the 2019-2020 influenza season found 42 per cent of adults (aged 18 and older) were inoculated, the same percentage as the 2018-2019 season. In the 2017-2018 season, 38 per cent of adults were inoculated, and in 2016-2017, 36 per cent got the flu jab.

But COVID may tell a different story. The Canadian Community Health Survey, released by Statistics Canada last September, found three out of four Canadians (aged 12 and older) saying they'd get the COVID vaccine when it became available.

Jarbeau said there's not enough evidence to definitively link vaccine injury support programs to an increased willingness to get inoculated.

"There is limited data on the impact of providing no-fault vaccine injury support on vaccine uptake. That said, all immunization programs are based on the principle of reciprocity: Canadians are encouraged to get vaccinated for their own benefit and for the protection of others," she said. "In return, there is a duty to ensure that Canadians who are immunized are financially supported should they experience serious permanent injury as a result."

The worldwide COVID vaccine development and approval process had been fast-tracked with the first trials starting last March. Health Canada has already approved two COVID vaccines, one from Pfizer-BioNTech on Dec. 9 and another from Moderna

on Dec. 23.

Pfizer's clinical trials showed its vaccine to have 95 per cent efficacy. Two doses are required for maximum efficacy. Moderna's clinical trials showed its vaccine to be 94 per cent effective in subjects with no prior COVID infection, and 87 per cent effective in people over 65 years of age. Two doses are required.

Each province/territory has set — or will set — out its own inoculation schedules based on priority populations. Those schedules follow overall recommendations from the federal National Advisory Committee on Immunization.

Health-care workers in Manitoba are first in line to receive the vaccine. But exactly when the general public can get inoculated is unknown. The province's rollout plan entails making "adjustments" to provide COVID vaccines to a "broader range of health-care workers, residents of personal care homes and elderly Manitobans," according to its COVID-19 website.

Ontario may begin inoculating the general public sometime in July while Alberta may start in the fall. PHAC said last month the country's vaccination campaign is expected to wrap up in December 2021.

Health Canada is warning people who are allergic to the ingredients in the COVID vaccines not to take them (ingredient lists are available on the

Fisher RM laggard on library

By Evan Matthews

Despite overwhelming public support from its ratepayers, as well as agreement and willingness from the Lakeshore School Division on a potential location, the RM of Fisher council is delaying the establishment of a public library in the municipality.

RM of Fisher Reeve Shannon Pyziak said while council expressed support for the library in principle many months ago, there are still other factors to consider before establishing a public library in the RM.

"Including the differing views of ratepayers within our municipality, the current pandemic we're living in, and the municipal budget and impact of adding another service to our RM," said Pyziak, emphasizing the fact that joining the Evergreen Regional Library is a five-year commitment at minimum.

Regional libraries, in conjunction with their RMs, calculate library tax levy's based on population, basing the levy on a per capita system.

Based on the RM of Fisher's resident total (1,827), the Evergreen Regional Library (Group), would require a levy of \$18,726.75 from the RM annually.

"Many ratepayers and businesses within our communities have been impacted financially by the pandemic. Is it responsible to increase our budget for new services?" asked Pyziak.

"If the expectation is the (RM budget) does not increase, then other services may need to be decreased or cut. Which services would those be? That is why looking at our budget is imperative in this decision."

However, library committee members are pointing out that the majority of ratepayers in the region feel the reeve's questions have already been answered, but those answers may be falling on deaf ears.

When council had asked for the Fisher Library Committee to gauge community interest early on, a com-

munity survey showed — depending on the specific question — anywhere from 70 to 85 per cent of RM of Fisher community members found a library in the community to be either "important" or "very important."

At its Dec. 2 and Dec. 17 meetings, the RM of Fisher had the library listed on its agenda as "unfinished business." In each of those instances, council exhibited almost no discussion on the matter and made no decisions, nor did it offer any explanation to committee members regarding the delay.

The library is on the RM of Fisher's Jan. 6 meeting agenda.

The Fisher Library Committee members have said there isn't much else work for them to do, as the organization has done its diligence in providing all information the RM of Fisher Council has asked for — including researching regional libraries and annual operating costs, gauging community support and even providing examples of potential locations — all of which were discussed at the public meeting in February 2020 and in the *Express* since.

The committee's findings have also been presented to council, members said.

In December 2020, the Lakeshore School Division board approved the concept (in principle) to house the library at Fisher Branch Collegiate, according to Supt. Don Nikkel, who added that what happens next is up to the RM.

Reeve Pyziak said while council is pleased with the school division's support, "further work and discussion needs to occur in relation to location of space, lease specifics and renovation costs to the RM."

However, the library committee has stated repeatedly it would find a way — via its own fundraisers — to cover the cost of renovations to FBC, without financial help from the RM.

In order to join the Evergreen Regional Library, by March 31 the Fisher Library Committee must provide a letter stating that the RM of Fisher has passed first, second and third reading of the bylaw establishing public library in the municipality, the amount of the levy to be contributed to the library service, agreement from the partnering municipalities and libraries, as well as naming library board representatives.

The Fisher Library Committee has also stated, until the RM passes its bylaw to establish a public library in the municipality, the library committee cannot acquire a charitable number — meaning it cannot begin its corporate fundraising, which committee members said would help pay for the aforementioned renovations to FBC.

FBC would require a separate secured entrance for community members to access the library while school is in session.

Reeve Shannon Pyziak addressed the issue by stating the RM of Fisher has a charitable number the committee can use for library donations. However, committee members said without any bylaws passed, donors do not have any certainty the library will ever come to fruition and that their donations will be used as intended.

If the Fisher Library Committee does not get its application in to the Evergreen Regional Library by March 31, it will not be able to join until 2022.

To date, the RM has not passed any of the three readings of the bylaw establishing a public library service in the RM, but Reeve Pyziak confirmed council does understand the Evergreen Regional Library deadline.

When the *Express* asked RM of Fisher Reeve Pyziak (and the administration) if the RM could pass the bylaw readings and add a tentative line to the 2021 budget for the library so the library committee could get its application to the Evergreen Regional Library in on time and then begin fundraising for potential FBC renovations, Reeve Pyziak did not respond to that question by press time.

Conflict of interest?

Though the RM of Fisher has not yet read the first, second or third reading of the bylaw to establish a library, RM of Fisher Councillor Tom Nevakshonoff said if and when the bylaw ever makes it to the council floor, he believes the bylaws will be defeated by council majority.

With Reeve Pyziak citing the consideration of differing views of ratepayers as a reason why the bylaw readings have been delayed, two farmers voiced concerns in opposition the library tax levy at the February 2020 public meeting: Richard Woloshyn and Thomas Pyziak.

Both farmers have direct links to council. Farmer Thomas Pyziak is husband to the RM of Fisher Reeve Shannon Pyziak. Ward 3 Coun. Ron Galaluk's daughter is married to farmer Richard Woloshyn.

Of note, Nevakshonoff mentioned the Farmland School Tax Rebate which was introduced in 2004. Farmland owners receive a rebate ranging from 50 per cent to 70 per cent of school taxes paid on their farmland, capping at \$5,000.

Nevakshonoff made the case that it is the same people opposing a library tax levy who have also been benefitting by receiving at least \$5,000 via the Farmland School Tax Rebate.

The Province of Manitoba's Department of Municipal Relations takes care of Bill 35, the Municipal Conflict of Interest and Campaign Financing Act. However, according to Nevakshonoff, the legislation "lacks teeth" and is rarely enforced.

Whether or not the decision regarding a public library is a legislated conflict of interest, a perceived conflict of interest, or not a conflict of interest in any way; remains to be seen.

But library committee members have said the issue of a local public library in the RM of Fisher will not die on the council floor simply because council defeats it.

"Because it will become an election issue at that point," one committee member said.

> VACCINE, FROM PG. 15

agency's COVID-19 health product industry webpage).

Last month the Associated Press reported that two health-care workers in Alaska suffered allergic reactions after receiving Pfizer's vaccine, with one person experiencing anaphylaxis (difficulty breathing) and having to be hospitalized. The United Kingdom had also reported two similar cases in early December. The Manitoba government reported on Dec. 24 that one person — presumably a health-care worker — had an "adverse reaction" to the vaccine.

In a summary of the Pfizer COVID vaccine, published Dec. 10 in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, researchers noted reactions such as pain, swelling, fever, headache and myalgia, but most were "mild to moderate and resolved rapidly."

Jarbeau said serious and permanent adverse reactions are extremely rare, at fewer than one in a million.

"The Government of Canada is committed to protecting the health and safety of Canadians," she said. "Health Canada has a rigorous scientific review system in place to assess vaccines for safety and effectiveness in preventing the diseases they target.

Health Canada will not authorize a vaccine unless evidence demonstrates that its benefits outweigh the risks."

Health Canada has placed orders to reserve millions of doses of different COVID-19 vaccines, including those from Janssen Pharmaceutical, Novavax and Oxford-AstraZeneca, and all will be subject to the agency's approval process. If vaccines are found problematic while on the market, Health Canada can pull them.

PHAC is currently in discussions with provinces and territories to implement the vaccine injury support program, but details on eligibility criteria, compensation and whether the

program can be applied retroactively to COVID vaccines are yet to be determined.

"As discussions with provinces and territories are ongoing, no further details can be disclosed at this time," said Jarbeau. "Further information on program funding, operations and how the program can be accessed by applicants will be available when the program is launched in 2021."

Medical researchers currently don't know how long COVID vaccines will provide a measure of immunity to the virus. Like influenza, COVID inoculations may be required each year.

Interlake-Eastern RHA death count at 34 after outbreak at Kin-Place

Staff

The current five-day COVID-19 test positivity rate is 10.7 per cent provincially and 11.8 per cent in Winnipeg. As of 9:30 a.m. Monday, 118 new cases of the virus had been identified, which brings the total number of lab-confirmed cases in Manitoba to 25,244.

Monday's COVID-19 data shows:

- seven cases in the Interlake-Eastern health region;
- five cases in the Northern health region;
- seven cases in the Prairie Mountain Health region;
- 19 cases in the Southern Health-Santé Sud health region; and
- 80 cases in the Winnipeg health region.

The data also shows:

- 4,423 active cases and 20,133 individuals who have recovered from COVID-19;
- there are 245 people in hospital with active COVID-19 as well as 95 people in hospital with COVID-19 who are no longer infectious but continue to require care, for a total of 340 hospitalizations;
- there are 35 people in intensive care units with active COVID-19 as well as six people with COVID-19 who are no longer infectious but continue to require critical care for a total of 41 ICU patients; and
- the total number of deaths due to COVID-19 is 688.

Laboratory testing numbers show 1,275 tests were completed yesterday bringing the total number of lab tests completed since early February to

427,476. Case investigations continue and if a public health risk is identified, the public will be notified.

The Interlake-Eastern total case breakdown by district as of Monday, is as follows: A total of 1,874 cases, up by 376 from Dec. 14: 412 active cases, 1,428 recovered, 19 currently in the hospital with four of those in ICU and 34 deaths.

Arborg/Riverton 3 active cases, 51 recovered; Beausejour 17 active cases, 105 recovered; Eriksdale/Ashern 42 active cases, 76 recovered and 8 deaths; Fisher/Peguis 39 active cases and 261 recovered, 3 deaths; Gimli 27 recovered; Northern Remote 90 active cases, 157 recovered and 2 deaths; Pinawa/Lac du Bonnet 4 active cases, 49 recovered; Powerview/Pine Falls 88 active case and 37 recovered and 1 death; Selkirk 10 active cases and 84 recovered and 2 deaths; Springfield 5 active cases and 149 recovered and 11 deaths; St. Clements 15 active cases and 68 recovered and 1 death; St. Laurent 14 recovered; Stonewall/Teulon 128 recovered and 4 deaths; Unknown District 78 active cases and 94 recovered and 1 death; Whiteshell 5 active cases, 17 recovered and Winnipeg Beach/St. Andrews 13 active cases and 111 recovered and 1 death.

The chief provincial public health officer reminds Manitobans to self-isolate immediately at the onset of possible COVID-19 symptoms, no matter how mild. This means staying home from work, school or other daily activities. Testing should be done as

soon as possible once symptoms appear. For information on COVID-19 symptoms and guidance on when you should get tested, visit <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/fundamentals/symptoms.html>.

Manitobans should only leave their homes for essential purposes. When leaving the house to obtain essentials, be sure to physically distance, wear a mask in indoor public places and avoid crowded spaces. Do not leave the home if you are sick, or when any member of your family is sick. Further, do not socialize with anyone from outside your household.

Public health officials are also advising that if anyone is symptomatic, or has a household member who is symptomatic, the entire household needs to self-isolate pending COVID-19 test results. For health-care workers, exceptions may apply and staff may be able/required to report to work after contacting their workplace occupational health services or designate. For information on self-isolation, including exceptions, visit www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/fundamentals/self-isolation.html.

The online COVID-19 self-assessment tool can be found at <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/> and COVID-19 symptoms can be found at <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/fundamentals/symptoms.html>.

For up-to-date information on COVID-19 in Manitoba, visit www.manitoba.ca/COVID19.

For up-to-date information on the

#RestartMB Pandemic Response System, visit:

<https://manitoba.ca/covid19/restart-mb/prs/index.html>.

Manitoba government extends state of emergency

The Manitoba government is extending the provincewide state of emergency under the Emergency Measures Act to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect Manitobans, Infrastructure Minister Ron Schuler, minister responsible for the Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization (EMO).

The extension goes into effect on Jan. 6 at 4 p.m. for a period of 30 days.

The Manitoba Emergency Co-ordination Centre was activated on day 1 of the pandemic, and has been operating ever since, the minister said, adding it has been a critical player in facilitating the province's overall response to personal protective equipment procurement and provision. It also developed the Pandemic Response System, ensuring alternative isolation accommodations were available, and advising on and enforcing co-ordination of public health orders under the state of emergency. It also facilitates the federal/provincial engagement to military support in First Nations communities.

The state of emergency was first declared on March 20, 2020, by the powers set out in section 10(1) and 10(2) of the Emergency Measures Act.

RM of Bifrost-Riverton recap of activities for 2020

By Evan Matthews

Though 2020 was uncertain in many ways, the RM of Bifrost-Riverton tried to ensure certainty in one regard: the RM would continue to get work done.

After months of debate, the RM of Riverton-Bifrost decided to close its satellite office in Riverton on Jan. 8.

Riverton residents pushed back on the decision, but ultimately council decided the cost and inefficiencies associated with keeping the office open outweighed residents' concerns.

The news was posted on social media via the RM of Bifrost-Riverton's Facebook page on the same day. Many Riverton locals found out first-hand, however, as they went to pay sewer bills on Thursday Jan. 9 and the office had already been closed.

RM Reeve Brian Johnson cited cheaper taxes in Riverton as a silver lining to the issue.

Council initiated project construc-

tion of washrooms at Sandy Bar Beach.

Former CAO Cindy Stansell left the RM effective Feb. 14, moving to the role of CAO with the Town of Arborg.

Council provided a letter of support to the Riverton Elks, for the organization to apply for a grant to upgrade accessibility at the Riverton Curling Rink with an elevator. Ultimately the organization received the grant and installed the elevator.

The RM hired Jordan Willner as CAO in April.

Willner originally hails from Rorkeston, Man., and has previous CAO experience with the Village of Winnipegosis, the Town of Snow Lake, and the RM of Ste. Rose.

Most recently, prior to the RM of Bifrost-Riverton, Willner spent time with the Village of Marwayne (Alberta).

Council introduced its tax levy by-law and purchased three new municip-

pal graders in May.

In June, council adopted its tax levy bylaw.

Council passed a new gravelling program also passed a purchasing and procurement policy.

Council assisted Riverton-Bifrost Parks and Recreation Commission with its kitchen upgrade project, which was funded through the Building Sustainable Communities Grant.

Leading up to fall, Council established the 2020 road rehabilitation project along with authorizing the purchase of the front mount mower, which was previously on lease. The Arborg-Bifrost Fire and Emergency Services Committee made the recommendation to purchase a new pumper truck from Acres.

Council introduced a borrowing bylaw for the construction of the new waste disposal grounds for BAR Waste Co-op, as well as the council

code of conduct in October.

Council renewed the RM's curbside garbage collection for Riverton with Bardarson Enterprises for an additional two years.

The RM also saw the installation of three new rural street lights located at:

- Corner of Spruce Street and Lilac Drive (Okno, Man.);
- Corner of Maple Street and Lilac Drive (Okno, Man.);
- East side of Municipal Road 4E at the Lake Centre church/school property (Morweena, Man.).

Council participated in AMM's virtual 2020 convention. Councillors who attended also completed the mandatory provincial code of conduct training.

Council adopted its 2021 interim operating budget in order to initiate the 2021 planning process to close out the year in December.

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

MJHL planning update for a 2021 restart

Staff

The Manitoba Junior Hockey League continues to prepare for a restart and has developed a Restart Action Plan that will be initiated once it is deemed safe to do so and provincial restrictions allow for it.

In addition to the established and extensive MJHL Return to Play Guidelines already in place, a number of key elements have been identified in the MJHL Restart Action Plan to allow for a safe and responsible return to hockey.

“Our goal remains the same as in September, to provide a meaningful development season for the players through knowingly very challenging circumstances while continuing to exhaust all options in order to do so in a safe, structured and sensible manner,” said MJHL commissioner Kevin

Saurette.

“The MJHL and all member teams will continue to meet each challenge head on in what has already been a monumental effort by all involved. The health and safety of our players, staff, stakeholders and communities remains our No. 1 priority as we carefully navigate a responsible and beneficial pathway to restart training and on-ice competition.”

The MJHL remains optimistic that teams will have the opportunity to provide on-ice training activity for their players during the latter half of January with return to game play targeted for early-to-mid February.

Key Elements of a Restart Action Plan:

Players/staff to complete a 14-day self-isolation period before participating in team activities.

Players/staff to follow detailed travel procedures before reporting to the community/organization.

Teams to provide a 10- to 14-day modified training period for players/staff once the 14-day self-isolation phase has been completed in advance of resuming games.

All new players added to the roster would be required to complete a 14-day self-isolation period before participating in any team activities.

Each team will play a minimum of two games a week against the same team and will play the same team a minimum four times in a row over consecutive weekends.

Each team will only play teams from the same public health region, same division and/or of closest proximity based on regional restrictions at that time.

Each team will schedule games to be played during the weekend (Friday, Saturday and/or Sunday).

Regular season will be extended until the end of April to allow for further schedule and game play flexibility.

Playoff format will be reviewed over the coming weeks.

The MJHL successfully returned to conducting on-ice activity in July and has completed over 60 games since game play began in late September.

The MJHL will continue to consult with Public Health and Hockey Manitoba over the coming weeks to determine when it is appropriate to initiate the MJHL Restart Action Plan for a return to hockey.

The MJHL Board of Governors will meet this month to consider potential start dates and further restart activation planning.

Western Hockey League announces draft date change

Staff

The Western Hockey League announced on Dec. 22 that the 2021 WHL Draft, previously referred to as the WHL Bantam Draft, has been re-scheduled and will be conducted in December 2021.

The WHL Draft was originally scheduled to take place in May 2021.

“Moving the 2021 WHL Draft from

May to December allows additional time for players in the 2006 age group to be evaluated following a challenging season due to the COVID-19 pandemic,” said WHL commissioner Ron Robison in a statement. “We anticipate minor hockey leagues and tournaments will be fully operational in the fall, which will allow players to compete at a high level once again.”

The WHL also announced that the 2021 WHL Cup is tentatively scheduled to be held in October 2021, featuring WHL Draft-eligible players. The event provides another opportunity for eligible players to showcase their talents to WHL scouts in advance of the 2021 WHL Draft.

The 2021 WHL Cup will feature Under-16 teams from each of Canada’s

four Western branches — BC Hockey, Hockey Alberta, the Saskatchewan Hockey Association, and Hockey Manitoba — competing for U-16 supremacy in Western Canada.

The 2020 WHL Cup, which was scheduled to be held in October, was cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

COVID-19 cancels Manitoba curling championships

Staff

Selkirk won’t be the host of the Manitoba women’s and men’s curling provincials next month after all.

Curl Manitoba announced on Dec. 21 that those two events, scheduled to take place from Feb. 2 to 7 at the Selkirk Recreation Complex, along with the mixed doubles curling provincial championship, have been cancelled.

The mixed doubles provincials were slated to be held at the St. Vital

Curling Club in mid-February.

Last season’s winners will represent the province at the 2021 nationals which are set to take place in a bubble in Calgary in February and March.

Manitoba’s mixed-doubles champions — Krysten Karwacki and Derek Samagalski — have accepted an invitation to participate in Calgary.

Jason Gunnlaugson, the 2020 Viterra champion, and his team from Morris will compete at the Brier for

the second consecutive year.

St. Vital’s Jennifer Jones will make her 16th appearance at the nationals as she was the runner-up to Camp Morton’s Kerri Einarson in last year’s provincial final.

Einarson won the Scotties Tournament of Hearts in February and will be Team Canada at this year’s event.

But she has not played much since that huge victory in February.

Back in March, Team Einarson had just arrived in Prince George, B.C.,

for the World Championships when the decision was made to cancel the event because of COVID-19 the day before the competition was scheduled to start.

More recently in mid-November, Team Einarson defeated Kelsey Rocque in the opening draw of the Okotoks Ladies Classic but that bonspiel was soon cancelled when the Province of Alberta announced tighter restrictions for battling the coronavirus.

Classifieds



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SCRAP METAL

Buying scrap metal, cars, tractors, combines, farm scrap, any metal material, any farm machinery. Ph Lonnie at 204-886-3407 lve. message or cell at 204-861-2031.

Buyer for all farmyard scrap, machinery and autos. NO ITEM TOO LARGE! Best prices paid, cash in hand. Phone Alf at 204-461-1649.

HELP WANTED

Seeking professional drivers with Class 1 - 5 license to transport RV's throughout North America. We have company driver spots available in Double Haul, Triple Haul and Semi fleets and O/O spots available in Single (1 ton) and Double Haul fleets. For more information on each fleet, please visit roadexservices.com. Subsidized health and dental insurance, monthly bonus available for company drivers. Must have valid passport and be able to cross the border. To apply please email resume and a current driver's abstract to recruiting@roadexservices.com

HELP WANTED

HACCP rated individual needed for fish packer in Gimli. Experience with CFIA rules necessary. Ph 204-407-8012.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Do you own rental property in Winnipeg? Are you tired of dealing with long term renters and the mess they can leave? We can provide you with a different option to earn a rental income. Pawluk Realty 204-890-8141.

APARTMENT FOR RENT

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.

MISCELLANEOUS

Happy New Year!! Having a virtual event in Manitoba? Need registrants? Advertise it in the 37 MB weekly newspapers and get noticed! Each week our blanket classifieds could be helping your organization get noticed in over 340,000 homes! It's AFFORDABLE and it's a great way to increase and connect with our 37 weekly member newspapers. For as little as \$189 + GST, get your important messaging out! Call us at 204-467-5836 or email classified@mcna.com.
CONT. ON NEXT COL.

com for details. MCNA - Manitoba Community Newspapers Association 204-947-1691. www.mcna.com

NOTICES

Urgent press releases or media advisories service. Have something to announce? A cancellation? A change in operations? Though we cannot guarantee publication, MCNA will get the information into the right hands for ONLY \$35 + GST/HST. Call MCNA 204-947-1691 for more information, or email classified@mcna.com for details. www.mcna.com

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ESTATE & MOVING
Closes Wed Jan 27th @ 7:30 PM

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www.mcsherryauction.com



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI

MUNICIPAL GRANT APPLICATIONS 2021

The deadline for the Municipal Grant applications is **February 15, 2021**
If your organization would like to apply for a grant, the grant application package is available 3 ways:

- On the RM of Gimli website, www.gimli.ca
- By email request, gimli@rmgimli.com
- By mail, call (204) 642-6650

Applications received after the deadline date will not be considered.

Dated this 4th day of January, 2021
Kelly Cosgrove, CMMA
CAO



PART TIME EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY WITH POSSIBILITY OF FULL TIME

We are looking for a dedicated, organized and self motivated individual for the position of

Office Custodian & Automotive Detailer

Duties will include detailing the interior of trucks, cleaning offices, and other janitorial duties. Successful candidate must be physically fit, able to work independently, and be detail oriented. The successful candidate will receive competitive wages & benefits package.

Sales@jbrandtent.com

Call 204-364-2775 for more information



FULL TIME EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

We are looking for a dedicated, organized and self motivated individual for the position of

HEAVY TRUCK & TRAILER MECHANIC & SAFETY TECHNICIAN

Duties will include, but are not limited to performing inspections on units, mechanical repairs, and more. Experience is an asset. The successful candidate will receive training, all necessary tools, competitive wages & benefits package.

Sales@jbrandtent.com

Call 204-364-2775 for more information

Eddie's Gravel Supply Ltd.

FIREWOOD FOR SALE

Seasoned Poplar Mix, Birch, Oak & Tamarack.
Call 1-204-389-2023

FARMLAND FOR SALE BY TENDER

Sealed bids for the purchase of the following parcels of land, located in the RM of Fisher, should be mailed to Colin and Laura Grzenda, Box 7, Broad Valley, MB, ROC OK0 by Friday, Jan 29th, 2021.

Parcel #	Legal Land Description	Parcel Size	Cultivated Acres
1	NW 11-25-3W1	159.07 ac	110 ac
2	SW 11-25-3W1	160.00 ac	110 ac

Parcels have been farmed as a single unit. Both parcels are well drained and produce well. They also offer excellent hunting and recreational opportunities. Parcel 2 includes access to a gravel pit (excludes mineral rights).
• Tenders accepted until Friday Jan 29th, 2021.
• Sealed bids must be accompanied by a certified cheque for 2% of the tendered amount.
• Possession date of April 1, 2021.
• Purchaser will be responsible for the total of 2021 property taxes.

To obtain a complete tender notice outlining all terms and conditions, or if you have any questions, please contact Colin Grzenda at 204-880-9747 or 204-372-6167.

First Notice of Tax Sale Auction Rural Municipality of Grahamdale

Pursuant to subsection 367(1) of *The Municipal Act (MA)*, notice is hereby given that unless the tax arrears for the designated year and costs shown below in respect of the hereinafter described property are paid in full or an agreement under Section 369(1)(b) MA to pay the arrears and costs has been made prior to the commencement of the auction, the said property will be sold by public auction at following date, time and place:

Date and Time: **April 8, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.**
Where: Rural Municipality of Grahamdale
23 Government Road, Moosehorn, MB

Registered Owner: **ROBERT PERSHING THOMAS AS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ESTATE OF MARY THOMAS**

Roll #	Civic Address	2018 Arrears	Costs	Total
472200	SW 9-33-9 W	\$324.26	\$2,227.00	\$2,551.26

Legal Description: SW 1/4 9-33-9 WPM

- The tax arrears amount shown above includes penalties calculated to the day of the sale.
- Costs will continue to be incurred to the tax sale date and added to the amount required to redeem.
- The property may be sold at the auction for less than the amount of the tax arrears and if this is the case, the balance of the arrears and costs owing is deemed to be cancelled.
- Contact the number below for verification of costs. Any overpayment will be applied to payment of subsequent tax arrears. Payment must be made by cash, certified cheque, debit card (where available) or any other form of guaranteed payment.
- For any inquiries regarding the tax sale process or auction, contact TAXervice at 204-734-6381.
- **IF THE PROPERTY IS SOLD, THE SALE IS FINAL AND ANY INTEREST YOU HAD IN THE PROPERTY BEFORE THE SALE WILL BE EXTINGUISHED.**
- There will not be an opportunity to redeem this property from tax sale and a property transfer application will proceed immediately after the auction.

Dated this 7th day of January, 2021

Shelly Schwitek
Chief Administrative Officer
(204) 768-2858



This Notice is published for the purpose of effecting substitutional service thereof upon ROBERT PERSHING THOMAS AS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ESTATE OF MARY THOMAS, as set out in the Notice pursuant to Order of the District Registrar dated December 24, 2020.

RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI

UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE PLANNING ACT

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

On the date and at the time and location shown below, a PUBLIC HEARING will be held to receive representations from any person(s) who wish to make them in respect to the following matter(s):

THE RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI BY-LAW NO. 20-0022
Being an amendment to the Gimli Zoning By-law No. 11-0013, as amended.

HEARING LOCATION: Gimli Recreation Centre
45 Centennial Road
Gimli, MB

DATE & TIME: January 27, 2021
6:50 pm

APPLICATION: RMG-20-04R

AFFECTED AREA: Lots 28-35, Block 5, Plan 23548 in Pt. NE17-19-4E.
Roll No's: 381738-381745

GENERAL INTENT: To rezone an area in the RM of Gimli from "RS" Residential Single-Family Zone to "RT" Residential Two-Family Zone for the ability to construct future duplexes.

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Nancy Thom, CAO/Development Officer, Eastern Interlake Planning District
62 2nd Ave, Box 1758 Gimli MB ROC 1B0 - Ph: 204-642-5478 Fax: 204-642-6650
Email: epd@mymls.net website: www.interlakeplanning.com



COVID-19 PROTOCOL: Should you wish to attend the hearing, you must PRE-REGISTER NO LATER THAN 5:00 p.m. ON THE DAY OF THE HEARING with the RM of Gimli office at 204-642-6650.

A copy of the proposal and supporting material may be provided upon request to the contact person as mentioned above.

Please Note: E.I.P.D. recommends that property owner's notify lessee/renter if applicable.

Classifieds



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NOTICES

I, STANLEY MICHAEL TROSCHUK, as of this day will no longer be responsible for any debts and/or bounced cheques incurred by my son, MARK CHRISTOPHER TROSCHUK.
DATED: January 4, 2021
SIGNED: Stanley Michael Trochuk

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HEALTH

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HAY FOR SALE

For sale - small square bales wheat straw in shed. Round bales of barley, not combined. Ph 204-461-1717 or 204-375-6622.

CARD OF THANKS

We would like to thank everyone for all their love and support during our time of loss of our beloved Jimmy. Thanks also for the cards, baking, flowers and messages of sympathy. We appreciate it all more than you know.

-From Nora Chartrand and family

CARD OF THANKS

Edward "Eddie" Powroznik - My family and I would like to thank everyone for the kind thoughts and support we received after the passing of Ed. We deeply appreciate all the cards, flowers, phone calls, gift baskets, trays of dainties and care packages. Thank you also for the gifts of donations in Ed's name for Cancer Care. Your prayers and thoughts were a comfort to us and we are so grateful for family and friends at this time of sorrow. With love from the bottom of our hearts.

- Audrey, Michelle and Andy

CARD OF THANKS

THANK-YOU FISHER BRANCH SCHOOLS - The family of Ben Grocholski wishes to extend a heartfelt thank-you for all the love and support you have given us throughout this difficult time. Thank you to all the staff at the Collegiate and Early Years for the pictures, treats, gifts, cards, as well as making special effort to deliver homework, breakfast and arranging school visits.

As for Ben's schoolmates, it takes some very brave and loving kids to visit with a sick friend and your efforts mean the world to us.

-The Grocholski Family

CARD OF THANKS

Thank you to everyone who purchased bulls this past year and to all those who showed interest. Wishing everyone all the best in 2021!

-KLCC Charolais,

Ken and Linda Cherepak, Arborg

CARD OF THANKS

THANK-YOU INTERLAKE - The family of Ben Grocholski would like to acknowledge the entire Interlake, especially our home communities of Poplarfield, Fisher Branch, Hnausa, Riverton and Arborg for their support during this difficult time. Thank you to our co-workers at the IERHA and Manitoba Hydro; the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Children's Hospital, CancerCare, Arborg Hospital, Percy E. Moore Hospital, Shelly Beach Rentals, Hnausa General Store, Hecla Community Church, Fisher Branch Co-Op, Fisher Branch Home Hardware, Noventis Credit Union, Rick's Landscaping, RM of Fisher, Total Look Hair Design, our NP Beryl Dzedzic and Chrissie Erickson at Lundar Primary Care. Last but not least, thank you to our family and dearest friends for initiating fundraising efforts for you gave us the power to fight for Ben.

-The Grocholski family

Riverton Bifrost Holdings Inc.

Information and Rental Applications for:

Riverton Family Housing Units and Riverton Icelandic River Lodge Senior 55+ Suites

All rentals are subject to qualifying criteria and availability.
Phone 204-378-2937 or Email rbh.inc@outlook.com

Eddie's Gravel Supply Ltd.

Class 1 Drivers / Owner Operators Needed

Local and Winter Road Hauling.
To apply Email info@eddiesgravel.com or Call 1-204-389-2023

The Express Weekly News Classified booking deadline is Monday at 4 p.m. prior to Thursday's publication Please Call 204-467-5836

Rural Municipality of Woodlands EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY



The Rural Municipality of Woodlands invites applications for the position of **Public Works Foreman**.

The Public Works Foreman is responsible for the direction, coordination, efficient operation, construction, maintenance and repair of municipal infrastructure. The foreman supervises and coordinates the work of a variety of equipment operators, labourers, tradespeople, and contractors. A more detailed job description is available on the RM's website www.rmwoodlands.info

This full-time union position will report to the Operations Manager. Hours of Operation are 40 hours a week, November 1 to April 30 and 50 hours a week, May 1 to October 31. Salary and benefits are as per the collective agreement.

Interested applicants are invited to forward a cover letter, resume and references by 12:00 P.M. Wednesday, January 20, 2021 to: RM of Woodlands PO Box 10, 57 Railway Avenue, Woodlands, MB. R0C 3H0 admin@rmwoodlands.ca Fax: 204-383-5169

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

take a break > GAME

SUDOKU

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

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

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

Sudoku Answer

RONA

RONA GIMLI is looking for a SALES SPECIALIST

Responsibilities include:

- Providing specialized product knowledge and advice on all home appliance products as well as supporting products, warranty plans and financing plans.
- A commitment to providing excellent customer service
- Achieving weekly, monthly and annual sales targets
- Staying informed of in-store promotions
- This position requires any day of the week availability.

The right candidate for this position will be friendly, well-organized, with experience in sales.

Please submit your resume in person or email to

laura@ronagimli.ca

RONA GIMLI

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Classifieds Announcements



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ANNIVERSARY



Congratulations

**Mom, Dad, Amma and Grandpa
on your 65th Wedding Anniversary!**

Few in today's world come close to this milestone. On January 14th, 1956 Wilbert and Arlene were married on Hecla Island, there was a blizzard that day.

Wish you Continued Health and Happiness.

-Lots of love,
from your family

IN MEMORIAM



Edward John Kowalchuk

August 13, 1945 - January 8, 2013

We hold onto our memories,
Of you that are so dear;
To try to keep you always close,
Now that you are not here.
Please watch over us, with Dad and Tom too,
And hug all who have gone on before;
And know that when you were with us,
We could not have asked for more.
Breathe Easy.

-With love from your whole family
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SELKIRK

NOW HIRING!

The Canadian Tire Selkirk Automotive Department is now seeking staff for the following position:

EXPERIENCED Red Seal Mechanic

Strong candidates must have:

- Solid communication skills
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Compensation based on experience.

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Email resume and references to
mick.walsh@thetire.ca

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Employment Opportunity

Little Elska is currently hiring for the position of **Seamstress**

Your Role

The Seamstress is responsible for pinning & sewing all products, which includes -Minky Blankets, Knits and other products as assigned.

Requirements

- must have sewing experience
- willing to learn and take direction
- ability to work with minimal supervision
- strong work ethic with the ability to meet deadlines
- attention to detail

This is a part-time position, with flexible hours. Candidate must be willing to work more hours during our peak seasons.

Wage to be determined on experience.

How to apply

To apply, please send your resume to info@littleelska.com
*only those chosen for interview/test will be contacted

365 Main Street Arborg

Career Opportunity



Interlake Co-op is presently recruiting for a **GROCERY SUPERVISOR - Full Time** at Our Food Store located in Arborg, MB

Reporting directly to the Grocery Manager, the successful candidate will be responsible for assisting the grocery manager in all aspects of our grocery department including but not limited to; financial results, marketing, inventory control, merchandising, administrative duties, guest relations, along with talent development and performance management of our grocery team.

Qualifications/Competencies:

- High standards in marketing and merchandising
- Desire to work in a team setting, and networking skills.
- Exemplary guest service
- Strong leadership, and interpersonal skills.
- Knowledgeable in Microsoft Office (excel/word),
- Administration responsibilities including cashups, lotteries, till operations
- Excellent supervisory, planning and organizational skills.
- Strong work ethic with a positive and ambitious attitude.
- Possess sound leadership and decision making abilities.
- Ability to operate a forklift (training will be available)
- Previous leadership experience
- Must be available to work a variety of shifts including days, evenings and weekends.

We offer career advancement opportunities, competitive compensation, benefits package, company contributed pension plan and learning/development opportunities.

If you would like to work in a business who strives to make a positive difference in our members' lives, please complete an application form at our Administration Office/Website or send a cover letter and resume to:

Attention: Jessica McCutcheon - Grocery Manager 204-376-5271
Email: grocery@interlakecoop.com
Or mail to: Interlake Co-op, Box 40, Arborg MB, R0C 0A0
www.interlakeco-op.crs

WE THANK ALL CANDIDATES FOR THEIR INTEREST, HOWEVER,
ONLY THOSE SELECTED TO CONTINUE IN THE SELECTION PROCESS WILL BE CONTACTED.

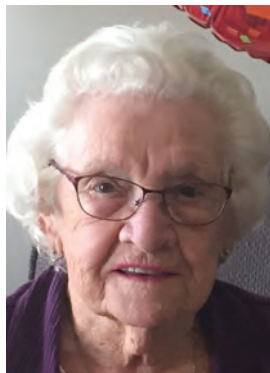
Join Our Team!

Announcements



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OBITUARY



Lillian Louise Porosky
(nee Kreutzer)

On December 23, Heaven gained another angel, our mother Lillian Porosky.

Mom was predeceased by her husband Alex and her parents William and Caroline Kreutzer.

Mourning Lillian's passing are her daughter Pat and husband Murray (Tim, Jackie and families), her son Ken and wife Patti, her beloved grandchildren Chad (Mimi) - Toronto, Scott (Alessandra) - Brazil, Michael - Winnipeg, and her pride and joy: great-grandson Thiago - Brazil. She will also be missed dearly by her three sisters; Ruby, Elaine, Deanna (Dave) and her entire extended family; Karen (Rick), Paula, Ryan (Ceara), Kelly (Dan, Levi).

Mom was a devoted wife, a loving mother, and a proud grandmother. Her grandchildren have many fond memories that

they will cherish forever.

Mom and Dad spent the majority of their years living and raising their family in Plumas, MB. She belonged to the Lions Club, UCW, and Rebekahs, and was also involved in the local community, always ready to lend a helping hand or share a funny joke.

Watching baseball and curling were favourite pastimes. She also always enjoyed her trips to the casino and playing cards with family and friends.

In 2000, Mom and Dad moved to Gimli where they resided at the Waterfront Centre and were members of the New Horizon 55+ Activity Centre. Mom made many a perogie there, played bingo several times a week and could always be found at the Gimli Legion on Friday and Saturday evenings for the meat draws. A special thank you to Deanna and Dave for all the help they provided to Mom and Dad while living in Gimli.

In 2017 Mom moved to River Ridge 1, a place she called home and where she really enjoyed living. We will always be grateful for the wonderful care and support they provided.

Due to COVID restrictions there will be no funeral service, however a celebration of life will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to a charity of one's choice.

Mom, you are out of sight but you will forever be in our hearts. Thank you for leaving us with a lifetime of wonderful memories and for your never-ending love!

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

Gilbart Funeral Home, Selkirk in care of arrangements.



OBITUARY



Isabel Napp (nee Walbank)

It is with heavy hearts and sincere gratitude for a life well-lived that we announce the peaceful passing of Isabel Napp (nee Walbank) beloved wife of the late Rudy on December 23, 2020.

She is survived by her three daughters Janice (Jim), Kenda (Dan) and Lori (Gordie) as well as her grandchildren Caroline (Isaya), Bryan (Nikki), Heather (Isaac), Emily, Amanda, Nicole (Michael), Serena (Ioan), Kelsey, Benjamin, Colin (Michelle), Marlee (Matt), Madlynn (Ryan) and her step-grandson Jamie (Kerri). Also her precious 12 great-grandchildren Rudy, Hazel, Jackson, Riley, Luc-Etienne, Allison, Finnan, Weston, Mackenzie, Kayla, Nora and Hamish. Auntie Isabel will be lovingly remembered by her nieces and nephew and extended family.

A heartfelt thank you is extended to Nurse Melanie Bernas and Dr. Clark from Palliative Care IERHA and the team for their compassionate care. As well the wonderful staff at the Gimli Community Health Centre

A private cemetery service will take place at a later date in Louisa, Quebec.

"Thank you Mom for leaving us with wonderful memories and for your never-ending love".

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

Gilbart Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



OBITUARY



Shirley Joyce Tokash (Zulak)
Aug. 12, 1947 - Dec. 26, 2020

Our beloved mom, Shirley Tokash was granted her angel wings on December 26, 2020 at 10:45 p.m. at Holy Family Home at age of 73 years.

Mom will be greatly missed by her husband of 55 years Danny; daughters Tammy Tokash (Scott), Kelly Spulnick (George); grandchildren Jason, Amanda (Jared), Kristen, Melissa, Amber (Dave), Braden (Lisa); great grandchildren Nevaeh and Ciarra; and numerous family and friends.

Mom was predeceased by her parents Jean and Nick Zulak; brother Morris; and sisters Sally and Nancy.

Born in 1947 and raised in Ethelbert, Manitoba, she later moved to Winnipeg where she met her husband Danny. They were married on August 14, 1965 and had two daughters, Tammy in

1966 and Kelly in 1968.

Mom worked at Paulin Chambers for many years, Morden's Chocolates and finally, as a homecare attendant.

Mom loved gardening, cooking, bingo, the cottage and of course family; Not in that order, but close.

The cottage, a place mom loved so much, always with Emily waiting on the driveway on Friday evenings to get the party started! Family and friends having a singsong around the bonfire, drinks in hand with dad and Mers playing the guitar. Those are the memories we will cherish.

Special Thanks to Auntie Jan, and Uncles Reg and Nestor for being there to help with mom and dad for the last ten years. Also, to HSC Dialysis and to Holy Family Home for the excellent care mom received.

Mom, you fought so long and hard. You faced many obstacles, yet you never ceased to amaze us with your resilience. Even covid didn't take you down. But you were getting tired, rest peacefully.

Cremation has taken place, due to Covid, a family celebration will take place when safe to do so.

Condolences for the family may be left at www.alternacremation.ca



OBITUARY

Dorothy Ellen Swanson

February 22, 1947 - December 26, 2020

Dorothy died Saturday, December 26, 2020 at Selkirk Regional Health Centre, Palliative Care. Her lung, heart valve and kidney failure finally overcame her will to live.

Dorothy is survived by her loving husband Brian, they celebrated 52 years together; daughters, Sherry (son-in-law Mike MacVicar) and Tammy; grandchildren, Josh, Katelyn, Brandon and Alysha; great-grandchildren, Agust, Marlowe and Mason. Mom was thankful to connect with her long lost son Jerry Paul; his partner Lori Lumax and his daughter Jasmine. Also survived by in-laws Bob and Stacey Swanson, Maureen and Lyle Olson; three sisters Millie Henshaw, Faye Gullickson, and Joyce Firestone; along with many nieces, nephews and close friends.

Dorothy was predeceased by son-in-law Jamie Kotowich; mother Gladys Kelly; in-laws John and Violet Swanson; as well as her brothers Marvin and Lorne; sisters Viril, Ethel and Phyllis.

Dorothy was born in Saskatchewan and as a young child moved to Selkirk with her mother. By the time she was seventeen she had moved to Winnipeg and was working at Old Dutch. In 1968 Dorothy married Brian Swanson, she became a stay at home mom until both girls started school then worked at various restaurants, Chicken Delight, Pizza Place and the MoonLighter. Dorothy's Cafe was purchased and operated from 1984 to 1994. Many great experiences, memories, staff and friendships were formed over these ten years as part of the Winnipeg Beach business community. Dorothy returned to restaurant work at Gimli Chicken Chef, Niakwa in the Beach and the Charrier RoadHouse Restaurant. Due to increasing health concerns she finally retired from outside work but continued working at home.

Dorothy enjoyed the occasional road trip and playing VLTs. All that knew and loved her will cherish her memory forever.

We thank the doctors, nurses and staff at Gimli, HSC, and Selkirk Hospitals. We thank Dr. S.V. Patel who has been our family doctor for many, many years.

Cremation has taken place and no formal service will be held.

Mom was a bright light to so many over her years... a wonderful daughter, thoughtful and strong sister, an excellent employee - even better employer, sharing of knowledge and time. A fun aunt, patient mom and grandma who taught so many teenagers to drive, shared so many laughs and jokes and taught those around her to be strong, resilient and kind. - A funny, sarcastic, witty woman who was the brains behind so many of Brian's creations - the love of his life and sparkle to his shine.

We love you!

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

Gilbart Funeral Home, Selkirk in care of arrangements.



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OBITUARY



Mary Elizabeth Dzydz

With deep sorrow we announce the passing of our loving mother, grandmother and great-grandmother Mary Dzydz (nee Keller) on December 29, 2020 in Gimli.

Mary was born April 4, 1925 in Camp Morton, Manitoba. She was predeceased by her husband Joseph, her parents Martin and Lena and siblings Lillian, Jane, Florence, Josephine, Edward, Donald, Arthur, Margaret, and Jack.

She will be sadly missed by her daughter Debbie (Jim), sister Betty (Henry), grandchildren Jackie (Peter), Katie (Steve), Stacey (Greg), Colin (Kyra), Taz, eight great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews, with a special remembrance for niece, Norma. Mary treasured her friendships over the years, especially most recently with Joyce.

A memorial service will be held at a later date when we are all able to have the sun shine on us and can all gather together. She will be cremated and interred in Gimli.

Mary's family would like to thank the wonderful staff who cared for her at Betel Personal Care Home in Gimli and Teulon Care Home.

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

Gilbart Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



OBITUARY

Cyril (Jim) Henderson Craig

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

Jim was born February 5, 1929, in Northern Ireland. He was predeceased by his wife, Agnes.

He will be sadly missed by his daughter Louise, her husband Andrew and their daughter Kate, and his son Jim, his wife Melissa and children Olivia, Jacob and Zachary. Jim treasured his friendships over the years, especially most recently with Kathy, Roger and Barb, Dan, and Lazlo.

A virtual memorial service will be held later in January 2021. Once available it can be viewed via his obituary at www.gilbartfuneralhome.com.

He will be cremated and interred next to our mother Agnes in Northern Ireland.

Jim's family would like to thank the excellent staff who cared for him at Gimli Community Health Centre in Gimli, MB.

If you wish to make a donation in memory of Jim Craig, please visit <https://www.cancer.ca/en/donate>.

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

Gilbart Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



Your memory will live forever Engraved within our hearts

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