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EXPRESS PHOTO BY CORRINE EINARSSON

The sliding hill near the railway tracks in Arborg was a great place to play on a day off from school. Pictured from left to right are Leo Chomokovski, Annika Chomokovski and Leah Bobbee.

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ROGer's Rhythmic Rumble getting set for musical battle Feb. 15

Call out to musicians: \$500 grand prize

By Patricia Barrett

Eriksdale is getting set to rock with battling bands, high energy performers and plenty of musical chops when the 2nd Annual ROGer's Rhythmic Rumble gets underway in a few weeks.

The rumble is a friendly music competition that will showcase local and area talent and help raise money for the ROGerKimLee Music Festival this summer. The rumble is open to all musicians, including solo artists, full piece bands and musicians with original work and cover songs.

The Eriksdale Music & Custom Frame Shop, a retail music store, sound equipment rental and arts hub, is hosting the rumble. The music store is owned and operated by Derrick McCandless and Dawn Mills.

McCandless said the rumble is one of their pet projects and is held in honour of three musicians and friends, Roger Young, David Kim Russell and Tony Leon Oreniuk, all of whom have sadly passed away.

"We were very, very dear friends," said McCandless. "It's kind of neat because we have Roger's stepson

playing with his band in the battle of the bands, and Lee's friends are playing as well. That's very cool."

The rumble is a musical offshoot of the ROGerKimLee Music Festival, an annual event that's held in August. The rumble will help raise funds for the festival.

The music shop, which provides sound-equipment rentals, will be supplying the sound system for the rumble, and McCandless said they'll be stepping in as roadies to get everything ready for big night.

"It's a bit of a project for us. We're organizing the rumble and running the music store at the same time," said McCandless. "And we're supplying a good-sized sound system for the rumble. We'll be setting it all up and tearing it all down."

Passionate about the arts, McCandless and Mills transformed a local shop in to the Eriksdale Music & Custom Frame Shop, a creative centre that sells instruments, offers music lessons, handmade pottery and custom picture-framing services. It also brings together community musicians through Saturday afternoon jams, boot camps in the summer and live music events.

Not only will the rumble showcase Eriksdale and local talent, but it will



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Derrick McCandless and Sound Horizontal perform at the 2024 RRRumble.

also provide musicians with a prize, prime festival spot and bragging rights.

"There's a \$500 prize for the best band, and they'll earn a prestigious playing spot at the RogerKimLee Music Festival, on the Friday or Saturday evening, which is a pretty good spot," said McCandless.

Jude McCudden, a volunteer with the music festival, said the rumble brings together talent from Eriksdale and beyond.

"In its second year hosting the Roger's Rhythmic Rumble, [the festival] has collaborated with the Eriksdale community's Winter Carnival to offer a great night out ... where musicians compete in a fun and friendly event for a \$500 prize," said McCudden. "This is a perfect opportunity for local and Manitoba performers to show

their talent while you sit back with refreshments and friends in the warmth of Eriksdale's Rec Hall without driving too far."

The 2024 rumble featured rock, blues, a solo saxophonist from Ukraine, a guitarist from Clarkleigh and a young songwriter.

The 2nd Annual ROGer's Rhythmic Rumble is set for Saturday, Feb. 15 at the Eriksdale Recreation Hall. It will start at 8:30 p.m. with entry by donation.

For more information or to enter the competition, call the Eriksdale Music & Custom Frame Shop at 431-334-7558.

For more information about the festival, scheduled for Aug. 15-17, email: rogerkimleemusicfest@gmail.com or visit www.rogerkimleemusicfest.com

RM of Grahamdale holding public hearing on joining Western Interlake Planning District


By Patricia Barrett

The RM of Grahamdale will be holding a public hearing next week to consider public feedback to its application to join the Western Interlake Planning District, which would take responsibility for the administration

of the RM's building and planning regulations.

The RM of Grahamdale wants to join the WIPD in order to tap in to shared

Continued on page 3



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Kahleigh's Brew Barn defends Best Poutine title

By Jo-Anne Procter

Attention food lovers. It's that time of year again. La Poutine Week has rolled around, and this celebration of Canada's beloved dish is turning up the heat in kitchens nationwide.

From Feb. 1 to 7, restaurants are unleashing their culinary creativity with unique twists on poutine that will tantalize your taste buds.

One standout location making waves this week is Kahleigh's Brew Barn in Riverton. They have crafted an irresistible creation called the 'Sweet Home Manitoba' poutine.

Their feature poutine is an elevated version of their Crispy Chicken Honey Dill Fries. These classic KBB McCain fries grown in Manitoba are topped with cheese curds, mozzarella cheese, warmed Manitoba-made honey dill sauce, crispy chicken, applewood smoked bacon crumble and fresh dill.

This a dish you aren't going to want to miss out on that promises flavours that celebrate local ingredients while pushing creative boundaries.

In 2024, Kahleigh's Brew Barn earned impressive accolades — ranking No. 1 in Manitoba and landing an incredible No. 3 nationally.

With just a couple of days left to experience this mouth-watering delight, there's no better time than now to dive into the deliciousness.

Customers are encouraged to vote for their poutine after their meal by visiting www.lapoutineweek.com. Create an account in one minute, find the restaurant you're looking for and vote.

The Best Poutine Award is presented to the top restaurant in each region that wins the title. The top five regional winners are selected by customer votes, and the final rankings are determined by a panel of three judges. The top five national winners are determined from the highest-ranked regional winners.

The Riverton restaurant is open seven days a week from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Monday to Saturday, and from noon to 8 p.m. on Sundays.



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Kahleigh's Brew Barn in Riverton will be serving their Sweet Home Manitoba poutine that they created for La Poutine Week that runs Feb. 1-7.

> HEARING, FROM PG. 2

resources and ensure consistency for developers in the region, said the RM's administrative assistant Justin Shannon.

"Amending the regulation and officially joining the WIPD means becoming a permanent member of the planning district," said Shannon. "The value of a planning district is that it allows municipalities to pool resources to hire planning staff and a building inspector. Having a shared staff and eventually a shared development plan also means there is more consistency for developers within the region."

The RM has had a contract with the WIPD since Jan 1, 2024, to administer its planning matters.

"The WIPD issues our development and building permits and administers our zoning bylaw, organizing any hearing required under the planning act for variance orders, conditional use orders, zoning bylaw amendments etc.," said Shannon. "These public hearings still take place before the RM of Grahamdale council, with council making decisions on whether or not to approve their application."

A public hearing is required under the Planning Act when applying to change the membership of a planning district, said Shannon.

"Its purpose is to demonstrate to the

province that the RM of Grahamdale has given our residents and ratepayers the opportunity to be heard on joining the WIPD," he said.

The public hearing will be held in Moosehorn in RM council chambers at 23 Government Rd. on Thursday, Feb. 6 at 2 p.m.

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Interlake manufacturing, farming and fishing sectors weigh in on tariff concerns

Trump pauses promised tariffs for 30 days after speaking with Trudeau and Mexico's president

By Patricia Barrett

Before American president Donald Trump made good on his promise last Saturday to impose a 25 per cent tariff (a tax) on all Canadian goods sent to the U.S., people in the manufacturing, farming and fishing sectors in the Interlake weighed in on how tariffs could possibly impact them and how they're responding.

Diemo Machine Works north of Arborg is a privately owned and operated custom machining and fabricating manufacturer that works with various types of materials (e.g., carbon steel, stainless steel and aluminum), and provides products to industries such as oil and gas, transportation, agriculture, mining and construction across North and South America.

Allan Friesen, Diemo's director of strategic initiatives and procurement, said tariffs will likely hurt the company, but they're expecting them to cause a minimal amount of pain. It's Canada's counter-tariffs they're worried about.

"The tariffs from the U.S. would hurt us, but they wouldn't be that big of a deal," said Friesen last Thursday. "What we're concerned about are counter-tariffs from our side. If the



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Diemo's laser, shown here in 2019, cuts sheet metal. The Interlake manufacturer sends 70-80 per cent of its products to the U.S.

Canadian government does not put tariffs on, we'd be fine. The reason manufacturers are concerned about counter-tariffs has to do with the difference between the Canadian and U.S. dollars. Our dollar compared to the U.S. is currently at \$1.44 or thereabouts. With that exchange rate, we have such an advantage over American competitors that we could still be fine with the [American] tariff. Putting our own tariff on could kill Canadian businesses."

Diemo sends about 70-80 per cent of its products to the U.S., said Friesen, and the company is almost 100 per cent dependent on the U.S. market.

Lobbying the government to refrain from put counter-tariffs on American goods is one thing manufacturers could do and they can also look for

alternative markets, he said.

Diemo is currently looking at other market options.

"We will be looking for Canadian customers and new markets. We are certainly exploring our options and opportunities in Canada, and we're working with some potential opportunities right now," said Friesen.

Grain farmer Gordon Klym, who farms in the Ledwyn area in the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton, said the threatened tariffs will affect the agriculture industry in the Interlake.

"We still don't know what the tariffs will be or what products they'll be applied to," said Klym, the day before Trump signed the tariff order, "but I do know they'll affect us; there will be a financial impact on ag producers."

A lot of beans, for instance, are exported to the U.S. and producers in

the Interlake have increased bean acreage over the last number of years, he said.

"There will likely be quite an impact on their bottom line because the elevators we sell to will not be shouldering the losses from a possible 25 per cent tariff. Elevators can't afford to do that," said Klym. "It will end up coming back on us farmers."

But farmers also "can't afford" to take on extra costs associated with tariffs, and they'll be faced with some difficult choices.

"Farmers are always at the bottom of the list; everybody takes their cut and whatever is left over is what the farmer gets," said Klym. "Farmers will be faced with a choice: they can either quit growing those products or sell at a loss."

Canadian ag producers could also look at markets other than the U.S., he said, despite the U.S. being a "big market" for them. Canada already ships agricultural products overseas to Europe, Asia and elsewhere, but overseas shipping comes with extra transportation costs whereas shipping to America doesn't.

As to how he's coping with Trump's tariff threat, Klym said he's been in the farming business for far too many years to get anxious about times of uncertainty.

Lake Winnipeg commercial fisher and analyst Bill Buckels said the pain delivered from tariffs on the Manitoba fishing industry could be relative when considering "normal cycles" of economic uncertainty in the industry.

"In the fishing business, we've always had bad seasons just like in the farming business," said Buckels last

Continued on page 8

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Ashern wellness centre should be opening June 1

By Becca Myskiw

The Ashern Wellness Centre is set to open to the public on June 1 this year. Phase 1 of the new facility will be completed this spring, making it available for the community to use this summer.

The Lakeshore Regional Wellness Commission (LRWC) is overseeing the \$1.5-million project, which aims to provide a variety of physical activity options for the community. Last week, LRWC announced a \$100,000 grant from the Manitoba government for the construction, with group vice-president Scott Cameron stating that this funding will help them complete the first phase of the project.

“This grant will allow us to hopefully satisfy the requirements and open the doors to the public,” he said. “It’s the big push that we needed to ensure the doors stay open.”

The new wellness centre is being developed in the space where the Ashern curling rink once stood. The renovation includes numerous upgrades, such as new bathrooms, change rooms, locker spaces, a large meeting room and a sauna in the basement. The upper level has also been completely renovated, featuring a new bathroom, a walking track, a shuffleboard court and more. With the announcement of the grant, LRWC provided an update on the progress of the wellness centre. Currently, they are focused on finalizing details in the basement, includ-

ing the addition of fixtures, lighting, baseboards, benches and other elements needed to satisfy permits. The field house is nearing completion, with the tin and walls finished. However, major work remains to be completed there. The boiler system for the field house has been installed, but the headers and manifolds for the in-floor heating system still need to be put in place. An accessible ramp system is also being constructed, and the field house bathroom requires completion.

Cameron confirmed that everything is on track to meet the June 1 opening date. Phase 1 of the wellness centre project emphasizes renovations, accessibility and optimizing all levels of the facility for functionality and usability for everyone. Phases two and three will focus on further improvements, such as replacing the current concrete gym floor in the field house with proper gym flooring.

“It’s incredible because we have been impatiently waiting and going through the steps of this project,” said Cameron. “Realistically, it’s just around the corner now, which feels amazing. It’s been a massive project that’s taken a lot of effort, a lot of work and a lot of funds.”

As the wellness centre project is being completed in phases, LRWC is actively continuing its fundraising efforts. Cameron mentioned that they are looking for their next fundraising opportunity, which will take place



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Ashern wellness centre is slated to open June 1, thanks for a provincial government grant.

on March 1 when they host the CFRY Radio Amateur Talent Show at the Ashern Centennial Hall. This annual competition showcases local talents performing live on the radio, each contestant gathering pledges before and during the event to raise funds for a local organization — in this case, LRWC. He expressed excitement about hosting the event this year, not only to raise funds for the wellness centre but also to create a space for community connection.

Until June 1, LRWC has a temporary use permit for the upper level of the Ashern Wellness Centre, allowing that area of the facility to be used by the community.

“It’s been a long time since the board got together and made this dream,” said Cameron. “It’s crazy how time flies. It’s been a lot of work to get where we are today, and it’s going to be rewarding to cut that ribbon and get everyone in.”

Gimli RCMP investigating shots fired at vehicle in Riverton

By Annaliese Meier

Gimli RCMP responded to a report of shots fired in the community of Riverton at approximately 12:30 a.m. on Jan. 22.

Officers responded immediately, and while en route, learned that a victim had departed and was heading towards Gimli. They met him on Highway 8.

The 27-year-old male driver, from

the RM of Bifrost, and his 22-year-old female passenger, from Riverton, were both uninjured.

The victim reported that he had been parked outside the Riverton hockey arena when the suspect approached and fired a weapon, striking both the driver’s side and rear windows.

The 30-year-old male suspect, also from Riverton and known to both individuals in the truck, fled the scene.

He was later arrested without incident at a residence located south of Riverton.

During the initial investigation, officers determined that the passenger, Erika Reydal, 22, was also involved in the shooting. As a result, she was arrested alongside Bradley Hokanson, 30. Both were remanded into custody and subsequently released for a future court date on the following charges:

- Discharge of a Firearm with Intent
- Pointing a Firearm
- Unauthorized Possession of a Firearm
- Careless Use of a Firearm
- Mischief Over \$5,000 – Damage to Motor Vehicle
- Disguise with Intent to Commit an Offence

The Gimli RCMP continues to investigate the incident.

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Free provincial park entry for the month of February

Inaugural Manitoba Winter Trails Day Celebrated on Feb. 8

By Annaliese Meier

The Manitoba government is promoting winter activities by offering free entry to all provincial parks for February, announced Environment and Climate Change Minister Mike Moyes.

“Manitoba’s provincial parks offer an incredible variety of trails and activities for Manitobans of all ages,” said Moyes. “I am pleased to announce we are waiving the entry fee to all provincial parks for the month of February to make it more affordable for Manitoba families to get outdoors and enjoy all our beautiful provincial parks have to offer.”

Visitors can partake in cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, fat biking, snowshoeing and hiking, along with activities at outdoor skating rinks and toboggan hills. Hecla/Grindstone Provincial Park has free ice-fishing shelters, while ski slopes are available in Asessippi and Whiteshell provincial parks.

Additionally, the inaugural Manitoba Winter Trails Day will be celebrated on Feb. 8. This annual event showcases winter trails, honours trail partners, and encourages outdoor adventures.

On Feb. 8, residents can join guided activities in:

Birds Hill — embark on a snowshoe trek along the Nimowin Trail to search for animal tracks and signs of wildlife, and learn how creatures thrive during winter.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

The Manitoba government is promoting winter activities by offering free entry to all provincial parks for the month of February.

Spruce Woods — take a guided hike on the Epinette Trail to discover the park’s unique landscape and its intriguing connection to the spruce forest.

Details and registration information for upcoming programs can be found along with more information on winter activities in provincial parks at www.manitobaparks.com. Manitobans are also encouraged to check this

website for trail conditions before visiting parks.

Trail users are reminded to only use trails for designated activities and never walk on groomed ski tracks, keep dogs on leash and practice the principles of Leave No Trace by removing everything that is brought in.

No vehicle permits are required in February, but Snopasses are needed for snowmobiles on designated trails.

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Canada Revenue Agency cutting back on mailing 2024 paper tax packages

By Patricia Barrett

The Canada Revenue Agency is cutting back the number of paper income tax packages it used to automatically mail to taxpayers who had previously been filing their taxes by paper, forcing them to print out their own packages and forms, place an order for them or switch to online filing.

The CRA sent out a notice in early January to those who had been automatically receiving paper packages, stating it's "committed to making sure individuals can easily file their income tax and benefit returns" but will not be mailing out paper tax packages except to "vulnerable" individuals.

CRA media relations spokesperson Nina Ioussoupova said the agency identified certain "vulnerable" Canadians who had previously filed by paper and will still be proactively sending them the paper tax forms they require.

The reduction in the mailout of print packages is part of CRA's effort

to support a "greener future" in line with the Government of Canada's Greening Government Strategy and the CRA's commitment to sustainable development, she said.

About 485,000 Canadians will no longer automatically receive paper tax forms in the mail, and they should be receiving a letter to educate them on other ways to file their income tax, as well as instructions on how to order paper tax packages if they prefer using paper.

"These letters aimed to educate these tax filers on alternative filing options," said Ioussoupova. "Even though these letters encouraged tax filers to file online, it also provided instructions on how they could self-source their own paper copies of the tax forms."

The reduction in paper mailouts is expected to save CRA about 25 per cent.

"Due to increases in postage and printing costs decisions needed to

be made to ensure the CRA continues to be fiscally responsible in serving Canadians, while continuing to proactively provide paper tax forms to the Canadians that need it most," said Ioussoupova. "This year the CRA anticipates that it will realize a year-over-year savings of approximately 25 per cent."

Paper tax packages have not been available at Service Canada outlets since 2018 when CRA stopped providing them, said Ioussoupova. CRA has informed other departments/partners, such as Employment and Social Development Canada, about CRA's reducing the mailout of paper tax packages. The agency also educates tax filers on alternative ways to file their income tax and how to get paper packages through posters and digital messaging in Service Canada outlets.

People who prefer to file their taxes using paper can still obtain a paper package, she said, by calling the

CRA's automated ordering phone line at 1-855-330-3305 or using the CRA's online ordering tool: canada.ca/cra-forms.

For those who have computers and printers, forms can be downloaded from CRA's website then printed.

People who do not have access to computers and printers can visit a public library to see whether it's possible to have tax forms printed out.

"Public libraries are an option that tax filers can leverage if they do not have a computer or printer. If a library is unable to provide printed copies, tax filers can use library computers to place an order for a tax package directly with the CRA at canada.ca/cra-forms," said Ioussoupova. "Public libraries will not be reimbursed for printing costs. If libraries do not have the means to provide printed copies, then tax filers can use library computers to place an order for a tax package."

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EXPRESS PHOTO BY CORRINE EINARSSON

Perfect temperatures made for a great day of family skating on the Icelandic River Trail in Arborg last week. On Jan. 30, the above average temperature recorded was -2 C, which was nine degrees above the average daily high. Conditions have been more than favourable for outdoor activities this winter. 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

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> TRUMP, FROM PG. 4

Friday. "This will not be the end of world for us, and fishers shouldn't be unduly worried about tariffs."

The commercial winter fishing season is just about over and there's a "tremendous" shortage of fish in the supply chain. That means there's going to be considerable demand from America for walleye (pickerel), which is a vertical market in the U.S., he said. If the price of food goes up as a result of Trump's tariffs, Manitoba fish going to

Community Support Service

A.A Meeting in Ashern

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

AA Arborg

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

AA Eriksdale

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

AA Winnipeg Beach

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

Gimli Group AA

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

Al-Anon

Gimli and Winnipeg Beach

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All ages welcome.

AA Riverton Group

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

northern U.S. states (which buy the most fish from Manitoba) will see a price increase, along with other meat products such as chicken, beef and pork.

"But I'm expecting a negligible impact on the fish market. After discussing possible tariffs with all the major fish companies in Manitoba, my analysis is such that there will be a negligible impact on us because we're not shipping an unfinished product like an agricultural commodity. People selling pigs to the U.S. are going to feel this because that's an unfinished product. We in the fishing business aren't selling round fish to the United States in any great degree. We are selling boxes of fillets and we've already employed people to process it here in Canada," he said. "Any additional costs from the tariffs will be passed on to our American buyers, but Americans prefer our wild-caught freshwater fish over some of the garbage fish that comes from overseas."

Manitoba still has international fish markets and the industry can further diversify should the bottom fall out in America, said Buckels. Fish buyers in Manitoba have been planning for the Trump tariff since January because they knew it was coming, and some have even issued a price increase because they're short of fish for the American market. In spring, it might be a different story. But at the moment, the industry has an opportunity to approach its trading partners in Europe to see if it can promote increased sales or find new markets altogether.

"We have international buyers that will help us absorb any potential shocks from the tariff. That said, we still have to increase our market going forward like any other Canadian business and diversify," said Buckels. "There are some manufacturers in the Interlake, for instance, that have done just that a long time ago; they've established an international market for their products and don't wholly rely on the U.S. The fishing industry needs to do the same. We have time to diversify. I'm feeling optimistic because we're not in the same boat as the wider manufacturing sector."

Donald Trump had promised via social media in November 2024 that he would sign an executive order on his first day in office (Jan. 20) that would impose tariffs on all Canadian imports. He didn't. He then set the tariff date ahead for Feb. 1.

He signed an executive order on Feb. 1 titled "Imposing Duties to Address the Flow of Illicit Drugs Across Our Northern Border." It imposes a 25 per cent tariff on all Canadian products sent to the U.S. and a 10 per cent tariff on Canadian energy. Those tariffs take effect Tuesday, Feb. 4.

Since Trump threatened Canada with tariffs, analysts have been speculating about his motives. Some contend that because America has one of the highest debts of any country in the world, Trump needs the revenue from tariffs to service it. Others say tariffs could destabilize the Canadian economy and encourage investors to turn to the U.S. Tariffs could also be a means to compel Canada to become America's 51st state, which would give Trump control of Canada's rich mineral resources, oil and gas reserves and other resources. Trump has said many times over the past few months that Canada should be part of the U.S., and even gave a shout-out during his inauguration speech to manifest destiny, the 19th-century American version of European imperialism.

Trump himself has said his tariffs are warranted to get Canada and Mexico to crack down on migrants and fentanyl crossing their respective borders into America.

The Canadian government said Canada is responsible for less than one per cent of the fentanyl smuggling and illegal crossings to the U.S.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's responded on Feb. 1 to the Trump-initiated tariff war. His public address included themes of betrayal and loss, law-breaking (i.e., Trump violating the Canada-US-Mexico trade agreement), Canadian unity in the face of attack and determination to withstand "rough" economic times ahead.

"We were always there standing with you, grieving with you, the American people," said Trudeau, with reference to the wars Canada and America fought side-by-side and natural disasters that befell America in the past. "Together, we've built the most successful economic, military and security partnership the world has ever seen, a relationship that has been the envy of the world. We've had differences in the past, but we've always found a way to get past them."

A \$155-billion Canadian tariff package was then announced in response to the "unjustified" American tariffs.

In a news release issued Feb. 1, minister of finance Dominic LeBlanc and foreign affairs minister Melanie Joly confirmed Canada is moving forward with 25 per cent tariffs on \$155-billion worth of American goods.

"Less than 1 per cent of the fentanyl and illegal crossings into the United States come from Canada," they said in the news release. "We will not stand idly by when our nation is being needlessly and unfairly targeted. The government will defend Canadian interests and jobs. We stand ready to support affected workers and businesses."

The first phase of Canada's response includes tariffs on \$30 billion of goods imported from the U.S., starting on Feb. 4. The products include orange juice, peanut butter, wine, spirits, beer, coffee, appliances, apparel, footwear, motorcycles, cosmetics, and pulp and paper.

The second phase will impose tariffs on an "additional" list of imported goods that will be made available for a 21-day public comment period. Those products include passenger vehicles, trucks, buses, electric vehicles, recreational vehicles, recreational boats, aerospace products, steel and aluminum products, certain fruits and vegetables and beef, pork and dairy.

The federal finance department has a list of products on its website. Additional non-tariff options such as procurement of American products/services could follow should the U.S. persist with its tariffs.

Various premiers and the prime minister are encouraging Canadians to be selective in their purchases and "buy Canadian" products where they can, or find alternative products from Europe, Asia or other regions. Buying Canadian products will help support the country's economy during the trade war.

Trudeau spoke with Mexican Prime Minister Claudia Sheinbaum after Trump's executive order and the two leaders agreed to work together in areas of common interest and to "enhance the strong bilateral relations between Canada and Mexico."

A 25 per cent tariff is estimated to cost the average Canadian about \$1,900, according to the Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

The federal government had announced on Jan. 28, before Trump's tariff order, that it was preparing a "stimulus package" to help businesses cope with the tariffs.

Canadian Forces run training event on Lake Winnipeg

By Katelyn Boulanger

At the end of January, the 38 Canadian Brigade Group's (38 CBG) Arctic Response Company Group (ARCG) took to the end of Breezy Point Rd. to conduct a pre-training exercise on Lake Winnipeg. The 38 CBG was tasked to prepare the Canadian Army Reserve Force to deploy as part of its Canadian Armed Forces responsibilities.

"We were on Lake Winnipeg as part of Exercise First Run and basically it was the second of three weekends where we are preparing soldiers to go to the Arctic," said Major Richard Kang, deputy commanding officer of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles.

He explained that this is annual training for the group.

"One of the missions of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles is to have a company of infantry soldiers who are prepared to go to the Arctic. And so, every year we validate our ability to do so with an exercise through the Arctic. We are on a rotation basis between the territories. So, last year it was Nunavut, and the year before, that would have been in the Northwest Territories, and this year, we'll be going to Carcross, Yukon," said Kang.

This pre-training on Lake Winnipeg allowed the soldiers to get used to the equipment that they will be using as well as the weather conditions that they can expect in the Arctic.

"The first weekend was a classroom weekend where we just got used to the equipment. We were introduced to the snowmobiles. We got some lectures about cold weather injuries and such. And then, the second weekend, which was Exercise First Run was a taste of everybody's exposure to the cold, to the snowmobiles, and getting everything sorted out," said Kang.

There were seven different training stations that all helped the soldiers

learn skills that they will need in the Arctic. They were put in scenarios that sharpened their knowledge with regard to hypothetical casualty evacuations, small attacks and more.

Lake Winnipeg in the winter also simulates the Arctic environment well enough to help the soldiers understand what they are going to be facing when they head further north.

"One of the important items that our soldiers need to be prepared to do is to navigate. So, we had a couple points set out along the edges of Lake Winnipeg where we would conduct a few scenarios. One of the scenarios was just a checkpoint to make sure we knew how to get to the location. And we were to practise setting up our Arctic tents and taking them down, and the routine that's involved with that. So, getting the stoves ready and making sure everybody is on the same page with how the camp is supposed to look once we have the Arctic tents deployed," said Kang.

He also explained that our area allows for longer distance snowmobile riding which the soldiers had to get used to.

Kang feels that this year's training session on Lake Winnipeg went well.

"From the feedback from the soldiers, they had a good time. I think they built up the confidence that they needed to be prepared for the Arctic. They found out certain combinations of clothing layers that will work for them, for the different temperatures that they're going to expect," said Kang.

He also says that more than learning just about the environment, this exercise also allowed them to be better prepared to work together.

"We had some soldiers who've been doing this for a while, and we have brand new soldiers that are doing it for the first time. And so, it's a chance



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY BRETT MITCHELL

The 38 Canadian Brigade Group's (38 CBG) Arctic Response Company Group (ARCG) conducted a pre-training Exercise FIRST RUN on Lake Winnipeg on Jan. 26.

for everybody to get to know each other and practise some of their leadership skills as well," said Kang.

He also appreciated the warm welcome that the soldiers got from the area residents particularly the fishers who were out on the ice.

"It was really great to see all the fishers and all the people on the ice. They didn't hesitate to approach us and ask. They thought it was really cool to see the army out there. So, that was nice," said Kang.

If residents saw the training and would like to learn more, they can visit the 38 Canadian Brigade Group's website at <https://www.canada.ca/en/army/corporate/3-canadian-division/38-canadian-brigade-group.html> or the Royal Winnipeg Rifles at <https://www.theroyalwinnipeg-rifles.com/>.

Kang would also like to thank everyone who worked so hard to make this event a success.

"There's a great deal of planning that is involved with deploying a company of soldiers to the Arctic and so I just want to thank everybody. They're putting in the work behind the scenes to get this done and make this come to fruition," he said.



Exercise FIRST RUN is the final pre-training exercise for 38 Canadian Brigade Group's (38 CBG) Arctic Response Company Group (ARCG) before a much larger training event in the Arctic Circle in February.



**The RM of Gimli
Invites You to a
Public Forum on the
Trails Master Plan**

Date: Thursday, February 20th

Time: 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Location: Johnson Hall, Waterfront Centre, 106-94 1st Avenue

Join us for a **community come-and-go session** to share your thoughts on the future of our trails. Whether you're a frequent trail user or simply interested in enhancing our outdoor spaces, your input is vital!

What to Expect:

- **Presentation boards** with feedback from local clubs and committees.
- An opportunity to **share your ideas** on improving the trails.
- Connect with fellow community members who care about our trails.

This is a respectful event. We encourage open and constructive dialogue where **all voices are heard and valued.**

We look forward to seeing you there and hearing your input!

Any questions in advance email: recdirector@rmgimli.ca

P.O. Box 1246, 62 - Second Avenue, Gimli, Manitoba R0C 1B0

www.gimli.ca

Aspen Park Library turns a new page with new look

By Cathy Danyluk

For the Love of Books!

Aspen Park, the condominium community west of Gimli off Route 231, is known for its gently curving streets, large green spaces, mature trees and the ever-evolving renovation of individual homes. It has been called "The Hidden Jewel of the Interlake," and we residents strongly feel that it is our Hidden Jewel.

Aspen Park also boasts a large Recreation Centre that features a library made up of over 1,700 titles, books that have been donated by residents over the years for sharing with other residents. The Park has voracious and generous readers, particularly in its Book Club.

Recently, our Book Club members decided to undertake a massive "redo" of our library. With the support of the condominium board and a volunteer, new bookcases and lighting fixtures were added. Over several weeks, Book Club members removed all of the books from the shelves, sorted them into categories ranging from autobiographies to science fiction, and returned them to the shelves under new signage. Special attention



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Aspen Park library, renamed the Book Nook, had a overhaul recently getting new signage, lighting and bookcases. Book Club members spent several weeks categorizing the 1,700 titles.

was given to local authors, some of them residents of Aspen Park.

The library's new look and signage have attracted a lot of attention, and residents are now able to find a favourite author or type of book more easily. The number of donations has also grown.

Suggestions were solicited for a name to give to the renewed library space, and "Book Nook" carried the day — it's simple, straightforward, and descriptive.

The number of book club members has grown as well, and they have now christened themselves the Book-

worms. Members commit to reading one book a month and meeting to discuss it.

Our Bookworms have taken charge of which titles they read. When summer comes, they sit down and together draw up a list of the books they want to share and discuss over the next season, from September to June. With individual members putting forward their recommendations, reading choices are varied and wide-ranging, and so are the members' opinions of them, which are freely expressed.

The Bookworms could not do this without the collaboration of the Ev-

ergreen Regional Library in Gimli, whose librarians make sure that there are copies available for everyone, whether print or e-books. The library notifies the members individually when their copies are ready for pick-up, and it is very flexible about returns.

"The Evergreen Regional Library is happy to support local book clubs. We can assist patrons by bringing in multiple copies of books through inter-library loan. With a little time and pre-planning we can bring in books from libraries all over Manitoba.

Community Survey

Eriksdale

E.M. Crowe Memorial Hospital
Emergency Room Renovation

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<https://forms.office.com/r/Ku2x3wGuKj>

Mark your calendar!

Thursday, March 6 attend a public information come and go at Eriksdale's Recreation Centre. Drop in and discuss the project. Watch this paper for more details.



Students invited to apply for 2025-26 Student Advisory Council

By Lana Meier

The Manitoba government is actively seeking applications for the 2025-26 Student Advisory Council, targeting students in grades 9 to 12. Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister Tracy Schmidt has reaffirmed the vital role of student voices in shaping educational outcomes across the province.

"Our government continues to put students at the forefront of our decision-making — and what better way to ensure their voices are heard than from them directly," said Schmidt. "Consulting with our young people helps us make better decisions that support student success and address what matters most to the next genera-

tion."

The Student Advisory Council consists of 30 students from diverse backgrounds across the province who meet regularly with education leaders from the Manitoba government and other stakeholders. Council members provide student-centred perspectives and input on current and emerging issues that affect students, contributing to positive change at the provincial level.

This council also helps youth develop leadership and advocacy skills, build networks and work collaboratively as a team. Previous council members have influenced initiatives related to remote learning, anti-racism, technology in the classroom, and

mental health, among others.

"Joining the Manitoba Student Advisory Council has been a transformative experience, allowing me to grow as a leader, listener and advocate for youth voices in education," said Harisharn Bahra, a two-year Student Advisory Council member.

The council will begin meetings in August for a one-year term. Previous participants who still meet the criteria can apply again.

Applications are open until midnight on March 21. For more information and to apply, visit: <https://edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/studentadvisory-council/index.html>.

MGEU says wait times for care in six allied health areas in IERHA unacceptable

By Patricia Barrett

The Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union (MGEU), which represents roughly 200 allied health workers in the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority, says patients in that region are waiting too long to see allied health professionals and staff are concerned about impacts on patients.

A one-month statistical snapshot from October 2024 of how many people in the Interlake-Eastern health region were waiting to access care in six allied health areas — speech language therapy, audiology, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, dietetics and mental health services — shows what MGEU says are unacceptable wait times.

MGEU president Kyle Ross last Thursday the six areas are the ones with the “longest waiting lists,” but wait times are troubling across the allied-health board, and more staff have to be hired.

“These [six] professions don’t have enough people providing services for Manitobans in Interlake-Eastern. People have to wait, which is impacting their quality of life and impacting their ability to be out in the community and doing things,” said Ross. “We’re really hopeful the government and the health authority will step up and recognize that these wait times are unacceptable. Manitobans expect a quality health-care system and they’re not getting it right now.”

MGEU represents about 32,000 members in total across a diverse range of sectors and occupations, including in health care. Health-care support staff (e.g., health-care aides) and allied health professionals are among the groups MGEU represents.

MGEU executed a freedom of information (FIPPA) request to acquire IERHA wait-time data from October. The data show a total of 981 people waiting for service across the six allied health areas.

In total, 291 people were waiting for speech language therapy service (233 outpatients, 50 pediatric and eight PCH), 77 people were waiting for audiology service, 57 people were waiting for occupational therapy (13 acute care, 44 home care), 158 outpatients were waiting for physiotherapy, 311 people were waiting for mental health services (79 adult CMH, 63 child and adolescent CMH, 165 direct access to psychiatry and 4 for psychology assessments), and 97 people were waiting for dietetic service (41 people from Lake Manitoba east and 56 from Lake Winnipeg east).

“People feel they’re waiting too long. When we talk to Manitobans and

they’re looking six to eight months out for an appointment, that’s a great amount of the time when they’re in pain or dealing with another [condition]. Our members in these allied health professions want to provide that service. They don’t want people to have this lingering and dragging on; they want to be able to address the issue as soon as possible,” said Ross. “Without having enough hands to provide that quality care, we’re not seeing that care. Manitobans expect better.”

Mental health services had the greatest number of people (311) waiting for service in October 2024. Ross said there may be two reasons for that relatively high number: a greater number of people reaching out for mental health supports now that mental health challenges are becoming more normalized, and fewer allied health professionals available to provide mental health services.

Ideally, wait times would be “reasonable,” he said. What’s reasonable to one patient may not be reasonable to another, depending on what medical condition needs addressing.

“People using the health-care system would have to feel it’s reasonable — I can’t speak for someone who’s in pain or experiencing something else — and they would understand it may take a bit of time to get access to some service. But it would be within a reasonable amount of time,” he said. “But today, most Manitobans are telling us they’re not experiencing reasonable waits. That’s what it comes down to. Weeks would probably be reasonable, not months and years to get health care.”

Because there are too many people to treat and too few allied health professionals to manage the workload, patients might feel as though they being pushed as quickly as possible through the system.

“Staff are saying they’re frustrated because they want to provide consistent, quality care. They want adequate time and to not feel so rushed. They feel as if they’re pushing patients through as fast as they can. They have to see as many patients as they can because the demand is so high. And I’m sure the patients feel they’re being rushed,” said Ross. “We need more hands to provide these services. Those professions are in need right across the province. We need to recruit people into these professions so that Manitobans get the quality care they expect.”

Last fall MGEU’s support staff members, some of whom work in the IERHA, accepted a new four-year collective agreement that included sig-

nificant wage increases. That was a step in the right direction to addressing retention in a different care group in the health-care system.

The union is currently in bargaining negotiations for its allied health members. Staff shortages in many specialized areas need be addressed in order to improve working conditions and keep allied health workers from leaving the profession altogether or leaving Manitoba for better working conditions elsewhere.

“We’re raising this issue with government. The government needs a strong focus on staffing and has to find creative ways to solve this problem. Staffing is a major problem and it’s not an easy thing to solve,” said Ross. “The government consists of a large group of people with a lot of minds thinking about this, and I think we have to get creative and find a way to get Manitobans entering allied health programs such as speech language therapy and occupational therapy, and get them to work in rural communities or their home communities, where they can support their

own communities and make them a better place for everyone.”

In the short-term, allied health professionals need to be retained because if they start leaving there won’t be enough people to replace them, said Ross. Some of the things the government could do to retain and recruit allied health staff is offer incentives and create a long-term plan to manage human resources.

“We have to find incentives to get people to take up allied health professions, but we also need to ensure that the staff we have now want to stay and continue working in their professions,” said Ross. “It’s a crucial time for the government. It needs to create a good plan to ensure we retain the staff we have and build upon recruitment efforts, finding ways to get people to take up these professions.”

Although the IERHA is one of the smaller health regions, Ross said it has similar issues — staff shortages — to the other regions, and it’s trying

Continued on page 13



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MAHCP members 96% in favour of strike; without a contract since March 2024

Recruitment and retention hampered without a contract

By Patricia Barrett

Members of the Manitoba Association of Health Care Professionals union voted overwhelmingly in favour of a strike last month, citing critical and enduring staffing shortages, increasing workloads, increasing patient wait times and at-risk care despite the provincial government's promise to fix Manitoba's health-care crises.

MAHCP has about 7,000 members working in about 50 allied health specialties. Its members voted 96 per cent in favour of striking, and the union is currently in negotiation with the government. The union has been without a contract since last March.

Allied health professionals are an integrated and integral part of the health-care system, and the reality is patients don't get treated without the work of allied health professionals, said MAHCP president Jason Linklater last Friday.

He said the strike mandate can be interpreted as the membership's overall displeasure with the favourable health-care messaging coming from the government as their workplace realities say the opposite.

"The good news the health minister delivers is not well taken by people who work in health care because they can see firsthand things are not improving," said Linklater. "MAHCP has 96 per cent in favour of a strike, and I think that says they haven't seen change happen. This is an ultimate wake-up call."



FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

An ambulance on Highway 68 is shown.

Linklater said the union represents a number of allied health professionals who work in the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority but who are actually employed by provincial Shared Health. Some of those staff include paramedics and diagnostic staff in areas such as laboratories, X-ray, CT and ultrasound. Because Shared Health is their employer, the IERHA is not responsible for staffing or possible delays resulting from staff shortages.

As far as paramedic positions in the IERHA, there are 159.5 full-time equivalent positions out of a total of 228 positions, said Linklater based on his research. That's represents a 30 per cent vacancy rate that's "on par" with other regional health authorities. The actual number of paramedic positions in IERHA is slightly higher because part-time positions do exist, but he doesn't know how many there are.

In terms of delays getting an ambulance because of paramedic shortages, he said he doesn't have current data for the IERHA. But in 2022, the IERHA had the "worst response time of any region" at the median, which was 18 minutes, and at the 90th percentile, which was almost 50 minutes.

"The response time targets are 15 minutes in rural areas. So that means in 2022, Shared Health wasn't meeting their target half of the time," said Linklater.

In the event of a strike, the IERHA would see some disruption such as patients having "routine" blood tests or diagnostic appointments postponed and a possibility that "some mental health and addictions services" being disrupted, he said. But emergency services would continue. So would lab and other diagnostic procedures that are required in life-and-death situations. Because staffing

is already below baseline, many places "already operate like they would during a strike" all the time.

"We absolutely don't want to go on strike. Nobody ever wants that because it's bad for everybody," said Linklater. "That said, essential service agreements are in place to ensure patients won't be harmed by a possible strike. EMS and paramedics are absolutely essential staff. And since Manitoba is already short the number of paramedics we are — that is, we're staffed below baseline already — there would be minimal to no reduction in paramedic staffing during the strike. If you call 911, someone will be coming."

The [NDP] government promised to hire 90 new paramedics in 2024, but hired only seven, said Linklater, and "call volumes have gone up compared to five years ago."

With Manitoba's rural areas in rough shape, there are some instances in which there are not enough staff to meet essential service agreements on a normal day, let alone during a strike, he said.

Compounding the staffing shortage crisis is the absence of a contract. Contracts possess inherent power to retain and attract workers.

MAHCP members have been without a contract since March 31, 2024. A survey the union carried out at the end of 2024 showed a majority of respondents citing worsening staff shortages, increasing workloads and plummeting morale. Without a contract, allied health staff could start leaving for greener pastures.

Allied health was without a contract for five years and there was a significant outflow of staff, said Linklater, explaining what has generally happened in the past. When the last contract got implemented, the union saw

that hole get plugged and a "slight uptick" in staffing numbers. Although they're holding fairly steadily as of now — not losing "a whole lot of people" — they're not gaining staff either.

"We know that the longer our members go without a contract, the worse it's going to get," he said. "When this government came in, allied health in particular was told that they [the government] wouldn't let this happen to them. And they have; we're approaching a year without a contract again."

With other provinces or territories experiencing similar health-care staffing crises, jurisdictions need to be as competitive as they possibly can to attract medical staff.

Health-care professionals rely on information to make decisions, diagnoses and inform their medical practice overall, and that mindset is applied to job-seeking opportunities. Having a contract that potential recruits can assess is a way to get eyeballs on Manitoba. No contract is a crapshoot.

"The success of recruitment and retention depends on having a contract. How could you recruit a person to come work in Manitoba while there's no employment contract in place?" said Linklater. "I've seen advertisements for all sorts of allied health jobs, including paramedics, but when [a potential candidate] doesn't have a contract to look at, how can they make a decision to come to here?"

Linklater said he's had paramedics call him from the United Kingdom — Manitoba lost paramedics to the U.K. when the National Health Service made positive changes — saying they'd consider coming back to Manitoba, but in the absence of a contract they have no idea whether it would be the right move.

Some of MAHCP's allied health groups are very small and specialized, he said, and losing one or more members could impact access to service. For example, if Manitoba lost one of its 10 perfusionists — allied health specialists who keep a patient's blood circulating during heart surgery and without whom surgery can't be performed — it could have a significant impact on wait times. Because Manitoba doesn't offer perfusionist training, people who are interested in the career have to move to another province — and they might not come back unless there's an incentive to do so.

Incentives are another tool the government could employ to attract new allied health professionals, he said. Newfoundland and Labrador, for instance, is offering a variety of incen-

Continued on page 13

GREEN ACRES ART CENTRE
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BINGO

Gunton Greenwood Memorial Hall
Monday, February 10
Starting at 7 p.m.
Doors open at 6:30 p.m.
4 cards for \$10
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PRIZES
Hot Dogs, Drinks and Fresh Pie for sale

Province asks public to weigh in on design of new ER for Eriksdale hospital

By Patricia Barrett

The provincial NDP government announced last week it will be consulting with Interlake residents on the design and development of its promised new emergency room for the Eriksdale hospital.

Health, seniors and long-term care minister Uzoma Asagwara said the province is holding an open house in Eriksdale early March so that people can weigh in with their thoughts on the project.

“Community advocacy has always been at the heart of this project and it will be critical for us to maintain that heart by bringing community members into the design process,” said Asagwara in a Jan. 30 news release. “Our government has been working closely with our partners in the Interlake to see this project through. This is an amazing opportunity for Interlake residents to help shape the future of

health care in their region.”

In addition to providing Interlake residents with an opportunity for feedback, the province is holding multiple consultation meetings throughout February and early March, said the minister.

“The project team will meet with frontline staff and physicians, elected First Nation and municipal leaders, First Nation and tribal council health directors, the local My Health Team and many more partners,” said the minister.

Community members are invited to complete an online survey that’s posted on the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority’s website in advance of the open house.

The survey, which takes about 5-7 minutes to complete, asks people to respond to questions such as what physical improvements to the hospi-

tal’s emergency room would benefit patients, visitors and staff, with a selection of areas including the ambulance area, triage, patient waiting area and so forth, what aspects of the renovation would contribute to staff and physician recruitment and retention, and what top 3 factors — which includes wait times — should be met for a [good] patient experience. Respondents can also provide feedback not specifically addressed by the questions.

Marion Ellis, CEO of the Interlake-Eastern RHA, said in the news release that First Nations and communities the IERHA serves are valued partners in the ER renovation process.

“Nations and communities served by Interlake-Eastern Health in the Eriksdale area are valued partners,” said Ellis. “The renovation project is an opportunity to work together to

improve the emergency department.”

Keith Lundale, president of the Eriksdale Chamber of Commerce and health-care advocate, said the consultation process is appreciated.

“From my position as Eriksdale and District Chamber of Commerce president, we welcome the consultation process with community involvement and the realization of this vital ER department to the residents of the RMs of West Interlake, Coldwell, St. Laurent and Lake Manitoba First Nation,” said Lundale in the news release.

The open house for the new ER is scheduled for March 6 at the Eriksdale Recreation Centre. A time was not provided in the news release.

The online survey will close on Feb. 21. It is available at: <https://ierha.ca/news-updates/>

> SIX ALLIED HEALTH AREAS IN IERHA UNACCEPTABLE, FROM PG. 11

different ways to address the issue.

“As an employer, the IERHA is doing a lot of things in trying to correct these issues, but this is a difficult nut to crack, trying to get people to take up a profession and trying to retain the people you have,” he said. “It’s unfortunate we’re in this situation, but we have to find a way to get out of it.”

A representative for the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority said the RHA is engaged in a number of strategies to retain and recruit new allied staff in order to reduce patient wait times.

“These include offering students opportunities to experience health care via summer placements, internships, education funding and job

shadowing. We partner with educational institutions to offer our health region as a training site, recognizing that these are opportunities for students to form relationships with staff, who can make transition to the working world more seamless for new grads,” said the representative.

“Where possible, we partner with communities and educational institutions to offer training locally, removing barriers that may exist to accessing health-care education. We continue our work with the provincial government’s recruitment and retention office to bring more health care workers to the Interlake region.”

> MAHCP STRIKE, FROM PG. 12

tives to students, graduates and experienced professionals that include signing bonuses, bursaries, travel-related support and salary advances to pursue education, and it advertises those incentives on the government’s website.

Linklater said MAHCP has “encouraged” the Manitoba government to follow Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia’s “proactive” lead and craft an all-encompassing human resources strategy for allied health for the entire province, looking at getting youth education in health-care professions all the way to planning for retirements and so forth, and also come up with incentives that could include paying for education, implementing return-of-service agreements or offering signing bonuses to recruit staff.

As far as a possible strike goes, Linklater said the union is still at the bargaining table for another eight days (as of Jan. 31) but is preparing for a strike.

The Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority said it supports a new and fair collective agreement for the province’s employees.

“Interlake-Eastern RHA supports the successful negotiation of a new and fair collective agreement for our province’s professional technical/paramedical sector employees,” said an IERHA representative. “Negotiations are underway and we support the work towards a new collective agreement for these valued health-care staff members.”

A spokesperson for Shared Health said the organization is “committed to the successful negotiation of a new and fair collective agreement for our province’s professional technical/paramedical sector employees. While we won’t publicly comment on specifics of active negotiations, we remain at the bargaining table and continue to work towards a new collective agreement for all of these valued staff.”



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Everyone goes home with a prize at upcoming Gimli Junior Funspiel

By Patricia Barrett

Organizers of youth curling in Gimli are in the midst of preparing for their annual Gimli Junior Funspiel next month and are hoping new curlers will take part in the friendly competition.

Jay Boaz said every kid will go home with a prize. "It's a great event for new curlers as each end is only worth one point and every kid goes home with a prize," said Boaz. "There will also be a closest to the button competition with prizes for the individuals and teams with the best results in both age categories."

Age groups that can take part are 10 and under (8 teams maximum), and 16 and under (12 teams

maximum). The funspiel will have the same format as last year's competition, with four end games and a minimum of three games, as well as a closest to the button competition.

Local businesses including VR Ventures, Hidden Treasures, Marvelous Meadows Golf Course and Bowlers Lanes have stepped up to provide great prizes for the kids, he said.

The funspiel will be held during spring break, on March 31 at the Gimli Recreation Centre.

Teams can register at <https://forms.gle/w8kT-gJDWDdcqXGwx9>



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DRAW TO BUTTON CONTEST

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Manitoba Merv predicts an early spring on Groundhog Day

By Jo-Anne Procter

Every February 2nd, Manitobans anxiously wait to witness the moment that defines their seasonal hopes: Manitoba Merv's big reveal. This year was no different as he emerged from his burrow at Oak Hammock Marsh, greeted by eager faces and hopeful hearts.

With a little wiggle and a curious glance, Merv announced an early spring by not seeing his shadow. Traditional folklore suggests we can expect warmer days ahead, which is music to everyone's ears in this chilly

province.

According to the Weather Network's website, Manitoba's Groundhog Day mascot has had an impressive success rate of 73 percent since 2000, the highest among Canadian groundhogs.

However, according to Oak Hammock biologists, the best way to find out if we have an early spring is to look for the arrival of the first Canada geese. Recording the spring arrival of the first Canada goose seen at Oak Hammock Marsh is another favoured annual tradition at the Marsh.

The Oak Hammock Marsh Interpre-



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Manitoba Merv predicted an early spring after the puppet didn't see his shadow on Groundhog Day.

tive Centre is currently undergoing renovations and plans to reopen in the spring. At that time, Manitoba Merv

will have his own exhibit that will expand on the topic of hibernation.



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get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



Champagne Chicken

er, blend mushrooms and chicken broth; set aside.

In skillet over medium heat, melt butter and mix in flour. Slowly add mushroom broth while stirring. It should start to thicken; if it doesn't, add 1 tablespoon flour and stir well.

Add garlic powder and salt and pepper, to taste. Mix in heavy cream while continuing to stir. Remove from heat and set aside. Reserve until ready to cook and keep refrigerated, if necessary.

To prepare chicken: Butterfly chicken breasts, making four thinner pieces.

In shallow dish, mix flour and lemon pepper seasoning. Coat chicken in flour mixture.

Melt butter over medium heat and add chicken broth. Pan fry coated chicken breasts then remove from pan and set aside.

Use champagne to deglaze frying pan and add mushroom sauce to heated champagne. Place chicken breasts back in pan in mushroom sauce and cook over medium heat about 5 minutes. Serve over rice.

Substitutions: Mushroom soup can be used in place of homemade mushroom sauce. Chicken broth can be used in place of champagne.

Recipe courtesy of "Cookin' Savvy"

Servings: 2-4

Mushroom Sauce:

1 can (14 ounces) mushrooms

1 1/2 cups chicken broth

3 tablespoons butter

3 tablespoons flour

1 tablespoon garlic powder

salt, to taste

pepper, to taste

1/2 cup heavy cream

Chicken:

2 chicken breasts

2/3 cup flour

2 tablespoons lemon pepper seasoning

1/2 stick butter

1/2 cup chicken broth

3/4 cup champagne or sparkling wine

mushroom sauce

rice, for serving

To make mushroom sauce: In blend-



Irish Beef and Beer Pot Pie

1 sheet puff pastry, thawed

1 egg

Heat oven to 400 F.

In large skillet or Dutch oven, brown ground beef; drain and set aside.

Over medium heat, deglaze skillet with beer and whisk in flour. After thickening, whisk in tomato puree and add Worcestershire sauce. Mix in ground beef, garlic powder and beef broth. Add hashbrowns, carrots and peas. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Simmer 20-25 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Place puff pastry sheet on cookie sheet. Beat egg and brush over pastry. Bake 10 minutes. Place hot puff pastry on top of beef mixture and serve.

Recipe courtesy of "Cookin' Savvy"

Servings: 4-6

1 pound ground beef

1 cup stout beer

3 tablespoons flour

1 can (15 ounces) tomato puree

1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce

1 tablespoon garlic powder

1 cup beef broth

1 bag (28 ounces) hashbrowns with peppers and onions

1 can (14 ounces) carrots, drained

1 can (14 ounces) peas, drained

salt, to taste

pepper, to taste

Expert patient here to help!



Susie Schwartz

By Susie Schwartz

I've been asked what my top tip for building a relationship with my doctors has been, and while it's hard to choose, I think this is my number one: Always frame your thoughts as questions.

Huh?

Well, yes, that's a question, but let me explain what I mean.

Have you ever been tempted to walk into your appointment and say, "So, I've got nerve pain in my legs. It must be spinal stenosis."

Okay. First of all, I just searched 'reasons for nerve pain in legs' and 15 possibilities popped up! So, you might be wrong about your diagnosis.

But when you frame your thoughts about your pain as a statement, it is dismissive of the doctor's thoughts and expertise. They are probably thinking, 'So why are you here if you know the answer already?' It's human nature. I can just see their compassion meter plunging downward with the above conclusion.

Imagine if you instead walked in and said, "I've got nerve pain in my legs. Do you think it might be spinal stenosis? Or might it be some-

thing else?" This right away sets the tone for discussion and teamwork. You still get to say your suspicions, but not in an off-putting way.

And I find when I ask a question, I either get a, "Yes, it might be. We'll do some tests," or, "Well, it could be, but stenosis is not the most common cause, so let's do some bloodwork and rule out some other things before heading down that route." It might just turn out that the pain is caused from an electrolyte imbalance – much less serious than stenosis.

In my 41 years of regular doctors appointments, guiding discussions with gentle questions has found me accurate diagnoses countless times, and has also built bridges with my doctors. They see that I am paying attention to my body and am open for discussion. They see that I have done my research but also value their opinion and their experience and expertise. They are more willing to order extra tests or promptly send me to a specialist. They want to help. They celebrate when I receive good news. And I really believe that my questions are at the root of these strong relationships.

Of course, we would hope that every doctor would treat every patient equally and always push for the best, most thorough result. But their humanness can get in the way. That's the bad news. But when we do our part we see that we can influence our care. That's the great news.

So ask, don't tell. Trust me. This tip is gold.

Less health stress, yes?

A published author and musician, Susie currently lives in the UK. Find her on Instagram @authorsusieschwartz, and at www.lesshealthstress.com. (Email: info@lesshealthstress.com) If you like her writing, find more on her Substack page: The Quest For Less Health Stress

Irish Sweet Soda Bread



Recipe courtesy of "Cookin' Savvy"

Servings: 4-6

4 tablespoons butter, melted

1 cup sugar

1 1/2 cups buttermilk

4 cups self-rising flour

1 cup currants

2 tablespoons sanding sugar (optional)

coffee or tea, for serving (optional)

Heat oven to 375 F.

Mix melted butter and sugar then add buttermilk. Mix in flour and currants.

Flour hands and counter. Add sanding sugar to dough, if desired, and knead into ball.

Grease small Dutch oven or pie plate and bake 40 minutes. Serve with coffee or tea, if desired, or as a dessert.

Substitutions: Raisins can be used in place of currants.

MPI and Snoman stress importance of snowmobile safety

By Jennifer McFee

Safety should remain top of mind for snowmobilers while they enjoy Manitoba's trails this winter.

January and February have the highest fatality rates for snowmobilers across the province. From 2021 to 2024, there were 12 snowmobile fatalities in Manitoba, with speed as the leading contributing factor. Other factors included alcohol impairment, lack of helmet use, driver inexperience and careless driving.

To highlight the significance of snowmobile safety, Manitoba Public Insurance and Snoman Inc. teamed up to share some tips for riders.

At a recent event near Stonewall on Road 82 North, attendees had the chance to learn about snowmobile safety through several demonstrations. These demonstrations showcased the importance of sharing the roadway. In addition, they shared information about safety equipment for snowmobiles and riders, as well as trail safety and trail grooming equipment.

The timing was ideal since International Snowmobile Safety Week recently ran from Jan. 12 to 18. And coming up quickly is Manitoba's first ever Winter Trails Day, which is set for Feb. 8. According to the provincial government, Winter Trails Day will take place each year on the second Saturday in February to showcase the Manitoba's winter trails and activities, celebrate the dedicated partners who create and maintain trails, and inspire everyone to embrace the season by enjoying outdoor adventures with family and friends.

Joe Thievin, grooming co-ordinator for South Interlake SnoRiders Club, shared with the *Express* some advice for planning your snowmobile trip.

"If you're planning to go snowmobiling, one of the key things to do is to ensure that you take a friend. Invariably, your snowmobile will break down or get stuck when you're by yourself," said Thievin, who is also the president of the regional snowmobile association and he serves on the Snoman board of directors as the vice-president. In addition, he's the president of the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations, encompasses 729 clubs across Canada.

"It wasn't long ago we heard of somebody up near St. Laurent who spent the night in the woods because they had got stuck. If you don't have a buddy to take with you, it's important that you share your route. You want to say when you're leaving home, where you're going and when you expect to be there. As a rider, you

have some peace of mind that if you break down or get stuck or you don't make it to my destination, then people know where you are."

Thievin also provided some ideas for how to pack for your outing.

"When we go snowmobiling, we take things like booster cables in the event that your battery goes dead and a tow rope to pull your machine. We also take a first aid kit, flashlight and a basic set of tools in case you have to do a small repair," he said.

"It's about being prepared with survival gear. We pack protein bars. We also bring matches and a fire-starter. Then at least if you get stuck in the bush somewhere, you can build a fire and keep yourself warm."

You should also make sure your snowmobile is in good repair and that you're prepared for the ride by dressing warmly and wearing a good helmet.

"A good helmet does two things — it saves your life if you fall off and it makes your ride more enjoyable because you don't have all the wind coming and freezing you," Thievin said.

"You should also make sure that you're riding a snowmobile that you're comfortable with and that you ride to your ability. Don't jump on a big sled with limited ability and go tearing through trees because you're going to have problems."

In addition, it's important to steer clear of anything that would impair your ability to drive the snowmobile.

"We focus on zero impairment and avoiding anything that impairs your ability. That could be illegal drugs, prescription drugs, alcohol, cannabis, sleep deprivation. We hear too often in the news about a fatality or an injury associated with snowmobiling — and quite often it's impaired ability or excessive speed that causes injury," Thievin says.

"You should also ensure to drive to conditions. Speed is critical. Don't drive too fast or excessively when conditions are deteriorating. When it's snowing or blowing or low light conditions, there are lots of hazards that you could encounter in those situations."

Maria Campos, vice-president and chief customer and product officer for Manitoba Public Insurance, said that by highlighting safety concerns, they're creating awareness about proactive steps for riders to make themselves safer while out on their snowmobiles. Like Thievin, she pointed to the importance of wearing a helmet, controlling speed and riding sober.

"MPI doesn't advocate for and ed-



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY CHRISTY BROWN

Maria Campos of Manitoba Public Insurance and Joe Thievin of South Interlake SnoRiders Club shared advice for a safe snowmobile season.



ucate about safety alone," Campos added. "It is through partnerships, like the one we have with Snoman, that we are able to fulfill our road safety mission — whether it is on or off-road."

Safety is a key concern for both MPI and Snoman. MPI collects a \$25 non-refundable annual fee for all off-road vehicle registrations on behalf of the provincial government to support trail maintenance and development, off-road vehicle safety education and training programs, and rehabilitation of public lands impacted by off-road vehicle use.

And when you purchase a SnoPass to ride on the 12,000 kilometres of designated provincial trails in Manitoba, you're helping to invest in grooming and maintaining those trails —



Part of the preparations for a snowmobile adventure includes packing safety equipment.

which, in turn, contributes to overall snowmobile safety.

To learn more about Snoman, visit www.snoman.mb.ca.

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Masters scores game-winner for Falcons' second win of the week

By Kieran Reimer

The Lundar Falcons concluded the weekend in style, securing a 3-2 victory over the Selkirk Fishermen.

The game was tied at two late in the third period after Cayden St. Laurent and Dylan Vitelli each scored in the first period, followed by two goals from the Fishermen.

After firing 16 shots in the third period, the Falcons finally broke the deadlock with a goal from Daniel Masters with three minutes remaining. Goaltender Kennedy Kerr played a crucial role, making 36 saves to help the Falcons earn three points in Selkirk.

Earlier in the week, the Falcons also picked up another three points with a

4-2 win over the North Winnipeg Satellites at Billy Mosienko Arena. Masters scored twice in that game, while Liam Russell and Slater Farthing added the other goals. Aiden Poseluzney made 29 saves in net.

With this weekend's victories, the Falcons now have a record of 16-9-0-2 and are in third place in the Capital Region Junior Hockey League.

They have three games remaining in the regular season, with one scheduled for Saturday night at home.

UPCOMING GAME:

- Saturday, Feb. 8 vs. La Broquerie Habs, 7 p.m. at Lundar Arena



EXPRESS PHOTO BY BRETT MITCHELL

The Lundar Falcons defeated the Selkirk Fishermen 3-2 on Sunday. Goaltender Kennedy Kerr made 36 saves.

Ice Dawgs' comebacks fall short against Habs

By Kieran Reimer

The Arborg Ice Dawgs faced a tough week, losing two games to the La Broquerie Habs, leaving them with just one game before the Capital Region Junior Hockey League playoffs begin.

In Wednesday's matchup, the Ice Dawgs lost 5-3 at home. They fell behind early, trailing 3-0 for most of the game. Dainen Jacobson managed to get Arborg on the scoreboard with a

power-play goal late in the first period. Although they were down 5-1 at one point, Ben Danielson and Skylar Farrington scored to narrow the gap to 5-3, but that was as close as they would come.

Goaltender Nathan Meisner had a busy night, stopping 40 of the 45 shots he faced, despite the team allowing five goals.

On Saturday, the Ice Dawgs faced

the Habs again, this time suffering an 8-3 defeat in La Broquerie. Once again, an early surge from the Habs set the tone, as they took a 5-1 lead. The Ice Dawgs managed to bring the score to 5-3 in the second period, but the Habs responded with three more goals in the third to secure their victory.

Brandon Burak scored twice for Arborg, while Ben Danielson added one

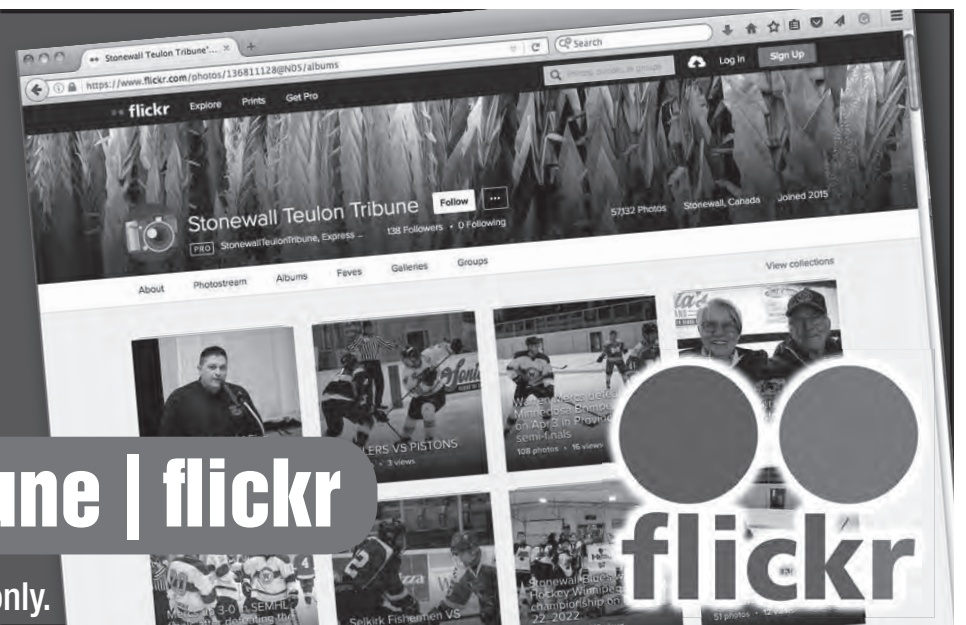
more. With these losses, the Ice Dawgs' record stands at 7-21-0-1-0 for the season, leaving them in sixth place in the CRJHL.

The Ice Dawgs will conclude their regular season at home against the Beausejour Comets on Saturday, with a puck drop scheduled for 7:30 p.m. at the Arborg & District Arena.

To see more photos of your favourite Interlake Athletes

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sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Lightning Report: Hard work leading to success for U13 girls

By Kieran Reimer

The U13 AA Female Interlake Lightning gained some breathing room in the standings last week after securing two hard-fought victories over the Twins. Last Sunday, they emerged victorious with a close 4-3 win and followed it up with an impressive 9-1 win against the same Twins squad on the following Sunday. These two triumphs earned them four points and sole possession of seventh place, a position they have achieved through hard work this season.

"We had a couple game that were in our grasp and we lost them and the girls were really hungry for one and they came out and proved how much they wanted it," said head coach Megan Humeniuk on Saturday. "They grind and my theory is if you outwork every team there's no way you can't win and the girls put it to the test and it was awesome."

Although the Lightning may not lead the league standings, they certainly lead when it comes to effort on a game-by-game basis. The Lightning have secured all seven of their wins this season through relentless hard work and by staying competitive even when they are trailing.

Humeniuk said the girls' efforts have made it easy on her and the other coaches because they know they'll be getting 100 per cent from their players every time they are on the ice.

"Interlake has an identity especially in sports and especially in hockey of being grinders and working very hard and our philosophy all year as a

team has been it doesn't matter what happens at the end of the game but at the end we are the hardest working players on the ice," said Humeniuk. "It's something that's really huge for these girls is their work ethic and them wanting to win and be great. It's really amazing and I love seeing 11- to 12-year-old girls wanting to play the game so bad."

The Lightning are now preparing for seven games over the next three weeks to finish out the regular season. They will play twice next weekend, with a road game on Saturday in Niverville and a home game on Sunday in Stonewall.

After this seven-game stretch they will be ready for the playoffs.

"Our girls know how to play the game, we know what we need to do on the ice, it's just making sure we're doing everything the same way all the time and showing up to games with the same energy and mentality of working hard. It's been our motto all year and it's helped us in the past and it'll help us produce for the playoffs."

UPCOMING GAMES:

Saturday, Feb. 8 at Eastman Selects, 2:15 p.m. at Niverville Centennial Arena

Sunday, Feb. 9 vs Pembina Valley, 2 p.m. at Veterans Memorial Sports Complex

The U13 AA Male Interlake Light-



Interlake Lightning's Tytan Johnson, right, presented a cheque for \$25,155 to Karson Collins on Sunday at the start of the U18 AAA Lightning game. Collins was the lucky winner of the 2024-2025 Interlake Lightning 50/50 fundraiser.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

The Interlake Lightning female U13 AA team trounced the Twins 9-1 in Stony Mountain on Feb. 2. Earlier in the week they defeated the Twins 4-3. Goaltender Amira Murdock from Fisher River recorded the win.

ning defeated the Kenora Thistles 7-1 on Sunday afternoon in Kenora. They currently sit 11th with a 12-11-0-1 record.

Upcoming Games: Friday, Feb. 14 at Winnipeg Bruins Black, 6:30 p.m. at Dakota Community Centre; Sunday, Feb. 16 at Pembina Valley Hawks, 3:30 p.m. at Manitou Community Arena

The U15 AA Male Interlake Lightning lost 3-2 to the Winnipeg Bruins Black on Thursday night. They currently sit ninth with an 8-10-5-2 record.

Upcoming Games: Saturday, Feb. 8 at Winnipeg Thrashers Blue, 7:30 p.m. at Gateway Recreation Centre

The U15 AAA Female Interlake Lightning lost a trio to the Eastman Selects, Pembina Valley Hawks and Westman Wildcats over the weekend. They currently sit seventh with a 3-19 record.

Upcoming Games: Saturday, Feb. 8 at Yellowhead Chiefs, 4:30 p.m. at Shoal Lake Communiplex

The U15 AAA Male Interlake Lightning defeated the Winnipeg Wild Red 5-1 on Tuesday night at Veterans Memorial Sports Complex. They currently sit fifth in the Central with a 5-23 record.

Upcoming Games: Thursday, Feb. 6 at Winnipeg Thrashers Blue, 7:45 p.m. at Gateway Recreation Centre

The U17 AAA Male Interlake Lightning lost 5-1 to the Eastman Selects on Saturday and 5-2 to the Winnipeg Wild on Sunday. They currently sit seventh with a 6-19-5-0 record.

Upcoming Games: Thursday, Feb. 6 at Winnipeg Thrashers, 7:15 p.m. at Gateway Recreation Centre

The U18 AAA Female Interlake Lightning went 1-3 at the Female World School Sport Tournament at Hockey For All Centre last week. They lost 6-0 to the Winnipeg Ice on Thursday, won 4-1 over the Northern Capitals and lost 4-2 to RHA Winnipeg on Friday, and lost 3-2 to the St. Mary's Academy Flames on Saturday. Upcoming Games: Saturday, Feb. 8 vs Pembina Valley Hawks, 8 p.m. at Veterans Memorial Sports Complex

The U18 AAA Male Interlake Lightning lost 6-1 to the Winnipeg Wild on Wednesday, won 5-2 over the Winnipeg Thrashers on Saturday, and lost 5-3 to the Kenora Thistles on Sunday. They currently sit seventh with an 18-16-2-1-3-2 record.

Upcoming Games: Friday, Feb. 7 vs Brandon Wheat Kings, 7 p.m. at Teulon-Rockwood Arena; Saturday, Feb. 8 vs Central Plains Capitals, 7 p.m. at Teulon-Rockwood Arena; Sunday, Feb. 9 at Winnipeg Wild, 3 p.m. at Hockey For All Centre

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Are you suffering from joint or arthritic pain? If so, you owe it to yourself to try elk velvet antler capsules. Hundreds have found relief. Benefits humans and pets. EVA is composed of proteins, amino acids, minerals, lipids and water. Key compounds that work to stimulate red blood cell production & cartilage cell regeneration & development. Stonewood Elk Ranch Ltd., 204-467-8884 or e-mail stonewoodelkranch@mymts.net

THE RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ARMSTRONG CONTRACT OPPORTUNITY MUNICIPAL OFFICE CLEANER

The Rural Municipality of Armstrong is open to accepting expression of interests for the 2025/2026 office cleaning services. All interested parties can refer to the RM website at www.rmofarmstrong.com for a detailed job description.

Please submit your letter of interest by 12:00 noon on Friday, February 21, 2025, to the Assistant CAO at the Municipal of Armstrong office.

E-mail: acao@rmofarmstrong.com

Mail/Drop-off: R.M. of Armstrong
1094 Highway 19
Box 69
Inwood, MB R0C 1P0

We appreciate your interest in this position, however, only those chosen for an interview will be contacted.

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Public Notice is hereby given that the Interlake Weed Control District (comprised of the Rural Municipalities of Armstrong, Bifrost-Riverton, Fisher, and Gimli, the Town of Arborg, and the LUD of Fisher) intends to conduct the following Pesticide Control Programs during 2025.

1. To control noxious weeds and brush, as well as vegetation causing a safety hazard, on rights-of-way, school grounds, and public areas within the Interlake Weed Control District, the Rural Municipalities of Grahamdale, Coldwell, St. Laurent, and West Interlake, and the LUD of Lundar. School grounds include all Evergreen and Lakeshore School Division properties. The projected dates of application will be from April 14 to December 31, 2025. The herbicides to be used in the program may include:

- 2,4-D Amine	- Diuron	- Picloram
- 2,4-D Ester	- Diflufenopyr	- Saflufenacil
- 2,4-D choline salt	- Diquat	- Simazine
- Aminocyclopyrachlor	- Flumioxazin	- Triclopyr
- Aminopyralid	- Fluroxypyr	- Gateway adjuvant
- Bromacil	- Glyphosate	- Hasten NT adjuvant
- Chlorsulfuron	- Imazapyr	- Excel 70 surfactant
- Clopyralid	- Indaziflam	- LI700 surfactant
- Dicamba	- Mecoprop	- CZ 70 surfactant
- Dichlorprop	- Metsulfuron methyl	- nonionic surfactant
- as well as products in the allowable list as per MB Regulation 286/2014		

2. To control insect pests including mosquitoes, forest tent caterpillars, cankerworms, grasshoppers, spruce bud worm, etc. in public areas. The projected dates of application will be from April 14 to October 31, 2025. The insecticides to be used may include:

- Bti	- Btk	- Carbaryl	- Cypermethrin	- Deltamethrin	- Dimethoate	- Malathion
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The public may, within 15 days of the publication of this notice, send a written submission to the department below regarding the control programs, or to register with the department their written objection to the SPECIFIC control program(s) next to their properties for the 2025 season.

Manitoba Environment and Climate Change
Environmental Approvals Branch
Box 35, 14 Fultz Boulevard
Winnipeg MB R3Y 0L6

Fred Paulson, Weed Supervisor
Interlake Weed Control District

Eddie's Gravel Supply Ltd. is Hiring

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FARMERS AND RANCHERS

Plan to attend the Bred Cow and Heifer sale

Saturday, February 15, 2025
at the Ashern Auction Mart
Starting at 1 PM

This sale is open to all consignors

Please contact

Kirk Kiesman at 204-768-0019

Larry Kornelsen at 204-494-0455

Tyler Slawinski at 204-672-0450

To book your cattle

Updates will be posted on our

website at ashernauctionmart.com

For further information contact:

Ashern Auction Mart - 204-768-2360

Licence #1128



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

FULL TIME POSITION UTILITY OPERATOR CLASS II, CLASS I OR OPERATOR IN TRAINING (OIT)

This full time position will be under the supervision of the Utilities Manager. Duties will include performing various tasks necessary for the maintenance and operation of the municipal sewer and water utilities within Provincial regulations. Current systems include Sewage Treatment Plant (Class 3), 8 Lift Stations and 1 Water Treatment Plant (Class 2).

Candidate must possess the following:

- Class II or Class I Provincial Certification preferred
- Operators in Training will be considered provided they have two years post secondary education in a related field
- Experience in operating and maintaining equipment is preferred
- Valid Class 3 Drivers License with air preferred
- Have knowledge of Workplace Safety Practices.
- Must be physically fit, able to lift at least 50 pounds.
- Excellent communication and organizational skills, and a demonstrated ability to work independently and in a team environment is required.

Candidate may be required to work shift work, including weekends, and to be on call and/or available for any call out emergencies that may arise from time to time. Salary in accordance with the collective agreement.

Resumes complete with 3 references will be received by the undersigned until 4:00 p.m. on February 21, 2025.

Ron Hahlweg, C.E.T.
Director of Operations
Rural Municipality of Gimli
PO Box 1246
Gimli, MB R0C1B0
Email: operations@rmgimli.com

We thank all candidates for their interest, however, only those individuals considered for an interview will be contacted.

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RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI

INVITATION TO TENDER

CLOSING DATE: Friday, February 28, 2025 at Noon

The Rural Municipality of Gimli is accepting tenders for the following:

RFT 2025-01 2025 EQUIPMENT RATES: the RM of Gimli is seeking proposals from qualified bidders for hourly rates on various types of privately owned equipment for the purpose of establishing pay rates and hiring order of private equipment for the 2025 works season ending March 31, 2026. Contractors who do not submit pricing and/or do not hold a valid business license or business tax will not be considered for municipal projects.

RFT 2025-02 FUEL: for the supply of fuel for the period of April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026, for municipal equipment. The tenders are for approximately 40,000 litres of gasoline, approximately 50,000 litres of clear diesel fuel, approximately 90,000 litres of purple diesel (at pumps, card lock system). To be delivered to the Public Works Yard in the Gimli Industrial Park.

RFT 2025-03 DUST CONTROL: Application of Magnesium Chloride or Calcium Chloride dust control product. Product must be Magnesium Chloride Liquid or Calcium Chloride Liquid with a 30% to 35% Brine Solution and an Anti-Corrosive Inhibitor to meet Corrosion Rate of less than 4.0 mils per ASTM G 4-84. Bidders may provide a quote for one or both. The product shall be available for delivery to various locations in the Municipality from June 1, 2025 to October 31, 2025, as required by the Municipality.

RFT 2025-04 SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF LIMESTONE AGGREGATE: for the supply and delivery of limestone aggregates; to be deposited on municipal roads throughout the RM of Gimli, or hauled to stockpile at the Public Works Shop yards, as directed by the Municipality. The material to be applied in one main haul approximately during the period of June 1, 2025, until completed. Additionally, there may be spot hauling continuing until December 31, 2025.

RFT 2025-05 GRAVEL HAULING & LOADING: for the hauling of gravel to be deposited on municipal roads throughout the RM of Gimli from the pit located in SW25-20-3E. The material to be applied in one main haul during the period of June 1, 2025, until completed. Additionally, there may be spot hauling continuing until December 31, 2025, approximately 14,000 cubic yards. While the Municipality would normally be responsible for loading, contractors are asked for the option of supplying a loader.


RFT 2025-06 GRAVEL STOCKPILING & CRUSHING: for the gravel stockpiling and crushing at the pit located in SW25-20-3E. Traffic Gravel to Department of Highways Specifications, approximately 14,000 cubic yards.

Detailed tender packages complete with specifications are available to interested bidders on the RM of Gimli website, www.gimli.ca, or at the Municipal Office, 62 2nd Avenue, between the hours of 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday.

Any questions or concerns related to the tenders can be directed to:

Ron Hahlweg
Director of Operations
Rural Municipality of Gimli
Phone: (204) 642-6688

The RM of Gimli reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive irregularities and informalities therein, and to award the tender in the best interest of the RM of Gimli in its sole discretion. Lowest bid may not be accepted. Contractors must comply with Municipal requirements for liability insurance, WCB coverage and business licensing to be eligible to be awarded the contract.



Interlake-Eastern
Regional Health Authority

ASHERN PERSONAL CARE HOME

Sprinkler system installation


Starting Monday, February 3, contractors will be on site in Ashern Personal Care home to install a fire suppression sprinkler system. This work will require access to ceilings throughout the facility to install heat and smoke activated sprinklers. Workers will erect temporary boarding to contain the worksites.

Temporary shutdown of south entrance

As a result of construction, the south entrance of the personal care home, accessed from the parking lot off Steenson Ave., will be closed temporarily as of February 3. Staff and visitors will be redirected to the personal care home's main entrance that faces Poplar Ave.

The project will be completed in eight phases and is expected to conclude mid-summer.

We apologize for the inconvenience as we complete this necessary work.



Rural Municipality of FISHER

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

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

AUDIT SERVICES

The Rural Municipality of Fisher invites proposals for the service of an auditor, and for the preparation of the municipality's annual reports for the fiscal years 2024 to 2026, all inclusive, in accordance with the qualifications and duties prescribed by *The Municipal Act* respecting the financial affairs, books, accounts, records and transactions to the municipality.

The Rural Municipality of Fisher has a Utility Fund, an L.U.D of Fisher Branch, and Handi-Van Services.

Proposal to include an amount for one (1) year and an amount for three (3) years.

Sealed envelope to be marked "AUDIT SERVICES"


Proposals must be received by 9:00 a.m. Friday, February 28, 2025

For Further Information, please contact the undersigned.

The Council has the sole authority to make the appointment of auditor and reserves the right without prejudice to reject any and/or all proposals.

Kelly Marykuca, CMMA
Chief Administrative Officer
Rural Municipality of Fisher
Box 280
Fisher Branch, Manitoba R0C 0Z0
Phone: (204) 372-6393
Email: fishercao@mymts.net

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: ELIZABETH ANNE LA RUE, late of the Village of Dunnottar, in Manitoba, Deceased.

ALL claims filed against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at their offices, 72A Centre Street, P.O. Box 6500, Gimli, Manitoba, R0C 1B0, on or before the 12th day of March, 2025.

DATED at Gimli, Manitoba, this 6th day of February, 2025.

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

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www.mcna.com

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Feb 12th @ 7PM

Firearms & Ammo
Feb 13th @ 7PM

Estate & Moving
Feb 19th @ 7:00PM

McSherryAuction.com
204-467-1858
or 204-886-7027
mcsherrytld@gmail.com

WANTED

COIN COLLECTIONS

CASH FOR COIN COLLECTIONS & ACCUMULATIONS OF COINS! ROYAL CANADIAN MINT COINS, OLD COINS, OLD PAPER MONEY, SILVER COINS, GOLD COINS, RARE COINS ETC.

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Todd
204-904-9705

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In Arborg at busy implement dealership**

Shachtays in Arborg is hiring additional staff for the following positions:

- **Office/Administration**
- **Parts/Counter Person**

*Experience not necessary but a definite asset.
Benefit plan available.*

Apply in person, fax, mail or e-mail resume to: 276 Ardal St., Box 190, Arborg, MB R0C 0A0
shachtays@hotmail.com
Ph: (204) 376-5233
Fax: (204) 376-5234

*Locally owned and operated.
Serving the Interlake for 58 years.*

**RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

**TWO TERM POSITIONS
OPERATOR B**

These full-time term positions will be under the direct supervision of the Public Works Foreman and reporting to the Public Works Coordinator. Duties will include operation of tractors, compactor, tandem and single axle trucks, skid steer, sidewalk sweepers, snow blowers, grass cutting and other related equipment. This position also performs duties as assigned as they relate to Public Works activities.

Candidate must possess the following:

- High School Diploma, GED or equivalent.
- A Minimum of two years experience operating and maintaining equipment.
- Valid Class 3 Drivers License with air.
- Have knowledge of Workplace Safety Practices.
- Must be physically fit, able to lift at least 50 pounds.
- Excellent communication and organizational skills, and a demonstrated ability to work independently and in a team environment is required.

Hours of work will be 40 hours per week, from Monday to Friday. Candidate may be required to work shift work, including weekends and be available for any call out emergencies that may arise from time to time. Salary for 2025 is \$27.02 per hour and will be administered in accordance with the current collective agreement.

Resumes complete with 3 references will be received by the undersigned until 4:00 p.m. on February 21, 2025.

Ron Hahlweg, C.E.T.
Director of Operations
Rural Municipality of Gimli
PO Box 1246
Gimli, MB R0C1B0
Email: operations@rmgimli.com

We thank all candidates for their interest, however, only those individuals considered for an interview will be contacted.

CLANDEBOYE AVE in Selkirk

Executive Mall

**OFFICE
SPACE FOR
LEASE**

Property Features

Total square Footage 1700, includes eight offices of various sizes, a board room and a front reception area. Current tenants include the local newspaper, an accountant, two massage therapists, a women's gym and the local Chamber of Commerce. The building was recently upgraded. Both the reception and board room are shared. Currently one office is available for lease.

**For information please contact: BIG Real Estate
204-485-0010 email bigandcolourful@mts.net**

Announcements

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Lakeshore Handivan Association Inc.
 The Lakeshore Handivan Association is currently hiring for a full time Handivan Coordinator/Administrator for the Ashern Office. Commencement date: ASAP
 Reporting to the LSH Committee, the Coordinator will perform the duties and responsibilities necessary to supervise and organize Handivan services for the area based on the needs of both the RM of Grahamdale and West Interlake Municipalities. The Coordinator will work in conjunction with the CRC office (LIFE) on calls.
Duties And Responsibilities:
 • Supervise and organize driving staff including orientation/training
 • Maintain statistical records of services provided
 • Prepare monthly reports for meetings
 • Oversee Vehicle Fleet Maintenance and assigning drivers to transportation requests
 o Invoicing clients at month end
 o Scheduling trips based on request
Skills And Qualifications - Minimum:
 o Strong Organizational & interpersonal skills To deal with the public and staff
 • Maintaining Records and Office Procedures)
 o Microsoft Office/Computer Skills and financial background
 o Class 5 Driver's license
Preferred Skills
 • A background in logistics/dispatch(preferred)
Job Type: Full time - Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Salary: Negotiable
Work Location: Living Independence for Elders
Application deadline: Friday, February 14, 2025
 Full job description available from the LIFE Office by calling (204) 768-2187 or email: Ishandivan23@gmail.com
 We thank all those that apply but only those selected will be contacted for an interview. Please send a completed resume and references to: Lakeshore Handivan Association Inc. Hiring Committee, Box 684, Ashern, MB R0C 0E0
 Email: Ishandivan23@gmail.com
 Drop off: (sealed envelope) to LIFE at #4-61 Main Street, Ashern

Registered Purebred Polled 2 Year Old and Yearling CHAROLAIS BULLS FOR SALE

We have a good selection of quality bulls. Will be semen tested. Delivery & EPD's available.

For more information call Ken at (204) 376-2418 (land line) or Text to (204) 641-3788 KLCC Charolais, Arborg

BOOKKEEPER WANTED

Part time or full time Experience with Quickbooks Necessary Call 204-513-0528 or email joel@destinyroad.ca



OBITUARY

Leonard Evanchyshin

It is with deep sadness that we announce the peaceful passing of Leonard Evanchyshin, age 69 years on January 27, 2025.

He will be deeply missed by his partner Marie Senga of 40 years; sister Mavis (Ed) Kaluzny and brother Allen Evanchyshin. Also missed by in-laws Philip (Pam), Adam (Lori) and Barb Senga; Uncle Jim Lewkun; Auntie Anne Senga and numerous nephews, nieces and cousins.

He was predeceased by his parents Peter and Jean Evanchyshin; sister Adeline (Ed); great niece Jessica Woytowich; sister Elsie (Bill) Stepaniuk; in-laws Joe and Jean Senga; brother-in-law Glen Senga.

Leonard was born April 9, 1955 in Malonton, Manitoba. He retired from Air Canada after 25 years of service. Leonard also operated Evanchyshin Hauling with his brother Allen for many years.

After retirement Leonard enjoyed fishing, hunting, travelling, family gatherings, spending time with his beloved pet dog Daisy and all his animals on the farm.

Funeral Service will be held at Komarno Community Hall, Komarno, Manitoba, Monday, February 10, 2025 at 11:00 a.m., with interment at Zbruch Cemetery; pallbearers will be Glenn Stepaniuk, Greg and Barry Woytowich, Graham Kaluzny, Philip and Adam Senga.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Leonard's memory may be made to Zbruch Cemetery, care of Box 32, Malonton, MB R0C 1Z0 or a charity of your choice.

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



take a break

> GAMES

SUDOKU

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

Fun By The Numbers

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

Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:

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

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

Sudoku Answer

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

Crossword Answer

X CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

- "The Las Vegas of the East"
- Cook
- Manning and Wallach are two
- Chameleon
- A way to fill up
- What MLBers hope to play in
- Unhappy
- Indefinite period of time
- Excites
- Males
- Mongol leader Genghis
- Turfs
- Soda comes in them
- Not nice
- Professional organization
- Part of a play
- Sea eagle
- Emily Blunt's character in "Sicario"
- Beige
- Mental sharpness
- Valley
- Alcyone's husband
- A place to gamble
- Flightless Australian birds
- Call out somebody's name over a P.A. system
- US spy group
- Pancakes from buckwheat flour
- Swiss river
- Disfigure
- Have surgery
- Formal withdrawal
- Early English council
- Square measures
- 2,000 lbs.
- Siskel and __, critics

CLUES DOWN

- Mouths
- Buffalo
- You plug it in
- Each
- Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
- King of Thebes

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13	
14						15					16				
17					18										
19					20				21						
				22				23							
		24	25					26				27	28		
29	30							31				32		33	
34					35	36					37				
38				39							40				
		41		42					43	44					
				45				46							
		47	48					49					50	51	52
53							54				55	56			
57											58				
59											61				

- English name meaning "mythical hunter"
- Indicates near
- More herbaceous
- Gas-powered cars need one
- Dishonest individual
- Systems, doctrines, theories
- The woman
- The whole of one's holdings
- Witnesses
- Doctor
- Paul __, Swiss painter
- Kids look for him on December 24
- Single
- Competitions
- Predict the future
- Cage for trained hawks
- Musician Clapton
- Frozen water
- Semiformal men's evening

- attire
- Most worn
- Common soap ingredient
- Former EU monetary unit
- Provisions
- Book parts
- Republic of Ireland
- Partner to "Pa"
- Sammy __, songwriter
- Dutch colonist
- Clare Booth __, American writer
- Solar disk in Egyptian mythology
- Minute arachnid
- From a distance
- Monthly apartment cost
- Young women's association
- Tourist destination
- "Woman" in Ojibwe language
- Pointed end of a pen

Classifieds Announcements



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OBITUARY

Kevin Albertson

Sadly and unexpectedly, Kevin passed away on January 24, 2025. Cremation has taken place and obituary and tributes can be viewed online through Parkland Funeral Services, Stony Plain, Alberta

OBITUARY

Judith Anne Vigfusson (nee Nichol)



It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Judie on Wednesday, January 29, 2025 at the Gimli Community Health Centre.

Judie leaves behind to cherish her memory her husband John Vigfusson; sons Dale (Ildiko) and Dallas Haigh; grandsons Ryan (Charity) and Landon Haigh; great-granddaughters Saydee and Anna Anderson; and her special friend of 80 years, Helen Herr. She also leaves many relatives on the Vigfusson side and would like to thank two nieces, Louise Tower and Kerrine Adair, for all they've done for her.

Judie was born June 4, 1936 in the Regina Misericordia Hospital and grew up in Regina. She was predeceased by her parents, Howard and Beatrice Nichol, and her brother Bobby.

John and Judie were fortunate to have 28 wonderful years together. She so enjoyed being the wife of a farmer. They went on many adventures together throughout Canada and the USA. They spent 19 winters as snowbirds in Pine to Palm Resort Park in Texas and in 2014 they moved from the farm to Gimli.

A celebration of life was held on Saturday, February 1 at the Riverton Community Church of the Nazarene with Menno Friesen officiating. Interment will be at a later date in Regina, beside her parents.

Flowers are gratefully declined and if you choose to, donations to CancerCare Manitoba would be appreciated.

Many thanks to all the doctors, nurses, aids, housekeeping staff and cooks at the Gimli Hospital for your care and compassion during her stay in hospital.

Tributes: www.gilbartfuneralhome.com

Gilbart Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



OBITUARY

Robert Arthur Green

July 8, 1948 – January 26, 2025



Robert Green passed away suddenly at home in Fisher Branch on Sunday, January 26th.

Robert leaves to mourn his wife of 51 years Betty (nee Walker); his children Donald Green (Amy Johnston), Sandra (Philip) Lappage, Angela Green (Fraser Hebert), Jodyne Green and Crystal (Andrew) Meisner; his grandchildren Curtis (Brandi), Morgan (Bjorn), Walker (Rosalie), Joshua, Madison, Caleb, Wade, Xander, Logan, Katelyn, Aiden, Mason and Garrett and great grandson Rowan. He also leaves his mother-in-law Rollande Walker; his siblings Amelia Hrabluik (Les Allen), Sharon Lawrence (Dennis Jones), Velma (Norman) Nicoll, David (Alice) Green; brother-in-law Gary Lawrence and his sisters-in-law Pat Philippe, Barb (Reg) Marginet, Judy (Dave) Rea, Brenda (Bill) Nostedt, Cindy (Gord) Maddock, Sheila (Doug) Lawless, Kelly (Rick) Lounsbury, Cateland (Greg) Penner, Connie (Doug) Petersen, and Sandra (Daren) Hird; as well as many nieces, nephews, and extended family and friends.

Robert was predeceased by his parents James and Beatrice Green; his father-in-law Bill Walker; brothers-in-law Normand Philippe and Peter Hrabluik; his nephew Tony Nostedt and his cousin Donald Grobb.

Robert was born in Treherne, MB and raised on a farm in the Tiger Hills south of town. As a young boy he attended Pinkerton School and later Treherne Collegiate and worked on the mixed grain and livestock farm with his dad. When he was in grade 11, he left school to work on the farm full time and bought his first piece of land. While growing up, he was a 4-H member and a leader for the Treherne 4-H Seed Club. It was at a 4-H curling event where he met Betty Walker and they married on October 20, 1973. They continued farming with his dad until 1982, when they moved their growing family to Fisher Branch and established their own cattle ranch, which became G7 Ranch. Robert and Betty loved farming and took a lot of pride in the cattle that they raised.

Robert was a Councilor and Reeve for the RM of Fisher for 17 years. He was also a Board Member of East Interlake Conservation District and the Ashern Auction Mart. He enjoyed visiting and meeting new people and he saw the value in working with everyone to make his community better.

When he was younger, he enjoyed hunting moose, elk, deer and geese with his father-in-law Bill Walker, cousin Donald Grobb and numerous other friends. As he got older, fishing became more of an off the farm priority. Last fall, he thoroughly enjoyed sturgeon fishing on the Fraser River in BC with Mark Gray, Richard Wright and Jodyne.

A celebration of life was held on Saturday, February 1st at 1:00 p.m. at the Fisher Branch Community Centre.

Memorial donations may be made in Robert's memory to the Manitoba Farmer Wellness Program at www.manitobafarmerwellness.ca or a charity of your choice.



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