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Happy New Year!

EXPRESS PHOTO BY BRETT MITCHELL

Arborg's Reechka Ukrainian Dance Club celebrated Malanka last Saturday at the Arborg Community Hall. The evening included performances which showcased snippets of folk dances from different regions of Ukraine, as well as the stunning costumes. Dancers Kenley Magnusson and Kyle Dudar performed the poltava with their Junior group.

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Good Times FINANCING

How Manitoba farmers can navigate profit challenges in 2025

Specialist shares insight with producers

By Lori Penner

As Manitoba farmers gear up for the 2025 growing season, economic pressures remain a significant concern. Darren Bond, a farm management specialist with Manitoba Agriculture, recently shared insights and strategies to help producers manage costs, navigate market challenges, and turn a profit despite an ongoing cost-price squeeze.

Bond, who specializes in crop production costs, risk management and farmland rental, emphasizes that every agronomic decision must also account for economic costs and benefits. "At the end of the day, farming is a business," he says. "Making informed decisions based on accurate cost and revenue projections is crucial for success."

Bond notes that while the cost of production has eased slightly over the past two years, it remains historically high.

"What's really impacting farms in 2025 is the significant drop in grain prices," he explains. "This has created a cost-price squeeze where revenue is not keeping up with expenses."

Manitoba Agriculture's annual Guidelines for Estimating Crop Production Costs show that many of the province's top crops are projected to incur losses when factoring in land and equipment costs.

"We're looking at losses of around \$30 to \$50 per acre for most crops," Bond states. "Farms with higher equity might still see profits, but those carrying significant debt, particularly younger farmers or those who've recently expanded, are feeling the pinch."

In a challenging economic climate, careful planning becomes essential. Bond advises farmers to start by calculating their costs of production.

"The best numbers for producers are their own," he says. "Take your total costs, divide them by your expected yield, and calculate your cost per bushel. This gives you a clear picture of your breakeven point and helps inform your marketing and cropping decisions."

He likens the process to navigating a ship. "The earlier you make course corrections, the more options you have," he explains. "Waiting until the last moment often leaves fewer, less desirable choices."

One of the most significant opportunities for farmers lies in optimizing their cost structures. However, Bond

cautions against cutting corners that could reduce yields.

"If you cut \$20 worth of costs but lose \$40 in yield, that's not a trade-off you want," he says. "The goal is to reduce expenses without compromising production."

Fertilizer management is one area where producers can make meaningful savings.

"Fertilizer is incredibly expensive," Bond notes. "If we can use it more efficiently, such as by applying it closer to the crop's needs, we might save \$10 or \$20 per acre. Small adjustments like this can add up."

Bond encourages farmers to review all areas of their operation to identify opportunities for efficiency.

"Every farm is different, which is why understanding your specific cost structure is so important," he says. "Whether it's fertilizer, fuel or equipment costs, knowing where you stand compared to others can reveal areas for improvement."

Cost-price squeezes are not new to agriculture, Bond notes.

"Our parents and grandparents faced similar challenges," he points out. "What's different today are the sheer scale and cost of farming. Equipment and input costs are so much higher, which increases the risks. A small loss per acre can quickly turn into a significant financial setback."

Despite these challenges, Bond highlights that certain fundamentals of farming remain unchanged.

"Too much moisture, too little moisture — these are things farmers have always dealt with," he says. "Mother Nature hasn't changed. What's important is to plan for these variables and stay adaptable."

Bond recommends that farmers seek professional advice to enhance their decision-making.

"No farmer can be an expert in everything," he says. "Some might excel at machinery maintenance but need help with financial management, while others might have strong financial skills but need agronomic advice."

Working with a consultant can provide valuable insights and support.

"A good advisor doesn't just solve problems; they also help farmers build their own skills," Bond emphasizes. "By learning alongside your advisor, you'll be better equipped to ask the right questions and make informed decisions in the future."

Bond also stresses the importance of choosing the right consultant.

"Ask for a quote and ensure you understand what you're getting," he advises. "The relationship should be



EXPRESS PHOTO BY LORI PENNER

Farm management specialist Darren Bond at the recent Farm Days event in St. Jean Baptiste, where he shared tips on how to make informed decisions that will lead to profits on the farm.

collaborative, with a focus on developing the farmer's own management abilities."

ADAPTING FOR THE FUTURE

With challenges comes opportunities. Bond encourages farmers to stay informed about market trends and explore alternative cropping strategies.

"Consider shifting acres to crops that offer higher profitability with less risk," he suggests. "What worked last year might not work this year, and being flexible is key."

Winter is an ideal time for planning and evaluation.

"Take this time to review your operations, analyze your costs, and make strategic decisions for the coming season," Bond advises. "The earlier you start, the better prepared you'll be to navigate whatever 2025 brings."

Farming in 2025 requires a balance of tradition and innovation. While economic pressures are undeniable, careful planning, cost management and professional support can help Manitoba farmers weather the storm.

"Farming is always about managing risks and rewards," Bond concludes. "With the right strategies in place, producers can not only survive but thrive in challenging times. By staying informed, proactive and adaptable, Manitoba's farmers can position themselves for long-term success."

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Arborg's Heritage Village staging a murder to beat the winter blahs

Royal MTC's *Murder for Two* coming to town Feb. 22

By Patricia Barrett

The Arborg & District Multicultural Heritage Village is excited to have the opportunity to provide local theatre lovers with a little intrigue and lots of drama when it presents a Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre musical next month, two months before the play opens in Winnipeg.

Murder for Two, by Joe Kinosian and Kellen Blair, is a blend of theatrical genres — a musical, a comedy and an old-fashioned murder mystery — that's sure to please. It features two actors playing a dozen characters, as well as a piano. The plot centres around the murder of author Arthur Whitney, moments before his surprise birthday party, and the sleuthing efforts of small-town police officer Marcus Moscowicz and his partner, Lou.

It's not the first time the village's chair Pat Eyolfson has brought theatrical and other performances to Arborg. But it's the first time she's collaborated with the Royal MTC.

She took the initiative to bring the musical murder-comedy to town as a way to provide a little pick-me-up for residents in the grips of an unforgiving and unpredictable Manitoba winter.

"I had been talking with a produc-

tion person at MTC, asking her if they'd ever consider coming out our way and how we could partner. I'd love to see something coming to our town," said Eyolfson, who was the recipient of the Lieutenant Governor's Award for Historical Preservation and Promotion in 2016 in recognition of her efforts to create the heritage village. "Then lo and behold I got a call back from the lovely lady at MTC and she wondered if we'd be interested in hosting *Murder for Two*, and I said, 'Absolutely.'"

Eyolfson previously worked with Winnipeg-based theatre groups such as Theatre Projects Manitoba, which presented *Chautauqua: The Interlake Trail* a number of years ago, and she's arranged accommodations for companies, including billeting people at her place.

"I reach out to them [theatre companies] because I feel sad for our communities in that we don't often get any of these entertaining events to take part in," said Eyolfson. "If I see something in the city I'm interested, then I try to find out who's connected to it and get them to come out to Arborg."

And Eyolfson herself is a playwright, having written several witty theatrical plays to entertain visitors and supporters of the heritage village during the museum's dinner theatre events, dances and fundraisers.

"We've always made our own plays. The first one was *Shotgun Wedding*. I wrote the first six or seven plays, which centred around hillbillies," said Eyolfson. "Then we staged the *Hatfields and McCoys* and involved the audience in the action."

The village is a designated Manitoba Star Attraction. It's located on about 13 acres along the Icelandic River and showcases historical buildings, artefacts and stories from around the Interlake. Its historical buildings include an Icelandic family home, general store, a church, school and a mill. The museum attracts thousands of visitors to the area each summer, has a campground and provides jobs to young adults.

The heritage village will present *Murder for Two* on Saturday, Feb. 22 at 7:30 p.m. at the Arborg-Bifrost Community Centre, which has a 500-seat capacity.

"We're expecting to get about 300 people, but we'd love to get more," said Eyolfson.

There are a number of ways to purchase a ticket. People can do an e-transfer to the heritage village administration at admhv4007@gmail.com and the tickets will be held at the door. They can also call the heritage village's treasurer at 204-671-0203 or pop into the Arborg Pharmacy on Main Street to buy a ticket. Tickets are \$25.

The play is set to open in April in Winnipeg.



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Arborg & District Multicultural Heritage Village chair Pat Eyolfson, shown here in 2016, worked with the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre to bring top-tier theatre to Arborg in February.

Gimli RCMP investigating fatal garage fire

By Lana Meier

Gimli RCMP received a report of a garage fire at a residence located on Lakeview Road on Matheson Island at approximately 7:55 p.m. on Jan. 12.

RCMP, along with the local fire department, attended the scene.

Once the fire was extinguished, firefighters located the remains of a deceased individual.

Both the cause of death and the cause of the fire remain under investigation; however, no criminality is suspected.

Gimli RCMP, along with the Office of the Fire Commissioner, continue to investigate.

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Interlake-Gimli MLA Derek Johnson has his work cut out for him in 2025; priorities

By Patricia Barrett

Interlake-Gimli MLA Derek Johnson said he has his work cut out for him in 2025 after seeing government cuts to programs that were beneficial to Interlakers, increased taxes, relatively little movement on health-care system improvements in the rural area, and threats to the Interlake economy should U.S. president Donald Trump follow through on his promise this week to implement a sweeping 25 per cent tariff on Canadian exports to America.

Although there are pockets of improvement in some parts of the Interlake-Gimli riding that are cause for celebration, Johnson said there have been more disappointments as of late.

“The Building Sustainable Communities and the Green Team grant programs were cut substantially in the last couple of years. In the Interlake, we’ve had reduced funding by 71 per cent compared to what it was historically,” he said. “Collectively, we lob-



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bied the provincial government after they cut \$4 million — and that affected Interlake-Gimli the most — and

pressured them to increase it back up to an additional \$300,000. That’s kind of bittersweet. Do you take that as a win or a loss?”

The Building Sustainable Communities grant program provided funding for capital projects and community development projects by local governments and non-profit organizations.

On the health-care front, Johnson said he’ll continue lobbying for the new personal care home for Arborg that has seen “zero action and engagement with the Arborg Seniors Housing Committee” thus far. The Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority has the “lowest number of personal care home beds” in the province. And after the Lac du Bonnet PCH is built, the worst area will be the northern Interlake.



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO

Interlake-Gimli MLA Derek Johnson is shown here as he joined Gimli residents on their annual pilgrimage to the rock on Willow Island to commemorate the landing of the first Icelanders to the area in 1875.

He’ll also be lobbying the government to fulfil its election promise to build a new emergency room for the Eriksdale hospital.

“I’m lobbying the NDP government with regard to the [health-care] commitments it made such as the new emergency room for Eriksdale,” he said. “And I realize that an overhaul of the emergency room isn’t going to

Continued on page 6

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Access Credit Union plans to close Lundar branch, raising community concerns

By Patricia Barrett

Access Credit Union will be closing its Lundar branch in September and consolidating it with its Eriksdale branch, about 20 kilometres (12 miles) north of Lundar.

The credit union announced its decision on Jan. 15, citing low in-branch traffic and an increase in the use of online banking services.

In addition to its Lundar branch, Access will be closing four other rural branches: Birds Hill (consolidating with the Riverbend branch in Winnipeg), Gretna (consolidating with Altona), Lowe Farm (consolidating with Morris) and Miami (consolidating with Morden). These closures are scheduled for May 22.

Access said the closures are strategically aimed at "optimizing resources" in order to provide better service to its members.

"The decision to streamline the branch network was carefully considered. We understand the value of the in-branch experience and are committed to supporting members through this transition to ensure uninterrupted banking," said Access president and chief executive officer Larry Davy in a Jan. 15 news release. "Banking habits are evolving, with more members using direct deposit and digital solutions like our mobile app, online or by phone. We've seen a steady decline in in-branch transactions and a rise in digital adoption."

Access is the largest credit union in Manitoba, according to its news release. It has nearly \$13.5 billion in assets, serves over 205,000 members and continues to put its members first.

Post-pandemic, Access underwent mergers with five other credit unions. In July 2022 it merged with Noventis and Sunova. In January 2023 it merged with Amaranth. And in July 2023 it merged with Carpathia and Casera.

After the mergers were completed, Access stopped providing iTM (interactive teller machines) service to nine rural locations including Lundar, Selkirk, Gimli, Moosehorn, Ashern, Fisher Branch and Riverton. The iTMs gave customers access to a live financial representative via a screen.

Access said the decommissioning of iTMs was the result of low usage and "challenging cost-effectiveness," according to a statement on its website.

The upcoming branch closure in Lundar does not sit well with the Rural Municipality of Coldwell's council and its residents, who are reaching out to council with their concerns.

Reeve Virgil Johnson said they were "blindsided" by the announcement and that the RM will fight "tooth and nail" to keep the branch in Lundar, which is located in a section of the Lundar Arena on Main Street.

"We have a lot of elderly people here and they're used to walking into the branch. They want to walk into a financial institution and see staff and talk to a teller. They don't bank online like the younger generation," said Johnson. "And they want to be able to use the Access ATM because third-party ATMs don't work half the time and they charge high fees. And maybe there are some people who don't have an account at the Lundar Access branch, but they can still use the ATM."

CIBC abandoned Lundar a number of years ago. When Access closes its branch this fall, Lundar will have no financial institution.

"The blow we took years ago when CIBC closed was bad enough. A lot of people shifted over to the credit union," said Johnson. "When it was Noventis, we were OK. Then they got merged with Access and the credit union got bigger. And now that they're bigger, how much money do they need to make in order to service small communities? You look at any financial institution's profits at the end of the year and it's always staggering."

In addition to inconveniencing seniors, people with mobility challenges, people without a vehicle or those who can't afford the high cost of gasoline, the loss of Access will have other detrimental impacts on the Lundar community, including a possible decline in people shopping locally. If they need to drive to another community — or even Winnipeg — for banking services, they could also do their

shopping there.

"What happens to a town when you lose your financial institution? Your residents will drive to another town to use a bank or another credit union and, naturally, they'll do some shopping or go to a restaurant there," said the reeve. "So this will be a big blow to our community."

Johnson said he thinks the upcoming closure has nothing to do with the cost to Access of operating the Lundar branch as Coldwell gave the credit union a "smoking deal" on rent.

"Access is saying it's the biggest credit union in the province so that means you've got lots and lots of money pouring in. What is the Lundar branch costing you? Their overhead is next-to-nothing. It has nothing to do with the rent cost to explain why they pulled the pin."

Credit unions were considered saviours after big banks started shutting down branches in rural communities over the past several decades. Credit unions stepped into the breach, offering tailor-made lending services that helped support small communities and spurred on socio-economic development. They also created local jobs and had local boards of directors.

By leaving Lundar, Johnson said Access could jeopardize its relationship with the community.

"They're getting away from their roots, which is troublesome. You can almost see this as corporate greed. Farming is the backbone of the area and the rest of the country [region]. What are we going to do without them? It was farmers who brought those credit unions in," he said. "Instead of attracting business, Access might lose business. People will be mad if you're going to make them drive somewhere. They're shutting the door in their faces; are people going to [stay] with them or are they going to go to another financial institution?"

Johnson said he doesn't know if Access plans to leave behind an ATM in Lundar, which would somewhat mitigate the loss of the branch.

"One of our councillors is working on getting a meeting with Access,"



said Johnson. "We're not just going to roll over, that's for sure."

Access' chief marketing officer Adam Monteith told the Express that in-branch user transactions have been trending downwards for many years, independent of mergers. And the mergers have been beneficial in that they've allowed for investment in technologies including online and mobile banking.

"The Lundar branch is somewhat unique, having opened only six years ago. Although we had hoped for more growth to ensure the branch's financial viability, transaction levels in Lundar have not increased," he said.

The "one staff member" in Lundar will be welcomed at another location close to home, he added.

The closure of any branch requires a significant amount of long-term analysis, he said when asked what in-branch numbers are required to keep the Lundar branch open. And given the reduced hours of Lundar's branch and its proximity to Eriksdale, it would be "unlikely to see any significant change in branch activity that would result in a strategic change."

As to how Access will address the needs of local seniors and people with mobility challenges, Monteith said members have "made it clear" that technology is the most significant investment that can be made to reduce accessibility barriers across all user

Continued on page 9

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create the necessary human resources. You need to have staff.”

There have been some improvements on the nursing front in the Interlake region such as the successful graduation of almost 40 nurses from an LPN training program that was offered in Arborg, he said, and that has resulted in an increase of LPNs working in the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority and other Interlake areas.

“There are some nurses working at Percy Moore [federal hospital] and Lake Manitoba First Nation, which is in the Interlake region, and that LPN training program has been a huge success. But we do need to continue on with initiatives like that,” said Johnson. “When we educate people who’ve grown up in the Interlake, they’re more likely to spend their whole career in health care in Interlake-Gimli.”

Interlake hospital emergency rooms — some of which have been completely shuttered and others offering reduced hours or periodic closures — have seen “absolutely no improvement whatsoever” since the NDP came to power, he said. And average wait times for diagnostic procedures have yet to improve.

But there’s light at the end of the tunnel for some communities such as Lundar where a “homegrown” doctor will be setting up her practice, potentially attracting other doctors and might be willing to cover ER shifts in Eriksdale, and in Gimli where a doctor is in the process of building a new clinic.

“When you have a doctor that sets up a practice in a community, there’s the potential of getting coverage for your hospital emergency room if they’re willing to be on call. That could help keep emergency rooms open for more hours than they currently are,” said Johnson. “I’m excited to see doctors coming back to their home communities and putting down roots.”

Currently, the Arborg hospital’s ER is permanently closed as is Teulon’s. Eriksdale’s ER is open on average

only six to eight days a month. Other hospital ERs such as Ashern, Gimli and Stonewall periodically have to close for a day or two or can offer only half day (or night) services at times.

Another important area Johnson wants to focus on is tackling crime in the Interlake and investing in programs for rural areas.

“Crime is pretty much top of mind for most Manitobans and Interlake-Gimli is no exception to that; rural residents continue to be violated. We’re [provincial Conservatives] going to keep working to support Manitobans by holding the government accountable and ensuring there’s a long-term plan from the premier [Wab Kinew], who said he was going to do bail reform, which hasn’t happened. We need to keep pushing the government to continue on a path of safety for Manitobans,” he said. “They’ve invested in a couple things only for the City of Winnipeg such as a handful of ankle monitoring bracelets ... but they haven’t done it for rural Manitoba. ... We have to keep pushing the government to ensure these mechanisms are put in place and invest in new technology.”

The government had announced a five-point plan in February 2024 to crack down on repeat offenders. It includes assessing the need for detention, additional officers for the Winnipeg Police Service that would be focused on arresting repeat offenders, and enhanced community monitoring and supervision of offenders.

Other goals Johnson said he’s working on for 2025 include seeing affordable provincial tax breaks within a balanced budget — not while there’s an almost \$2-million budget deficit. When the Conservatives left office in 2023, they had “handed the NDP a \$373-million surplus during our last year in government.”

“The government is borrowing money to give tax breaks like they did for the gas-tax holiday. At the beginning of this year, we experienced a large gas-tax hike; they only gave a 10 per cent reduction from what it was a year ago,” he said. “Look at the pump prices and tell me if that’s making a difference. The gas tax affects rural

Manitobans far more than it does to people in Winnipeg, especially people on the lower socio-economic scale.”

The government reduced the fuel tax to 12.5 cents a litre on Jan 1, 2025 (a 10 per cent reduction), after a year-long gas-tax holiday. Prior to 2024, the tax was 14 cents a litre.

Drainage in the Interlake-Gimli riding is also a priority for Johnson, who said “all the provincial third-order drains” need to be repaired and cleaned. Upgrades to highways in various areas of the Interlake also need attention.

“You name any municipality in my constituency and there are drain improvements that need doing,” he said. “When you have so much precipitation that leads to overland flooding events, like the one we had in 2022, it can affect areas from Armstrong to Coldwell to Grahamdale to Fisher and across to municipalities along Lake Winnipeg.”

With regard to the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin flood channels that the previous Conservative government had set aside money for each year, Johnson said the NDP government has so far budgeted zero for the channels. Last year the government announced a pause on the channels then committed to moving forward on them in a throne speech.

“We’ll find out in April when the NDP releases their budget whether they’re actually budgeting money towards it. We as a PC government budgeted \$100 million each and every year for that channel in anticipation of moving forward,” said Johnson. “They [NDP] budgeted zero last year. If they budget zero again this year, they have zero intention of moving it forward. They haven’t budgeted anything for the channels since taking government.”

The United States is Manitoba’s top agri-food trade partner accounting for 46 per cent of Manitoba’s total agri-food exports and 86 per cent of Manitoba’s total agri-food imports from 2013-2023, according to a fact sheet on the Manitoba government’s website. The top five destinations in

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Verticillium stripe a growing issue for Manitoba canola growers

By Becca Myskiw

Did verticillium knock you down in 2024? That's the question Justine Cornelsen was asking on Jan. 22 at Manitoba Ag Days.

Cornelsen is the agronomic and regulatory services manager for BrettYoung, an agricultural seed company. Her in-field experience there, combined with her time at the Canola Council of Canada, makes her an expert on verticillium stripe.

First identified outside Winnipeg in 2014, the disease's fungal species, *verticillium longisporum*, has now been found in six provinces across Canada. Damage from verticillium stripe typically isn't seen until late in the season when canola plants start to ripen prematurely. The plant stems eventually dry out, turn beige and begin to shred, resulting in significant yield loss. It's a soil-borne disease that moves easily, most commonly at harvest.

Verticillium stripe is highly affected by the environment, thriving in especially hot and dry conditions, much like the summers Manitoba has experienced for the past few years.

Cornelsen's presentation at Manitoba Ag Days started with an introduction to the disease before she got into canola disease survey results from 2024. Last year, there were perfect conditions for verticillium stripe to thrive, and the numbers prove it — the disease was found in 60 per cent of canola fields surveyed in Manitoba.



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Verticillium stripe is one disease that's becoming more of a problem in canola, and farmers should keep an eye out for it.

ba. The annual survey done by Manitoba Agriculture surveyed 138 fields in 2024, each chosen best to represent the number of canola fields in the municipality.

In 2019, verticillium stripe was found in under 20 per cent of surveyed fields in Manitoba, compared to just two percent in 2017.

"That's obviously an alarming increase there," said Cornelsen. "But we didn't know what we were looking for, and surveyors didn't know what they were looking for."

Because the disease is so new, the industry has only figured out how to identify it in the field, meaning in-

formation on how much it's grown is only becoming available now. Cornelsen said the incidence, which reflects the number of plants affected with verticillium stripe in a field, is even more alarming than the survey results. 2024 results show that 32 per cent of canola plants per field were infected with verticillium stripe.

"So that's a big number," said Cornelsen. "For reference, blackleg incidence is typically 10 to 15 per cent. What it means is [verticillium stripe is] widespread across the province and it's at high levels within the fields."

She noted that other canola diseases

like clubroot or blackleg are often patchy within a field, while verticillium stripe is across the entire crop. Because the disease has grown so much only in the last five years, research on it hasn't yet been able to figure out its severity. Though work on it has been done in Europe, where they've been dealing with verticillium stripe for longer, Cornelsen said those numbers are inconsistent and come in wide ranges.

Without numbers to base her conclusions on, Cornelsen relies on anecdotes from industry sources. One

Continued on page 11

Health Canada recalls egg over possible salmonella contamination

By Patricia Barrett

Health Canada issued a warning and recall on Jan. 18 about shell eggs that could be contaminated with salmonella, which are bacteria that cause food poisoning, and is asking consumers to not eat them.

The affected eggs brands are as follows: Compliments, Foremost, Golden Valley Eggs, IGA, no name and Western Family. They have best before dates of Feb. 16, Feb. 22 and

March 1.

The eggs were distributed in Manitoba, Ontario, British Columbia and possibly other provinces and territories.

"Food contaminated with Salmonella may not look or smell spoiled but can still make you sick. Young children, pregnant women, the elderly and people with weakened immune systems may contract serious

and sometimes deadly infections," states the recall. "Healthy people may experience short-term symptoms such as fever, headache, vomiting, nausea, abdominal cramps and diarrhea. Long-term complications may include severe arthritis."

Health Canada advises consumers to contact a health-care provider if

they think they've become sick from any of the recalled products.

For more details about the eggs, including UPC and Codes, visit Health Canada's recalls and alerts website at: <https://recalls-rappels.canada.ca/en/alert-recall/certain-brands-shell-eggs-recalled-due-salmonella>



PHOTO BY HEALTH CANADA

Compliments is one of the brands of eggs subject to a recall by Health Canada for possible salmonella contamination.

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Community grieves loss of much-loved woman

By Jennifer McFee

The community is reeling from the news that a vibrant young woman lost her life last week in a highway collision.

Friends, family and community members are in shock to hear about the death of 28-year-old Kellie Verwey. The much-loved woman was planning a wedding this summer with her fiancé, Travis Lundy. Together, they shared in many special occasions through their mobile coffee and cocktail bar called Roasts and Toasts.

On Wednesday, Jan. 15 at 10:50 a.m., Portage la Prairie RCMP received a report of a three-vehicle collision on Highway 26, about three kilometres east of Portage la Prairie.

A westbound pickup truck had veered over the centre line, and an eastbound pickup truck swerved to prevent a collision. The westbound truck hit the ditch and rolled while the eastbound truck collided with a westbound SUV driven by Verwey. She died at the scene.

The 21-year-old man driving the eastbound truck was transported to hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

Meanwhile, the 24-year-old driver of the westbound truck freed himself from the vehicle, which was later confirmed to be stolen from the Arborg area. He was picked up by a passing motorist and dropped off at a nearby gas station.

The motorist who picked up the driver returned to the scene and told officers where he'd dropped him off. The investigators determined the driver took a cab and was believed to be heading to Winnipeg.

Officers from the Headingley RCMP detachment contacted the cab driver who then told them that the man got out near a motel on Highway 1 in Headingley, where he fled on foot. Area patrols led to the arrest of James Lorne Hilton from the RM of St. Andrews. He was charged with multiple offences including dangerous operation of a motor vehicle causing death, operation while impaired and failure to stop after an accident resulting in death. He was taken into custody without incident. Portage la Prairie RCMP, along with a forensic collision reconstructionist, continue to investigate.

Now the community is left to grapple with the unfathomable loss of a young woman who brightened the lives of all who knew her.

With a long list of personal and professional achievements, Verwey found ways to make a positive impact in Portage and beyond. Five years ago, she graduated from the Asper School of Business at the University of Manitoba with a commerce degree. While in university, she took part in exchange programs in England and Iceland. She enjoyed playing hockey, travelling and spending time with loved ones.

In addition to operating Roasts and Toasts, which earned an award from the Portage Chamber of Commerce for Outstanding New Entrepreneur in 2024, Verwey also made her mark as a tourism coordinator for the municipality.

Sharilyn Knox, mayor of the City of Portage la Prairie, shared some poignant sentiments with the *Express*.

"I wish we didn't need to be here, fighting for change, but here we are, honouring the memory of Kellie, who was loved by so many and loved our community. We are deeply grieving her senseless



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

The community is grappling with the loss of Kellie Verwey, who died in a highway collision on Jan. 15.

loss and the lifelong effect on the other young victim and witnesses involved. I will keep shouting 'enough is enough' at the people responsible until there is meaningful change," she said.

"Our leaders need to step up, make the hard decisions and show the courage to implement meaningful bail reform and mandatory treatment programs. We need to prioritize the safety and well-being of our communities, protect those who support us, and ensure that those who serve and protect us can do their jobs effectively."

She added that what's happening now isn't working and it's time to admit it out loud.

"Let's take a deep breath, set aside the blame and commit to a strong, courageous path forward. Stricter penalties and more accountability for repeat offenders are not just talking points — they're essential steps to protect our citizens and support our first responders, who are bearing the brunt of a broken system," she said.

"I'm not in the position of making the laws or policies when it comes to justice, but I can and will be a voice for the people in our communities. I'm willing to stand up, take risks and demand the tough decisions needed to ensure public safety. Now is the time for leadership, not politics, and we're ready to help fight for the change our communities deserve."

Legal professionals might need to take a step back and realize that changes to the justice system are essential for the safety of our community, Knox added.

"While defending clients is a crucial part of their role, it's equally important to recognize that sometimes the people they defend need to be held accountable for their actions. Implementing bail reform and mandatory treatment programs can help ensure that offenders receive the necessary support to address their issues while also protecting the

public and reducing the risk of repeat offenses," she said.

"It's time to prioritize the well-being of our communities and make the hard decisions needed to create a safer environment for everyone."

In addition, Knox wrote a letter to Justice Minister Matt Wiebe on behalf of council, which she shared on social media with family consent.

"I write to you not only as the Mayor of Portage la Prairie but as a deeply grieving community leader. On January 15, 2025, our community lost a vibrant, promising young woman, Kellie Verwey, in a senseless and preventable tragedy. This loss has shaken our city to its core, and it demands immediate attention and action," she wrote.

"The incident that claimed Kellie's life is both devastating and infuriating. According to the RCMP, a stolen vehicle driven recklessly by James Lorne Hilton caused the chain of events that led to her death. This individual, known to the police, had an active arrest warrant at the time of the crash. He should have been in custody, not behind the wheel of a stolen truck on our highways. This is a systemic failure, plain and simple, and it cost an innocent young woman her life. Her dreams, her future, and her contributions to our world were stolen in an instant."

Knox said the tragedy outlines glaring systemic deficiencies, including allowing repeat offenders to roam free and failing to prioritize public safety. She implored the justice minister to strengthen enforcement mechanisms to ensure individuals with active warrants are apprehended and kept in custody; to prioritize public safety in sentencing and parole decisions, especially for repeat offenders; to increase resources and accountability within the justice system to prevent known criminals from endangering innocent lives; and to consult with communities and families affected by crime to develop meaningful, impactful reforms.

Hundreds of people offered heartfelt responses to Knox's post, which has also been shared thousands of times.

"As someone who knew Kellie since her birth, I watched her grow and blossom into the extraordinary woman that she was and will always be remembered. She achieved so much in her short 28 years and touched so many lives ... she had so much more to give," states one post.

"Let her tragic death not be in vain, but a call to a reform of our justice system, reaching every corner of our nation, and let hers be the last innocent life lost to a broken system that failed her, and her family and friends. We love you Kel!"

Another post thanked Knox for her well-written letter.

"Condolences to Kellie families and friends. Our communities have lost a beautiful soul taken way too soon. Gainsborough, Portage la Prairie, Oakland, Warren, McCreary and High Bluff," states the post.

"We need to support change in this broken system to keep our community's safe and honour Kellie. Her fiance, Travis and her families have lost a lifetime of joy...we need to do better and keep the pressure on to make this change."

The Whoop and Hollar Folk Fest also shared an emotion-filled response.

> MLA, FROM PG. 6

2023 for Manitoba agri-food exports were Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, California and Indiana.

Johnson said a possible Trump tariff of 25 per cent could hurt not only Manitoba's agriculture sector — especially beef and pork exports — but also manufacturing in the area around Arborg and in Bifrost-Riverton.

"If that 25 per cent tariff is brought in, it will affect our agriculture industry and have ripple effects on the wider economy. When producers are making good money, they'll buy new equipment like a tractor and pick-up trucks or repair a fence with wood they buy from a local Co-op and so

forth. In the Interlake, more so than anywhere else, there's a seven-fold effect on the economy," he said.

Building cross-border relationships is key to navigating what could be tough economic times ahead, he said, as well as shoring up our border — which have benefits for both America and Canada.

But if push comes to shove with regard to Trump tariffs, the government could consider looking at Manitoba Hydro's cheap "one-and-a-half cents per kilowatt hour" electricity exports to American states.

"In the end, the only people that will be hurt by this [25 per cent tariff] are consumers and producers," said Johnson.

> ACCESS CREDIT UNION, FROM PG. 5

age groups.

"While we can appreciate the convenience of a physical location for our seniors and members with mobility issues, nearly every transaction can be done today over the phone or through online and mobile apps," he said. "We remain committed to investing in Lundar and the RM of Coldwell as a significant community supporter for projects that address those needs as well."

The use of online financial services has its risks from hacking and other fraudulent activity, but Access' protections are standard across the financial industry.

"The strongest anti-hacking protection is education: making sure that members recognize fraud and scams, avoid clicking on unknown links, do not provide personal information to unverified callers, and remain suspicious of unusual financial requests," said Monteith. "The technological protections we offer are standard

across the industry including complex password requirements, alerts, device management and back-office unusual activity programs. We are also continuing to invest in this area recognizing the importance of keeping our members safe. Additionally, we provide educational materials, online education and financial literacy sessions in communities to further enhance member awareness and security."

As far as leaving an ATM behind in Lundar after the branch closes, Monteith said Access is evaluating usage patterns and is unable to commit to a standalone ATMs at this time.

When asked if reduced fees or better rates will be offered as a form of compensation for the closure of the Lundar branch, Monteith said Access has "highly competitive" rates and fees, and offers "significant community investment and leading-edge technology."



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On the subject of democratic freedoms, Trump's known disdain for liberal media and his endorsement of social media messaging, Johnson said we should be paying more attention to supporting the media, and especially media in the rural areas of Manitoba.

"People have to look at where they get their media from and assess the accuracy of it. The younger generation don't typically read the paper: they use TikTok," said Johnson. "The Interlake still remains engaged with written print because our average age is higher. The importance of written media in the Interlake is very, very high. And it's very important to support local media and ensure it's there for the people that use it."

The Express reached out to the province for more information about crime prevention in the Interlake.

A spokesperson from the justice department said the province is committed to working with federal, provincial and territorial partners to share criminal justice system data, which will help police analyze trends and initiate further reforms. And electronic monitoring has been expanded to rural Manitoba.

"The department continues to build capacity in the Business Intelligence Unit, a team of dedicated data specialists providing statistical and data solutions across the department and is also continuing its implementation

of the Integrated Case Management System to support the work of Manitoba's three levels of court," said the spokesperson. "The province has invested \$2.9 million over two years for electronic monitoring in Manitoba. As part of this bail reform plan, more than \$500,000 has been allocated to the enhanced Community Monitoring and Supervision Program, which provides intensive supervision and expanded supports to chronic offenders. Electronic monitoring was introduced in Winnipeg in August 2024 and has since expanded its focus to rural Manitoba and also for intimate partner violence offences. Forty-seven individuals across Manitoba are currently being monitored on electronic monitoring."

The Express also reached out to the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority, asking for an update on construction of the new ER for Eriksdale and whether there's a human resources staffing plan that will be part and parcel of the new ER.

An IERHA representative said: "Interlake-Eastern RHA is excited to have the opportunity to help optimize patient experience and patient flow in the Eriksdale hospital emergency department. Work continues with the province to develop designs for the Eriksdale ED. More details will be shared as the project plan continues to develop. This is a truly exciting opportunity to do better together."



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Local MP James Bezan responds to Trudeau resignation

Conservative MP for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman Bezan shares opinion

By Katelyn Boulanger

The announcement came on Jan. 6 that Justin Trudeau would be stepping down as both Liberal leader and prime minister.

"I intend to resign as party leader, as prime minister, after the party selects its next leader through a robust, nationwide, competitive process," said Trudeau at the announcement.

"This country deserves a real choice in the next election, and it has become clear to me that if I'm having to fight internal battles, I cannot be the best option in that election."

The *Express Weekly News* contacted local Conservative MP for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman James Bezan to

share his opinion on this development.

"After nine years, Justin Trudeau had lost complete control of his government and his caucus, and it was Canadians who were suffering the most. In my opinion, nothing has changed with his decision to leave. The budget is out of control, the carbon tax continues to drive up the cost of everything and families are struggling to make ends meet. All the potential Liberal leadership candidates are complicit in creating this sad reality over the last nine years," said Bezan in a statement to the *Express*.

In addition to Trudeau issuing his resignation publicly, Parliament will be prorogued until March 24.

"It's clear the only reason Justin Trudeau is shutting down Parliament is because he knows that he and his party do not have the confidence of the House of Commons. All major opposition parties have promised to bring Justin Trudeau's government down at the next possible opportunity. But instead of giving Canadians a real choice in a carbon tax election, Trudeau quit, and the Liberals are going into hiding until March 24," Be-

zan said.

"The Liberals, time and time again, attempt to hide their unethical behaviour from the Canadian people. We have seen this before. Just like with the SNC Lavalin and WE Charity scandals, the Trudeau government denies, deflects, and seeks to pin the blame on others. For the last several months, the Liberals disobeyed the order of Parliament to hand over the documents related to their latest scandal regarding the \$400 million Sustainable Development Technology Canada, better known as the Green Slush Fund. If they were truthful with Parliament and Canadians, and maintained the confidence of the House of Commons, Parliament would have continued to operate normally."

With 2025 being an election year, politicians will have had plenty of time to prepare for an upcoming election and Bezan indicated that he's going to run again for the MP spot in our region.

"I am seeking re-election as the Conservative candidate in Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman and have been prepared for an election since we are in a minority Parliament situation. Most Canadians want a carbon tax election now. Only Common Sense Conservatives can be trusted to axe the tax to make life more affordable for Cana-



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY KATELYN BOULANGER

MP James Bezan shared his opinion on Justin Trudeau's resignation.

dians; to build the homes, to restore the dream of homeownership; to fix the budget, to stop the rampant inflation, and, to stop the crime so Canadians can once again feel safe in our streets," he said.

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Facing our fears

Everyone has fears. Some people are afraid of spiders. Others are scared of flying in airplanes or swimming in deep water. It is important to work to overcome our fears. If we don't, they can cause us difficulties in our lives. They may even prevent us from reaching our lifelong goals.

It is not easy overcoming fears which

are fully ingrained in our minds. In order to work toward coming to terms with them, we must want to take the necessary steps.

The first one is to admit to ourselves that our fears are real. Then we have to slowly face them. It has to be done in small steps.

For example, if your fear is of spiders, you should just look at one in a glass jar. Once you feel comfortable

gazing at it without feeling scared, open up the jar. Let a family member or friend hold the spider in his/her hand.

After watching it move around a number of times, observe it walking on a table. After many days, put the spider on your hand. If possible, let it move up your arm. If you can tolerate the spider touching you, then you are probably over your fear.

The process of overcoming our fears is individual. Some people can move through the steps quickly. Others do it more gradually. It is important to pace ourselves. Rushing through the procedure too quickly will probably

backfire.

We may feel like we are cured. Then we experience our fears. They still cause us to shake or run away. Soon we are back to the beginning. We will have to start the steps all over again.

Now that it is the new year, we often make resolutions. Ideally, they help improve our lives. Taking the time to work at our fears and overcoming them is an ideal life change.

The best is yet to come. We should make the effort to experience our ideal lives. We won't regret our decisions.

- By Patricia Witzke

> GROWING ISSUE, FROM PG. 7

person she's worked with called Verticillium stripe the "largest field robber in the Red River Valley," while a grower she knows said the disease was so intense in 2024 that growing canola in future years will be extremely challenging. She's had people estimate their yield losses to be 10 to 15 per cent because of the disease.

There are no fungicide options for verticillium stripe, which leaves very few management methods for growers to use right now:

- Crop rotation
- Controlling brassica weeds
- Growing resistant hybrids

That last bullet has only become an option recently as seed companies

begin to look at verticillium-resistant traits.

"We definitely see differences at a field level but we're trying to figure out why we're seeing them," said Cornelsen, meaning that though they see resistance traits in testing, they don't know what that resistance is exactly — it could be slowing the rate of infection, blocking the pathogen from entering the plant, strengthening the stem or something else entirely.

"Is it true resistance or tolerance? Will it hold up? We don't know how they're resistant yet."

Once companies have these traits down, the process for commercializing them is long. For example, club-

root was first found in 2003, and the first resistant hybrid didn't come out until 2009. Just a few years later, the disease was already overtaking the trait in the field.

Cornelsen ended her presentation by posing a research question for attendees: does straight cutting allow verticillium stripe to thrive?

There's no work to validate this question yet, but because of the disease's life cycle moving the inoculum

into the stem, by letting the plant stand longer, you could potentially be allowing verticillium stripe to build up in the stem. As Manitoba is a predominantly straight-cut province when it comes to harvest techniques and the disease is most prevalent here, it begs the question: have we helped increase the pressure of verticillium stripe because of this harvest management strategy?



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Reechka Dance Club holds Malanka



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY BRETT MITCHELL

Arborg's Reechka Ukrainian Dance Club celebrated Malanka, or Ukrainian New Year, last Saturday at the Arborg Community Hall, with close to 400 friends and family sharing food, dance and good cheer. Following performances by the dancers, a traditional Ukrainian supper including perogies, pyrizhky and cabbage rolls was enjoyed by all. This year's New Year's babies were Beau and Arya Olafson who were born last Malanka. Entertainment was provided by the band, Men in Cheap Suits.





Winnipeg Beach developer proposing affordable housing development, short-term rentals

By Patricia Barrett

A Winnipeg Beach business owner and developer who owns a large section of land next to Highway 9 is considering building a 60-unit affordable housing development if she gets approval from council to rezone the land for the new subdivision.

Ruby's Paradise owner Anjali Schludermann submitted a proposal to council in November, detailing the proposed development of five separate lots on the property.

Inga Robak, assistant chief administrative officer and assistant development officer for the Eastern Interlake Planning District, said Schludermann has to obtain approval for rezoning the land and also for the subdivision.

"A rezoning is required first. A subdivision is also required to separate all these lots," said Robak. "Then the

developer can proceed with the plans for the development from there."

Details of the development are publicly available under council's Jan. 22 agenda, which was posted online last week.

For proposed Lot 1, the owner is seeking to rezone the land to residential to accommodate an existing house and garage. For proposed Lot 2, the owner is seeking to rezone the land to residential in order to build a house.

For proposed Lot 3, the owner wants to rezone the land to commercial to accommodate an existing driving range and possibly build short-term rental housing and a number of other features.

"Possible future development on this parcel may include: short-term rentals houses — approximately 52 units, permanent mini golf, virtual

IIU investigating death of woman following RCMP arrest

By Lana Meier

The Independent Investigation Unit (IIU) is currently investigating the death of an adult female following her arrest by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).

On Jan. 17, the RCMP informed the IIU that on Jan. 15, at approximately 8 p.m., officers were dispatched to a residence in Vogar regarding a 911 hang-up call. Upon arrival, officers discovered that a female was under the influence of drugs and had attempted to use a weapon on someone in the residence. She was subsequently placed under arrest.

While transporting the female for a medical assessment at Lakeshore General Hospital in Ashern, an officer noted that she had become unrespon-

sive. The police immediately pulled over, called for emergency medical services and provided emergency care. The female was then taken by ambulance to Lakeshore General Hospital and later transferred to St. Boniface Hospital in Winnipeg. On Jan. 16, the police learned that she had died in the hospital.

The IIU has assumed responsibility for this investigation in accordance with Section 65(4) of the Police Services Act.

Since this case involves a fatality, a request for a civilian monitor will be made to the Manitoba Police Commission.

The investigation is ongoing, and no further details will be provided at this time.

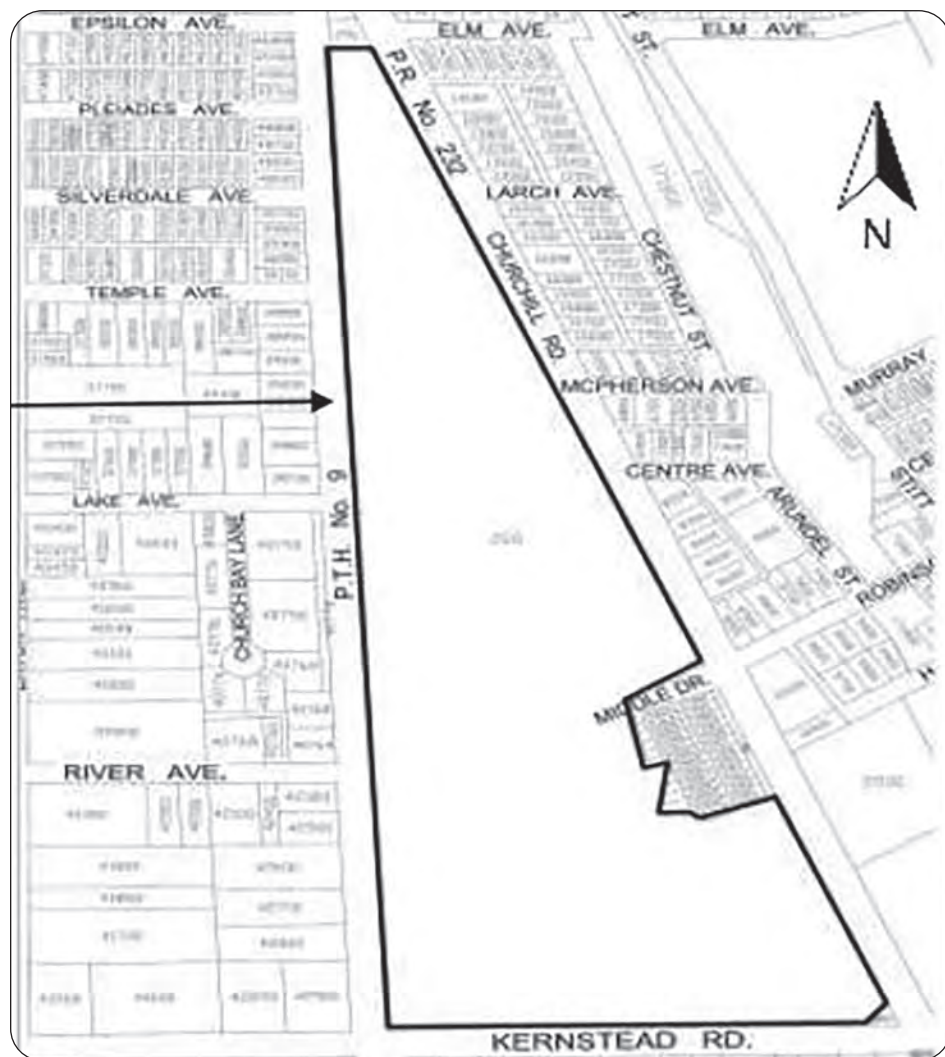


IMAGE BY EASTERN INTERLAKE PLANNING DISTRICT

A Winnipeg Beach property owner is proposing the development of five parcels of land between Churchill Road (left) and Highway 9 (right).

golf and ice cream shop, permanent walking path and ski trail, swimming pool with fitness area, splash pad, dog park, greenhouse for vegetables [and] restaurant," states the proposal.

For proposed Lot 4, the owner wants to rezone the land to residential for a "possible 60-unit affordable housing development."

For proposed Lot 5, the owner wants to rezone the land to commercial for an exiting farmers' market.

"Possible future development may include: Bank, Store, public wash-rooms for the farmers [and] market," states the proposal.

The proposal generated three letters of objection that are available under council's agenda. The residents say they're opposed to the development for a number of reasons, including the town's lagoon being unable to handle sewage from the development, increased traffic on Churchill Road to access the development, and a concern about rental properties and crime. One resident was in favour of the dog park.

Council will hold a public hearing on Jan. 22 at 6 p.m. during its regular meeting.

> COMMUNITY GRIEVES, FROM PG. 8

"So many tears shed today. It seems that it's always the good people that are taken from us, due to the actions of irresponsible individuals who keep getting away scot-free," the post states.

"Enough IS enough!! Kellie, you will be missed so much, and we will all be forever changed by your efforts to unite and help your community and elevate Portage's tourism potential! To all of Kellie's family, close friends, and colleagues ... we stand with you.

Mayor Knox, what a heartfelt tribute and call to action. Thank you."

A celebration of Kellie Verwey's life will take place in Portage la Prairie on Saturday, Jan. 25 at 1 p.m., and the service will also be live-streamed. To register and view the service, visit www.mckenzieportagefuneralchapel.com.

As expressions of sympathy, donations can be made to a soon-to-be-established fund in memory of Kellie Verwey care of Community Foundation of Portage and District.

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First blizzard of 2025 shuts downs most of southern Manitoba



EXPRESS PHOTO WINNIPEG BEACH SNOWSHOE CLUB

Winnipeg Beach Snowshoe Club members were out and about on Thursday, Dec. 16 taking full advantage of the above-average temperatures. The temperature reached a high of 1 C and a low of -4 C. 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

By Lana Meier

A sharp change of weather shut down schools and highways from southern Manitoba to Winnipeg and the Interlake with many sections hit by blowing snow and blizzard conditions on Friday. Poor visibility in blowing snow started Thursday night.

An Alberta clipper cold front passed through the Red River Valley bringing snow, falling temperatures and strong winds, according to Environment Canada.

Winds increased to 70 km/h with gusts as high as 100 km/h throughout Friday morning, making travel nearly impossible.

Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure was asking motorists to avoid driving on all roadways in southern Manitoba as conditions worsened last Friday. Blowing snow made visibility nearly zero in certain areas, with multiple highways being closed including the Perimeter Highway in Winnipeg.

Priority on the roadways was needed for emergency vehicles as there had been a high number of accidents, which was challenging Manitoba's emergency response teams.

The areas affected by the blizzard included: City of Winnipeg.

- * Dugald, Beausejour, Grand Beach
- * Morden, Winkler, Altona, Morris
- * Portage la Prairie, Headingley, Brunkild, Carman
- * Selkirk, Gimli, Stonewall, Woodlands
- * Steinbach, St. Adolphe, Emerson, Vita-Richer

The province reminds the public that it is illegal to travel on closed roads and motorists could be subject to a fine.

Travelers should always check Manitoba 511 at www.manitoba511.ca for current road conditions prior to making the decision to travel. 511 is updated regularly by road patrols, but conditions can change in a matter of minutes.

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Happy New Year and Denture insurance renewal date

By Elisha Vador

For us at Vador Denture Centre, the most wonderful time of the year (besides Christmas) starts on New Years Day, January 1, 2025. It's a time when we start submitting and receiving new pre-approvals for denture coverage. It's a joyous occasion for you, with dental insurance too, because your full yearly maximum is available once again and you're able to call us and schedule your denture appointment knowing you're saving the most money with your full benefits in tow. The real question is how much coverage does your specific plan cover towards new partial dentures, full dentures, relining, dental implant procedures...etc? Well, you can leave all the heavy insurance lifting to us, after all, we find enjoyment in discovering how much your plan covers and want to be the first to share your benefit results with you, but don't worry, you'll also receive your results by mail or online too.

Some insurance companies provide us an instant response when submitting electronically, while others take some processing time before a pre-approval response is provided. All insurance plans are different, so a predetermination of benefits is necessary for an accurate price quote.

If you have coverage through the government program (Canadian Dental Care Plan) with Sun Life, we have been receiving approvals for partial dentures and are happy to start the pre-approval process for you too. Starting in 2025, those aged 65 and younger will be able to apply for the Canadian Dental Care Plan insurance benefit, although the date has not been announced yet, we are gearing up and excited for you to receive your benefit coverage. It's the closest to the best denture insurance coverage we have seen by any insurance plan. We were one of the first providers to accept the

government insurance plan when it started back in May of 2024 and have worked alongside the head case managers at Sun Life and their subordinates to provide a seamless pre-approval and coverage process. If you have received your CDCP card and are ready to use your benefits, then don't hesitate to call.

Dentures can be replaced every 5+ years through your private insurance. So, if you received your denture(s) in 2020, then you'll be eligible for new. By simply sending in a pre-approval, the information provides your coverage specifics towards the designated treatment and is accurate for 3-6 months if no other dental insurance has been used for another treatment, like extractions. Each insurance plan is different, so it's important to call us and ask for a free consultation appointment to find out the exact treatment and predetermine your coverage so you can have your best dentures yet in 2025.



Office managers Manon (left) and Elisha (right) together provide over 20 years of dental insurance experience.

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All around the Interlake: Lightning report Jan. 19

By Keiran Reimer

The wins haven't exactly rolled in for the U15 AAA Female Interlake Lightning this season but being one of the league's top teams isn't what they expected going into it.

Head coach Allan Ward said back in November that this season would be about growth and development, and since then, things have slightly improved for the club, which is in its second year of existence.

Two weeks ago, Interlake picked up its second and third wins of the season against the Norman Wild, improving its record to 3-15.

They are also becoming more competitive with other teams, the most recent example being Sunday's 4-1 loss to the Brandon Wheat Kings.

The game remained deadlocked through 20 minutes before the Wheat Kings eventually found a way past Lightning's Jordan Brewer.

The Lightning brought the game close again in the third with a goal from Ella Riddell, which made it 3-1 at the time.

Although the Wheat Kings won by three goals, the Lightning played a respectable game, including a 35-save performance from Brewer.

And though it wasn't a win, it's a positive sign for the Lightning to be in close games with teams like the Wheat Kings that sit around the .500 mark and have beaten some of the league's top teams this season.

"Obviously, the scores don't always go our way, but what we're really focusing on with our girls is getting a 60-minute hockey game," said assistant coach Eryn Stewart. "Over the last two games, they've been working really hard, and we've definitely been playing a lot more as a team, gelling a bit better, getting our passes through. We've just got to work on the offensive side more but yeah the goal for our girls is to get that full sixty minutes and we're getting there."

Currently sitting seventh in the U15 AAA Manitoba Female Hockey League, the Lightning still have 10 regular-season games remaining to work out some kinks.

The Lightning know that goaltending won't be an issue, as the tandem of Brewer and Emma Cassils remains the team's strong point.

Brewer, who is coming off a solid performance against Brandon, has totalled 220 saves in just seven games this season, whereas Cassils has made 413 saves in 13 games.

If the Lightning have any chance of making some noise late in the season, they know the pair will be heavily involved in that success.

"They face tons of shots every game, so we can't expect them to be perfect, but they're pretty darn close sometimes," said Stewart. "We're very lucky to have two very skilled goalies, especially for next year as well, so it'll be nice to have them going forward, and we just have to get more shots and more goals to help them because they sure save us a heck of a lot."

The Lightning are now getting ready for their biggest season test on Saturday against the first-place Pembina Valley Hawks.

In their one meeting this season, the Hawks took it 4-1 at Veterans Memorial Sports Complex after taking the lead early and holding on for the win.

This time, the Lightning will look to get on the winning side of the scoreboard and pull off the biggest upset win of the season.

The puck drops on Saturday, Jan. 25 at 6 p.m. at the Carman-Dufferin Arena.

The **U13 AA Female Interlake Lightning** lost 5-0 to the Brandon Wheat Kings on Saturday. They currently sit seventh with a 5-14-0-1 record.

Next game: Sunday, Jan. 26 at Twins, 3 p.m. at St. Norbert Community Centre

The **U13 AA Male Interlake Lightning** lost 5-1 to the Brandon Wheat Kings Black on Saturday. They currently sit 14th with a 9-11-0-1 record.

Next game: Wednesday, Jan. 22 at Winnipeg Wild White, 8 p.m. at Eric Coy Arena followed by a game on Saturday, Jan 25 vs Winnipeg Thrashers Red at 4:30 p.m. at Warren's Access Credit Union Arena.

The **U15 AA Male Interlake Lightning** lost 5-2 to

the Winnipeg Wild Gold on Saturday night at Eric Coy Arena. They currently sit seventh with an 8-8-4-2 record.

Next game: Wednesday, Jan. 22 at Winnipeg Wild Green, 7:15 p.m. at St. Norbert Community Centre.

They also play Sunday, Jan. 26 at Winnipeg Wild White, 3:30 p.m. at Eric Coy Arena.

The **U15 AAA Male Interlake Lightning** lost 9-1 to the Winnipeg Bruins Black on Saturday and 9-2 to the Winnipeg Thrashers White on Sunday. They currently sit fifth in the Central Division with a 4-22-0-0 record.

Next game: Sunday, Jan. 26 at Pembina Valley Hawks, 3 p.m. at Rosenort Arena

The **U17 AAA Male Interlake Lightning** tied 3-3 with the Winnipeg Wild in league play on Wednesday. Over the weekend, they also took third place at the Robin's Minor Hockey Tournament in Thunder Bay. They currently sit seventh in the league with a 5-16-5-0 record.

Interlake has two home games this weekend. They host the Brandon Wheat Kings Friday, Jan. 24, at 7:45 p.m. at Warren's Access Credit Union Arena, and the Ice Bandits on Sunday at 2 p.m.

The **U18 AAA Female Interlake Lightning** split a pair of games on Saturday with a 2-1 shootout win over the Brandon Wheat Kings and a 6-2 loss to the Westman Wildcats. They also lost 5-4 to the Westman Wildcats on Sunday. They currently sit eighth with a 5-23-0-1-3 record.

Next game: Wednesday, Jan. 22 vs the Winnipeg Ice at 7:15 p.m. at Hockey For All Centre. They will host the Pembina Valley Hawks Friday, Jan. 24 at 8 p.m. at the VMSC.

The **U18 AAA Male Interlake Lightning** lost 5-3 and 4-2 to the Brandon Wheat Kings on Saturday and Sunday. They currently sit eighth with a 15-14-2-1-3-1 record.

The U18 teams has two home games this weekend. Friday, Jan. 24 vs Central Plains Capitals, at 7 p.m. at Teulon Rockwood Arena. They also host the Bruins on Sunday, Jan. 26 at 2 p.m.

Ice Dawgs key matchup delayed, will play twice next weekend

By Kieran Reimer

The Arborg Ice Dawgs remained in the same position in the Capital Region Junior Hockey League standings after their game against the La Broquerie Habs was postponed due to poor road conditions on Friday night. This match promised to be an exciting clash between the fifth and sixth place teams, both of which are competing for better standings as the regular season approaches its conclusion.

The Ice Dawgs and Habs will now meet this Friday in Arborg, with the puck drop scheduled for 8 p.m. In their previous two meetings this season, each team has secured one win.

They are also set to face each other again on Feb. 1 in La Broquerie, which will conclude the season series. Currently, the Ice Dawgs have a record of six wins, 18 losses and one overtime loss, totalling 20 points, placing them sixth in the CRJHL.

UPCOMING GAMES:

Friday, Jan. 24 vs La Broquerie Habs, 8 p.m. at Arborg & District Arena

Sunday, Jan. 26 at Beausejour Comets, 2 p.m. at Sun Gro Centre

Saturday, Feb. 1 at La Broquerie Habs, 7:30 p.m. at HyLife Centre

Falcons set back by CRJHL leading Warriors

By Kieran Reimer

The Lundar Falcons kept it close for two periods, but a third-period onslaught from the St. Malo Warriors showed why they are first in the Capital Region Junior Hockey League this season.

Heading into the third, the Falcons trailed 3-2 to the CRJHL defending champions, thanks to goals from Braeden Lukas and Liam Russell.

The game remained that way until the 16-minute mark when

the Warrior's offence broke free for five goals, while the Falcon's only response was Gavin Miller's powerplay goal when the lead was already out of reach.

The game ended with the Warriors on top 8-3 as they skated away with three points. The Falcons now drop to 13-9-0-2-0 and remain third in the CRJHL.

Saturday, Jan. 25 they will host the last place North Winnipeg Satellites at 7 p.m. from Lundar Arena.

get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



Baked Spaghetti

2 cups shredded cheese
 French bread or breadsticks, for serving
 Heat oven to 350 F.
 Brown and drain ground beef. Cook noodles according to package instructions. Drain noodles; add alfredo sauce and mix well.

Add marinara sauce, garlic powder and onion powder to ground beef. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Place noodles in 9-by-13-inch baking dish. Spoon beef mixture on top but do not mix in. Cover with shredded cheese then cover with foil and bake 30-40 minutes.

Serve with French bread or breadsticks.

Recipe courtesy of "Cookin' Savvy"
 Servings: 4-6

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 pound spaghetti noodles
- 1 jar (16 ounces) alfredo sauce
- 1 jar (24 ounces) marinara sauce
- 2 tablespoons garlic powder
- 2 tablespoons onion powder
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste



Cranberry Bars

1 1/2 cups chopped walnuts
 2 cups chopped white chocolate chips, divided

Heat oven to 350 F.
 Mix cake mix, eggs, butter, cranberries, walnuts and 1 cup white chocolate chips. Spread into 7-by-11-inch baking dish and bake 35-40 minutes until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

Let cool then melt remaining white chocolate chips and drizzle over bars.

Recipe courtesy of "Cookin' Savvy"

- 1 box white or yellow cake mix
- 2 eggs
- 1 stick melted butter
- 1 1/2 cups dried cranberries



Egg Tot Muffins

2 teaspoons onion powder
 1 package (2 1/2 ounces) real bacon pieces
 salt, to taste
 pepper, to taste
 Heat oven to 350 F.

Grease muffin tin with butter. Place three tots in each muffin hole and smash down.

In bowl, whisk eggs, cream, cheese, garlic powder, onion powder and bacon pieces. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Fill each muffin hole completely with mixture.

Place cookie sheet under muffin tin to contain messes and bake 20-25 minutes.

Recipe courtesy of "Cookin' Savvy"
 Servings: 12

- Butter
- 36 thawed tater tots
- 10 eggs
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream or half-and-half
- 1/2 cup shredded cheese
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder

Ask the money lady

I wanted to know if there is anything else I should be considering for the future other than just RRSPs.

Bernie

Bernie – there definitely is more than just RRSPs!

When you are planning for retirement, it is advisable to accumulate and consider separate buckets, accounts, or as we like to say, "pools of capital" to properly diversify your future. Of course, many people may not be able to do them all, but at least you can now see what we ask clients to consider when determining an achievable retirement lifestyle, and RRSPs will always be one of them. There are typically six common ways to divide your savings towards future retirement capital. These are the things that your Advisor will want to review with you. Plan to use as many as you can when saving for your future. Remember, if you are not planning for a comfortable and secure retirement, how can you expect to have one. Here we go.

Number One: Your employment pension, government pension or both. If you're lucky enough to have both – you are definitely in the minority these days. On these paid into investments, income will be received and taxable when you receive it in retirement but there is no taxes payable at death. Many employers have savings plans where they will match part of your contribution, and some may offer proprietary pension plans that you can also pay into. Please consider these options. They definitely add up over time and many can be moved to registered plans like a LIRA or LIF if you leave your employer.

Number Two: Your registered investments. This would be RRSPs converting to RRIFs once you reach the age of 71.

These investments are limited by minimum and maximum deposits and of course withdrawals will be taxed by the CRA.

Remember any funds left in your estate at death will be taxed as income on your last tax return unless participating in a spousal rollover. Consider purchasing Deferred Annuities with your RRSP contributions – these are great products to offer a guaranteed income once you retire, (guaranteed annual income for life).

Number Three: Tax-Free Savings
 Always a good option to supplement RRSPs with no taxation at death.



Christine Ibbotson

This should be considered by every Canadian over 18 even if RRSPs are not part of your savings plan.

Number Four: Non-Registered Investments

This could include various types of investment vehicles to diversify your portfolio. If you choose investments that earn annual interest, like bonds or debentures, you will be responsible for the tax each year. If you choose other investment products, such as securities, they will have taxation only on the growth and subject to capital gains tax when withdrawn. Non-registered investments may also be subject to probate and other estate fees upon death.

Number Five: Investment Property +/- Primary Residence

Investment properties may be subject to capital gains tax when sold or as a deemed disposition upon death unless there is a spousal/other rollovers. Always consider upsizing your primary residence throughout your life since this is a great non-taxable asset.

Number Six: Tax Exempt Insurance

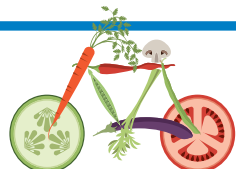
Limited tax-exempt life insurance policies, (for example, Participating Whole Life) are a great tool for asset accumulation and wealth preservation. They add diversification to your investment portfolio and provides tax-exempt growth over your lifetime. Participating Life insurance also provides a tax-free death benefit and will by-pass probate if a beneficiary is named.

*Good Luck and Best Wishes,
 Money Lady*

Written by Christine Ibbotson, Author, Finance Writer, National Radio Host, and on CTV & BNN, syndicated across Canada. Send your questions through her website at askthemoneylady.ca

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

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Farmland for sale -157 acres located west of Fisher Branch for sale including buildings, prime land and good drainage. Phone for details 204-801-1062.

AGRICULTURAL LAND FOR RENT

AGRICULTURAL CROWN LANDS are presently available for rent for cropping. These lands will be available for rent through an online auction. These lands are situated in the Rural Municipalities (RM)s of: ALEXANDER, CITY OF WINNIPEG, ELLICE-ARCHIE, KELSEY, LAC DU BONNET, MINITONAS-BOWSMAN, PIPESTONE, RIDING MOUNTAIN WEST, RITCHOT, ROBLIN, SPRINGFIELD, SWAN VALLEY WEST, VICTORIA & WALLACE-WOODWORTH. A complete listing of Agricultural Crown Lands available for rent can be found online at: http://resd.ca/leases_and_permits/LPproperties.aspx. The online auction will take place from February 24 - February 28, 2025, hosted by Garton's Auction Service: <https://gartonsauction.com>. For additional information, please contact your nearest Manitoba Agriculture (MA) Agricultural Crown Lands District Office (or via email at agcrownlands@gov.mb.ca) or call Real Lands Estate Services Branch at 1-866-210-9589. A listing of MA Agricultural Crown District Offices can be found online at: https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/land-management/crown_land/agricultural-crown-lands-district-offices.html

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Riverton Bifrost Holdings Inc. NOTICE OF TENDER April 1, 2025 - March 31, 2026

RBH Inc. invites tenders for **Electrical and Plumbing** for Family Housing Units located in Riverton. For information call 204-378-2937.

- Contract will be awarded with option for a one year extension
- Tender will not necessarily be awarded to lowest bidder
- Submission Deadline - Friday, February 7, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.
- Submit quotes by mail or email to: Riverton Bifrost Holdings Inc. RBH Houses Box 448, Riverton, MB R0C 2R0 rbh.inc@outlook.com



Box 280, Fisher Branch, MB, R0C 0Z0
Tel: 204-372-6393, Fax: 204-372-8470

UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE PLANNING ACT NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

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

APPLICATION FOR CONDITIONAL USE under the RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF FISHER ZONING BY-LAW 1055/00 AS AMENDED.

HEARING: RM of Fisher Council Chambers 30 Tache Street Fisher Branch, MB
DATE & TIME: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.
APPLICATION: CU2025-01
OWNERS/APPLICANT: Tyrone Abas Box 421 Hodgson, MB R0C 1N0
PROPOSAL: To allow the establishment of a Newly Constructed Micro Cultivation Facility in a *Business Commercial Zone*.
AREA AFFECTED: LOTS 4 to 11, both inclusive, Block 4 Plan 570 WLTO (P Div) Subject to the reservations and provisos contained in the grant from the crown, out of the said LOTS 8 and 9 in the NW ¼ 32-25-1 WPM
FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: RM of Fisher: Kelly Marykuca, Chief Administrative Officer Rural Municipality of Fisher Phone: (204) 372-6393 or fishercao@mymts.net



A copy of the above proposal and supporting material may be inspected at the municipal office during normal office hours, Monday to Friday. Copies may be made and extracts taken therefrom, upon request.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Finance Officer Full Time Term Position

Applications are being accepted for the position of Finance Officer for the Rural Municipality of Grahamdale for an approximate 2 year Term Position beginning in February, 2025 and ending in December, 2026.

Responsibilities:

As Finance Officer, the focus of your role is managing and overseeing financial activities with the R.M. of Grahamdale. Primary responsibilities will include budget preparation, financial reporting, compliance and full cycle bookkeeping. Key responsibilities of the position include:

- Preparation of the annual financial plan
- Ensuring sound financial controls are in place and followed
- Advising on financial matters
- Preparation of financial reports
- Accounts receivable, accounts payable, and payroll
- Weekly deposits and bank reconciliation.

Requirements:

Ideally, you will have experience in financial work in the municipal field. Strong communication, accounting and analytical skills are just some of the requirements of the position. Candidates who have completed designated accounting courses, the Certified Manitoba Municipal Administrator course, or other relevant discipline bring an educational advantage to the position.

If you would like more information about this position, please call Chief Administrative Officer Shelly Schwitek at 204-768-2858 or submit your resume in confidence to rm606@grahamdale.ca.

Application Deadline: 12 Noon on Friday, February 7, 2025.

Thank You

Riverdale Place Workshop Inc. expresses a heart felt thanks to the Town of Arborg, R.M. of Bifrost/Riverton, Village of Riverton, R.M. of Fisher and R.M. of Armstrong for your support emails and letters to the Minister of Families Nahanni Fontaine. A special thank you to participants family members with your letters of support. A special thank you to all the residents in the Interlake area and Manitobans who supported the workshop. Your thoughtfulness and concerns in letters are greatly appreciated. We greatly appreciated the help and support from our MLA Interlake Derek Johnson and Constituency assistant Brant Field.

Sincerely,
Riverdale Place Workshop Inc.
Board, Staff and Participants

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Riverton Bifrost Holdings Inc.

NOTICE OF TENDER April 1, 2025 - March 31, 2026

RBH Inc. invites tenders for **Electrical and Plumbing** at the Icelandic River Lodge in Riverton.
For information call 204-378-2937.

- Contract will be awarded with option for a one year extension
- Tender will not necessarily be awarded to lowest bidder
- Submission Deadline
Friday, February 7, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.
- Submit quotes by mail or email to:
Riverton Bifrost Holdings Inc.
Icelandic River Lodge
Box 448, Riverton, MB R0C 2R0,
rbh.inc@outlook.com

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY



Part-time Branch Librarian (20 hours/week) Siglunes Library (Ashern)

For the continuation of library service in Ashern, we are seeking an enthusiastic part-time Librarian for our Siglunes branch.

This job requires the ability to promote the library, to work with people of various ages, as well as creativity and the willingness to try new things. Computer skills are required.

Criminal Record Check, Vulnerable Sector and Child Abuse Registry checks are required.

Apply in writing with resume and cover letter by
Wednesday, January 29, 2025 to director@parklandlib.mb.ca
Please call 1-866-638-6410 if you have any questions.

UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE PLANNING ACT NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

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

APPLICATION FOR THE RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GRAHAMDALE TO JOIN THE WESTERN INTERLAKE PLANNING DISTRICT UNDER S. 27(1) OF THE PLANNING ACT

LOCATION: R.M. of Grahamdale Council Chambers
23 Government Road, Moosehorn, MB R0C 2E0

DATE & TIME: Thursday, February 6, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.

APPLICANTS: The R.M. of Grahamdale

PROPOSAL: For the R.M. of Grahamdale to request that the Minister add our Municipality to the Western Interlake Planning District, which would assume responsibility for administration of the Municipality's building and planning regulations.

AREAS

AFFECTED: All properties in the R.M. of Grahamdale.

FOR INFORMATION

CONTACT: Shelly Schwitek, Chief Administrative Officer
Rural Municipality of Grahamdale
Box 160, 23 Government Road,
Moosehorn, MB R0C 2E0
Phone: 204-768-2858
Email: rm606@grahamdale.ca

A copy of the above proposal and supporting material may be inspected at the location noted above during normal office hours, Monday to Friday.

Copies may be made and extracts taken therefrom, upon request.

To participate via phone or videoconferencing, please contact the R.M. of Grahamdale Municipal Office at least 24 hours prior to the beginning of the hearing.

Note: Property owners are responsible for notifying lessee

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office@evergreenbasicneeds.com
Or drop off at 71 4th Ave in Gimli

BIRTHDAY



Happy 90th Birthday
on January 25th
Elsie Dola

-Love your family

SHOWER/SOCIAL ANNOUNCEMENT



Please join us for the
Bridal Shower of
Morgan Sumka
Bride-elect of Dylan Stobert
on Saturday, February 8th at 1 p.m.
at Arborg Community Hall
The couple is registered at
Arborg Home Hardware and myregistry.com
They would also graciously accept gift cards
from Costco, Walmart and Home Hardware
Donations may be made at
Home Hardware,
Arborg Co-op or Riverton Co-op
Social event to follow at 8 p.m.

IN MEMORIAM



Joyce Kolach
September 16, 1935 to January 19, 2024
One year has passed and we still feel you near.
What we shared will never go away.....
-Love Brenda (Nick) Kochan,
Tannis (Pete) Yuzwa,
Lisa (Todd) Mazur
and families

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IN MEMORIAM



Alan McMillan

One year ago, on January 20th, 2024, you suddenly left this earthly realm and soared upward past the stars and into the heavens. Without you, life will never be the same, but I carry the memories of you safely inside my heart where you will live forever. Until we meet again my darling Al, may you gently rest in peace.

-Your loving wife,
Marilyn

IN MEMORIAM



Betty Carson
January 17, 2024
Kenneth Carson
November 30, 2020

May the winds of love blow softly,
And whisper so you can hear;
We will always love and miss you,
And wish that you were here.

-Lovingly remembered by your children,
James, Connie, Susan and Patricia
and our extended family

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IN MEMORIAM



Colin Rosman Bjarnason
October 26, 1950 – January 22, 2024

A year has gone by since we lost you.
A loving Husband, Father and Afi.
Those we love don't go away,
They walk beside us every day;
Unseen, unheard, but always near,
Still loved, still missed, and forever dear.

-Forever in our hearts,
your family

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 2 years-day and night
You are in my soul and heart
There you never will part
Lots of kisses to you from me
Yes-two hearts one love will always be.

-Miss you, Love you
Gordon

MUNICIPALITY OF BIFROST-RIVERTON

UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE PLANNING ACT

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

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

THE MUNICIPALITY OF BIFROST-RIVERTON BY-LAW NO. **05-2024**
Being an amendment to the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton Zoning By-law No. 04-2024.

HEARING LOCATION: Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton Council Chambers
329 River Road, Arborg, MB

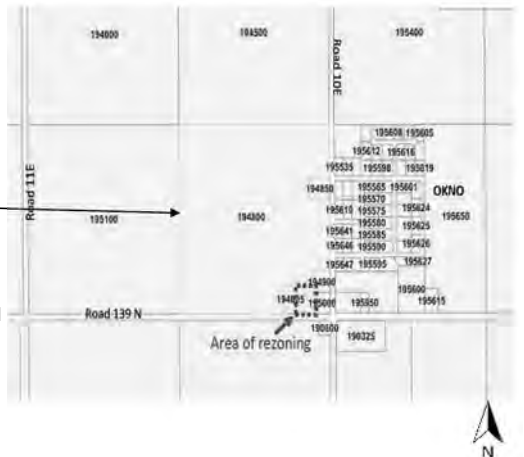
DATE & TIME: February 13, 2025
9:00 am

APPLICATION: MBR-24-05R

AFFECTED AREA: Pt. SE ¼ 10-24-02 EPM
Being Proposed Lot 1 &
Proposed Lot 2
Pt. Roll No. 194800

GENERAL INTENT: To rezone an area in the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton "AL" Agricultural Limited Zone to "GD" General Development Zone as per condition of subdivision approval.

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Nancy Thom, CMMA
Chief Administration Officer / Development Officer
Eastern Interlake Planning District
62-2nd Ave, Box 1758 Gimli, MB R0C 1B0 Ph: 204-642-5478 Fax: 204-642-4061
Email: eipd@mymts.net Web: www.interlakeplanning.com



A copy of the by-law may be provided/inspected at the location noted above during normal office hours, Monday to Friday. Alternatively, a copy of the information may be emailed upon request.

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

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OBITUARY



Irene Kwasiuk (nee Krupnik)

On January 10, 2025, Mom passed away peacefully in her sleep. She is survived by her son, Lenny; sisters-in-law Emily Deneka, Jean Lewicki, Francis (Walter) Chobotar and nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her husband Walter; parents Peter and Mary Krupnik; grandparents Michael and Anna Klym; her in-laws Stefan and Mary Kwasiuk, Nettie and Paul Smolinski, Metro Deneka and nephew Vaughn Chobotar.

Mom was born on August 6, 1934 in Fraserwood, Manitoba. She attended Fraserwood Elementary School, Teulon Collegiate and United College (U of W). She graduated from Teacher's College and taught school for 24 years. During her career, she taught in Okno, Ledwyn (Tarno), Shorncliffe and for 14 years at Riverton Elementary School.

Mom and Dad were married September 3, 1955 and moved to Sioux Lookout. They soon returned and bought Dad's parents' farm in Ledwyn. As well as her teaching, Mom worked with Dad on the farm especially during the summer, raking hay and hauling bales. She also had a large garden and there was always a lot of canning and freezing going on come fall. Mom was a member of the Arborg St. Philips Ladies Aid for many years. She was a member of the Arborg Hospital Auxiliary where she served for a time as President. She really enjoyed delivering "Meals on Wheels".

Mom enjoyed cooking and she and Dad prepared large "Ukrainian style" meals at Christmas and Easter for many years, for gatherings with family and friends. Those were fun times for her. After retiring to Arborg, Mom and Dad's morning would always start with enjoying coffee with their friends at the Co-op or Chicken Chef. Mom enjoyed travelling and she and Dad took many trips together throughout Canada, the U.S. and a couple trips into Mexico. She also had a lot of fun going on day trips to the casino with Dad and their friends.

Later on in Mom's life, many people were involved in her health care. I would especially like to thank all the staff at the Arborg Hospital, Home Care, Mary Thorarinson Assisted Living and the Arborg PCH for all the incredible care and kindness they showed to my mom.

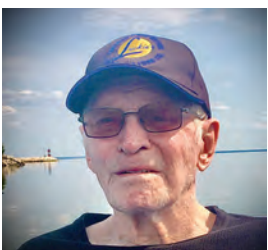
A funeral service was held on Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. at Silver Hall, Silver, Manitoba.

In lieu of flowers, a donation can be made to the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba or to the charity of your choice.

MACKENZIE FUNERAL HOME STONEWALL
 (204) 467-2525 • info@mackenziefh.com



OBITUARY



John Henry Selkirk July 8, 1932 - January 13, 2025

Our family is saddened to announce the peaceful passing of our husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather at the age of 92 on Monday,

January 13, 2025 at the Stonewall Rosewood Lodge PCH with family by his side.

Dad was the eldest of six children of William and Louise Selkirk of Pine Dock, Manitoba. John is predeceased by his father William, mother Louise, and siblings Alexander (Sandy), Isabel (Polly Ann), Harvey (Chuck), Shirley, and George (Geordie).

John is survived by his loving wife of 68 years, Joan, and their children, son Keith (Geraldine), children Shayna, Nolan, Colin and Kohdy, son Bernard, daughter Geraldine (Rick), children Dana and Cole, daughter Lynnette, children Travis, Brendan and Jaceen, son Darren children Jenna, Jane, Jake, Alison and their mother Shara, 14 great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

Born and raised in Pine Dock, John met and married our mother Joan on March 23, 1957 and enjoyed most of their 68 years together in Pine Dock living along the lake. Dad was an extremely hard worker and started doing what he loved the most, fishing with his dad from the age of eight and then with his youngest brother Geordie, son Bernard and nephew Wilfred until his health changed at the age of 86. Dad was an active community member as Mayor for many years and owned the gas station where he met and made many friends. Dad's other talents were logging, sawmill, construction and freighting on the ice. It was his health that moved him south to stay with his daughter Geraldine and later to Arborg PCH then to Stonewall PCH. The family wishes to thank everyone at the Arborg PCH and Stonewall Rosewood Lodge PCH for their wonderful, kind and considerate care during our dad's stay.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, January 25, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. in the Riverton Community Hall.

Gone Fishing

I've finished all my life's chores, and now I fish on heaven's shores.

The view is grand and the fishing's great, but I yearn for you as I wait.

Tributes: www.gilbartfuneralhome.com

Gilbart Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



In Loving Memory of Alan Arthur Springer (1953 - 2025)

With heavy hearts, we announce the sudden passing of Alan Arthur Springer on January 15, 2025.

He will be deeply missed by his daughter Julie (Robert), his son Alan (Erin), and his cherished grandchildren, Emmett and Addison.

Born on December 6, 1953, Dad grew up on a small farm, where he developed a deep respect for the land. In 1976 he married the love of his life, Darlene, bought a farm, and welcomed their first child, Julie. In 1980, their family was completed with the arrival of their son, Alan Jr.

As a lifelong farmer, Dad found purpose and pride in working the fields, nurturing the earth, and providing for his family and community. He possessed a gift for conversation, with a unique ability to share stories and make connections with old friends and strangers alike. Dad was a jokester with the most infectious laugh.

Dad is predeceased by his loving wife, Darlene; his parents Arthur and Alma; in-laws Agust and Mary; his sister Shirley; and his brothers-in-law Cecil, John, Roy, and Allan.

Left to mourn are his brothers Donnie (Cheryl) and Wayne; his in-laws Sveinn (Vicky), Ben (Milly), Marie (Nick), Donna (Raymond), Glenn (Audrey), Dennis (Laura), Ken (Gwen), Maeva (Tim), Esther, and Donna; along with many nieces, nephews, extended family, and friends.

As per Alan's wishes, cremation has taken place, and a private service will be held at a later date.

When someone you love becomes a memory, that memory becomes a treasure.

Arrangements by:

ARNASON FUNERAL HOME

Ashern - Lundar

1.204.768.2072

OBITUARY



In Loving Memory Of Jessie Merilla Crate

April 15, 1948 - January 12, 2025

After a brave battle, on January 12, 2025, our mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and sister passed away peacefully at the Health Sciences Centre, at the age of 75 years.

Jessie leaves to mourn, her daughters, Arlene (Chris) and Denise (Stan); grandchildren, Rendall (Aimee), Jessica, Tracey and Lance; her great-grandchildren, Raya, Jaxx, Kyrel and Creeson. Left to miss her are her sisters, Eunice Cochrane, Bev Cochrane, Karen (Gary) Hubar, Gloria McPherson and GERALYNN COCHRANE; as well as many nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Jessie was predeceased by her first husband, Vernon Spence; her second husband, Delmar Crate; her parents, Ed and Kay Cochrane; siblings, Don and Doreen McPherson, Bryan and Jessie Cochrane, Ellis and his first wife, Lorraine and her brother, Gordo McPherson.

Following Jessie's wishes, cremation has taken place. A memorial service and gathering will be held at a later date.

Arrangements Entrusted To
 ANDERSON FAMILY FUNERAL HOME

Ashern, Manitoba 204 768 3606

www.andersonfamilyfuneralhome.ca

OBITUARY



Alexander (Alex) Karish

November 9, 1939 - to January 14, 2025

Husband, father and Papa, Alex passed away peacefully. He leaves to mourn his sons Kelly (Julie) and Rocky (Nancy) and precious grandchildren Braden, Sarah and Madison, his sisters Helen (Ken) and Lucille, brothers Martin and Peter (Lois), treasure nieces and nephews and their children.

Alex was predeceased by his beloved wife and best friend Gladys, his mother and father Teenie and Henry Karish and brother Eddie Karish.

Born and raised in Fraserwood on the family farm, Alex worked hard and played hard. As a young man, he met the love of his life at a Crabby Steve's barn dance and together they started their family. Raising their two boys Kelly and Rocky on their own farm in Gimli, Alex had a number of jobs supporting his young family.

His proudest moment was in the 1980's when he embarked on his career as a small business owner operating Inwood Transfer. He and Gladys thrived during their time living in Inwood and enjoyed being a part of the community so much that Alex never stopped his visits to Rosie's Cafe even after moving back to Gimli in 2014.

Alex enjoyed tending his roses in Inwood and was an avid fisherman. He loved to drive the countryside looking for wildlife and spring was only official when the first pussy willow was found. Guitar playing and music were passions but what Alex loved the most was his grandchildren Madison, Sarah and Braden.

The family would like to thank the best neighbour Doris, the staff at Seniors' Resource, the folks at Meals On Wheels, and the staff at Gimli Hospital for their care.

The family will be holding a private service at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to St. Francis Cemetery, P.O. Box 116, Fraserwood, MB. R0C 1A0.

Memorial tributes may be made to www.neilbardalfuneralhome.com



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OBITUARY



Brooke Elizabeth Erickson
May 16, 1992 - December 9, 2024

It is with unimaginable sadness that we announce the passing of our beloved daughter, sister, and friend, Brooke Elizabeth Erickson, on Monday, December 9th, 2024.

Brooke was predeceased by her grandparents, Larry and Megan (Scharf), and John and Bella (Erickson), Uncle Bob (Klassen); and her cousin, Dayna Hartog.

She is survived by her parents, Lorne and Chrissie Erickson; her brother, Keevin Erickson (Taylor); her great uncles and aunts, Jim Scharf, Rick (Sharon) Scharf, Liz (Leo) Duri; her uncles and aunts, Raymond (Susan) Erickson, Eva Lavallee, Joyce Klassen, Val Erickson (Bob Montague), Dennis (Diane) Scharf. Brooke will also be lovingly remembered by her cousins: Jill and Derek Klassen; Heidi (Kevin), Mackenzie, Gavin, Oakley, and Braxton Sweetland;

Taryn (Jarod) and Sara (Kalki) Montague; Derek (Sophie) and Edward Scharf; Jackie and Susan Scharf; Danny Erickson and Curtis, Kyle, Cody, Lisa, and Candace Hartog; and countless friends.

Brooke was a vibrant, adventurous, and resilient spirit. Growing up in Lundar, she cherished her summers camping at Lundar Beach and spending time on her grandparents' farm. Her love for Camp Wannakumbac began at age 11, first as a camper and later as a dedicated camp counselor until she was 19. Music became her passion in her teenage years, fueling countless plans to attend concerts with friends, whether in Winnipeg, on road trips around Manitoba, or even as far as Edmonton. After graduating high school, Brooke spent a year in Winnipeg before moving to Vancouver to study film and music business at the Pacific Audio Visual Institute. Her deep love for music extended to volunteering at festivals across Canada, including in Kelowna, Toronto, Victoria, and Vancouver. Most notably, she served on the volunteer board for the Vancouver Folk Festival for the last decade, a role she was immensely proud of.

Brooke's love of live music introduced her to countless people over the years, many of them from Vancouver, whom she became dear friends. Her passion for concerts and festivals took her across Canada and into the United States, where she forged lifelong friendships. Similarly, she enjoyed her time working in the restaurant industry throughout the years, but what she valued most were the wonderful friends she made along the way. She cherished these connections and made every effort to stay in touch, nurturing relationships with warmth and care. She embraced everyone she met with an open heart, never judging differences but celebrating them with kindness and understanding.

Brooke had a deep love of travel, especially when it meant exploring the world with her family. From cruises to the Caribbean and Alaska to road trips across British Columbia, she cherished every adventure. She traveled to Nova Scotia, Niagara Falls, Montreal and Las Vegas, and even took a memorable drive across Canada. Each journey was an opportunity to create lasting memories with her loved ones, reflecting her adventurous spirit and the special bond she shared with her family.

On September 1, 2020, Brooke faced a life-altering accident, yet her determination and resilience shone through. After a year of intensive rehabilitation, she returned to the life she loved in Vancouver, continuing her recovery with weekly physiotherapy. Her strength and courage were an inspiration to all who knew her. Brooke treasured life's moments, creating precious memories with friends and family, especially over the past 4 ½ years. Her vibrant spirit, unwavering kindness, and ability to bring people together will forever be remembered by those whose lives she touched.

Brooke was a ray of sunshine wherever she went. Her colorful personality and vibrant hair lit up every room, and her kind and giving spirit left an impression on everyone she met. Brooke's strength, perseverance, and fearlessness will forever remain with those who loved her.

She was many things to her family and friends: a loving daughter, a devoted sister, a fishing and hunting buddy, a talented chef, and a concert companion. Brooke's vibrant presence brought joy and laughter to countless lives.

The family wishes to express their heartfelt gratitude for the outpouring of love and support during this difficult time. Your kindness and compassion have been a source of strength as we navigate this immense loss.

A service to celebrate Brooke's life will be held on Saturday, February 1st, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. at the Lundar Legion. There will also be a Celebration of Life held in Vancouver, BC at a later date.

Though she has left this world far too soon, her light will never fade. She lived with passion, love, and a fearless joy that we will carry in our hearts forever. She would want us to laugh, to dance, to love deeply, and to embrace every moment as she did. In her honor, let us live boldly, love fiercely, and never take a single day for granted. Her song continues in all of us.

Arrangements by:
ARNASON FUNERAL HOME
Ashern - Lundar
1.204.768.2072
1.866.323.3593

OBITUARY



**In Loving Memory of
Cameron John Bellingham ("Cam")**
7 January 1956 - 14 January 2025

It is with profound sadness and heavy hearts that we announce the sudden passing of Cam Bellingham, who left us on January 14, 2025 after a brief but courageous battle with cancer. He had just turned 69 years old. Cam was a beloved husband, father, son, brother, and friend whose legacy of love, kindness, and strength will forever be cherished by all who knew him.

A Life Well-Lived

Cam was born on January 7, 1956 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. He grew up in a loving family where he learned the values of hard work, compassion, and integrity. These values would guide him throughout his life, both personally and in the career world.

Achievements

A man of great intellect and determination, Cam pursued upward mobility with unwavering enthusiasm. In grade school he was a talented Junior Achiever, and later he graduated from CDI College with a diploma in accounting. He spent many years as a Lead Hand in the paint shop at Palliser Furniture, followed by a job at Statistics Canada in his pre-retirement years. Cam's colleagues remember him as a brilliant, witty-minded person with a wry sense of humor. He was a good person who always made the time to share his knowledge and wisdom with his associates.

Family and Personal Life

Despite his work-related achievements, Cam's greatest pride and joy was always his family. Cam was predeceased by his parents, Guy Kenneth Bellingham and Carol Ann Currie. He married the love of his life, his second wife Audrey Swift, on July 1, 2012. Together they built a home filled with love, laughter, and unwavering support. Cam was a devoted father to his son Josh and to Audrey's daughters Selina and Tiffany. Cam's baby granddaughter Callie was the most recent apple of his eye. Cam's love for them all was evident in everything he did. Whether it was attending school events, cheering them on at sports events, or simply spending quality time together, Cam was always there, a pillar of strength and guidance for the family at all times.

Community Involvement

Cam was also deeply committed to his community. He volunteered countless hours for the numerous churches he belonged to over the years and previously spent eight years volunteering with the Gimli Environmental Advisory Committee (GEAC). More recently, Cam was the volunteer projectionist at Bayview Church, and he served as the inventory manager with the Gimli Wave Youth Drop-In. He was always striving to make a positive impact. His generosity and selflessness touched the lives of many, and he was known for his willingness to lend a helping hand to those in need.

A Battle Bravely Fought

In November 2024, Cam was diagnosed with an aggressive form of bone cancer. True to his nature, he faced this challenge with remarkable courage and strength. Throughout his illness, Cam remained positive and hopeful, inspiring those around him with his strength and determination. He never allowed his illness to define him. His bravery in the face of adversity was a testament to his character and to the incredible person that he was.

Remembering Cam

Cam's passing leaves a void that can never be filled, but his memory will live on in the hearts of everyone who knew him. Cam is survived by his loving wife Audrey Swift; his children Josh Bellingham (Kira), Selina Swift (Devin), and Tiffany Swift (James); his granddaughter Callie; his sisters Dale Bellingham Gershuny and Tracey Fulcher (Tim); and a host of extended family and friends. Though he may no longer be with us in body, his spirit will continue to guide and inspire us.

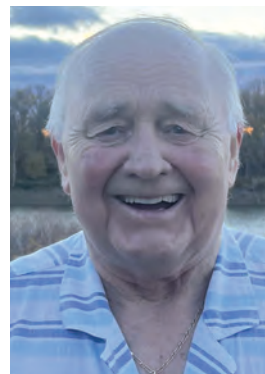
Celebration of Life

A private Celebration of Life will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to CancerCare Manitoba in Cam's memory, to continue his legacy of helping others.

Final Words

Cam's life was a testament to the power of love, kindness, and determination. He touched the lives of many, and his absence will be deeply felt. As we mourn his passing, let us also celebrate the beautiful life he lived and the indelible mark he left on our hearts. Rest in peace, Cam. You will be always loved, forever missed, but never forgotten.

OBITUARY



Kenneth Orval Hildebrand

Kenneth Orval Hildebrand, born on September 27, 1944 in Snowflake, Manitoba, passed away unexpectedly on December 26, 2024, at the age of 80.

Ken is survived by his wife of over 55 years, Vicki; his children Kris (Kristine), Erin (Chris), and Danielle (Jeff); and his grandchildren Josh, Arianna, Andrew, Timothy, Kara, Jacob, Ellie, Garrett and Jayedon. He is also survived by his brother Art (Judy), sister Emily (Ralph), and many nieces, nephews, friends and their families.

He was predeceased by his parents, Adolph and Alvina, sisters Edna (William), Ruth (Art) and Velma (Joe) as well as brother Albert (Gladys).

Ken grew up in Langruth, Manitoba and found his career in aviation with Shell Canada, which took him across western Canada and beyond. Known for his ability to make friends easily,

Ken always had a "guy" for everything.

A lifelong athlete and avid handyman, Ken enjoyed baseball, hockey, curling, golf, pickleball, DIY-ing and gardening. His warmth, generosity, and love for socializing and connecting with people will be deeply missed.

A Memorial Service will be held at Langruth Lutheran Church on Saturday, February 15, 2025 at 11:00 a.m., followed by lunch at Langruth Community Hall.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Alzheimer Society Manitoba. The family invites condolences posted at: edenbrookcemetery.ca

Eden Brook Funeral Home

Your memory will live forever Engraved within our hearts

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OBITUARY



Dimetro Dan Halkowich
April 7, 1940 - January 17, 2025

On the morning of January 17, 2025, Dan Halkowich passed away at the Health Sciences Centre.

He will be forever missed, but not forgotten, by his wife Corleen; his children Adrienne and Lee (Tammy); his grandchildren Bostyn, Connor, Ella, Sarah (David) and Roenick (Dania); his sister Ellen and his brother Roman (Jeannette); as well as his nieces, nephews and many, many friends.

He was predeceased by his parents Wasyl and Aleksandra; his sisters, Leona, Ann, and Mary; and his brother John.

Dan was born and raised on a farm in St. Martin, MB and lived in the area his entire life. He farmed for many years with his brothers and then operated Dan's Esso, a gas station and restaurant at St Martin Junction, with his wife for the rest of his working life. After

they sold their business you could find Dan fishing, golfing or hunting. If you didn't see him doing that, he was in his garden or cutting grass. In the fall he would say the garden would be smaller next year, but in the spring he would plant even more. Dan also had a knack for woodworking, and he spent many hours passing the cold winter days creating his masterpieces.

He loved the mountains and spent many vacations driving to the Rocky Mountains with his family. He even made it to Alaska which was one of the places that he always wanted to visit.

The family would like to extend special thanks to the staff at Dauphin Hospital, Ashern Hospital and Health Sciences Centre.

In keeping with his wishes, cremation has taken place and no service will be held.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the St. Martin Cemetery Committee, Box 17, St. Martin, MB, ROC 2T0.

Arrangements by:
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Your memory will live forever Engraved within our hearts

OBITUARY



Cody Donald Ladouceur
August 9, 1993 - January 12, 2025

Our family is saddened to announce the sudden passing of our beloved son, brother, fiancée, father, uncle, nephew, cousin at the age of 31 at Matheson Island, where he was presently living with his family.

Cody is predeceased by his sister Colette and maternal grandfather Donald Ladouceur and grandmother Debrah Ladouceur. Paternal grandparents Harry and Ruby Cook and many other ancestors.

Cody is survived by his fiancée Gabriella and their children, Mason and Sofia Ladouceur; mother Ramona Ladouceur (John Robert), father Harry Cook Jr (Linda), and siblings Quentin, Rudy, Trevor (Ivanna) Harveil, Harry III, Ruby, Lorinda, nephew Logan and Grandma Pat.

He enjoyed having game nights with friends and family. He found so much joy in cooking for the people he loved, some favourites include, pizza, bbqing and cooking on the bonfire during the summer days. He loved to take his kids swimming, family outings were so important to him. The museums, planetarium, and science gallery were Cody and Mason's favourite. He was so full of life and was always willing to take on a new adventure. He made sure everyone was included and felt loved. He showed so much love to his kids and fiancée, always made sure his kids were first priority. He was always such a jokester and would be the first in the room to crack a joke to make you laugh. He loved speaking about the stars and planets, where he now continues his journey.

Memorial service will be held on January 23, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. in the Gilbert Funeral Chapel, Selkirk.

Tributes: www.gilbartfuneralhome.com

Gilbart Funeral Home, Selkirk in care of arrangements.



OBITUARY



Annie Louise Scharf

It is with heavy hearts, our mom, wife, grandma and great-grandma born May 27, 1932 passed away January 17, 2025 with her family by her side.

Mom was predeceased by her husband Gerald Leslie on May 18, 2023.

She leaves to mourn her children, Robert (Muriel), Marge (Don) Harder, Ralph (Linda), Pat (Jim) Hillier, Teresa (Robert) Reynolds, Beth Scharf, and Paul Scharf; 19 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren; sister Rose Koval; brothers Bill (Joyce) McKnight and Harry McKnight, as well as numerous nieces and nephews and special friends Jim and Doris Hunter.

Cremation has taken place, and a family graveside service will be held.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Diabetes Canada or West Park Manor Garden Fund.

We wish to thank West Park Manor management and staff for their care and compassion.

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