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Showtime

EXPRESS PHOTO BY SARA URUSKI PHOTOGRAPHY

The Fisher Branch Chaika Ukrainian Dance Club celebrated its 55th anniversary during Malanka at the town's community hall last Saturday. Khloe, Addison and Paisley wait to dance a traditional Ukrainian folk dance in their costumes from one of the regions of Ukraine.

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# Provincial funding for intellectually challenged adults comes under threat

Families minister promises to renew Riverdale Place Workshop's funding agreement

By Patricia Barrett

After 49 years of providing jobs, social activities and care to adults with intellectual challenges, the Riverdale Place Workshop in Arborg was threatened with closure after the provincial government said early last week it was pulling funding.

The province pays for clients to take part in day programs at the workshop, which is located on the west side of Arborg.

Workshop manager Alex Janower said he and his eight staff were shocked when the provincial families department told them by letter and in person on Jan. 6 that it's stopping funding in a few months' time.

"I'm so devastated and disappointed. I've been here for a long time and I never thought it would come to this. I feel you should serve the people even if there's a smaller number [of clients]. It should be our decision if we can't continue, not theirs," said Janower, who has been with the not-



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

The Riverdale Place Workshop raised money in 2018 to purchase a van to take clients on social outings. Shown here are workshop manager Alex Janower (fifth from left), staff members and a number of clients.

for-profit organization for 38 years. "The government doesn't pay anything towards our building; they pay for the clients who are attending our program. We're in the process of trying to increase our client numbers. To just cut us off so that it's impossible for us to continue is unfair and it's not right."

The workshop currently has 13 clients, he said. Although the department didn't give them a reason for pulling funding, Janower thinks it might have to do with having fewer

clients. During and after the COVID pandemic, client participation declined. Some stopped coming for health reasons and some passed away. Pre-pandemic client numbers were around 30.

Without provincial funding for clients, the workshop will have to shut down.

"If we don't receive funding, we have no choice but to shut down because we just can't operate on our recycling program alone; there's not enough revenue coming in," said Janower. "They're basically shutting us down by not giving us funding. We said that's very unfair."

Riverdale Place Workshop provides vocational training, employment and socialization to adults with intellectual challenges. Its clients live in the Arborg area and in distant communities such as Fisher Branch and Poplarfield. They take part in workforce activities and earn a small monthly income. They also take part in music, dancing, craft-making and community activities.

The workshop employs some clients in its recycling program, which serves Arborg, Riverton and parts of the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton. Because of its environmental stewardship, the workshop earned a Sustainability in Pollution Prevention Award from the provincial government in 2017. In 2023, it diverted over 235,000 kilograms of recyclables from the landfill.

The Families department sent the workshop a letter dated Jan. 6, stating it intends to stop funding on March 31. It thanked the workshop for its past 49 years of service supporting adults with intellectual disabilities.

The letter provides no explanation about why the department intends to pull funding.

"Riverdale Place Workshop must cease providing services (as defined

by the service purchase agreement) on Manitoba's account on March 31, 2025," wrote the department's executive director of disability policy.

The director goes on to say that Community Living Disability Services is "committed to working with Riverdale Place Workshop to assist with transitioning individuals supported by the agency to a new service provider."

Janower said he doesn't know where their clients could be transferred — should they wish to continue attending a day program — but Gimli or Selkirk could be options. Should that be the case, he doesn't know if the province will pay for or provide transportation to and from an alternative site.

One thing he knows for sure is that some of the workshop's clients will not spend several hours on the highway travelling to and from another site, and that in turn will deprive them of social stimulation and paid work opportunities.

"A lot of our clients who live farther away won't want to go to Gimli, especially if there are transportation costs for them and their families," said Janower. "Gimli is 45 minutes from Arborg and that's almost two hours on the highway. We have some clients from Poplarfield and they're not going to travel to Gimli. We have a client that comes from Fisher Branch and [that client] won't go to Gimli. We have elderly clients that won't want to go to Gimli. They'll just be staying at home. That means work activities will be taken away from our clients."

Councils for the Town of Arborg and the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton are concerned about the government's plan to pull support for adults with intellectual challenges.

Continued on page 3

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## > RIVERDALE PLACE, FROM PG. 2

On behalf of council for the Town of Arborg, Deputy Mayor Ron Johnston said last week that the closure of the workshop would be a “huge loss” to both the town and municipality.

“Several clients have moved into our community and participate in the social activities held in the community,” said Johnston. “Their inclusion and willingness to contribute to our environmental stewardship is remarkable.”

The Families department’s letter was brought to council’s attention and was discussed the following day at a council meeting.

“It was concerning to us that we had not been involved in any discussions leading up to this decision, along with the extremely short notice to react,” said Johnston. “We’ve sent a letter to [Families] Minister Nahanni Fontaine requesting a meeting to discuss the impact this decision will have on the clients and community.”

The town provides funding to the workshop to support its recycling program, and it would have to come up with an alternative solution to recycling in order to protect the environment and reduce the amount of waste going into the landfill, he added.

Bifrost-Riverton Coun. David King said he is deeply concerned and disappointed by the government’s plan to cut funding to the workshop as it provides “critical support” to people with intellectual challenges, as well as instils a sense of belonging, dignity and independence.

“The withdrawal of funding threatens to dismantle the lives of residents and places an undue burden on their families, many of whom may not have the resources to provide alternative care,” said King in a letter shared with the *Express*. “.... Without adequate support, the residents may face displacement, increased health challenges or institutionalization in larger, less personal facilities. These outcomes are not only inhumane, but could result in great long-term costs to the government and taxpayers.”

King wrote that the decision to stop supporting people with disabilities “draws disturbing parallels” to historical injustices such as sending In-

igenous children to schools outside their communities.

Bifrost-Riverton council said it will be reaching out to the province and consulting with the Town of Arborg council.

“But who is really affected is the clients who work at this facility. Were they included in the decision of ... a new service provider?” said CAO Larissa Love on behalf of council. “After 49 years of service, they are treated like this.”

Interlake-Gimli MLA Derek Johnson, who has visited the workshop on occasion and formally recognized it in the legislature a number of years ago, said the province’s intent to stop funding for people with intellectual challenges is “callous.”

Having sat on the provincial treasury board when the provincial Conservatives were in power, he said the funding cut — amounting to about \$275,000 annually for the workshop — just doesn’t make sense from a government efficiency point of view.

“I can’t see this as a cost-cutting measure because if the workshop’s clients decide to participate at a different place, the government will still have to pay the same fee for service. I don’t envision the province saving money,” said Johnson. “This is just callous.”

The only possible saving to the province could come from attrition whereby Arborg and area clients stop taking part in a day program.

Johnson said he’s supportive of the workshop’s inclusivity. It gives people with intellectual challenges a sense of worth, helps them develop life skills and instils pride as a result of their making their own money. Taking away their workplace would disrupt their lives.

“They don’t get paid much, but they love earning money. They save up for different things for their own homes. The workshop was closed for a couple of days over Christmas and there were [recycling] cans piling up, and one of the workshop’s clients was so eager to get back to work. They love to go to work,” said Johnson. “It’s an outstanding facility with its support services, and people feel they have worth.”

Johnson wrote to Families Minister Nahanni Fontaine, asking her to reconsider the plan to cut funding to “our most vulnerable citizens” and offering to work collaboratively with her.

The *Express* reached out to the provincial Department of Families with questions such as why it’s unwilling to fund the workshop, whether there’s a certain number of clients necessary for funding support, where it intends to transfer clients at the end of March, whether it will provide transportation for them, and whether it’s concerned that the funding cut might result in adults with intellectual challenges falling through the cracks. The department acknowledged receipt of the questions but did not provide answers.

The *Express* also requested comment from Families Minister Nahanni Fontaine, who is also the minister respon-



EXPRESS PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

sible for accessibility and gender equity.

A spokesperson for the minister replied on the weekend: “We recognize the importance of organizations that support adults with intellectual disabilities and continue to provide funding across Manitoba. We will renew the service purchase agreement with the Riverdale Place Workshop.”

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# Local pup proving different is good in magazine cover competition

By Becca Myskiw

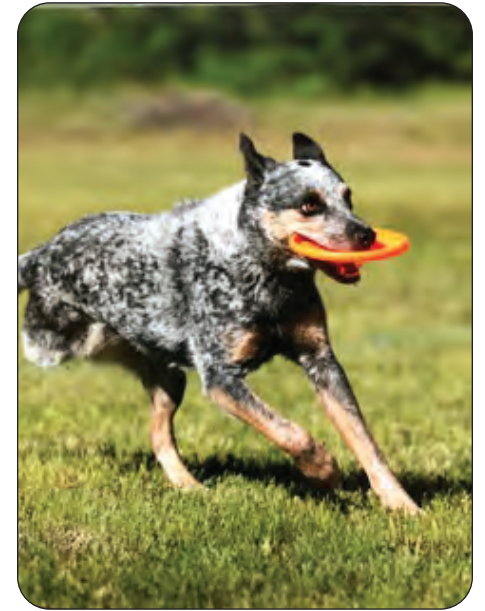
A local three-legged pup from St. Andrews is in the running for a magazine cover that comes with a noteworthy title.

Chance, a five-year-old blue heeler from the local area, is pulling ahead in America's Favorite Pet, an annual competition for a feature on the cover of *Modern Cat* or *Modern Dog* and \$10,000. The competition has partnered with PAWS, a non-profit organization for animal welfare, to benefit from funds raised throughout the

competition.

Chance is Debbie Hart's dog. She got him from the Winnipeg Humane Society at just five months old in October 2019. He had been hit by a car and his original owners couldn't afford the surgery to repair his leg. Hart's friend, who worked at the Humane Society at the time, sent her a photo of Chance knowing how much Hart loved heelers, and she fell in love with his face.

"The attraction for both of us was instant," she said. "We were meant to be



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Chance is a three-legged blue heeler who competes in disc and dock diving regularly and is currently in the running to be on the cover of *Modern Dog*.

# A bird's-eye view



EXPRESS PHOTO BY CLIVE WILLIAMS

This blue jay decided to stop in for a quick snack in Sandy Hook. The temperature recorded at noon on Jan. 13 was a high of -19 degrees C, with a low of -25 degrees with a slight wind making it feel like -21 degrees C. The temperature was five degrees colder than the daily average. Help the *Express Weekly News* record the weather of the week and send in your photos of friends and family enjoying the outdoors. Email: [news@expressweeklynews.ca](mailto:news@expressweeklynews.ca)

together."

The almost six-year-old Heeler competes regularly in disc and dock diving, both of which Hart said he loves to do.

"He tries so hard at these sports. He gives his all and I love him very much for it," she said. "Three legs don't slow him down at all."

She and Chance also do agility for fun, but three-legged dogs aren't allowed to compete in the sport — not that Hart and Chance mind. She trained him for flyball to prove it could be done.

Knowing how incredible and impressive her pup is, Hart wanted the world to know too. That's why she entered him in America's Favorite Pet.

"I wanted everyone out there who

don't know him to see what a great dog he really is and that having only three legs doesn't mean he can't do stuff," said Hart. "Chance is one of the most loving dogs I have ever had. He loves everyone and he just can't get enough love back. He tries his hardest to do anything I ask him to do. ... He has a huge heart."

Right now, the online competition is in the first round of voting, which ends today. The first cut will narrow each group down to the Top 20 competitors. Starting today is Round 2, which will keep voting open until Jan. 23, when the Top 15 competitors will move on. After that, the groups will go down to the Top 10 competitors on Jan. 30, then the Top 5 on Feb. 6, be-

Continued on page 6

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# Gimli High School's Student Voice collects 800 items, food for community

By Patricia Barrett

Students at Gimli High School organized a school-wide hamper drive to make the holiday a little brighter, collecting 800 items that were distributed to families within the school community.

The Student Voice, a student-led team that was made up of student council and the Kiwanis-sponsored Key Club along with guidance from teachers, organized the hamper drive.

"With guidance from staff advisors Ms. Pidwinski, Ms. Ngo and Mrs. Groot, the team organized a school-wide hamper drive with a competitive twist. Each grade was tasked with collecting specific items. Grade 9s brought canned goods, Grade 10s provided dry goods, Grade 11s donated toiletries and Grade 12s contributed gifts and toys," said Kiwanis advisor Frances Petrowski. "The grade with the highest contributions, Grade 10, earned a well-deserved pizza lunch donated by Sobeys."

The Student Voice works together to "drive positive change and create meaningful experiences" at school, in the community and beyond, said Petrowski, and their efforts truly shone during the final week before



EXPRESS PHOTOS COURTESY OF FRANCES PETROWSKI

Student council and the Kiwanis-sponsored Key Club organized a hamper drive that collected 800 items.

the Christmas holidays.

"Thanks to everyone's generosity, over 800 items were collected and distributed to families within the school

community — a heartwarming display of Christmas spirit," she said.

"Well done, GHS Student Voice. Your dedication made a real difference."

# Gimli RCMP arrest three males after shots fired

By Lana Meier

Gimli RCMP responded to a report of gunshots from a residence on Highway 8 around 5:30 p.m. on Jan. 4 within the RM of Gimli.

Upon arrival, officers learned that three males had approached the residence, threatened the male occupant and forcibly kicked in the front door. During their escape, the victim's dogs chased the suspects, and one of the animals was shot, resulting in injuries.

Immediately, officers began patrolling for the suspect vehicle and, through their investigation, located the three suspects at a rented residence in Gimli. A search warrant was executed at that location, leading to the seizure of a .357 Magnum, \$17,000

in cash and various prescription medications.

All three suspects were arrested without incident at this residence.

Gimli RCMP have charged Arthur Mills, 23, and J'ziah Cassanova, 18, along with a 17-year-old male youth, all from Mississauga, Ont.

All three have been charged with break and enter, assault, reckless discharge of a firearm, using a firearm in the commission of an offence, as well as various drug trafficking and Criminal Code offences.

They been remanded into custody.

RCMP advise this incident was not random, and there is no threat to the public.

The investigation continues.



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Gimli RCMP seized a .357 Magnum, \$17,000 in cash and various prescription medications at a rental house.

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# get informed

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

## New year's reflections from your member of Parliament

By Jennifer McFee

The area's member of Parliament sends new year's greetings to his constituents.

James Bezan, member of Parliament for Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman, offered his reflections on 2024 as the calendar changed over to 2025.

"As shadow minister for National Defence, I've been working closely with our leader Pierre Poilievre on a Conservative plan to rebuild the Canadian Armed Forces to ensure our national security. I'm working to bring forward policies that will support our brave men and women who serve and keep Canada safe," he said.

"I'm happy to see a high level of community engagement from people in the riding. Speaking to constituents at events and town halls and hearing their feedback helps me do my job as their representative in Ottawa."

Some of the biggest challenges continue to be the cost-of-living and housing crises, he added.

"Life is getting more unaffordable," he said, noting that rural Manitobans continue to pay more for necessities like groceries and gas.

Looking ahead, the wheels are already turning for a busy 2025 since it's an election year.

"I'll be asking voters for the trust and confidence to continue representing them in Parliament," Bezan said.

### > LOCAL PUP, FROM PG. 4

fore group finals begin that same day.

As of earlier this week, Chance was sitting at the third most popular pet in his group. Pets gain rankings as they get more votes. People can vote for their favourite pet once for free and as many times as they want above that for \$1 a vote. Each of those dollars raised go towards PAWS.

America's Favorite Pet will go until



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman Member of Parliament James Bezan reflects on 2024.

"The new year will be an opportunity for a Conservative government to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime. We'll treat job creators and farmers fairly, and make sure people in Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman keep more of their pensions and pay cheques."

For the community, he shared a few hopes for 2025.

"I want investments from the federal government more equitably distributed across Canada, especially to rural communities," he said. "This hasn't been happening under this Lib-

eral government, and rural Manitoba communities are struggling to get the investments they need. Our rural municipalities and towns should be treated fairly by Ottawa."

He also wishes his constituents a very happy new year.

"I wish peace, prosperity and good health to everyone in the riding as we head into 2025," he said.

"This will be a year of change. I hope I can once again count on the support of the great people of Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman. I look forward to seeing everyone around the riding."

March 13, when the finals end. The winning cat and dog will have passed group finals, quarterfinals, semifinals and the final round leading up to their titles.

"I want the world to see what a special dog [Chance] is," said Hart. "The exposure of being on the cover would, I hope, inspire others to give a three-legged dog a chance at a good life, proving that being different is not a bad thing."

If Chance wins, Hart said they'll also donate half of the \$10,000 prize to local animal rescues.

People can vote for Chance in America's Favorite Pet at [https://americasfavpet.com/2025/chance-c827?fclid=IwY2xjawHxGT1leHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHU0U0vz1gvjMpOGDXfBc0-b8GUpZuKeFZ-ns2LeZqcJRaR-tUdLIt0qMsog\\_aem\\_NSeykBUg-ZYXJ-liT99mXuA](https://americasfavpet.com/2025/chance-c827?fclid=IwY2xjawHxGT1leHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHU0U0vz1gvjMpOGDXfBc0-b8GUpZuKeFZ-ns2LeZqcJRaR-tUdLIt0qMsog_aem_NSeykBUg-ZYXJ-liT99mXuA).



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# Selkirk Health Centre welcomes first baby of 2025

By Annaliese Meier

At 2:12 a.m. on New Year's Day, the Selkirk Regional Health Centre welcomed its first baby of 2025. Tisha Hanson and her family welcomed their new daughter, Azayla, weighing seven pounds and 13 ounces and measuring 19.75 inches long.

Hanson expressed gratitude for the exceptional care she received while at Selkirk's obstetrical unit. The staff went above and beyond to ensure both mother and baby felt comfortable throughout their stay.

"The staff were really good with her and me. They did everything I needed," Hanson said.

Continuing a cherished tradition, Betty Milkowski, chair of the Selkirk Hospital Gift Shop volunteers, along with vice-president Bev Hykawy, presented gifts to celebrate Azayla's arrival — diapers, toys, blankets,

clothing and even a playpen. These thoughtful offerings highlight the dedication of local volunteers who have been supporting new families since the hospital's inception.

"The most important thing is all the work that the volunteers do to help us. They make it possible for us to donate and help. This has been going on since the first hospital was built in Selkirk and the original ladies auxiliary was founded. Congratulations to Tisha and her new baby girl," Milkowski said.

Dr. Bunkowsky attended the delivery. In 2024, 443 babies were born at Selkirk Regional Health Centre.

Expectant parents interested in utilizing these services can reach out via phone at 204-482-5800 for more information or to schedule a tour of what could be their future birthing experience in Selkirk.



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Pictured centre is Baby Azayla with her mother Tisha Hanson, along with Selkirk Gift Shop volunteer Bev Hykawy holding some of the items the auxiliary gifted this year's new year baby and Betty Milkowski, chair of the Selkirk Hospital Gift Shop volunteers.

# Elders enjoyed traditional Indigenous meal

By Jennifer McFee

A mouth-watering meal can do more than nourish the body; it can also feed the soul.

For the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, elders in personal care homes and hospitals in Ashern and Pine Falls enjoyed a taste of tradition. On Sept. 30, they dined on moose meat in a collaborate project cooked up by Food Matters Manitoba and Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority (IERHA).

Food Matters Manitoba is an Indigenous organization working towards Indigenous food sovereignty with its northern community partners.

"Our approach is an employment and youth mentorship program that leverages our culture and local traditions to create a solid foundation for impacts and momentum that drives us forward towards our goals," explained Demian Lawrenchuk, executive director of Food Matters Manitoba.

Lawrenchuk said he was excited about the thought of contributing to the initiative and helping provide such a profound experience for these elders.

"I was very happy to see that the excitement was echoed throughout my organization. An elder and youth in one of our partner communities almost immediately set out to the bush

and harvested a nice bull moose. They butchered the moose, packaged up the meat and shared it with those in need in their community, Brochet," he said.

"A portion of this meat was frozen and set aside for the IERHA and their elders. It was perfect timing because we had one of our Winnipeg staff heading up to the community to meet with chief and council. She brought a cooler up with her and was able to bring the frozen meat back with her on the plane. From there, we transferred the meat over to IERHA."

Moose has always been a symbol of life to Cree people in the north, he added.

"Our stories and teachings tell us that the moose will always be here to take care of us and give us life, as long as we always continue to show it respect," Lawrenchuk said.

"Moose meat is especially significant for our elders, who have gone through so much difficulty in their lives and so much change. It is a deeply healing experience for them with the health benefits of the meat but also for overall well-being grounding them to their identity, culture and upbringing."

The memorable meals, prepared by Interlake-Eastern dietary staff in Ashern and Pine Falls, included moose roast, tacos and stew.

This type of project is not commonplace for Food Matters Manitoba, since the food they produce is always shared locally in their northern partner communities. Nonetheless, Lawrenchuk said it was a meaningful to be a part of this experience and to contribute to the well-being of elders in the south.

"Our people have always found a beautiful life through getting out on the land, putting in hard work for the well-being of the collective and sharing the nourishment with each other," he said, adding that this project marks the first time he has collaborated with the Interlake through Food Matters Manitoba.

"It is especially important for us to take care of the elders, who have paved the way for us, and to continue to do our part in paving the way for the next generation to have a good life and learn these important values."

Jamie Boyer, IERHA's regional manager for Indigenous Health, said the collaboration for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation was "an act of love, reclamation and decolonization all in one."

"This project is important because it truly was done in the spirit of the truth and reconciliation. It was very meaningful to work together with an Indigenous organization to raise cultural awareness about traditional

foods and how we care for each other as Indigenous peoples," she said.

"To be able to bring that into a health-care setting to nourish and care for all our relations was just beautiful."

In keeping with tradition, Boyer passed tobacco when they received the moose meat.

"As Indigenous people, we want to acknowledge and honour the sacrifice of that four-legged being to give of itself to feed the people," she said.

From start to finish, the initiative was met with enthusiasm from everyone involved.

"Everyone was so excited to be a part of this. The support service staff were happy to get to work with the moose meat," Boyer said.

"I had health-care aides say that they were very happy to be delivering such a meaningful meal to the residents and patients on that day. I heard from one of the managers that the residents are already asking when they can have it again."

Based on the positive reactions, Indigenous Health envisions continuing the collaboration in future years.

"Food is medicine, and to be able to collaborate with Food Matters Manitoba on an initiative like this has meant so much to everyone involved," Boyer said.

"We are just so grateful."

## Now we have your attention: cellphone disruptions rarely an issue in ESD schools

By Patricia Barrett

Since provincial cellphone restrictions for students took effect last September, teaching staff in Evergreen School Division schools are reporting fewer issues with distractions and more attention on the curriculum.

ESD superintendent and CEO Scott Hill said while the division had its own guidelines in place for cellphone use prior to the government bringing forth restrictions, the new directive shows that the province “has our back” and that there are many benefits to restricting the use of the devices.

“Some of the benefits that our staff are noticing include more activity and play during non-instructional times, fewer disruptions in class, enhanced student effort and engagement, and reduced stress on staff,” said Hill.

ESD school principals say that by and large, students have been “very receptive” to the new rules and that they’ve had minimal need to remind students of what’s expected, said Hill. And teachers say they’ve noticed that students are “more focused” and “on task” during lessons.

“In advance of having clear guidelines that were consistently upheld, principals report that students who weren’t on their own phones were often distracted by those who were, [and] these concerns have been greatly reduced, creating a more focused and productive learning environment,” said Hill. “In high school there are built-in opportunities to use their phones, which teaches students when it’s acceptable and when it’s not to be on their phone, much like in a workplace environment.”

In addition to fewer disruptions in class and a reduction in staff stress, Hill said the provincial directive has raised the level of awareness among educators, students and parents about the “potential harms and negative impact of smartphones” — not just on learning but also on mental health and well-being.

The provincial government announced last August it was restricting the use of cellphones by students in kindergarten to Grade 12, citing the



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT  
Evergreen School Division Supt. Scott Hill

distractibility of the devices and studies showing students taking up to 20 minutes to refocus on their school work. The directive came in to effect at the start of the 2024 school year.

Students in kindergarten to Grade 8 are banned altogether from using cellphones in school, including at lunch and during breaks, while grades 9 to 12 students cannot use cellphones in class but are allowed to use them on breaks and at lunch. The provincial guidelines include cellphone exceptions for students with medical or other learning needs, or when cellphone use is directed by teachers for educational purposes.

Thirty-nine per cent of Canadian children aged two to six used a mobile phone, according to 2022 data from Statista.com, with 49 per cent of children aged seven to 11 and 87 per cent of teens aged 12 to 17 using one. Studies on the ability of cellphones to distract — which include access to social media

apps, videos and so forth — have shown negative impacts on attention, memory, critical thinking and opportunities for person-to-person interaction. A Canadian-led mental health and addiction study published in 2023 showed a third of people from countries around the world could be at risk of addiction to their phones.

Most ESD students accepted the cellphone restrictions without issue, said Hill. Some schools reported a few challenges at the outset, such a “handful” of students leaving class more often for bathroom breaks that may have been more about accessing their phones. But other schools indicated a reduction in the frequency of students asking to take breaks.

“As with any policy directive, consistency is important,” said Hill. “So there has been an effort at schools to establish consistency across classrooms. And at the division level, there has been an effort to establish consistency across schools.”

Citing feedback from students, Hill said some are “happy” and that “it’s OK to not have a phone.” Others have called the restrictions “unfair.” That said, middle years students who have clearance to leave school grounds at lunch can still access their phones, and high school students can access them during breaks.

“Some students also shared that they feel more secure about their own privacy at school now that there are clear restrictions,” said Hill. “The vast majority of students have adjusted readily to the expectations and it’s typical to get a response such as this one from a Grade 10 student: ‘I feel like I pay more attention in class now.’”

As far as the teaching staff go, most are saying cellphones are really not much of an issue anymore and that they rarely need to address their usage, said Hill.

“I think that the removal of phones from learning environments has helped bring about a more positive context for teaching and learning,” he said. “This step has greatly helped improve classroom management and reduced teacher stress.”

## Manitoba Public Insurance’s Top 5 frauds in 2024

By Annaliese Meier

Among the various instances of suspected fraud that they investigated this year, MPI’s Special Investigation Unit (SIU) successfully uncovered cases involving a highly skilled shopper, targeted gunfire, an elusive animal resembling either a rabbit or a coyote, an elusive driver and a strange deer-shaped object. These investigations ultimately prevented \$15 million in auto-related fraudulent activity and protected the interests of Manitoba ratepayers.

There are various forms of insurance fraud that have negative repercussions for everyone involved. In an effort to promote greater understanding, MPI has compiled a collection of distinct instances that their SIU team uncovered in 2024.

Maria Campos, vice-president and

chief customer and product officer at MPI, praised the SIU team for their valuable efforts in investigating suspicious claims. Their expertise and dedication have greatly contributed to closing 3,548 investigations in 2024 and saving millions for MPI customers.

The highlighted fraud cases are notable for different reasons — the monetary damage, originality and boldness. However, these occurrences are not uncommon. MPI’s efforts to identify and prosecute insurance fraudsters help maintain the credibility of Manitoba’s public insurance system, ensuring that legitimate claims are properly compensated.

Anyone with information about auto insurance fraud is encouraged to call the MPI TIPS Line at 204-985-8477 in Winnipeg, toll-free at 1-877-

985-8477 outside of Winnipeg, or submit information online at mpi.mb.ca. Information can also be submitted by calling Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS), or online at manitobacrimestoppers.com. All calls and reports are anonymous.

### Fraud 1: Super Shopper

A claimant was in a minor motor vehicle collision. Afterward, they stated they could barely walk, could not stand for more than five minutes, couldn’t bend or squat, could not use their right arm and could not move their neck. These injuries made driving very difficult.

This individual stated that because of the extent of their injuries, they needed assistance at home with all tasks, such as getting dressed, moving around the house, going up the

stairs, bathing, going to the washroom, cleaning, laundry, cooking, and attending medical appointments. Further, this individual said they could not go shopping due to limited mobility. This limited function also made them unable to work with the possibility of never being able to return to their prior employment.

The SIU team investigated, and surveillance found the claimant shopping on multiple occasions for hours at a time, carrying several bags in each hand, and power-walking around the mall. There was no evidence of difficulty walking, standing, using the right arm or moving the neck. The only time the claimant was seen to have difficulty was when they attended medical appointments, after which

Continued on page 15



# Arborg arena asking residents to get in the game for Kraft Hockeyville \$250,000 prize

By Patricia Barrett

The Arborg & District Arena is vying for the 2025 Kraft Hockeyville grand prize of \$250,000 and is inviting area residents to get in the game by sharing stories, photos or videos about their connection to hockey — and to their beloved arena — by March 2.

The Arborg arena, which was built in 1988, has its own page on Hockeyville’s website where people can post their submissions and carry out other “rally” activities such as notes to earn the arena points. Stories earn the arena 10 rally points, photos earn three points and notes earn one point.

Kraft Hockeyville is a competition that aims to find a Canadian hockey community that stands out above the rest and rallies people to come together to protect the future of hockey across the nation. The winning community will get \$250,000 to upgrade and improve their facility and also host an NHL pre-season game.

There are a number of Arborg arena entries already posted on the website, including one from Tom.

“Arborg’s support & passion for hockey goes together like a great dinner of KD topped with Heinz Ketchup!” he wrote. “The game of hockey has been played in Arborg for generations, the spirit & passion is just as strong now as it was then.”

And Noah wrote that the arena al-

### HOW TO NOMINATE YOUR ARENA

- 1 Find your arena in our arena database.
- 2 Answer 3 questions about your community, arena, and desired upgrades.
- 3 Share the link to your **Arena Rally Page** with friends and family to gather more support.

FIND MY ARENA

The Kraft Hockeyville website provides instructions for those submitting material in support of their respective arena.

ways felt like a “second home” and that it resembles a football stadium on Friday night with people packing the rafters for a game showcasing the Arborg Ice Dawgs, a team that’s the “heart of our town.”

The Arborg arena is described as a “hub” of activity for town and area residents. It can seat 800 people and has an NHL-sized ice surface. It’s home to Arborg Minor Hockey, the Arborg Ice Dawgs Junior B Hockey Club and the Arborg Skating Club. It’s used by a 40-plus recreation hockey league, offers public skating and hosts a program for girls and boys aged 4-7 with NHL goalie James Reimer.

## ARBORG & DISTRICT ARENA

**Arborg & District Arena**  
Arborg, MB


[GO TO ARENA RALLY PAGE >>](#)

Photo by  
**MADISON H.**  
1.9.25

**REACTIONS**

Share your reaction to this photo!  
Earn up to 15 rally points, 1 per reaction, for your community’s arena.

SHARE



EXPRESS IMAGES COURTESY OF KRAFT HOCKEYVILLE

Madison H. submitted a photo, earning the Arborg arena three points.

Upgrades to arenas are not cheap. A pump upgrade a few years ago cost Arborg over \$30,000. The arena currently needs to upgrade a condenser, compressor and other components.

The Hockeyville competition is open to legal residents of Canada aged 14 and older, according to the


Continued on page 18




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## Gimli's Alec Baldwin sings and scores at Winnipeg Jets game

By Patricia Barrett

With thousands of people in the stands at the Canada Life Centre in downtown Winnipeg and countless thousands in front of their televisions, Alec Baldwin from Gimli did Canada and America proud when he sang the two countries' respective anthems at a Winnipeg Jets home game against the Detroit Red Wings on Jan. 4.

Someone had heard Baldwin sing at a Special Olympics fundraiser in Toronto and recommended that he sing at a Jets game.

Baldwin took to the ice decked out in a Jets jersey, waved to the crowd then scored with a beautiful performance of *O Canada* and the *Star-Spangled Banner*.

It was first time he had ever sung at an NHL game, he said. He wasn't nervous and the crowd didn't throw him off when they bellowed out "true

north" — the shout-out is a Winnipeg tradition during Jets home games — while he was singing *O Canada*.

"I was happy to be [there] and the audience loved me," said Baldwin, who has autism. "I sang *O Canada* and I sang *Star-Spangled Banner*. I sang true north while the people are crying out loud, 'true north,' the audience. I was able to concentrate and I ignored those strangers."

Baldwin, who got to stand on the "longest red carpet on top of the ice" at the game, is well known in Gimli and beyond for his athletic performances and medal wins at summer and winter Special Olympic Games, his artwork that's been featured at top dog shows and his annual Dog Party in Gimli that brings dog lovers in the community together.

And he's no stranger to singing. With a commanding presence, poise and powerful vocals, he has been invited to sing at six Manitoba Moose hockey games to date, at the Canadian embassy in Berlin during the Special Olympics games, at several dog shows across Canada and at a Gimli performing arts festival. He earned his Royal Conservatory of Music Grade 10 in piano and voice and practises singing, including anthem singing, with Gimli-area music teacher Muriel Smith.

"I sang loud, using opera voice. Muriel Smith is my singing teacher who helped me when I sang using opera voice," said Baldwin, referring to the technique he used to sing at the Jets game. "I memorized both anthems. I memorized them a long time ago because I sang *O Canada* and *Star-Spangled Banner* at the Moose games."

Baldwin has also learned to sing *O Canada* in French and sang it at a Moose game.

True North Sports & Entertainment, which owns and operates the Winnipeg Jets, Manitoba Moose and the Canada Life Centre, gave Baldwin and his family tickets so they could watch the game after his performance.

Baldwin said he wants to meet some of the Jets players if he gets a chance to sing again in the future.

"They [Red Wings] shot more points than Team Jets. It was disappointed," said Baldwin, referring to the Jets loss to the Red Wings by two goals. "I would have talked to them about what they've done in the past recently, their wins and losses."

Baldwin's mom, Tanis Benson, said she thought he did a great job at the game, and she appreciates his getting an opportunity to sing at the Jets and the exposure he got.

"He went out on the ice and he waved at everybody first," said Benson. "Then he nailed it. Even though there were so many people at the Jets game, and he might get distracted or forget the words, he nailed it. He nails it every time."

She added that Alex is continuing to take singing lessons and is working on recording all his songs.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY PRIYA PLESTED

Alec Baldwin, who has autism, was guest singer at the Winnipeg Jets home game against the Detroit Red Wings on Jan. 4.

A video of his performance that Baldwin's sister, Olina, recorded has received multi-thousands of views. And people took to Meta (Facebook) in droves to express their appreciation for Baldwin's performance. One person thought other Meta users were referring to American actor Alec Baldwin, and some didn't know who the singer was but were duly impressed.

"Wow! This young fella has an amazing set of pipes! Wish he sang at EVERY game!" wrote Wendy Rudiger.

"OH MY HEART!" wrote Linda Krawczonek.

"Alec you were amazing!! You are One of the best singers we have heard at the jets games and we attend a lot of them! Great job!" wrote Sarah Kane.

"I was at the game. He was awesome," wrote Peter Bjornson. "The one game I go to and forgot my cellphone in the car otherwise I would have recorded it."

True North Sports & Entertainment's Priya Plested, who is the co-ordinator of game presentation and helped arrange Baldwin's appearance, said he had previously sung at Moose games and thought he would be a good fit at a Jets game.

"I saw the look on Alec's face and it was just priceless. And seeing how the joy of performing came to him was fantastic," said Plested. "I think the crowd really enjoyed it and he did an excellent job. We were really happy he was able to sing for us here."

Baldwin said he enjoyed performing at the Jets and wouldn't say no if invited to sing again in the future.

"I would sing more at the Jets. It will be a fun idea. Jets will play," said Baldwin. "I had a good experience. Thank you so much. I would like to thank Priya, who invited me to the Jets game."

### Community Support Service

#### A.A Meeting in Ashern

Location: #11 2nd Ave North  
- Pioneer Manor  
(beside the main door entrance  
of Pioneer Manor)  
Contact Jackiem.lwrc@gmail.com

#### AA Arborg

Thursdays - 7:30 pm  
Arborg Support Centre  
327 Main Street  
Contact 204-376-5861

#### AA Eriksdale

Eriksdale United Church building  
#7 Main Street, Eriksdale (side door)  
Meetings are Mondays  
at 6:30 p.m.

#### AA Winnipeg Beach

Lady of the Lake RC Church  
Corner of Hwy. 9 and Lake Ave.,  
Winnipeg Beach  
Meetings are Saturdays  
between 7 and 8 p.m.  
Contact Ann J 204-389-3417

#### Gimli Group AA

Bldg 18 Municipal Rd  
Industrial Park  
Fri & Sun Mtgs at 7:30 pm

#### AI-Anon Gimli and Winnipeg Beach

Join us at 17B Loni Beach Road, next  
to New Horizon building... Gimli at  
7:00 pm Wednesday evenings for an  
hour of support, strength, guidance  
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All ages welcome.

#### AA Riverton Group

12 Main St. at the  
Riverton Senior Centre  
Mondays 7:30 p.m.



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- By email request, [gimli@rmgimli.com](mailto:gimli@rmgimli.com)
- By mail, call (204) 642-6650

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# Gimli newcomers feel welcomed with a Christmas Elf gift

By Becca Myskiw

A family new to Gimli is sure they chose the right community to move to after a holiday interaction left them with a \$100 Sobeys gift card.

Holliday Fisher, her partner Jonathan and their daughter were walking into the local Sobeys when they noticed two women standing outside the front doors. One brought out her phone and began to record as the other woman approached Fisher and her family.

"Me and my partner looked at each other like, 'What is going on?'" Fisher said with a laugh.

The stranger approached them and said, "Excuse me, I don't mean to bother you, but I have been nominated as the Christmas Elf this year, and I'd like to gift your family this."

She proceeded to present them with a \$100 gift card for the store they were about to enter, and Fisher and her partner were completely shocked.

"It was a very sweet and short interaction," said Fisher. "There were other people walking into the store at this time too, so we were re-

ally grateful that she chose our little family for this thoughtful gift."

Fisher said that \$100 taken off their grocery shop was extremely helpful and appreciated immensely. Christmas can be tough financially for many families, she said, and as they had just moved into their new home a few days before the holiday, they were feeling the financial struggle more than ever.

"We were shopping for basic groceries as well as stuff for our Christmas dinner," said Fisher. "I feel like the gift card was able to provide a nice meal for our family for Christmas."

She and her partner never found out who the Gimli Christmas Elf was, but they want her to know how thankful they are that she chose them to receive their gift. Fisher said they'll be paying this gesture of kindness forward — they're deciding just how to do it.


"We were initially shocked but very grateful," she said. "Reflecting back on it, we realize that this was a sign that we moved to the right town."




EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Holliday Fisher, left, and her partner Jonathan with their daughter. The family was gifted a \$100 Sobeys gift card shortly after moving to Gimli.

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**MANITOBA**



# RIVERTON & DISTRICT FRIENDSHIP CENTRE INC.

## RDFC Christmas markets bring holiday cheer and community spirit

By Desarae Bilinski

The Riverton District Friendship Centre annual Riverton and Arborg Christmas Markets spread holiday cheer and bring the community together in a celebration of local talent, and festive shopping. The markets were bustling with energy as many folks came by to shop 'til they dropped, discovering unique gifts, handcrafted goods, and delicious treats, all while supporting local businesses and artists.

Visitors were able to purchase a hearty perogies dinner and an array of sweet and salty canteen items, perfect for fueling up while enjoying the market festivities. For those looking to capture the magic of the season, Santa photos were available thanks to the talented teams at Creative Cocoon/Nesti Photography and Sara Uruski Photography, allowing families to create lasting memories.

We had our Travelling Silent Auction at both markets, raising funds for the Christmas Hamper Program, ensuring that holiday cheer could be



spread to those in need within the community. The generosity of those who participated in the auction is a testament to the spirit of giving that defines the season.

The markets were a true celebration of local talent, featuring a wide range of vendors, artisans, and creators, all



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY NEISTI PHOTOGRAPHY  
Riverton District Friendship Centre staff with Santa.

showcasing their unique products and crafts. From handmade goods to delicious local treats, the event demonstrated the strength of our communities and the importance of supporting small businesses.

Thank you to everyone who attended, and contributed to making this year's markets so special. We look forward to continuing this tradition of bringing joy and holiday cheer to Riverton and Arborg for years to come!

## Honouring service and strength: Indigenous Veterans Day

By Desarae Bilinski

On November 8th, the Riverton and District Friendship Centre hosted a moving Indigenous Veterans Day event at the Riverton Hall, honouring the bravery, sacrifice, and contributions of Indigenous veterans. The event featured a delicious turkey dinner, bringing the community together for a time of reflection and honour.

Cadets were in attendance, proudly supporting the ceremony, while wreath layers paid tribute to those who served.

This special ceremony was an important opportunity for reconciliation, acknowledging the historical and ongoing contributions of Indigenous peoples in the military. By honoring the sacrifices of Indigenous veterans, we strengthen our com-

mitment to reconciliation and recognize the deep and enduring impact of their service.

It was a meaningful experience where the community came together in respect and gratitude. A sincere thank you to all who attended, participated, and helped make this event a memorable and respectful tribute to those who served.



## Annual Family Christmas party brings holiday magic to the community

By Desarae Bilinski

The Annual Family Christmas Party was a spectacular success, drawing over 400 attendees for an unforgettable day filled with holiday cheer, laughter, and fun. The event, a cherished tradition for many, offered a festive atmosphere for families of all ages to enjoy.

There were a ton of fun activities, including the popular Polar Bear Snack Shack, where everyone could enjoy tasty treats and festive snacks. Mrs. Claus storytelling, Elves Workshop, and Rudolph's Pitstop. Frosty's Face Painting station was a big hit, transforming children into their favorite holiday characters, and the Grinch Games brought plenty of laughs and friendly competition.

For those looking to get their holiday groove on, the Zumba Party with Elfie had everyone dancing and laughing



along to festive tunes, spreading energy, and fun.

The excitement didn't stop there! A special visit from Moana, Spider-Man, Batman, and Bluey had the children beyond excited, adding even more magic to the event. Families also had the chance to capture the holiday spirit



with pictures alongside Santa and Mrs. Clause, creating cherished memories.

In the true spirit of giving, every child went home with a special present- a toy, game, or book, ensuring that every little one left with a smile on their face.

The Annual Family Christmas Party is a wonderful reminder of the magic



of the season, and the importance of making memories with loved ones. A big thank you to all who helped make this event so special. We look forward to celebrating again next year!

## RDFC annual seniors dinner- a huge success

By Desarae Bilinski

On Tuesday, Dec. 3, over 300 seniors gathered in Riverton for a heartwarming and memorable evening at the Annual Seniors Dinner. The event, which has become a cherished tradition, provided a chance for our seniors to come together, enjoy good food, and celebrate the spirit of togetherness.

The afternoon was filled with festive cheer, thanks to a delicious turkey dinner served with all the classic fixings. From mashed potatoes to cranberry sauce, every dish was crafted to perfection. The dessert table was filled with an array of sweet treats that satisfied every craving.

Adding to the enjoyment, folks were treated to lively entertainment by the talented Country Pride Band. Their music filled the room with lively tunes, keeping toes tapping and spirits high throughout the evening.

The Annual Seniors Dinner is a wonderful reminder of the importance of community, connection, and celebration. It was an evening to honor the seniors who have shaped Riverton and to make lasting memories that will warm hearts for years to come.

Thank you to all our staff, volunteers, and Riverton Collegiate Institute students. Thank you to all who attended and made this event such a special occasion. We look forward to next year's celebration!



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY NEISTI PHOTOGRAPHY  
The Riverton District Friendship Centre annual seniors dinner was a success with over 300 gathering for good food and dancing.

## RDFC Christmas Cheer Program brings holiday happiness

By Lana Meier

This holiday season, the Riverton & District Friendship Centre Christmas Cheer Program spread warmth and joy to over 115 families in need. They made sure that everyone in the community and its surrounding areas had the necessary items for their Christmas festivities. The hampers contained all the essentials for a fantastic holiday, including a delicious meal and toys for the children.

RDFC's Desarae Bilinski extends a special thank you to the Riverton Fire Department, whose annual toy drive played a vital role in making sure that every child received a gift this Christmas.

"Their generosity and dedication are truly appreciated by all who benefited from their support," said Bilinski.

"The success of the program wouldn't have been possible without the RDFC staff, and volunteers who dedicated their time to packing and distributing the hampers, as well as the many community members who donated items, funds, and their energy to support this important cause. Your kindness and generosity have truly made a difference in the lives of so many families this holiday season."

The Christmas Cheer Program showcases the power of community.

"We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed in any way. Your efforts have brought joy and hope to many, and we look forward to continuing this tradition of giving in the years to come. Thank you to all who helped make this holiday season brighter for our neighbors," said Bilinski.



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

# Chaika dancers celebrate 55 years of Fisher Branch Malanka

By E Antonio

The Fisher Branch Chaika Ukrainian Dance Club celebrated its 55th anniversary during Malanka with a sell-out crowd on Jan. 11. It was the celebration of the Ukrainian New Year, one week ahead of the actual Malanka, which traditionally has occurred on Jan. 13; however, with the changes in Ukraine recently there are celebrations occurring at different times.

Fisher Branch Community Hall welcomed a crowd of 350 guests for a night of delicious food, lively entertainment and family festivities.

"This year, we have 51 dancers from 35 different families from the community that we are representing," said Chaika Dance chair Laura Grzenda.

Five Chaika dance groups, with dancers ranging from four to 18 years old, performed 10 different dances they had rehearsed since September. Bedecked in traditional Ukrainian attire, the dancers provided lively entertainment for the duration of the evening.

"Since we reuse costumes, a lot of the ones the kids are wearing today have been worn by others in the past, and many of the costumes still have people's names written on the tags. It is really neat to see a part of their family heritage make an appearance in their present-day lives because you can see from the tags that their parents or aunts or uncles have worn the costumes in the past. One little girl came up to me and said she was wearing a skirt that was once mine, which was cool to see."

The youthful performers were filled with excitement and nerves. For some of the youngest dancers, Malanka was their first time performing in front of an audience.

"The little ones love to dance," said Grzenda. "It is an evening to spend with their friends, and they just love being able to let loose."

In addition to the dancing, community members came together to commemorate the Ukrainian New Year. The traditional celebration included a variety of dishes such as perogies, meatballs, turkey, ham, holopche (cabbage rolls), pereshke (sauerkraut buns), mashed potatoes and more. The festivities culminated in the creation of a Unity Circle.

"Everybody got together at midnight to cross their arms and hold hands with others while three representatives from the community went into the middle of the circle to honour different generations of Ukrainians."

This year, Johnny and Virginia Walashek represented the older generation. The elderly couple's children and grandchildren danced with Chai-



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY SARA URUSKI PHOTOGRAPHY

Senior dancer Carli helps first-year dancer Blair with the holding of the wheat, until it is time to throw it in the air, during the unity circle. The older dancers are amazing at teaching the younger dancers about Ukrainian traditions and Malanka.



ka when they were younger; now their great-grandson is a dancer at Chaika.

Asya Bird and Brody Webb were selected as Chaika's representatives in the Unity Circle, and Presley McConnell and Allen Emms with baby Mason was this year's Malanka Baby.

A surprise Ukrainian Baba also came to celebrate Malanka, and she gave everyone gifts of wheat and bread. When it was time to count down until midnight, guests rang in the new year by tossing their wheat and bread into the year.

"This tradition is important to the Ukrainian culture as wheat and bread is very symbolic. It shows the importance in the harvest as it represents health and prosperity."

Bread and wheat also made an appearance in several of Chaika's dances throughout the evening before sending everyone off with good fortune for the new year.

As Malanka festivities wind down, Chaika dancers are eagerly preparing for their next big event: the year-end Spring Tee on Sunday, April 13. This will be their chance to showcase all the new dances they've learned and perfected over the past year.



> **FRAUD, FROM PG. 8**

they would go shopping for hours with no issues.

As a result of the investigation, income replacement and personal care benefits ceased. This saved ratepayers all future benefits costs, and the claimant had to pay MPI back almost \$5,000 for receiving benefits fraudulently.

The lifetime savings to ratepayers was almost \$1.8 million.

**Fraud 2: Sniper Fire**

An individual checked on their vehicle, which was parked in a vacant lot, as it had no valid insurance. While there checking, the claimant said an unknown cyclist passed by and urgently advised them to move their vehicle, so the claimant went to a nearby MPI broker and obtained a five-day temporary policy for the vehicle so they could move it.

When the individual returned to the vehicle, they said they were collecting their personal belongings when a suspected gunshot suddenly shattered a window in the vehicle. Fearing for their safety, the individual fled the scene. Local fire and police were called to the scene minutes later as the vehicle's interior was on fire. They found no evidence to support or confirm any gunfire in the area.

The SIU team took the investigation and learned that the temporary policy was purchased 45 minutes before the fire loss. A nearby security camera observed the individual next to the open vehicle six minutes before the fire was detected and reported. Further, nobody else reported hearing a gunshot, to which the claimant clarified that they believed they were targeted by a sniper using a silencer.

Further investigation revealed that the vehicle was not capable of starting, running or being driven away in its current state, as many parts had been removed or disconnected.

The claim was denied, saving ratepayers almost \$9,000.

**Fraud 3: Rascally rabbit (or coyote?)**

A claim was opened stating that the registered owner of a vehicle was

driving 50 km/hour when they hit an animal, which they said could have been a rabbit or a coyote. The driver reportedly swerved left to avoid hitting the animal and then swerved right to get back in the proper lane, at which time they hit the curb, flipping the vehicle.

When SIU began to investigate, the driver denied going any faster than 50 km/hour and claimed they were driving two passengers, one of which was the claimant's licensed child.

SIU investigators obtained vehicle data confirming that the vehicle was travelling over 100 km/hour with 100 per cent acceleration, followed by a hard brake and swerving when the collision happened.

Once the investigation's findings were shared with the claimant, they admitted they had been home sleeping and their child had taken the vehicle without permission.

Whether the animal was a rabbit, a coyote or even existed was never determined.

The claim was denied, saving ratepayers almost \$33,000.

**Fraud 4: Phantom driver**

A two-vehicle collision occurred on a Manitoba highway in the early morning hours. One vehicle rolled, and the drivers and lone occupants of both vehicles were injured. In this case, the second vehicle's driver, which did not roll, is the claimant.

Once at the hospital, the claimant stated they had no memories of the incident or how they ended up there. They had no recollection of being involved in a collision that caused one vehicle to roll.

SIU began to investigate and discovered that the injured driver in the rolled vehicle saw another vehicle approaching quickly from behind. The driver of the rolled vehicle assumed the second vehicle would go around and pass. However, the vehicle approached at a high rate of speed and struck the vehicle, causing it to hit the median and roll. A passerby called 911.

The claimant stated they were not driving the second vehicle as they

had consumed a lot of alcohol. They reported that someone came over to the residence where the claimant was by cab, and the unknown person drove the claimant's vehicle, causing the collision.

Further investigation by SIU showed the passenger-side airbag in the claimant's vehicle was not deployed. The front passenger seat was proven not to have been occupied at the time of the collision, and the vehicle had been going 180 km/hour.

In addition to admitting to consuming a bottle of alcohol, the claimant was proven to be impaired with a blood alcohol content over the legal limit.

The claim on the claimant's vehicle was denied, saving ratepayers almost \$10,000. The third-party claim value for the damage to the rolled vehicle was almost \$49,000, which the claimant must pay.

**Fraud 5: Pole-shaped deer**

A customer contacted MPI to make a claim after hitting wildlife on the highway on the way home from grocery shopping. Upon inspection, deer hair was present however, the intense frame damage to the vehicle was not

consistent with a deer collision but more of a collision with a pole. The vehicle was found to be a total loss.

Due to the irregularities, SIU began an investigation. The claimant told MPI they were travelling at approximately 110 km/hour when a deer came from the right side of the road and impacted the front of the vehicle. They further stated that no other collision took place with any vertical or fixed object.

A collision analyst was engaged and a mechanical inspection was done. It was determined that the damage to the vehicle was the result of two distinct collisions — one being the alleged wildlife collision and the other with a fixed object resembling a post or a pole. The false wildlife collision was used as an opportunity to disguise the extensive damage that pre-existed.

The claim was denied, saving ratepayers just over \$13,600.

In total, through MPI's SIU's investigation and discovery of five fraudulent claims, Manitoba ratepayers were able to save \$1.9 million in 2024, contributing to the overall savings of \$15 million.

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# 'Emotional' day marks end of Stadnek's officiating career

By Jeremiah Knight

Ken Stadnek would still be officiating if it were his decision.

It's hard letting go of something that's been so good to him.

Yet, Stadnek, 69, was honoured during Arborg's Minor Hockey Day last month at the Arborg Bifrost Community Centre for his retirement from a remarkable 35-year career of calling amateur hockey games across the province.

The day featured every Arborg minor hockey team in action, including the Capital Region Junior Hockey Ice Dogs as the last game of the evening. Partway through the festivities, Stadnek was celebrated.

Stadnek, who has been involved with hockey locally for four decades (previously on the minor hockey board), officiated at every level, from senior men's hockey to minor hockey, which he was primarily assigned to during his later years.

He was named Most Deserving Referee in the Interlake in 2000 and from 2008-10, and was widely regarded for his unwavering dedication to hockey locally, which would mean reffing up to five contests per day just so that games could go on.

Stadnek's last game was in May at the end of last season. Though he had every intention of returning this year, the decision was out of his hands.

"It was really tough because it wasn't me who made the decision. It was basically Interlake Minor Hockey that said I couldn't ref anymore. They didn't want me reffing anymore," said Stadnek, who had bitter-sweet feelings about his retirement ceremony.

A nudge to hang up the whistle and expand his horizons also came from his children.

"My kids just decided that maybe dad should finally give up and do other things in his life. I guess eventually a person has to quit sooner or later," he said.

"When you've been doing it for 35 years and involved, it was emotional having something that you love that you eventually got to just quit. So it was emotional. No doubt about it."

You'd be hard-pressed to find a more resilient official in any sport than Stadnek.

Returning to the ice became his North Star after being diagnosed with Mantle cell lymphoma, a rare and aggressive type of non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL) that started in the B cells of the lymph nodes in 2016.

He was pronounced dead for a short



Ken Stadnek, right, stands with Tom Chwaliboga, referee in chief for Arborg Minor Hockey, following his retirement ceremony.

time before returning, then spent two months in intensive care on life support.

"That was, I would say, nervous for my family and everything else," said an emotional Stadnek.

He lost nearly 70 pounds while in the hospital, weighing a frail 127 pounds when he left in a wheelchair that August. Doctors had their doubts that he would be able to walk again.

Four months later, in December, Stadnek was lacing up his skates and preparing to dust off his whistle. His recovery left medical professionals scratching their heads, as a typical recovery process can take up to three years.

While he continues to take pills daily that eat away at the integrity of his bones, Stadnek is happy to be alive.

"Somebody was looking after me, I guess."

Born and raised in Arborg, Stadnek only played competitive hockey until he was 16 and got into curling. He also maintains he was a much better golfer than a hockey player.

Hockey was never far away, though. He later became a local scout and, at one point, a coach for the OCN Blizzard, now Northern Manitoba Blizzard, of the Manitoba Junior Hockey League.

As a coach, he mentored James Reimer, a goalie for the Buffalo Sabres of the National Hockey League, and Colby Robak, who spent parts of four seasons in the NHL.

The chance to officiate came out of the blue, though it shouldn't have surprised Stadnek, given how often he was at the rink with his kids. He



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Ken Stadnek (second from left) was joined by his family, Kyle, Sharon, Scott and Kelsey (left to right), as he was honoured for his retirement after 30 years of officiating at the Arborg Minor Hockey Day in December.

received a call from Grant Thorsteinson, who was the referee-in-chief for Arborg Minor Hockey at the time and was beginning his transition into retirement, and Stadnek didn't take much time to accept.

He can remember his first assignment like it was yesterday. It's likely a day that no one inside the arena in Fairford for the contest between nine-year-olds soon forgot after that day.

"Halfway through the first period, the kid that was reffing with me ... the fans were giving me the gears, they were giving him the gears, and he took his jersey off and threw it in the crowd and said, 'Here, if you guys think you can do better, I quit,'" Stadnek recalled.

"I thought, 'I guess I'm going to have to finish this game by myself,' and I thought I'm never ever going to do that and put any other team and everything (in jeopardy) so that just made me decide that's what I wanted to do."

The stories from over three decades of work are endless.

Some involve Tom Chwaliboga, who is the current referee in chief for Arborg Minor Hockey and the rec director at the Arborg-Bifrost Recreation Centre.

Chwaliboga has known Stadnek from a young age as family friends, but the two have grown closer over the last decade since Chwaliboga joined the referee fraternity. It was at that time when Stadnek went from

friend to mentor.

"He's been organizing the referees for Arborg and area for a number of years," said Chwaliboga. "That means he had to organize and make sure there's referees, timekeepers for all the minor hockey games that are going on in Arborg for the past 30 years. That takes a lot of time, effort, dedication, and probably patience. When you think you've got it all organized and all of a sudden somebody phones you that afternoon and saying, 'Hey, I can't make it tonight,' now you're scrambling."

"I know Ken has refereed more games in a day than he should, but otherwise there's no game happening without a referee. So, if nobody showed up, Kenny made sure that he was doing sometimes up to four or five games a day just to make sure that kids could have a hockey game that night or that day."

Last month's Minor Hockey Day will surely be another story he shares over the years as a memory that marked the end of an incredible run, and perhaps the beginning of another.

Stadnek conceded not every moment was bright while wearing the striped sweater, but he wouldn't trade it for anything.

"I decided to do it and just lived it ever since then," he said. "I had some memories, and it's just been 30 years of having lots of fun with lots of guys and lots of memories."

# Burgess joins Team Einarson ahead of WFC Masters

By Kieran Reimer

Team Kerri Einarson's lineup will be slightly different this week at the WFC Masters in Guelph, Ont.

With Shannon Birchard out due to injury, filling her place at second is three-time world junior champion Karlee Burgess who hails from Winnipeg.

Burgess, 26, spent the 2024 season on Team Chelsea Carey, which had competed against Team Einarson at past events.

This week she threw with Team Einarson for the first time and will make her season debut with the team when the WFC Masters gets underway Tuesday at the Sleeman Centre.

"It's going really well and it's nice that we're all on the same program in working with Curling Canada and coaches and doing these training camps," said Einarson, the five-time Grand Slam of Curling champion and Gimli native.

"We all kind of throw quite similar so it's definitely been easy putting the broom down for her and we'll see what it's like in an actual game in a week. I know that she's got a lot of energy and we're excited to have that. She's very patient out there, and we're looking forward to having her and think she'll be a great addition to our team."

Birchard's knee injury is expected to keep her out for the remainder of the

season.

She last hit the sheet a month ago in Swift Current at a tour event where she was unable to finish the competition.

Einarson and the team hope she can now make a full recovery and eventually return to the lineup healthy for next season.

"When we found out and Shannon made the call to step back for the rest of the season it was definitely very difficult on her and on us," said Einarson. "I love having her on the ice. She's a great teammate and shot-maker so to not have her, it's going to be tough, but Karlee's a great teammate and shot-maker as well. It was a hard decision for her and she's just worried about recovering and rehabbing her knee. She just wants to really focus on that and get ready for next season."

Team Einarson's lineup now includes skip Kerri Einarson (Gimli), third Val Sweeting (Lottie Lake), second Karlee Burgess (Winnipeg), lead Briane Harris (Petersfield) and alternate Krysten Karwacki (Winnipeg).

Their tournament begins at 3 p.m. Tuesday when they take on Team Skrlík in the preliminary round.

They will then face Team Tabata on Wednesday, Team Homan on Thursday and Team Fujisawa on Friday to finish off the preliminary round before the quarterfinals, semi-finals and finals on Saturday and Sunday.



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Three-time world junior champion Karlee Burgess has joined Team Einarson in the absence of Shannon Birchard at the WFC Masters in Guelph, Ont., from Jan. 14 to 19. Kerri Einarson and her team begin the tournament on Tuesday against Team Skrlík at 3 p.m. from the Sleeman Centre. Pictured left to right: Kerri Einarson, Val Sweeting, Karlee Burgess and Krysten Karwacki.

The full schedule can be found at <https://the grandslamofcurling.com/wp-content/uploads/masters-draw-schedule2025.pdf>

## Lightning Report: Coach Dalgliesh receives Jets Community Hero Award

By Kieran Reimer

The U13 AA Interlake Lightning's head coach, Shaun Dalgliesh, was named the recipient of the Winnipeg Jets Community Hero Award at the Jets vs Los Angeles Kings game at Canada Life Centre on Friday.

Dalgliesh spends countless hours year-round coaching hockey and baseball while holding local hockey training camps on Sundays.

He is also Stonewall Minor Ball's president, the MMJHL Stonewall Jets treasurer, and the referee-in-chief of the Stonewall Minor Hockey Association.

"It was nice to see him get recognized for the hundreds of hours he puts in each year. A lot of the work goes unnoticed, so it was nice seeing him appreciated," said Chris Arbez, who nominated Dalgliesh in October.

Arbez, whose kids Dalgliesh had coached over the past five years, kept the nomination a secret until mid-December when the Jets announced Dalgliesh was receiving the award.

Arbez, Dalgliesh, and their wives received free Jets tickets and got to go on Friday when they received a shout-out on the scoreboard.

"It's always nice to be recognized; it means a lot to me," said Dalgliesh. "I think I've thanked Chris a hundred times already for taking the time to recognize me because it's pretty easy to complain about things that are going on and not as often people take the time to recognize them. It's meant a lot, and a lot of people I haven't talked to in a long time reached out and said how well deserved it was, just making me feel it's not going unnoticed. You look back on what I had as a kid, it was mostly due to people giving back and giving us that opportunity. Over the years my dad coached and had been involved in multiple different things so when I look back on it, I feel it's needed for our community to thrive so that's my primary reason to give back."

Dalgliesh is a father of two and coaches the U13 Lightning despite

not having a kid on this year's team.

The Lightning are in the home stretch of their regular season schedule and are fighting for their playoff lives.

They enter the week in 14th place with a 9-10-0-1 record and fresh off a 7-5 win over the Winnipeg Wild Green on Sunday, keeping them in the multi-team logjam jousting for spots in the A-side playoffs.

"Ideally, we want to get above 500, that's the goal, and try to push ourselves into the A-side for the playoffs," said Dalgliesh. "We can compete so it's trying to get the guys to buy in and make sure we're all pulling in the same direction and looking to accomplish something that they may not have felt they could at the beginning of the year. We want to bring that playoff intensity to our game as well and stay with the top teams in the league."

The Lightning's next game goes on Saturday in Brandon against the Wheat Kings Black at 3:15 p.m. from

Westoba Place.

It's one of just eight games remaining for the club as they continue their exciting push for the playoffs.

The U13 AA Female Interlake Lightning lost 5-4 to the Twins on Friday night in St. Norbert. They currently sit seventh with a 5-12-0-1 record.

Next game: Friday, Jan. 17 at Titans, 7:15 p.m. at Allard Arena

The U15 AA Male Interlake Lightning lost 4-3 and 5-2 to the Winnipeg Thrashers Grey and the Winnipeg Wild Green on Friday and Saturday. They currently sit sixth with an 8-7-4-2 record.

Next game: Saturday, Jan. 18 at Winnipeg Wild Gold, 8 p.m. at Eric Coy Arena

The U15 AAA Female Interlake Lightning split their weekend with a 4-0 loss to the Brandon Wheat Kings on Friday and a 4-0 win over the Nor-



# Falcons narrow gap on Comets with pair of wins

By Kieran Reimer

The Lundar Falcons collected six points over three contests this week to inch closer to the second-place Beausejour Comets.

They collected a 3-1 victory over the North Winnipeg Satellites on Tuesday to start off the week.

The Falcons lead throughout the game and got goals from Cayden St. Laurent, Dayson McCreedy and Cole Phillion, his first of the season.

Seth Hasker won the goaltending battle, making 28 saves on 29 shots. The Falcons outshot the Satellites 47-29 on the night.

The Falcons then found themselves on the other end of the scoreboard against the first-place St. Malo Warriors on Friday, losing 5-4.

Braeden Lukas, Dylan Vitelli and Ryan Benson all scored in the second period to put the Falcons down just a goal heading into the third period.

The Warriors made it 5-3 early in the second before Vitelli once again cut the lead to one with his second of the

night, but that was as close as the Falcons would get.

Kennedy Kerr stopped 32 of 37 as the Falcons were outshot 37-32 in the loss.

Then on Sunday the Falcons found themselves in another tight game with the Arborg Ice Dawgs, but a two goal night from Ryan Benson helped them skate away with a 4-3 win.

Braeden Lukas and Daniel Masters also added goals while Kennedy Kerr stopped 41 of 44 and the Falcons never trailed despite being outshot 44-41 in the game.

They improved to 13-8-0-2-0 after the weekend and remain third in the Capital Region Junior Hockey League.

Heading into this week, the Falcons are seven points behind the Beausejour Comets and 12 points ahead of the Selkirk Fishermen, firmly in third place.

Next up is another clash with the Warriors on Saturday at 7 p.m. from Lundar Arena.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

The Falcons' Dawson McCreedy had a goal and an assist in Lundar's 3-1 win against the North Winnipeg Satellites on Jan. 7.

# Ice Dawgs slide to sixth after pair of close games

By Kieran Reimer

The Arborg Ice Dawgs lost a pair of close games over the weekend, dropping them back to sixth in the Capital Region Junior Hockey League.

On Friday, the fourth-place Selkirk Fishermen handed the Ice Dawgs their first loss of the new year by a score of 7-5 at Selkirk Recreation Complex.

The Ice Dawgs went down early but clawed their way back with goals from Brody Maxwell, Brandon Burak, Ben Danielson and Tyson Barylski to

trail just 5-4 heading into the third.

After a scoreless first half of the third, the Fishermen added another to make it 6-4.

Barylski scored his second of the game short after to make it a one-goal deficit once again, but Ryland Schroeder and the Fishermen had other plans. He sealed the deal with his sixth of the season.

Fishermen's Marcus Sharpe picked up the win in net with 40 saves, while Nathan Meisner stopped 45 in the loss.

On Sunday, it was a similar outcome, with the third-place Lundar Falcons handing the Ice Dawgs a loss by a score of 4-3.

The Ice Dawgs went down early but again clawed back with goals from Tyson Barylski, Dainen Jacobson, and Brandon Burak in the second period to tie things up 3-3.

Things looked to be headed for overtime until a late offensive push from the Falcons led to Daniel Masters scoring the game-winning goal with just two minutes left on the clock.

Falcons' Kennedy Kerr walked away with the win in net with 41 saves while Paxton Moore stopped 37 in the loss.

The Ice Dawgs hold a 6-18-0-1-0 record for 20 points following the weekend.

They sit only two points back of the La Broquerie Habs heading into Friday's game against the Habs at home.

The puck drop goes at 8 p.m. from Arborg & District Arena.

## > HOCKEYVILLE, FROM PG. 9

contest opened on Jan. 1 and closes on March 2. Judging will start on March 3 and run until March 15. The Top 4 will be announced on March 15. Voting will take place on April 4 and 5 with the winner announced on April 5.

Visit the Kraft Hockeyville website at [www.krafthockeyville.ca](http://www.krafthockeyville.ca) and use the search feature to find the Arborg & District Arena. Once you're on the Arborg page, follow on-screen instructions to register then follow the links to post your submission. The website provides three questions which people can use to write or record their stories.

For more information about the competition, call the Arborg arena at 204-376-5576.

## > LIGHTNING, FROM PG. 17

man Wild on Saturday. They currently sit seventh with a 3-13 record.

Next game: Saturday, Jan. 18 at Yellowhead Chiefs, 1 p.m. at Shoal Lake Communiplex

The **U15 AAA Male Interlake Lightning** lost 8-2 to the Winnipeg Wild Green on Wednesday and 7-0 to the Wild Green in their rematch on Sunday. They currently sit fifth in the Central Division with a 4-20 record.

Next game: Friday, Jan. 17 at Pembina Valley Hawks, 6:45 p.m. at Hockey For All Centre

The **U17 AAA Male Interlake Lightning** lost 6-3 to the Winnipeg Thrashers on Friday and won 3-1 over the Eastman Selects on Saturday. They currently sit seventh with a 5-16-4 record.

Next game: Wednesday, Jan. 15 at Winnipeg

Wild, 6:15 p.m. at Hockey For All Centre

The **U18 AAA Male Interlake Lightning** lost 8-2 to the Winnipeg Wild on Wednesday and 3-2 to the Parkland Rangers in overtime on Sunday. They currently sit eighth with a 15-12-2-1-3-1 record.

Next game: Saturday, Jan. 18 at Brandon Wheat Kings, 7:30 p.m. at J&G Homes Arena

The **U18 AAA Female Interlake Lightning** went 2-1 over the weekend with a 2-0 win over the Central Plains Capitals, a 4-3 win over the Westman Wildcats, and a 5-3 loss to the Brandon Wheat Kings. They currently sit ninth with a 4-21-0-0-3 record.

Next game: Saturday, Jan. 18 at Brandon Wheat Kings, 1 p.m. at J&G Homes Arena

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**NOTICE OF REGISTRATION OF PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATE FOR MUNICIPAL BY-ELECTION TOWN OF WINNIPEG BEACH**

Please be advised that a municipal by-election will be held on April 12, 2025.

Prospective municipal election candidates must register with the Senior Election Official (SEO) during the registration period before they may begin to accept contributions, incur expenses, fundraise or borrow money for their campaign.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that I will be receiving candidate registrations:

For the office of head of council: Between January 13, 2025 and March 7, 2025

at the Town of Winnipeg Beach office, 29 Robinson Avenue, Winnipeg Beach during the regular hours of business.

To obtain a registration form contact the SEO at the email or telephone number listed below.

B. Leah McIsaac  
204-782-2146

seo@winnipegbeach.ca

Dated at Winnipeg Beach on January 6, 2025.

B. Leah McIsaac Town of Winnipeg Beach  
Senior Election Official (SEO)

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**NOTICE OF VOTERS LIST / PERSONAL SECURITY PROTECTION Town of Winnipeg Beach**

Notice is hereby given that a copy of the VOTERS LIST may be revised at:

29 Robinson Avenue, Winnipeg Beach on January 13, 2025

between the normal business hours.

At this time the Senior Election Official (SEO) will be available to update the voters list by:

- (a) adding the names of voters who are entitled to have their names on the list;
- (b) deleting the names of persons who are not entitled to have their names on the list; and
- (c) making such other correction of errors to the list as required.

**VOTER ELIGIBILITY:**

A person is eligible to have his or her name added to the Voters List if he or she is:

- 1) a Canadian citizen and at least 18 years of age on election day; and
- 2) a resident of the local authority for at least six months prior to election day, OR a registered owner of land in the municipality for at least six months prior to election day.

**APPLICATION FOR PERSONAL SECURITY PROTECTION:**

A voter may apply in writing to the SEO (at the address / email below) no later than March 7, 2025 to have his/her name and other personal information omitted or obscured from the voters list in order to protect the voter's personal security. The application may be submitted in person, by mail or email and must include your name, address and include proof of identity.

**All changes to the voters list must be completed on or before March 7, 2025.**

Dated at Town of Winnipeg Beach in the Province of Manitoba, on January 6, 2025.

B. Leah McIsaac Town of Winnipeg Beach

Box 160, Winnipeg Beach, MB R0C 3G0

204-782-2146

seo@winnipegbeach.ca



**Town of Winnipeg Beach 2025 SURPLUS ASSET DISPOSAL**

**The Town of Winnipeg Beach is disposing of a 1994 Ford E350 as described:**

- 1994 Ford E350 Econoline 8 Cylinder
- Milage - 151,660 KM
- Serial Number: 1FDKE30M9RHA92931
- Reason for removal from service: Scheduled for replacement
- Current Safety: None
- Starts and Runs: Yes
- Fuel: Diesel
- Transmission: Automatic
- Know Issues: Requires new cab mounts for safety. Rear engine seal leaks.

This vehicle is being sold AS IS, WHERE IS. Bidders are invited to bid with the information provided. The winning bidder will be required to transfer ownership before the vehicle can be removed from property.

Sealed Offers of Purchase can be submitted to the Town of Winnipeg Beach Municipal Office by 4:00 PM Friday January 31st.

Successful bidder will need to pay in full before truck is removed from property.

The Town of Winnipeg Beach has placed a reserve bid amount of \$2,000.00

All bids to show GST separately.

The Town of Winnipeg Beach reserves the right to reject any or all offers.

If you require further information, pictures, or would like to make an appointment to view the truck in person please email: firechief@winnipegbeach.ca

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### Online McSherry Auctions

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Estate & Moving #3  
January 29th @ 7:00PM

[McSherryAuction.com](http://McSherryAuction.com)  
204-467-1858  
or 204-886-7027  
[mcsherryttd@gmail.com](mailto:mcsherryttd@gmail.com)

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### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: **EVAN JAMES WIGHTMAN** (also known as **JIM WIGHTMAN**), late of the Village of Dunnottar, in Manitoba, Deceased.

ALL claims against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at their offices, 72A Centre Street, P.O. Box 6500, Gimli, Manitoba, R0C 1B0, on or before the 26th day of February, 2025.

DATED at Gimli, Manitoba, this 15th day of January, 2025.

BAKER LAW CORPORATION  
SOLICITORS FOR THE EXECUTORS  
Attention: Grant D. Baker

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: **TERRENCE KEITH WILSON**, late of the R.M of Gimli, in Manitoba, Deceased.

ALL claims against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at their offices, 72A Centre Street, P.O. Box 6500, Gimli, Manitoba, R0C 1B0, on or before the 26th day of February, 2025.

DATED at Gimli, Manitoba, this 15th day of January, 2025.

BAKER LAW CORPORATION  
SOLICITORS FOR THE EXECUTORS  
Attention: Grant D. Baker

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: **MERLE NORMA PERRY**, late of the Town of Arborg, in Manitoba, Deceased.

ALL claims against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at their offices, 72A Centre Street,

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

P.O. Box 6500, Gimli, Manitoba, R0C 1B0, on or before the 26th day of February, 2025.

DATED at Gimli, Manitoba, this 15th day of January, 2025.

BAKER LAW CORPORATION  
SOLICITORS FOR THE EXECUTORS  
Attention: Grant D. Baker

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: **LARRY WAYNE CHRISTIAN WEBER**, late of the R.M of Gimli, in Manitoba, Deceased.

ALL claims against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at their offices, 72A Centre Street, P.O. Box 6500, Gimli, Manitoba, R0C 1B0, on or before the 26th day of February, 2025.

DATED at Gimli, Manitoba, this 15th day of January, 2025.

BAKER LAW CORPORATION  
SOLICITORS FOR THE EXECUTORS  
Attention: Grant D. Baker

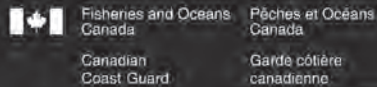
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: **MARY ANNE BERGMAN**, late of the R.M of Gimli, in Manitoba, Deceased.

ALL claims against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at their offices, 72A Centre Street, P.O. Box 6500, Gimli, Manitoba, R0C 1B0, on or before the 26th day of February, 2025.

DATED at Gimli, Manitoba, this 15th day of January, 2025.

BAKER LAW CORPORATION  
SOLICITORS FOR THE EXECUTORS  
Attention: Grant D. Baker

CONTINUED ON NEXT COLUMN



## Notice of Gull Harbour Aid to Navigation Replacement Proposal

The Gull Harbour Aid to Navigation site is located in Lake Winnipeg, Manitoba, on Hecla Island. It contains two designated Heritage Lighthouse structures. The taller structure, 23.5 m (77 ft) built in 1926, is the subject of this replacement proposal.

An engineering assessment of the 1926 Gull Harbour lighthouse structure determined that the upper wooden housing, steel tower and concrete base are in poor and unsafe condition, and cannot be easily refurbished to meet current structural standards.

A plan is being developed to remove the 1926 lighthouse and replace it with a new Aid to Navigation that would be built to closely resemble the architecture and heritage characteristics of the existing structure.

The Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) is working with the Federal Heritage Review Office (FHRO) on this replacement proposal. This includes plans to archive and retain historical information, drawings, and photos of the 1926 lighthouse.

A virtual meeting will be organized in early 2025 to explain the replacement proposal and gather feedback from the local community on the project.

Please email [Carl.Philippsen@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:Carl.Philippsen@dfo-mpo.gc.ca) with questions, comments, and/or concerns about the replacement proposal, or to request an invitation to the upcoming virtual townhall meeting in early 2025.



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[www.mcna.com](http://www.mcna.com)

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## CARD OF THANKS

On behalf of the family of Donald Andruschak, we would like to thank the kindness of condolences from family and friends with your prayers, cards, visits, meals, flowers and donations to charity and tree planting in Don's memory. We appreciated the many who attended the funeral and to those whom we were unable to thank personally, your presence was warmly felt. To Tom, Mona, Linda, the ladies who served and choir members who sang - Wow, we love you. We offer special thanks to our dialysis family who offered beyond their expertise their compassion, friendship and love. To Dr. Ade for your care and wisdom these past days and years. To the nurses and health care staff who took such great care of Don. To Gilbert's who made navigating these difficult circumstances seamless. To all - our heartfelt thanks.

## BIRTHDAY



Guess who turned 80 on January 17th! You are the rock that makes our family a family.

Happy Birthday to you and many more Jenny Sander also known as Mom, Grandma and Great Grandma

-Love your family!

## NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: HELEN THERESA DUDRAK, late of the R.M of Gimli, in Manitoba, Deceased. ALL claims against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at their offices, 72A Centre Street, P.O. Box 6500, Gimli, Manitoba, ROC 1B0, on or before the 26th day of February, 2025.

DATED at Gimli, Manitoba, this 15th day of January, 2025.

BAKER LAW CORPORATION  
SOLICITORS FOR THE EXECUTORS  
Attention: Grant D. Baker

IN THE MATTER OF: The Estate of John Robert Thorvardson, Lundar, Manitoba, deceased. All claims against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at their offices, P.O. Box 1400, Stonewall, Manitoba, ROC 2Z0 on or before the 19th day of February, 2025.

DATED at Stonewall, Manitoba this 7th day of January, 2025.

GRANTHAM LAW OFFICES  
Solicitor for the Administrators

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Todd  
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## IN MEMORIAM



Barb Sawa

April 11, 1960 - January 15, 2023

Barb, you are my guiding light  
By your side you hold me tight  
You always have been there to lead me right  
Especially the last two years-day and night  
You are in my soul and heart  
There you never will part  
Lots of kisses from you to me  
Yes-two hearts one love will always be

-Miss

## MORTGAGE SALE ADVERTISEMENT

The land and building known as 11 Spruce Street, Ashern, Manitoba as described in Certificate of Title No. 2899359/1 will be sold at auction on Wednesday, the 12th day of February, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. The auction sale will be held by way of video or teleconference. There will be no in-person attendees at the auction.

**In order to participate in the auction sale, you must pre-register at least 24 hours prior to the auction by contacting Sonia at 204-957-6437 or by email at [sruppel@ltgic.ca](mailto:sruppel@ltgic.ca).**

The Vendor is informed that there is situated on the property a single-family detached bungalow of approximately 1,068 square feet with 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, living room, dining room, eat-in kitchen, full finished basement with 2 bedrooms, family rooms, bathroom and utility room.

TERMS: Deposit of \$8,500.00 by certified cheque, bank/credit union draft or solicitor's trust cheque to Levene Tadman Golub Law Corporation, or cash (the cash component of the deposit not to exceed \$7,500.00) to be provided within 24 hours of the date and time of auction and the balance in accordance with the conditions to be announced at sale.

The Property is sold subject to a RESERVE BID of \$100,261.06 plus such other additional and incidental costs which may be incurred by the Lender from the 23rd day of December, 2024 to the date of auction and which costs will be announced prior to the commencement of the Sale.

Property Taxes are paid to December 31, 2024.

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

Property is subject to Nil.

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

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

**LEVE NE TADMAN GOLUB LAW CORPORATION**  
Barristers & Solicitors  
700 - 330 St. Mary Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB. R3C 3Z5  
Attention: Mara Koven-Lapointe/Sonia  
File No. 126222  
Phone No. 204-957-6437

## MORTGAGE SALE ADVERTISEMENT

The land and building known as 55 Settler's Trail, Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton, Manitoba as described in Certificate of Title No. 2256572/1 will be sold at auction on Wednesday, the 12th day of February, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. The auction sale will be held by way of video or teleconference. There will be no in-person attendees at the auction.

**In order to participate in the auction sale, you must pre-register at least 24 hours prior to the auction by contacting Sonia at 204-957-6437 or by email at [sruppel@ltgic.ca](mailto:sruppel@ltgic.ca).**

The Vendor is informed that there is situated on the property a single family detached bungalow of approximately 1,529 square feet with 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living room, dining room, kitchen and crawl space.

DIRECTIONS: From Main Street and Perimeter Highway, travel North on Highway 8 for approximately 108 km. Turn right onto PR 222 for approximately 7 km. Turn right onto Ingimundur Drive. Property located on Settlers' Trail at the end of Ingimundur Drive.

TERMS: Deposit of \$23,000.00 by certified cheque, bank/credit union draft or solicitor's trust cheque to Levene Tadman Golub Law Corporation, or cash (the cash component of the deposit not to exceed \$7,500.00) to be provided within 24 hours of the date and time of auction and the balance in accordance with the conditions to be announced at sale.

The Property is sold subject to a RESERVE BID of \$253,546.38 plus such other additional and incidental costs which may be incurred by the Lender from the 23rd day of December, 2024 to the date of auction and which costs will be announced prior to the commencement of the Sale.

Property Taxes are paid to December 31, 2024.

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

Property is subject to Caveat 225426/1, Caveat 1930808/1, Caveat 1977950/1.

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

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

**LEVE NE TADMAN GOLUB LAW CORPORATION**  
Barristers & Solicitors  
700 - 330 St. Mary Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB. R3C 3Z5  
Attention: Mara Koven-Lapointe/Sonia  
File No. 126222  
Phone No. 204-957-6437

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# Announcements



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## CELEBRATION OF LIFE

### John Henry Selkirk

On January 13, 2025 at the age of 92, peacefully passed with family by his side. He is survived by wife Joan; children Keith, Bernard, Geraldine, Lynnette, Darren and their families. Celebration of Life on January 25 at 1 p.m., Riverton Community Hall. Longer obituary to follow.

## OBITUARY



**Michael Wayne Yuzwa**  
June 11, 1969 - December 31, 2024  
It is with deep sadness we announce the sudden passing of Michael at the St. Boniface Hospital.

Michael is survived by his precious mother, Mary; his sisters Iris (Joe), Kathie (Morris), Brenda; and his brother Chris; nephews Matthew (Mara) and Kristian; nieces Sheila, Alanna and Jenna. Michael is also survived by many aunts, uncles and cousins.

He was predeceased by his father Mike in 2003, his grandmother Stella

Ambrozik in 2006 and more recently his uncles Sarafin and Frank Ambrozik and cousin Kenny Genyk.

Michael grew up on a farm and as a youngster he enjoyed feeding farm animals, playing hockey and dirt biking. Michael was a quiet country individual who loved his mother immensely. He would help her with grocery shopping, which she appreciated, and they enjoyed their time together. His happy times were driving on the country roads, picking wildberries with Mom, spending time with family at Dauphin Ukrainian Festival and spending time with Aunt Helen and Uncle Ronnie helping out with field and garden work. Michael had some difficulties in life, he did the best he could.

Michael will be forever loved and missed. He will always be in our hearts.

Sweet Child of Mine

Funeral Service was held on Saturday, January 11, 2025 at Broad Valley Community Hall, interment took place in Broad Valley Cemetery.

Grief is the last act of love we give to those we love.

Vichnaya Pamyat (Eternal Memory)



204-886-0404

## OBITUARY



### Ruth Adeline Blahey (nee Fedorchuk) September 5, 1945 - December 24, 2024

Peacefully, after a lengthy illness, Ruth Adeline Blahey (nee Fedorchuk) passed away at the Arborg Personal Care Home early Christmas Eve morning at the age of 79.

Ruth is survived by her sons Michael (Thelma), Bradley (Debbie) and her beloved grandchildren Dawson (Leah), Brooke (C.J.) and Steven. She will be missed by her brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, David Wabick, Victoria Fedorchuk, Carl Blahey, Gail Blahey and Louise and Bernie Sobie along with nieces and nephews Suzanne, Pam, Monica, Lorrie, Kelly, Jennifer, Stephany, Tiffany, James, Darryl, Jeffrey and their families. Ruth's cousins, neighbors and friends will all miss her.

Ruth was predeceased by her husband David (2022), her parents John and Sophie Fedorchuk, her sister Christine Wabick, brother

Gordon Fedorchuk, brother-in-law Jim Blahey, sister-in-law Sandra Leschyshyn and David's parents Steve and Marie Blahey.

Ruth was born in the Gimli Hospital September 5, 1945. Her family lived in Silver where she attended Hastings School and Arborg Collegiate for high school. After high school she took a job in Winnipeg and would come out on the weekends to see her family and David. She and David were married July 19, 1969 in Winnipeg. They settled on the farm in Skylake where they spent their entire married life together.

Ruth was very close to her family and enjoyed supporting events in the Silver and Chatfield communities with her family. She enjoyed growing flowers, feeding the birds and watching the wildlife in the area. She and David did some travel across Western Canada to visit family as well as one memorable trip to St. Kitts.

After David's passing, she made the move to town to the Assisted Living complex in Arborg. She so enjoyed living there and making and renewing friendships. However, as her health declined, she spent more time in the hospital and eventually a move to the care home was required.

Funeral Service will be held on Saturday, January 18, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. at Silver Community Hall with interment to follow in the Skylake Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations to a charity of your choice are appreciated.

A very big Thank You to all the doctors and nurses at Arborg and Gimli Hospital who always took such good care of Ruth. To all the homecare, assisted living and homecare staff, the family thanks you for always making Ruth feel comfortable. Many thanks to Ken Loehmer for his caring and support at this difficult time.

Vichnaya Pamyat



204-886-0404

## OBITUARY

### Brooke Elizabeth Erickson

May 16, 1992 - December 9, 2024

A Celebration of Life will be held in memory of Brooke, loving daughter to Lorne and Chrissie Erickson of Lundar, MB. at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 1, 2025 in the Lundar Legion Hall with Cindy Thorkelson officiating.

Longer obituary to follow in the next edition of the Express Weekly News.

Arrangements by:

ARNASON FUNERAL HOME

Ashern - Lundar

1.204.768.2072

1.866.323.3593

## OBITUARY



### Roland Edward Fortin

The family is deeply saddened to announce the passing of Roland (Rolly) on December 30, 2024 at the age of 97.

In line with his wishes, cremation has taken place and the family graveside service will be held at a later date.

Arrangements by:

Arnason Funeral Home

Ashern - Lundar

1.204.768.2072

1.866.323.3593

## OBITUARY



### Frank Skibinski

January 25, 1929 - January 3, 2025

It is with heavy hearts that the family of Frank Skibinski, of Hodsgon, MB, announce his peaceful passing on January 3rd, 2025.

He was a loving husband, father, and grandfather (Gigi), cherished by his family and friends.

A family burial will take place in the summer.

A full obituary to honour and celebrate his life will be published at a later date.

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> GAMES

## SUDOKU

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

### Fun By The Numbers

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

Level: Intermediate

### Here's How It Works:

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

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

Sudoku Answer

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

Crossword Answer

### CLUES ACROSS

- This regulates cortisol production (abbr.)
- People of northern Vietnam
- Employee stock ownership plan
- Regions
- The center of a city
- Hindu serpentine deity
- Roared
- Sun up in New York
- "Sir" in Malaysian
- Shrimp dish
- Muckraker Tarbell
- Apex
- Harmonic effects
- One of Babe Ruth's nicknames
- Groups in organic chemistry
- More pleasant-tasting
- Spring forward
- Noted writer
- Building occupied by monks
- "The world's most famous arena"
- Colorless liquid hydrocarbon
- Long or fast speech
- Things you can eat
- Substance in which magnetic moments are not aligned
- Actor Idris
- I (German)
- Taxes
- Indonesian island
- Nuisance (slang)
- Shawl
- Digits
- Moved on foot quickly
- "For goodness \_\_\_"
- Facial body part
- Russian river
- Urinate

### CLUES DOWN

- Partner to "oohs"

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11		
12				13				14			15			
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49						50			51		52	53	54	55
56						57			58					
59						60				61				
62						63					64			

- Scaly water dweller
- Pueblo people of New Mexico
- Music producer Teo
- Greek mythological goddess
- Got together to discuss
- Acquires
- Involve
- Some are tomato-based
- Old Irish alphabets
- A sheet of glass in a window or door
- Blood poisoning
- A moon of Saturn
- Neither
- Sums
- They follow "A"
- Satisfaction
- People of southeastern Burma
- Small amount
- Guy (slang)
- Sound unit
- Midway between northeast and east
- Affirmative
- Almost at the top
- Extremely slow
- Pearl Jam's debut album
- Influential mid-century playwright
- Martens
- Approval
- Dallas-adjacent Texas city
- African nation
- Dark brown or black
- A place to get caught
- Large-headed, elongated fish
- Type of sword
- Scottish tax or levy

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