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The Riverton Handivan committee celebrated a milestone as they welcomed the newest member to their fleet on April 29. Left to right: Shianne Bjarnason, Shara Selkirk, Doug Thorarinson, Kevin Chudd, Sherry Rozecki, Corey Palsson, Brendan McMURAKHY, Irwin Schellenberg, Jonas Thorarinson, Interlake-Gimli MLA Derek Johnson, Tanis Wyant and Cara Enns.

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New Iceland Heritage Museum hosting storytelling art exhibition

By Patricia Barrett

The New Iceland Heritage Museum is playing host to a visiting exhibition that showcases the diverse work of Canadian artists and the stories they tell through their work.

Titled *Celebrating Storytelling Through Art in Manitoba*, the exhibit is on a 10-month tour of the province that includes the Interlake. In addition to Gimli, the exhibition will be shown in St. Andrews in the fall.

The exhibit is an engaging look at the variety of ways artists tell stories through media such as photographs and drawings, as well as Indigenous-themed art. It will feature artworks from the Canada Council's Art Bank collection.

"Stories We Tell approaches storytelling as a part of our everyday lives — the stories created when we listen to, learn from and share our history and culture, both personal and collective, with friends and relatives," states a news release from the Canada Council Art Bank in Ottawa. "The exhibition also explores the human desire to share stories and the different ways artists — whether from ancestors or through myths — experience and create stories, either by re-telling history or recounting new stories from their own experience."

In collaboration with the Manitoba

Arts Network, the exhibit provides rural communities across the province "greater access to contemporary visual art."

Artists such as Pitseolak Ashoona, Carole Condé and Karl Beveridge, Carolina Hernandez-Hernandez, Jonathan Hobin, Robert Houle, Pedro Isztin, Nomi Kaplan, Herzl Kashetsky, Victoria Mamnguqsualuk, Shawna McLeod, Kim Moodie, William Noah, Pudlo Pudlat, Jana Sasaki, Noboru Sawai and Diana Thorneycroft will be featured.

"Among the works of art featured is *Mother Goose* by Jonathan Hobin, which evokes childhood imagery and fables with a dark twist as a commentary on standards ingrained in societal norms since childhood," states the release.

The exhibition will be at NIHM until June 24. It's also online at artbank.ca

Other stops include Boissevain at the International Peace Garden in July 2024; McCreary at the McCreary District Library in August/September 2024; St. Andrews at the St. Andrews Heritage Centre in October 2024; The Pas at the Pas Campus of the University College of the North in November and December 2024; and Thompson at the Thompson Campus of the University College of the North in January and February 2025.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY CANADA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS

A child holds a goose on her lap with her gloved hand around the bird's neck. *Mother Goose* by Jonathan Hobin, 2009.

The left-hand side shows a coloured pencil drawing of a person with a bow and arrow, another person and a dog with their heads in water and a third person on a two-headed dog. Legend of the Two-Headed Dog by Victoria Mamnguqsualuk, 1994.

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Local ladies strut their stuff to support community



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY SUSAN BAUERNHUBER

The Arborg Royal Canadian Legion No. 161 Ladies Auxiliary hosted its popular annual fundraising fashion show and tea last Thursday evening. Over 120 guests attended and enjoyed fancy sandwiches, cakes and beverages as they watched 14 models from the community showcase a new clothing line from Johnson's Fashion & Footwear in Gimli. The Ladies Auxiliary is made up of a group of 19 ladies who take pride in giving back to their community. The fashion show is their largest annual fundraiser. They also do catering for various functions throughout the year.

ACU teaming up with Winnipeg Blue Bombers to help students tackle finances

Staff

Access Credit Union is teaming up with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers to promote financial literacy.

The financial institution is giving schools across Manitoba the chance to win a special financial literacy workshop featuring a player from the Bombers.

The "Tackle your finances like a pro" workshop will be delivered by the Access financial literacy team, along with a Winnipeg Blue Bomber, to teach students practical money management skills and tips. Giveaways and prizes will also be up for grabs.

"Access is excited to be teaming up with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers to help teach students how to manage money, budget and make good

financial choices," said Larry Davey, president and CEO of Access Credit Union. "Our goal with financial literacy is always to help empower people with financial knowledge and we believe that starts at a young age."

Access CU's Financial Literacy Program began in 2017, offering workshops to give people the knowledge and skills they need to achieve financial success.

"The Financial Literacy Program is a great initiative from Access Credit Union to empower and educate youth in our local communities," noted Wade Miller, president and CEO of the Winnipeg Football Club. "The Winnipeg Blue Bombers are excited to partner with Access Credit Union and support this program in the years

ahead to see the students benefit from these workshops."

The deadline to apply is June 30.

Schools can do so online at accesscu.ca/bombers.

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Photo book cherishes Gimli and the rural way of life

By Patricia Barrett

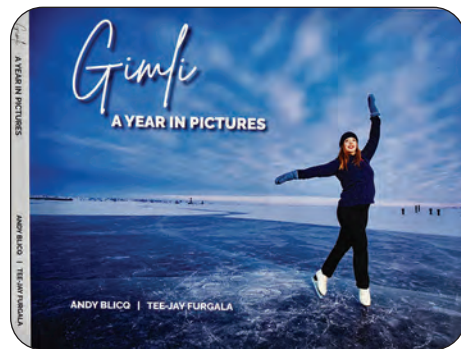
The love of small rural towns is at the heart and centre of a new book of photographic essays that document the everyday life of Gimli, its residents and people who flock to the beachside town.

And its authors, Andy Blicq and Tee-Jay Furgala, held a book launch party last Sunday at the Lakeview Resort.

The self-published, 216-page book titled *Gimli: A Year in Pictures* shows life in the town over the course of four seasons.

Blicq, who has created seminal documentaries as an independent filmmaker and used to work for the CBC and on television programs such as *Country Canada*, said the book sprang from a love of Gimli and his and Furgala's determination to document it in photos with accompanying textual passages for context.

"It's a celebration of the community that shows an interesting snapshot of life in our town," said Blicq. "Doing a project on this scale meant we had to focus on the town of Gimli, but we did do some shooting in the immedi-



ate area outside of town."

The year-in-the-life of Gimli pays homage to small-town rural life with its vibrant sense of self and cohesive community. It focuses primarily on people but also on events and theme-driven photos to "tell the story of the passing of the seasons and to also express the beauty of the lake and community."

There are about 85 different stories and subjects and about 200 people featured in the book. It includes photos of Gimli's iconic festivals such as the Icelandic Festival of Manitoba at which Blicq and Furgala spent a day with the festival's Fjallkona and the Gimli International Film Festival



EXPRESS PHOTOS COURTESY OF ANDY BLICQ AND TEE-JAY FURGALA
Gimli: A Year in Pictures celebrates the rural way of life with over 200 photographs and stories. Tee-Jay Furgala, left, and Andy Blicq.

where they found a California filmmaker watching a movie on the huge screen set up on the beach. It also captures ordinary day-to-day events in the community such as boxing classes and baseball games.

Because Furgala is "an excellent portrait photographer," Blicq said they included "character" stories that focused on people such as Rev. Stan Gacek of St. Michael's Church.

"It's a character-oriented book. Overall, you get a picture of not only the people who live here but also how Gimli is a place that people gravitate to, particularly in the summer," he said. "There are a lot of visitors that come to Gimli in the summer and we captured some of those stories."

Blicq and Furgala shot photos for 18 months, starting in May 2022 and ending in the fall of 2023 after which they edited the book for about six months.

Blicq said that although there's a generational divide between them, he and Furgala had an "amazingly harmonious relationship" and "bonded" over their shared love of photography, the creative experience and their town.

Furgala worked in the film industry for roughly 10 years, enjoying the creative environment and getting to meet celebrities. But after working incredibly long and inconsistent hours on movie sets, he said he decided to become a realtor. He now works with Royal LePage - JMB & Associates in Gimli.

He said the favourite part of the project for him was hanging out with Blicq and taking pictures of people. "Everyone has a story to tell" and some activities he wouldn't have thought twice about piqued his interest.

"The older generation does floor curling. I read the story Andy wrote and thought, 'This is really interesting.' I would have never thought that was fun. But I shot it. They come on the weekends and all gather around and have fun. It was small things like that I found intriguing," said Furgala. "What really surprised me is that you might think you know people in passing, but you don't really know them until you actually take their picture and hear their story, and then it becomes 'Oh, I never knew that about you.' There's more than meets the eye."

As for their approach to planning, Furgala said he and Blicq just started talking to people when they hit the streets. They'd spend roughly an hour with many of their subjects, but some photo shoots — a man with a pottery shop, for instance — would take several hours.

"We knew we had to go to certain events like the Icelandic Festival, but other times we just walked around to see who we could photograph," said Furgala. "We also had friends we called on. I asked a friend, who's an ice skater, if I could take photos of her

Continued on page 5



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Riverton Handivan committee unveils their newest addition

By Lana Meier

Riverton volunteers and the federal and provincial governments made a good thing even better on April 29, when the Riverton Handivan committee took possession of the newest member of their fleet.

It's a gorgeous blue Chrysler Pacifica, acquired through Chudd's Chrysler in Gimli, and fully loaded with accessibility features for those with mobility challenges. The cost of the van was covered by both cash and two rullapylsas, which were accompanied by freshly baked brown bread. The contract-signing concluded on a cheerful note, leaving all parties content.

Project funding came from the Province of Manitoba's Building Sustainable Communities program and from the federal government's Rural Transit Solutions Fund. A statement was sent by Sean Fraser, federal Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, which read, "Today's ribbon-cutting symbolizes more than just the purchase of a new wheelchair accessible van for the community of Bifrost-Riverton and surrounding ar-

reas; it also represents a commitment to inclusivity, mobility and economic growth. We will continue investing in projects like this that build stronger, more inclusive communities."

Derek Johnson, provincial MLA, represented the province as a gracious contributor to this program during the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The Riverton Handivan has been in operation since 2005, when the Riverton Elks purchased a multi-passenger bus for the benefit of seniors and those with mobility challenges. Since then, a total of 26 residents have been involved in its operations over the course of 19 years. Among them are three founding members — Jonas Thorarinson, Irwin Schellenberg and Sherry Rozecki — who have been with the organization from the very beginning. Additionally, Leslie Gislason, Ivan Grimolfson and Colin Bjarnason also dedicated their time and efforts to the Handivan for several years.

Over the years, a smaller van was added to the fleet, and now they can respond to multiple needs, both medical and recreational. The RM of



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Interlake-Gimli MLA Derek Johnson in front of the new Riverton Handivan.

Bifrost-Riverton generously provides storage for both vans and contributes to their annual operating expenses. The Handivan fees remain affordable as a result, and they are thankful for the support from these three levels of

government.

Interested in joining the team or utilizing their services? Feel free to reach out to Sherry Rozecki at 204-378-0153. New drivers and customers alike are welcomed.

> RURAL WAY OF LIFE, FROM PG. 4

[on Lake Winnipeg]. It was a beautiful night and the photo was really good. It made the front cover of the book."

With a background as a motion picture technician and photographer, Furgala said worked on his own with some of the subjects who appear in the book. For the most part, he teamed up with Blicq when their schedules allowed. With Blicq's lifetime of journalistic experience, he said he picked up a few pointers on how to interview people.

"Andy has more of a background in journalism, and way he asked people questions and interviewed them was beneficial to me; I learned how to approach an interview in that way," said Furgala. "I photograph people but I don't ask them really deep questions. It was a piece of cake to him because he's been doing it for 40 years."

The hardest part of the project was deciding what photos and stories would make it into the book and what would have to be dropped.

"We gathered maybe 100 different stories, but we couldn't fit them all in for various reasons. We had to cull the bad shots. There were tons of shots I wanted to put in the book; I probably shot 4,000 to 5,000 images," said Furgala. "I said

[to Andy], 'Really? We can't just squeeze this one in?' I'm sure some people might feel a little disappointed that we shot them but didn't put them in the book."

That said, they have enough material for a Part 2 and Part 3 if the book takes off and there's a demand for more, he said.

The book will be available at HP Tergesen & Sons general store in Gimli.

Blicq said they may approach booksellers such as McNally to see whether there's interest in distributing it. In the meantime, CBC has asked him and Furgala to put together a short film on how they made the book. That will run on its digital platform.

"We did this book essentially for the pleasure of doing it but also for the experience of doing it," said Blicq. "And we wanted something for our community. We both love this place."

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Women's resource centre adds slate of new staff, services

Province funds new supports for domestic violence victims

By Becca Myskiw

The Interlake Women's Resource Centre (IWRC) is expanding to have mobile counsellors.

With a recent funding increase from the provincial government, IWRC was able to nearly double in size — going from two counsellors and one part-time administrative professional to five full-time staff, including two new domestic violence counsellors and a full-time administrative professional.

The centre's executive director Jennifer Campbell also moved from two part-time positions as counsellor and director to the now full-time executive director.

"We're empathetic, compassionate, and we understand (domestic violence victims) are really struggling," Campbell said. "This is a safe, inclusive environment. It's really important in breaking the cycle of domestic violence; you have to provide services and build awareness."

One of the new positions is a full-time mobile counsellor, who will travel throughout IWRC's catchment area providing services.

Currently, the mobile counsellor is in Riverton Community Health Office & Clinic on Fridays and in Teulon on Tuesdays.

Campbell said the centre is extremely excited to be able to add a mobile

counsellor.

The size of the IWRC's rural catchment area can be challenging for clients who do not have access to transportation, so being able to bring these services to them is important, she said.

"We've already had an uptake of people interested in those services," she said. "We also find having our centre in Gimli is a hub area, the main area in our catchment people come to. But we still find some people don't want to travel outside of their community for services, so they have the transport barrier to access mobile counselling."

People interested in IWRC's mobile counselling can call the office at 204-642-8264. Everything done with the centre is free and confidential.

It is open Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and accepts walk-ins for those experiencing a crisis.

"Mobile counselling will be really huge in breaking barriers and bringing public awareness," said Campbell, noting that as they build more of a presence in each community, their message and services will become wider known, bringing knowledge to the region's population.

IWRC has been in Gimli since 1984. The organization settled at 87 5th Ave. in 1991 but has since outgrown the space. The mobile counsellor's office is in the kitchen and IWRC's clientele is always growing, so Campbell said they're working on moving to a new location.

"Then we have more opportunity to

grow as well," she said.

IWRC currently sees anyone who identifies as a woman and anyone under 18 affected by family domestic violence or family violence. It offers crisis intervention, information and referral, advocacy, single and group counselling and outreach programs.

With the new funding, IWRC is also now working toward supporting men affected by family violence, domestic violence and gender-based violence.

Campbell said men are statistically less likely to come forward as victims. The centre hopes to add services for men sometime in the next year.

The centre also has a presence in the local schools and anyone over 15 can access services without parental permission.

IWRC doesn't turn anyone away. The counsellors are trained to provide mental health supports, to help victims understand the cycle of violence, to help with life skills and with domestic violence awareness. Upon intake, people will typically have one-hour counselling sessions once a week, depending on the situation, moving to less frequent meetings as they work with their counsellor more and more.

Along with counselling, advocacy and support, IWRC counsellors will go the RCMP with clients to help them file a report, go to meetings with them as an advocate and help wherever they can.

To learn more about IWRC, go to www.iwrc.ca.

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Spectacular annual Narcisse mating ritual



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY LAINE WILSON

Every spring, the Narcisse Snake Dens are alive with tens of thousands of red-sided garter snakes as they slither to the surface from their winter dens. Pierce, Paisley and Ridge Wilson had fun visiting the Narcisse Snake Dens on May 11. When the mercury reached 27 degrees C, which was 13 degrees above the daily average. Share your pictures of friends and families enjoying the outdoors to record the weather of the week. Email details to news@stonewallteulontribune.ca

Winnipeg Beach opens sewage lagoon to septic haulers

By Becca Myskiw

Winnipeg Beach residents can now choose their own septic hauler to pump out their sewer.

The Town of Winnipeg Beach made the announcement May 8, stating effective immediately, the “sole septic contract pump out requirement has ended.”

Taxpayers can now choose any local septic hauler to do the job.

Previously, Winnipeg Beach would send out a tender to local septic companies and choose the best bidder to pump out all the sewer in the town. This system created problems because Winnipeg Beach’s lagoon licence only allows dumping twice a year — June 3 to 24 and Sept. 9 to 27. With one sewer company doing all the work for the residents, they didn’t have time or room to service everyone, so those who couldn’t get on the list in time didn’t get the service at all.

Now, any septic service with a business licence and the proper qualifications can have access to the Winnipeg Beach lagoon to dump sewer.

There are currently three septic businesses available to hire: Gimli Septic Service, JJ’s Septic Service and MT Septic.

The Winnipeg Beach lagoon is a gated area and can only be accessed with a fob. Each company listed above has the proper access. To find the available haulers as more get access, go to <https://winnipegbeach.ca/p/business-directory>.

“This way, it’s up to the individual for what company they want to use,” said Pam Jackson, Winnipeg Beach mayor. “If you’ve got more companies vying for the same work, it allows for competition and people will not be panicked for getting their tank pumped.”

Jackson said the taxpayers’ response to the changes have been positive so far, and she’s happy they’re able to give people the choice to choose their hauler now.

“People should be able to make their

own decisions,” she said. “It’s great for others businesses too because there’s not a monopoly. It provides

support to all of our local businesses who provide this kind of service. It’s a win-win all the way around.”

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For-fishers by-fishers entity: Freshwater Fish Harvesters Association proposal

By Patricia Barrett

An association of inland commercial fishers with representatives from the prairie provinces and the Northwest Territories has submitted an expression of interest (EOI) to the federal government to take ownership of and manage the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation (FFMC), a Crown corporation.

The Freshwater Fish Harvesters Association Inc. (FFHAI) is a non-political and registered not-for-profit group of inland commercial fishers, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, that legally registered in 2021 and represents Manitoba, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories. FFHAI's board has representatives who fish on Lake Winnipeg and Lake Manitoba and has the unanimous support of the Lake Manitoba Commercial Fishermen's Association with its 400-plus members.

FFHAI submitted its EOI to the gov-

ernment in early March, stating it would like to see FFMC transition to an entity that's run by fishers for fishers, regardless of whether they're Indigenous or non-Indigenous.

FFHAI's president Jamie Linington is a Métis/Indigenous commercial fisher who works on Great Slave Lake in the Northwest Territories and who co-chaired a committee set up in 2019 by the federal government's interlocutor, who made a recommendation on how to transition FFMC away from a government-owned corporation.

She said a transition to a commercial fisher-led entity would be in keeping with the wishes of fishers with whom the government's department of fisheries and oceans (DFO) consulted. A fisher-led entity was also recommended by the interlocutor in his 2021 report after meetings with fishers across western and northern Canada.

"It has been said since 2017 that we'd like to transform FFMC to a for-fishers by-fishers entity that could be based a co-operative model or other model, whatever makes most business sense," said Linington. "We'd still have to do our due diligence to determine what that will look like and consider all the intricacies of fishing communities from lakes such as Lake Winnipeg, Lake Winnipegosis, Lake Manitoba, Great Slave Lake and the lakes in Saskatchewan. Fishers know their lakes and know what can be done better. We all have to come together with over 20 million pounds collectively, all our lakes together; that's how we currently enter the marketplace."

After hearing concerns from commercial fishers, Indigenous groups and other stakeholders with regard to how FFMC is governed, as well as the interlocutor's report recommending a fisher-led management model, the federal government launched a competitive process this year, requesting expressions of interest a few months ago from those wanting to own and manage FFMC.

FFMC is a Crown corporation that the federal government established in 1969 to help inland commercial fishers in western and northern Canada obtain fair prices for their fish and to market their fish internationally. The corporation's fish processing plant is in Winnipeg.

Citing low economic returns to commercial fishers, Linington said Saskatchewan and Manitoba opted out of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Act (which required FFMC to buy their fish and fishers to sell their fish to FFMC exclusively), leaving the Northwest Territories as the only



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Commercial fishers at Gimli Harbour.

party to the Act. Alberta has not opted out of the Act, but it shut down its commercial fishery.

"This was the result of the Crown corporation's negligible returns to fishers," said Linington. "Things like federal pensions, unions and freight overhead to the centralized processing plant in Winnipeg created a situation where fishers were getting a 30 per cent return or less."

In 2022, without any indication that the federal government would move to a competitive process, FFHAI prepared an in-depth, 18-page report, including financial estimates, titled FFHAI Proposal on the Transformation of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation (FFMC) for DFO. It recommended a fisher-led model.

"After a review of different corporate models, it is foreseen that the most appropriate model is the co-operative model. This framework balances the interests of the harvester, which is paramount, with the realities of the market. It ensures that from lake to plate, and for the first time, the fisher peoples' interests are considered foremost," states the report, which FFHAI shared with the *Express*. "The harvester-controlled co-op is the most likely model to ensure the biggest return to the harvester, along with a consistent modern production and distribution system sustainability, environmental, traditional knowledge and inclusion matters at the fore."

The transitioning of a Crown corporation comes with a number of challenges that are set out in the report.

It would require funding to complete a due diligence proposal for the acquisition of FFMC, transition fund-

ing to "maintain the continued supply chain productivity" and implementation funding to, among other things, decentralize infrastructure and generate investment.

FFMC currently "lives on" a \$50-million line of credit from the federal government to buy fish, said Linington, and has no contingency funds. That's "not good business" practice.

The report also recommends decentralizing fish processing and establishing an estimated 10-11 processing plants throughout N.W.T. and the prairies to maximise efficiencies, help prevent the degradation of the product (it's 1,695 kilometres from Great Slave Lake to Winnipeg's processing plant and roughly 800 from the north end of Lake Winnipeg) and provide greater returns to fishers.

Negotiations would then need to be undertaken with unionized and federal employees that could result in possible changes to employee contracts, freight and transportation providers and other stakeholders.

Inland commercial fisheries are facing an existential crisis because of an aging population of fishers and a younger generation that has been given no incentive or financial support to enter the industry. The report recommends "capacity-building" and harvester training.

Investment in small harbours for maintenance and upkeep would also be required.

The maintenance of an inclusive industry that welcomes women fishers is also a consideration in the transforming of FFMC.

The report states that FFHAI is

Continued on page 18

Community Support Service

AA Meetings in Ashern

Open Meeting

Time: 6-7pm Fridays

Starting Friday March 3rd.

Location: #11 2nd Ave North

-Pioneer Manor

(beside the main door entrance of Pioneer Manor)

Contact AAMBCO@mts.net

AA Eriksdale

Eriksdale United Church building

#7 Main Street, Eriksdale (side door)

Meetings are Mondays

at 6:30 p.m.

AA Winnipeg Beach

Lady of the Lake RC Church

Corner of Hwy. 9 and Lake Ave.,

Winnipeg Beach

Meetings are Saturdays

between 7 and 8 p.m.

Contact Ann J 204-389-3417

Gimli Group AA

Bldg 18 Municipal Rd

Industrial Park

Fri & Sun Mtgs at 7:30 pm

AI-Anon

Gimli and Winnipeg Beach

Join us at 17B Loni Beach Road, next to New Horizon building... Gimli at 7:00 pm Wednesday evenings for an hour of support, strength, guidance and Hope. Contact 204-389-4777.

All ages welcome.

AA Riverton Group

12 Main St. at the

Riverton Senior Centre

Mondays 7:30 p.m.

Gimli budgets millions for fire department, watermain renewal; property tax increase

By Patricia Barrett

The RM of Gimli's financial plan for 2024 proposes about \$13 million in spending on capital projects that include several equipment purchases for the fire department, watermain renewal in the central part of the town of Gimli and equipment for public works.

Council presented its budget on May 9 with a majority of councillors voting (first reading) that evening in favour of the budget.

Although livestreaming was not expected to be available until October — per a notice posted on the RM's website — the budget hearing was livestreamed.

Coun. Thora Palson, who handles the finance portfolio, presented the budget. She said the 2024 budget and the 2025-2029 capital plan represent a "big step forward" to achieving the community's goals of growth and sustainability and addressing Gimli's future needs.

"We have a responsibility to sustain our infrastructure and services and we're making progress towards that goal. We are renewing our aging water lines, replacing public works equipment and implementing the best asset-management practices for rural municipalities," said Palson during her opening remarks. "This budget provides resources to assess and maintain our assets effectively, extending their life and reducing long-term costs. With this plan we are not just investing in our community's future, but we are also creating a legacy that future generations will benefit from."

Palson cited a number of projects the

RM will carry out this year such as the renewal of the town of Gimli water lines, equipment purchases for the fire department, the allocation of \$1.6 million for the replacement of the roof at the recreation centre and other improvements, and an RM-subsidized program for 200 in-house compost units to help reduce solid waste and greenhouse emissions.

The RM expects to see just over \$24.2 million in revenue in 2024. Property taxes will increase for rural and urban properties.

The municipality's general mill rate increased from 14.206 to 14.788, equating to a 4.1 per cent increase. When taking the general debt and additional contributions to reserves into consideration, the increase represents between 4.94 and 5.35 per cent.

Municipal taxes for residential property worth \$200,000 in the urban area were \$1,477.80 in 2023. That will increase by \$72.99 to \$1,550.79 this year. And municipal taxes for residential property worth \$200,000 in the rural area were \$1,426.95 in 2023, and will increase by \$76.41 to \$1,503.36 this year.

"The main challenges in 2024 continue to reflect council's ongoing directive to make every effort to manage existing debt servicing and minimize taxation impacts by balancing the increased growth in service delivery to our assessment growth," states a PowerPoint presentation highlighting aspects of the budget.

Council proposes to spend \$12.9 million in 2024 on about 49 capital projects, which include the beach walkway (\$200,000), promenades (\$150,000), a new fitness centre

(\$950,000), designs for the fitness centre (\$30,000), gym equipment (\$40,000), the Gimli recreation and leisure youth hub (\$250,000), roof repairs and upgrades on the recreation centre (\$1.5 million), lighting in the central business district (\$50,000), Gimli Harbour initiatives (\$100,000), parking on Second and Third avenues (\$100,000), conceptual drawings and community visioning on the proposed wetlands (\$40,000) on the site of the former wastewater lagoon and beach flag poles (\$10,000).

Water and sewer projects this year include watermain renewal for First Avenue on the west side (\$100,000), watermain renewal for Fifth and Sixth Ave, which is in progress (\$4.1 million), watermain renewal on Centre Street between Fourth and Fifth avenues (\$182,572), a sewer capacity study, south sewer analysis (\$100,000), storm sewer CCTV inspections (\$30,000) and a wastewater treatment plant washer (\$15,000).

Purchases for the fire department in 2024 include an initial response truck for the fire chief (\$140,000), jaws of life equipment (\$40,000), a scissor lift (\$15,000), a rapid response grass fire truck (\$160,000 already approved by resolution), and an aerial platform truck (\$2.7 million).

Several pieces of equipment for public works are also on the list this year, including a tractor roadside mower (\$125,000), a riding mower grass/snow (\$80,000), two steamers (\$50,000), a used pickup truck (\$50,000), as well as an expansion for the public works facility (\$300,000).

Council's five-year capital plan for 2025 to 2029 proposes to spend \$41.2

million on projects including a site design for the wetlands on the former wastewater lagoon site (\$10,000 in 2025), project costing for the wetlands (\$20,000 in 2025), construction of the wetlands (\$500,000 in 2026), landscaping/paving at the new fitness centre (\$100,000 in 2025), land purchase (\$250,000 each year), repurposing of the fitness centre basement flooring (\$50,000), fire hall floor refinishing (\$25,000 in 2027), ORV (off-road vehicle) units for fire department (\$250,000 in 2027), fire department tanker (\$600,000 in 2027), fire department pumper No. 1 (\$1.1 million in 2026), sewer extensions (\$400,000 each year), south utility expansion (\$2.5 million over four years), watermain renewal on First and Second avenues (\$4.6 million in 2026), watermain renewal on Third and Fourth avenues (\$7 million in 2025), paved road renewal program (\$200,000 each year) and water hook-up at the New Horizons building (\$20,000 in 2025).

The RM proposes to take \$16.2 million from RM reserves to fund the five-year capital projects.

After a council debate on April 17 regarding financial losses at the Gimli Community Development Corporation (CDC) and concerns that the corporation would request more funding from the RM, the budget shows \$50,000 being allocated to the CDC this year (line 7400).

The RM plans to hire new staff, according to the RM's strategic project coordinator DJ Sigmundson.

"The 2024 Financial Plan has been passed," he wrote in a May 14 post

Continued on page 10

Kiwanis Club of Gimli set to celebrate 50th anniversary

By Becca Myskiw

The Kiwanis Club of Gimli & District Inc. is celebrating 50 years this summer with a family fun day.

On June 1, the club will host an anniversary celebration at the Gimli Park Pavilion.

"We have always had amazing support with the businesses and the community so it's our time to thank everyone," said club member Heather Ritchie.

From 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., there will be two inflatable bouncy houses for children to play on, face painting done by the Gimli Art Club, free hot dogs, freezies and popcorn for children under 12, and more.

There will also be an online 50/50 for the event. The club's doughnut truck will be at the pavilion throughout the day and they'll be serving food out of

the canteen.

Later that evening, the group will host a social at the pavilion starting at 7 p.m.

Tracey Martin and Without a Trace will offer live entertainment for the night, and Allan Sulyma will DJ. The social will have a silent auction, 50/50, cash bar and late lunch. Tickets are \$10 each and can be bought from any Kiwanis club member.

According to Kiwanis International, the mission of the group is to "improve the world one child and one community at a time." Kiwanis strives to be a positive influence in communities worldwide, working for children to be believed, nurtured and supported.

Ritchie joined the local group when she moved to the area 12 years ago, and has been a member of other Ki-

wanis clubs previously. The Gimli group covers the area of Dunnotar to Arborg, supporting the local children and community organizations wherever they can.

The group has student leadership programs in the Winnipeg Beach and Gimli schools, promoting leadership from early grades through high school.

"These kids have their own little projects," Ritchie said. "They learn how to operate a club with a president and treasurer and they raise money and then they decide what they're going to do with it."

The Kiwanis Club of Gimli & District Inc. supports meal programs within the schools, ensuring no child goes without breakfast. They also do hot dog lunch days, barbecues and other meals for the schools.



The Kiwanis Club of Gimli is hosting a 50th anniversary celebration June 1.

One of the group's largest endeavours is the Save the Lake program, a

Continued on page 14

From Latin dance to farming: a tale of agricultural passion

By Lori Penner

In a surprising turn of events, Cheryl Jolly-Nagel traded her dance shoes for work boots, leaving behind a thriving career as a Latin dance instructor at Club Med to embark on a new journey in agriculture, much to the shock of her friends and family.

Reflecting on that decision more than two decades later, Jolly-Nagel, formerly the president of the Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association, said, "I left a dream job, and when I fell in love with agriculture, I found my other dream job. I loved what I was doing, but it was a personal challenge to find my place on the farm."

Little did she know that her encounter with her high school sweetheart and her newfound love for agriculture would redefine her career trajectory.

Today, alongside her husband David, Jolly-Nagel manages a bustling family farm in Mossbank, Sask. But her contributions to the agricultural world don't end there. She has become a prominent voice in the industry, hosting Farm Show TV and engaging audiences across the country on various agriculture-related topics.

However, Jolly-Nagel's journey hasn't been without its hurdles. She recalls a time when morale among producers was low, and the agricultural industry faced skepticism and disinterest from the public.

"When I got into agriculture, I didn't know that farmers are their own worst enemy. At that time, I realized it wasn't the general population losing enthusiasm for the agricultural industry; it was the farmers themselves," she said.

"Newspapers shared nothing but doom and gloom financial projections. There were no jobs and no young people who wanted to be part of it. When I graduated, farming was

not a popular career choice. And yet, there I was, massively gung-ho to join the ranks of the farming crew."

Over the next 20 years, agricultural policy became her focus.

"I should have known that was going to be my fate because I always loved to argue. I will forever be in debt to the Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association that welcomed me to that table with zero experience. They let me cut my teeth on the policy issues that we were working so hard at and represent that organization. I had the enthusiasm they needed."

Over the years, Jolly-Nagel has tirelessly advocated for the industry, emphasizing the importance of promoting its practices. She highlights the need to bridge the gap between farmers and the public, dispelling misconceptions and building trust through open dialogue and shared values.

She admits that she grossly underestimated the importance of building relationships with the public and showing them how much farmers truly care about the land and the environment and the safety of our food system.

"I took for granted that because my family has been farming some of the same land for more than 100 years, that was enough to gain their trust. We thought we were always going to have their trust. And we just walked out of the tractor one day and wondered why doesn't anybody trust us? And we didn't realize that we needed to be building a relationship with the public first."

So much of the confusion stems from public perception — or, rather, misconception.

"Most consumers picture farms as that little red barn and farming practices from 50 years ago. And we have not done enough of the effort to bring them back up to the present day. Agriculture has gone through tremendous

technological change. From precision planting to drone technology. It's the most scientifically advanced industry on the globe. The public doesn't know how we're farming, but even more, they don't know who is farming."

Misinformation runs rampant, she says.

"We haven't done a good job explaining not only what we do in agriculture, but who is doing it. We just never took a lot of time to fill in that gap.

"Canadians are now two generations removed from the family farm, from having relatives on the farm to losing the common sense of how food is grown. If they're only getting their information online, what are they finding? It's not good. If they look up meat, it's bad. GMOs are the worst. Pesticides. Sugar is bad. Chemicals are bad. Everything they read online about farming is bad."

How do we change it? Sharing your values, Jolly-Nagel says, is three to five times more effective with building trust than sharing scientific facts and expertise.

"We don't take a minute during the day to think about the values that are behind every decision we make on the farm. I would suggest if you're using fungicides and you don't know why, you shouldn't use them. If you really haven't taken a minute about why you use pesticides and why choose to grow genetically modified canola, then maybe that privilege won't be there forever. And I realized if I don't really know why I need access to fertilizer, that privilege can go away real fast."

When those horror stories hit the media, producers are forced to react to them.

Jolly-Nagel says farmers need to get to a place where they can promote the industry rather than always being on the defence.



PHOTO BY LORI PENNER/VOICE

Cheryl Jolly-Nagel believes it's time to share the good stories about farming and educate the public on what the modern farmer actually does.

"Start sharing stories about life on the farm. I spend much of my time speaking to an urban audience and sharing the good news stories and I encourage you to do the same."

By sharing stories of life on the farm and championing the values that guide their decisions, Jolly-Nagel believes they can shape a brighter future for agriculture and inspire the next generation of proud farmers.

"We all agree it's important that the next generation is proud of the agricultural industry and a part of that heritage is acknowledging the role that farmers need to play. We must share the good news stories and put our values first. Those tools that we have available to us are a privilege. And if you're using one of those tools today on your farm, think about it as a privilege so that the next generation will continue to be able to use it. When I think of all the tools that can be taken away, it's a pretty bleak future for the next generation."

> GIMLI BUDGETS, FROM PG. 9

appended to council's May 15 agenda. "The [plan] contained funds for 3 new positions."

A part-time payroll clerk will be added to reduce overtime expenses. A part-time human resources position will be added to address "day-to-day" HR needs and provide support to the management team. And a full-time administration and communication clerk will be added to improve RM communications and "allow the CAO to focus on managing senior staff in a more meaningful manner," wrote Sigmundson.

Council budgeted \$975,005 this year for the CAO and staff, an increase of \$253,226 from last year's actual spending of \$721,779.

The budget presentation included council achievements from 2023, which include the renaming of roads with the name Colonization in them, the establishment of a Reconciliation Day, a celebration with the Manitoba Métis Federation, a short-term rental bylaw and accompanying accommodation tax bylaw, year-round access to a beach washroom, the purchase of fire fighting equipment, a blues festival, the award-winning ice fishing village and skating trail on Lake Winnipeg, improved drainage at Centre

and Third, the addition of new management positions and the establishment of an asset management plan.

Councillors Andy Damm, Thora Palson, Richard Petrowski and Kurt Reichert voted in favour (first reading) of the budget while Mayor Kevin Chudd voted against it. The mayor was reported absent for a subsequent meeting at which second and third readings were approved.

Coun. Petrowski said he voted in favour of the budget, but he has concerns about spending and the use of RM reserves.

"I supported the budget although I'm concerned about the amount of new spending and the use of the re-

serve funds," said Petrowski. "Having said that, there's a control mechanism whereby we get to vote on each project when it comes before council, and I can vote against a resolution for a particular item if I think it's not in the best interest of the community."

The *Express* requested from the RM information on some aspects of the budget such as the \$50,000 allocated to the CDC, council salaries for 2023 and comment from the mayor but did not receive a response by deadline.

A copy of the 2024 budget and a livestreamed video are available on the RM's website.

The Creative Cocoon immerses Interlake youth in theatre

By Autumn Fehr

Something brand new from The Creative Cocoon is blossoming in Arborg this spring, and we've heard firsthand from participants that it's full of fun!

The Creative Cocoon, a local non-profit organization in Arborg, was established in 2016. It aims to inspire creativity through arts and wellness for the community and surrounding area.

Although the non-profit has been around for almost a decade, they have been cooking up something new for the community, moving to a new location in Arborg, at 269 Main St., to make it happen.

The Creative Cocoon has a volunteer board of directors who work together to offer affordable classes and support arts and wellness so that all youth in the community can thrive.

The board has six members and has not had any new members for a few years, said Lisa Klym, co-chair of The Creative Cocoon Inc.

The non-profit values collaboration with creative individuals so it can deliver classes and workshops for the community's youth. Leading with collaboration allows artisans and instructors to share their creativity and talent and empower others.

This season, Creative Cocoon invites youth aged 10 to 17 to weekly theatre classes at 269 Main St. on Thursdays from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

"It's a really great class, and you don't want to leave at the end, and it helps with confidence," said Meadow, one of the student actresses in the class.

Instructor and artist Dani Caldeira encourages the students in each class to stretch their creative muscles through singing and theatre games.

The students begin to discover the art of storytelling and improvisation through these exercises, said Lisa Klym, co-chair of The Creative Cocoon Inc.

Caldeira has extensive experience in the creative arts. She is a singer and actress and was a theater director in Brazil. She and her family moved to Arborg in September 2023. Caldeira has been performing since she was nine years old. Her love for performing led her to work in the education field, with the arts as her primary focus.

The youth currently involved in the class were excited to chat about their experience in theatre class. Some participants had previous experience, and for others, it was something entirely new — but one thing they all have in common is that they love the creative arts and the class.

At the end of the term, participants

will take part in a live community production of *The Wizard of Oz*. For the final performance, the children must audition for the character they want to play, but all participants will have a role.

There is no date set for the production yet, but Klym hopes the children will be ready for their performance at the beginning of October.

"This class is so much fun and will not disappoint your young actresses and actors," said Klym.

Classes started April 25 and will continue through to September, but there is still time to register.

"Everything about theatre class seemed like fun, and I was right. I like how theatre boosts my confidence. Theatre class is so much fun that when it's time to go home, I do not want to leave," said Isabel, whose first experience in a theatre class was with Creative Cocoon.

Right now until June 5, youth are welcome to come and check out a class free of charge to see if they like it. The deadline for trying out a class for free is June 5. To try it out, message the Creative Cocoon through social media or email them and let them know your child would like to try out a theatre class. There is absolutely no experience required to join.

To register or for more details, email info@thecreativecocoon.net. The fee is \$175 for the entire term, and the registration deadline is June 30.

Follow Creative Cocoon's social me-



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Creative Cocoon welcomed youth ages 10 to 17 years to a Theatre Class being held Thursdays with a community production of the *Wizard of Oz* being held in September.

dia on Facebook at creativecocoon-arborg or Instagram at The_Creative_Cocoon, or visit their website at thecreativecocoon.ca for various classes for all age groups.

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RM of West Interlake hosting pollinator garden contest

By Becca Myskiw

Residents in the Rural Municipality of West Interlake have the chance to create a pollinator garden for a prize this year.

The RM of West Interlake is holding a pollinator garden contest this summer to encourage biodiversity in the area. A pollinator garden is a garden designed to attract and support pollinators — bees, hummingbirds, butterflies, moths, bats and beetles.

“Pollinators are crucial to help plants reproduce,” said Christina Kallstrom, recreation co-ordinator for the RM. “Gardening is also known to help people with anxiety, depression and a number of other mental health conditions. Garden also helps bridge the gap between seniors and the younger generations. These are just some of the reasons for the contest — these gardens will brighten our town as well.”

Pollinator gardens help sustain healthy ecosystems and support agriculture and biodiversity. Kallstrom is hoping this new program/contest will help people see humans “play a vital role in keeping our ecosystems happy and healthy by planting a pollinator garden.”

Last year, the West Interlake Watershed District provided Eriksdale and Ashern with two raised flowerbeds for pollinator gardens. Kallstrom is hoping this project will add to that.

“It is important that we are able to provide a biodiverse habitat that will first and foremost provide shelter and a food source for native pollinators,” she said.

“This will not only create a safe point, allowing for pollination of surrounding area, but also a focal point in which community members can gather to learn about native pollinators and witness them carrying out their lives.”

Pollinator gardens increase plant vigour, health and population and promote improved water quality through nutrient infiltration and reduction of runoff into water systems. This improved plant life also increases carbon sequestration as the plants become more resilient.

Along with the physical benefits, the pollinator gardens will add to the RM’s beauty and ensure education on their purpose. The RM is hoping to host workshops at each pollinator garden site, focusing on the interconnectivity of the watershed.

“Learning about something is much more engaging when you can see the process carried out before your eyes,” said Kallstrom.

To plant your own pollinator garden, people can go to the RM of West Interlake office and pick up mixed seed packets to plant. Then they can register their garden with Kallstrom by emailing rec@rmofwestinterlake.com and sending pictures of the garden as it grows over summer to be posted on Facebook.

On Aug. 30, Kallstrom will put each garden owner in a draw and randomly choose one winner from each community (Eriksdale, Ashern and Lake Manitoba Narrows). Each winner will get \$100 worth of gardening supplies.



The RM of West Interlake is offering seed packets to residents wanting to grow a pollinator garden.

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Lester Beach

RM of Bifrost-Riverton

Balaton Beach
Hnausa
Riverton
Valhalla

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Spring Home & Garden Guide



Tips to revitalize a garden this spring

Gardening is a rewarding hobby that pays a host of significant dividends. Many people love gardening because it allows them to spend time outdoors, and that simple pleasure is indeed a notable benefit of working in a garden. But the National Initiative for Consumer Horticulture notes that gardening provides a host of additional benefits, including helping people get sufficient levels of exercise, reduce stress and improve mood.

With so much to gain from gardening, it's no wonder people look forward to getting their hands dirty in the garden each spring. As the weather warms up, consider these tips to help bring a garden back to life.

- Discard the dead weight. Winter can take its toll on a garden, even in regions where the weather between December and early spring is not especially harsh. Discard dead plants that have lingered into spring and prune any perennials that need it. Branches that fell during winter storms also should be removed at this point if they have not previously been discarded.

- Test the soil. Soil testing kits can be purchased at local garden centers and home improvement retailers. Such

tests are inexpensive and can reveal if the soil needs to be amended to help plants thrive in the months to come.

- Mulch garden beds. Mulching benefits a garden by helping soil retain moisture and preventing the growth of weeds. Various garden experts note that mulching in spring can prevent weed seeds from germinating over the course of spring and summer. That means plants won't have to fight with weeds for water when the temperature warms up. It also means gardeners won't have to spend time pulling weeds this summer.

- Inspect your irrigation system. Homeowners with in-ground irrigation systems or above-ground systems that utilize a drip or soaker function can inspect the systems before plants begin to bloom. Damaged sprinkler heads or torn lines can deprive plants of water they will need to bloom and ultimately thrive once the weather warms up.

- Tune up your tools. Gardening tools have likely been sitting around gathering dust since fall. Serious gardeners know that tools can be expensive, so it pays to protect that investment by maintaining the tools. Sharpened pruners help make plants less vulnerable to infestation and infection. Well-



maintained tools like shovels and hoes also make more demanding gardening jobs a little bit easier, so don't forget to tune up your tools before the weather warms up.

It's almost gardening season, which means gardeners can start on the necessary prep work to ensure their gardens grow in strong and beautiful this spring.

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Rural Interest Group medical students visit Selkirk Regional Health Centre



Student works on a dummy's airways at Selkirk Regional Health Centre for the University of Manitoba medical students 2024 Rural Interest Group trip.

By Lana Meier

Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority (IERHA) hosted a dinner for 23 University of Manitoba medical students at Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site on Friday, May 3.

Physicians from Interlake-Eastern RHA — including Dr. Ian Alexander (regional family medicine specialty lead), Dr. Stewart Nadurak (family medicine resident) and Dr. Jade Young (family physician) — engaged with students to discuss their practices and encourage interest in family medicine within the region.



A student practises suturing on a pig foot at Selkirk Regional Health Centre for the University of Manitoba medical students 2024 Rural Interest Group trip.

The students were members of Rural Interest Group (RIG), a university-sponsored group for first and second year medical students with a passion for rural medicine and lifestyles. Throughout the year, RIG organizes trips to IERHA where students can meet with rural physicians and gain hands-on experience in rural Manitoba. These trips are part of Interlake-Eastern's recruitment efforts to showcase the opportunities for practising medicine in rural areas to future doctors.

Following dinner, students checked into the hotel in Selkirk and prepared for an early start on Saturday morning at Selkirk Regional Health Centre. They were divided into groups to ex-



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Twenty-three University of Manitoba medical students attended Selkirk Regional Health Centre for the 2024 Rural Interest Group trip.

perience four interactive clinical stations. Dr. Phoebe Thiessen, a family physician and the IERHA's regional medical obstetrics lead, led the obstetrical and gynecology station; while Dr. Nadurak demonstrated the ultrasound station; Dr. Alexander taught about intubation/airway at his station; and Dr. Rita Costa, an IERHA family medicine resident, oversaw the suturing station. Once everyone had rotated through the stations, there was an insightful Q&A session with all of the physicians present. The day concluded with a tour of Selkirk Regional Health Centre, guided by Dr. Alexander.

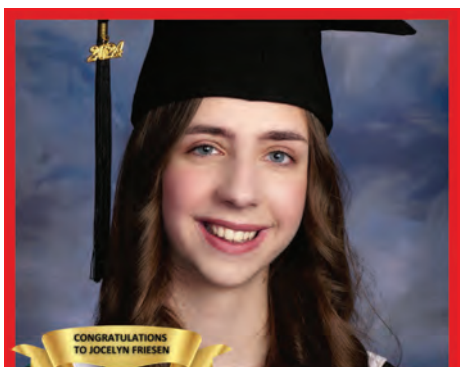
Students were grateful for the chance to engage with experienced physicians and for the valuable learning experiences. Some mentioned that they would have preferred more time

to explore Selkirk. Pamela Robertson, IERHA's physician recruiter, noted that this positive feedback is encouraging for the physicians who work hard to make RIG a valuable experience for students.

Robertson expressed gratitude to Dr. Costa, Dr. Nadurak and their team, as well as Dr. Young, who travelled from Eriksdale to join the students for dinner, and Dr. Phoebe Thiessen for her support throughout the day. The doctors eagerly anticipate the next RIG trip.

Community members who want to get involved in rural physician recruitment and who have suggestions on destinations or events for students or residents, please contact Pamela Robertson, physician recruiter, at probertson@ierha.ca.

> KIWANIS, FROM PG. 9



GROW OUR OWN SCHOLARSHIP



Congratulations to Vidir's
Grow Our Own Scholarship winner,
Jocelyn Friesen
from Arborg Collegiate

Jocelyn has been accepted direct entry into the Faculty of Science at the University of Manitoba and plans to get her degree in Computer Science. Jocelyn will be receiving \$1,000 from Vidir Solutions towards her education as well as a summer internship with Vidir.



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science and sailing camp for children in July. The Kiwanis Club of Gimli & District Inc. sponsors two children to participate in the camp and the Gimli Yacht Club sponsors another, sending three children to have a one-of-a-kind experience in the summer.

The club also helps with Meals on Wheels, runs the AKTION club and supports various other community programs.

They're widely known for their food truck and its famous fish fries, which often shows up at summer festivals and events.

Two years ago, the club had to take their food truck off the road and they've been fundraising for a new one since. The new one is almost ready, and Ritchie said they're hoping to have it ready for the town fish fry at the end of June, which is a fundraiser for the Save the Lake program.

Gimli Chamber getting the gloves out for annual town beautification day

Access CU sponsoring hot dogs and chips for cleanup volunteers

By Patricia Barrett

Members of the Gimli Chamber of Commerce are organizing their Second Annual Town Beautification Day next week and are inviting residents and businesses to roll up their sleeves and grab some bags and gloves to help collect rubbish that's accumulated on the streets and along the beach.

Cheryl Buhler, who is chair of the chamber's Destination Brand Committee, is helping organize the day. She said she's had nothing but positive feedback from businesses the chamber has so far contacted.

"We've talked to many businesses already and they said they'd be happy to pitch in and would be proud to take part in this initiative. Businesses such as Chicken Chef and Dairy Queen are excited to join in," said Buhler. "I've also reached out to Gimli High School, which has an environmental club, Dr. George Johnson Middle School's Kiwanis-sponsored club and the Gimli recreational boxing class to see if they'd be interested. Hidden Treasures Studio said it could round up some folks."

The beautification day is the brainchild of realtor and chamber member Kim Giesbrecht. Last year's event attracted roughly 40 volunteers who fanned out across town, the beach and recreational grounds.

Buhler said she's hoping to see areas farther afield, such as Sandy Hook, come on board. Campgrounds such as Autumnwood and a campground near Arnes expressed interest in having their own cleanup in conjunction with the big day.

To celebrate the cleanup and thank volunteers, Gimli's Access Credit Union is picking up the tab for supper.

"Access is providing hot dogs and chips for participants after the cleanup and they already have a huge group of volunteers ready to hit the streets," said Buhler.

Like last year's cleanup event, participants are being asked to gather at the Access Credit Union parking lot where organizers will be handing out RM of Gimli-supplied garbage bags and gloves and getting people prepped to "divide and conquer" the town, said Buhler. Organizers can either assign people or groups to a particular area or people can request an area.

"Together we can make our town known as the cleanest, prettiest and most-loved community in Manitoba," said Buhler.

Those who want to participate in the event but won't be able to do so on May 29 can still take part. The chamber would love to see people or

CLEAN-UP GIMLI

SPONSORED BY ACCESS CREDIT UNION

GIMLI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Please join our Gimli Chamber of Commerce for their annual Gimli Beautification Day. Let's roll up our sleeves, grab some trash bags, and make our town sparkle. Together, we can make a difference! Come join us.

MAY 29TH
4 - 6PM

VOLUNTEERS WELCOME AND NEEDED
ACCESS CU WILL PROVIDE HOTDOGS AND CHIPS TO PARTICIPANTS

MEET US AT
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Contact Cheryl for more information:
gimlichamber@gmail.com
204 661-2651

groups cleaning up an area prior to that date then let them know so that particular sections of the town can be struck off a five-foot-high map that will on display at the credit union.

"Not everyone will be able to come on May 29 and we'd love to see groups or businesses clean up a street corner or other small section of town," said Buhler. "Then they can let

us know and we can mark that area on the map."

The cleanup is scheduled for Wednesday, May 29 between 4 and 6 p.m. The rain date is May 30.

For more information about how to volunteer to clean up the town, email gimlichamber@gmail.com or contact Cheryl at 204-661-2651.

Gimli New Horizons 55+ Activity Centre celebrates 50 years

Staff

The Gimli New Horizons 55-plus Activity Centre celebrated 50 years of providing older adults with a number of programs and activities to keep them socially connected.

The anniversary celebration was held at new horizons' building on May 8 and included a look back in time, a luncheon and speeches from guests and local politicians.

During the celebration, new horizons board member Graham Watson said president Cindy Stewart acknowledged the centre's founding members — Mary Krulicki, Adeline Pawulski, Helen Krulicki, Nancy Dudar and Connie Harvard — along with 62 supporters, who advocated for the centre in February 1974.

"A dream was born, which has resulted in today's thriving community," said Watson.

Stewart also noted that there have

been 21 presidents over the centre's 50-year history providing guidance and thanked all the board members and volunteers past and present "who have made this community flourish."

Special thanks went out to Jonie Johnson and Margaret LaRoque, who work in the office, and Pauline Finlay was recognized as a 30-plus-year member.

Gimli New Horizons is made up of people who are 55 and older. The centre encourages its members to stay active and socially connected through recreational and social activities such as dances, fall suppers and other special events, health and wellness programs, educational programs and support groups at its facility on Loni Beach Road in Gimli's north end.

The centre currently has 520 members who participate in over 23 weekly activities and special events.

"You know the expression: It takes a village to raise a child. In this case, it takes an entire community to keep a senior activity centre running and developing," said Watson. "Horizons is a great place to meet people, and there's always someone you know there."

During the celebration, Watson outlined the history of the current GNH property, which was the Dalman family's dairy farm in 1912, the One Big Union summer camp around 1920 and a property that the Province of Manitoba took over around 1939.

"The location had many uses over the years from a teacher certification facility to Blue Bomber spring training camps to other learning opportunities," said Watson. "In 1994, GNH moved to this location [on Loni Beach Road], initially having a lease with the province and later with the RM of

Gimli."

The board expressed its appreciation to the RM of Gimli, whose mayor Kevin Chudd was in attendance. The RM now owns the land and the building and has provided financial support for maintenance.

Stewart thanked the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority, which provides funding for the centre's office staff.

Local dignitaries paid tribute to the centre and its members.

On behalf of Interlake-Gimli MLA Derek Johnson and Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman MP James Bezan, Johnson's constituency assistant Tammy Axelsson presented 50th anniversary plaques.

GNH's Ukulele Group provided musical entertainment, including a song composed for the celebration.

Winkler educator brings historical play to the stage

By Lorne Stelmach

A Winkler educator is seeing a dream project become reality with her musical play on the life of Louis Riel set to hit the stage in a few weeks.

Parkland School vice-principal Janna Larsen is also a playwright, and the production of her show *RIEL* will be performed for the first time June 7-9 at the Franco-Manitoban Cultural Centre in Winnipeg.

Larsen is no stranger to the theatre, as she has staged two pieces off-Broadway, including a version of *Little Matchbox Girl*, and done a Fringe show about kids auditioning for *Little Princess* where the audience voted and the winners got to finish the show.

Her production of *RIEL*, though, is special because of the connection to her father Norm, who encouraged her to tell Louis Riel's story.

"At first, I was, 'Dad, why is this my story? Why am I the person who should be telling this story?' He had researched all of this different stuff for me about the main players and Riel's life," Larsen recalled.

"So when I started, there was just so much there. It was hard to know how do you set up a story like this for success in a way it's offered to an audience in a way that this is him as a human being. How do we take that and how do we learn from it and how do we move forward? Look at our history, and can we do better now?"

A composition major when she did her bachelor of music degree at University of Manitoba, Larsen started entering composition contests at age 12 and on, so this all seemed pre-destined.

"I won a couple of them right off, and it kind of was exciting to hear people perform my stuff, and it right away was a nice connection to my love for musical theatre and to music in general."

The genesis of the idea for *RIEL* goes back to 2015 when her father was diagnosed with cancer, so

there was then over two years of what he called "senior-sitting."

Her father had previously been a lawyer for Legal Aid as well as a history teacher earlier on, Larsen noted.

"He was always NDP-minded and very much for the people and just wanted to make sure people all had rights and were allowed good legal counsel if they needed it," she said, adding that her father published a couple books, including one about notable trials in Manitoba that went into how the trial of Riel was unfair and how he faced many injustices.

"I knew very little about Riel when I started. ... To be honest, I feel like a lot of people don't know," Larsen said.

"It's a complicated story. I didn't know that he had almost become a priest. Had his father not passed away, he probably would have been a priest, and history would have been entirely different."

She worked on the project over about an eight-year period off and on, and although COVID offered her a lot of time, she didn't have the creative spark.

She has done extensive research, including going to the site of Batoche, taking in a re-enactment of the Riel trial and speaking to a number of historians.

"It's been a labour of love, sometimes very exciting and fun and sometimes just really hashing through how do we tell this story in a way that it's really about all of us as Manitobans. And it's about communicating and it's about respecting each other," she said. "And it's about having conversations more so than it is about race and religion. It's about just being open to respecting others and finding ways to find commonality."

It's exciting for her to now see it staged for the first time, although this is, in the world of Broad-



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Janna Larsen with her father Norm, who inspired her to write the show *RIEL* debuting in Winnipeg next month.

way, what would be called the workshop production that still needs to be further developed and refined.

"I would like to orchestrate it much further, and there's a lot of pieces I would still grow from this production, but this was a really great opportunity to see where there are gaps in the story," said Larsen.

One example she noted was the character of Archbishop Tache, who tries to advocate for Riel but whose hands are tied, so she felt he needed a song.

She's also trying to give voice to women in this story too.

"It's very exciting to finally see it and honestly hearing it sung," said Larsen, who recalled recently addressing a class about it at school here, and it became a revealing moment for her.

"As I was walking through it with them, I realized that without the music, it is quite depressing, and when you add the music, it's much more hopeful. There's hope in the lyrics," she said. "I feel like it's a hopeful piece, and I think that is why it needs to be a musical piece."

The music gives it that hopeful aspect, she said.

"I feel like when you look at his poetry and writings, which a lot of my lyrics are based on ... he was very hopeful for Manitoba, and he was already advocating for women's rights and all of Manitoban's rights," said Larsen. "I think he saw Manitoba in a light that we are still looking for today, but I think he would think we are on the right track, and I feel like that is hopeful."

Larsen now looks forward to seeing where all this production of *RIEL* might go, but for now she is enjoying every moment with the people who are involved including some with whom she has strong connections.

"I have a wonderful cast. Most of the people are ex-students of mine from over the years, and it's just a really great group of people."



Some of the cast of *RIEL* got together, fittingly, on Louis Riel Day weekend for their first read-through. The show features several local performers and musicians.

Gimli Art Club celebrates 55 years; gallery now open to the public

By Patricia Barrett

The Gimli Art Club marked its 55th anniversary with a pre-opening party on May 16 that gave special guests a sneak peek at new works by the club's artists, celebrated accessibility renovations and recognized new executive members on the club's board.

"A big thing for us this year is our 55th anniversary," said GAC past president Erika Hanneson. "The original members started the club in 1969."

The club had held its annual general meeting the week before at which it elected new members to a standard two-year term on the board.

Hanneson said the pre-opening party was held for GAC members and their families, supporters of the club and special guests.

"We celebrated our new executive committee members and the completion of the accessibility renovations that members and contractors have worked on since last fall. We shared this accomplishment with the Honourable Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli MLA) and Tammy Axelsson [Johnson's constituency assistant], who were both in attendance," said Hanneson. "Mr. Johnson presented the Gimli Art Club members with a copy of a private member's statement. He recently read this statement in the legislature and it describes the longevity of the club and its community support."

The club received funding of \$22,040 from the province's Arts, Culture and Sport in Community Fund last year, and the money went towards upgrades such as new wider and automatic doors.

Hanneson said the club wanted to "celebrate those changes," as well as the community organizations the club



Jacqueline Goodman and Mavis Hanneson

has paired with including Betel and Kiwanis.

"We're very appreciative of that provincial grant. We have an aging population in Gimli and our club reflects that," said Hanneson. "It's nice that we're making these changes in the building so that everybody has a chance to use the facility."

The pre-opening party also honoured the club's artists, who volunteer to manage and maintain the art club building at the harbour, the murals on the Seawall Gallery (the Gimli Harbour wall) and "still find time for friendship and art," said Hanneson, who is a ceramic artist and a painter and runs her own studio.

Many members of the club display and sell their work in the club's gallery, which is open to the public. Works range from painting to pottery to woodworking.

The art club threw open its gallery doors to the public last Saturday. Hours are posted on the art club's website www.gimliartclub.com



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY ERIKA HANNESON

Bob Dawson, Heather Dawson, Rosemary Miguez and Laurel Lins celebrated the Gimli Art Club's 55th anniversary.



Interlake-Gimli MLA Derek Johnson



Rose Marie Hess

get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



Taco Tuesday Board

Recipe courtesy of Healthy Family Project's "Come Graze With Us" e-cookbook

- Guacamole
- Salsa
- Queso
- Hard and soft taco shells
- Ground turkey, seasoned and browned
- Lettuce
- Diced tomatoes
- Shredded cheese
- Chopped onions
- Chopped peppers

- Sour cream
- Cilantro
- Lime wedges

On grazing board or platter, arrange guacamole, salsa, queso, taco shells, ground turkey, lettuce, tomatoes, shredded cheese, onions, peppers, sour cream, cilantro and lime wedges.

Weekend Breakfast Grazing Board

Recipe courtesy of Healthy Family Project's "Come Graze With Us" e-cookbook

- Hard-boiled eggs
- Cooked sausage links



- Mini frozen waffles, toasted
- Mini frozen pancakes, toasted
- Mini muffins
- Yogurt
- Fresh fruit
- Syrup
- Jelly

On grazing board or platter, arrange eggs, sausage links, toasted waffles, toasted pancakes, muffins, yogurt, fruit, syrup and jelly.

Berens River RCMP conduct traffic stop and seize drugs, cash and a firearm

By Lana Meier

RCMP conducted a traffic stop with a vehicle on the Main Road in Berens River First Nation on May 10 at approximately 6:05 p.m.

A search of the vehicle resulted in the seizure of a loaded firearm, 66 grams of cocaine, prescription medication, over \$1,300 in cash and drug paraphernalia.

A male and female were arrested.

Emile Williams, 35, has been charged with:

- Possession for the purpose of trafficking
- Possession of property obtained by crime
- Unsafe storage of firearms
- Carrying a concealed weapon
- Possession of a firearm when knowing possession is unauthorized
- Possession of a restricted fire-

arm without licence

- Weapons possession contrary to order

He was remanded into custody.

A 26-year-old female is facing charges of:

- Possession for the purpose of trafficking
- Unsafe storage of firearms
- Carrying a concealed weapon
- Unauthorized possession of a firearm

- Possession of a restricted firearm without licence

- Possession of a weapon obtained by crime

She was released from custody with an upcoming court date.

Berens River RCMP continue to investigate.



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Berens River RCMP conducted a traffic stop on May 10 and seized drugs, cash and a firearm.

> FRESHWATER FISH, FROM PG. 8

“committed to ensuring the continued participation and respect for female participants within its industry,” ensuring safe working environments for them and raising awareness of gender-based violence and discrimination.

Linington said commercial fishers are supportive of women participating in the industry, and she herself — whom fishers elected president of FFHAI — has their confidence and support.

The report also addresses issues such as lake science; eco-certification; climate change; traditional knowledge; food security; new markets for products such as fish oil, collagen and roe; taxation; and truth and reconciliation.

While she appreciates the fact that the federal government had to do its due diligence by consulting Indigenous representative groups — as the inland commercial fishery is made up of primarily Indigenous peoples — Linington said FFHAI would not want to see the marketing corporation governed by an Indigenous political representative body. Such a body would have “zero stake” in the industry unlike fishers who depend on it for their livelihood, it would not represent fishers in other provinces or the territory and it would sidestep the interlocutor’s recommendation to transition to a fisher-led entity.

The interlocutor’s report posted on DFO’s webpage states that the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs had presented a proposal to obtain FFMC and transform it into a “100 per cent Indigenous-led enterprise” and that the interlocutor had met with several

other Indigenous organizations in FFMC’s catchment area, including the Manitoba Métis Federation and the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan.

“As fishers we have the most incentive to manage and govern [FFMC] than any Indigenous political representative body that only has a four-year term. That’s what I think a lot of people feel,” said Linington. “For example, if the government said we’re going to transition FFMC to say the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, to those of us in Saskatchewan or N.W.T., they’re not our representative body. In my mind, that has the potential to create turmoil, pit people against each other and fuel a certain level of racism. The fishers ... said they want a for-fishers by-fishers entity regardless of what colour they are.”

In addition, she said a political body shouldn’t be in the business of managing a business. Inland fishers are already entrepreneurs, some processing their own fish and selling it locally, and they’ll come to the table with business knowhow. Furthermore, she feels optimistic that Indigenous and non-Indigenous commercial fishers would work cooperatively together under a new fisher-led entity; they’ve already been working together in Canada’s inland fishery for hundreds of years.

If the federal government selects an Indigenous political body to take over FFMC, Linington said the N.W.T. fishers she represents won’t participate under that model. Political bodies need to “stay in their lane,” so to speak.

“Myself personally and the fishers in the N.W.T. that are part of our

co-op, and who I can speak for, will not participate or deliver our fish to an entity run by an Indigenous political representative body,” she said. “We will look beyond such an entity because politics and business don’t belong together. You need to make business decisions. You can’t do that with a new council and chief every four years.”

She added, however, that FFHAI would like to form partnerships with Indigenous political bodies or even private-sector fish buyers like Presteve or John O’s Foods, headquartered in Ontario.

“Moving forward, we are not apprehensive about working with the private sector, FFMC’s competitors like Presteve and John O. And we’re not apprehensive about working with AMC or any other political representative bodies that want to enter into the business,” said Linington. “We can become partners in a transformation process.”

If FFHAI was the proponent chosen to take over FFMC, Linington said they’d treat fishers the way they themselves want to be treated.

“This is something I’m passionate about; I want to give fishers a voice no matter where they’re from. I’m part of a group that believes in the for-fishers by-fishers model. We’re going to consider all of the views as we go forward. We won’t be making decisions for fishers — it’ll be with them. We said we’ll treat all fishers the way we like to be treated,” she said. “We’ve been transparent with our proposals; we’re not hiding anything. This is not a cloak of secrecy. We want everybody to be informed as we are about this transition. We know who we are and what we’re about.”

Linington said she expects the

FFMC’s transition to be in full swing within two years, based on talks with the government before it launched the competitive process.

A spokesperson for DFO said 11 expressions of interest were submitted, but the department “does not share the names of those who submitted expressions of interest.”

When asked whether DFO is considering transferring FFMC to an Indigenous political entity, the spokesperson said “it is not possible to speculate on a successor entity.”

DFO is currently assessing the EOIs and a formal bid solicitation process for FFMC will be launched later this year.

“Among other considerations, bidding criteria for the competitive process will be developed to promote continued market access for rural, remote and isolated harvesters and to promote economic reconciliation. These criteria will be refined and further informed through engagements with Indigenous governments and organizations, provincial and territorial governments and the fishing industry,” said the spokesperson.

“The Government of Canada recognizes the critical services that the FFMC provides to inland fisheries across its operating regions. Fisheries and Oceans Canada is committed to the transformation of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation’s governance and ownership model in an ever-changing market, with the aim of continued marketing services to the communities that it serves.”

Anyone interested in providing input on criteria or considerations for the formal bid solicitation process is invited to contact DFO by email: DFO.freshwater-eaudouce.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Minerva Hall, south of Gimli, taking over summer market from Farmers Hall

By Patricia Barrett

Local crafts and farm-and-garden-raised produce that people look forward to buying each summer at the Farmers Hall, just west of Gimli, is moving south down the highway to a new home at the Minerva Hall.

The Farmers Hall on PR 231 decided not to hold their market this year, said Christine Dann, president of the Minerva Ladies Aid, and the owners offered it to Minerva Hall.

Although there's a change of venue, the popular market that draws residents and visitors alike will still offer a variety of local goods that people expect to find.

"I think we're well equipped to handle this farmers market. Minerva Hall and the Ladies Aid have had craft shows, rummage sales, a tombola and other events," said Dann.

Minerva Hall, which is south of Gimli and has its own storied history, is smaller than the Farmers Hall. It will have enough room for 12 stalls

inside whereas Farmers Hall could accommodate around 14 or 16 stalls.

"If people want to set up a stall on the Minerva Hall grounds and be outside — some people do want to be outside — we can have as many stalls as the grounds allow," said Dann.

Minerva Hall has a wheelchair ramp and public washrooms.

Dann said they'll be getting some kind of food service, such as food trucks, so that market shoppers can have a bite to eat on site.

The Farmers Market will not affect Minerva Hall's weekend rentals as it will be held every Thursday from 2 to 7 p.m., starting on June 27 and running until Sept. 5.

There is a cost \$25 for those who reserve a stall for all 11 weeks and \$30 for those who want to participate in the market on a casual basis. The revenue will help the hall with maintenance costs and upgrades.

To reserve a market stall, call Marlene at 204-642-8572.



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

A selection of yummy homemade jams is shown at a summer market in the Interlake.

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Arborg's Storm FC bolstered by additions from Interlake Impact

By Kieran Reimer

The Storm FC got a massive boost to their lineup to start their men's soccer season.

The club that finished second last in Division 5 of the Manitoba Major Soccer League a year ago made major off-season acquisitions, which include four players from the recently retired Interlake Impact.

"They're going to bring a sense of maturity to the team," said defender Cameron Dueck. "We'll be looking up to them. They've been playing for the Impact for many years, so it'll be really nice having experienced guys lead us forward because we're a very young team."

Joining the Storm FC from the Impact are Brian Penner, Dalen Penner, Dylan Loewen and Christian Dyck.

Dueck said Storm FC players have looked up to them throughout their soccer careers and were part of what inspired them to start Storm FC four years ago.

A majority of the club is a group of friends who played together in years prior. They played high school soccer together for Morweena Christian

School and wanted to continue playing after graduating.

"We thought it was cool and wanted to start our own team because we were always a sports class and wanted to play some soccer at a higher level than high school had to offer," said Dueck.

One of the youngest teams in the MMSL with an average age of 21, Storm FC has seen their share of ups and downs in their first three seasons.

In their first season, they fell just short of promotion to Division 4 after losing in the semi-finals. The following season they fell just short of a playoff spot, finishing in the middle of the league table.

Last year they fell all the way to second last in the league while having many troubles playing due to many games getting rained out.

With the new additions now, Dueck believes they have the tools for a better outcome this season. They are focused on preparing more ahead of games and formulating a strategy, which they will work on in practice once their practice field is ready in

Arborg.

"We want a general strategy other than going onto the field just to kick the ball and try to get it into the net," said Dueck. "We'd like to start developing a proper plan of strategies in certain scenarios, how we want to press and stuff like that. With that will come with more wins because we certainly have what it takes to get promoted. If we come together and pool our resources as a team, we will do a lot better this year."

Storm FC will play all their matches on the road this season as a majority of Division 5 clubs play out of Winnipeg.

They are set for a Sunday evening match against Mecs FC from Buhler Recreation Park at 7 p.m.

This year's team includes Brendan Kornelsen, Dylan Loewen, Christian Dyck, Dalen Penner, Rogan Dueck, Tristan Penner, Cameron Dueck, Skylar Denomme, Keyler Klassen, Ormando Reimer, Avery Janzen-Winter, Thomas Winslow, Jesus Murcia Varon, Joseph Barkman, Tyson Kornelson, Shayne Kornelson, Sean Hofer,



EXPRESS PHOTO BY ALANA HOFER

Storm FC's Joseph Barkman dribbles the ball up field. Storm FC added four new players from the Interlake Impact over the off-season.

Kai Friesen, Brian Penner and Jirah Truijen.

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Interlake Lightning players secure bronze at 2024 NAHC

By Kieran Reimer

Two Interlake Lightning U18 AAA Female hockey players proudly represented Manitoba at the National Aboriginal Hockey Championships (NAHC) held in Grande Prairie, Alta., two weeks ago.

Together, goaltender Rachel Halldorson and forward Bre-Ann Windross helped Team Manitoba secure a bronze medal against the top Under-18 Aboriginal hockey players across Canada.

While playing in her first NAHC, Windross was happy to help Team Manitoba bring home some hardware.

"Just getting a medal there is something to look at that is awesome," said Windross. "Obviously, we were aiming for gold, but even though we got bronze, it's still amazing knowing that we did something really well."

Manitoba got off to a hot start in the tournament, winning opening games against Team Atlantic and Team Saskatchewan 10-0, and 5-2 respectively.

They wrapped up group play with a 3-1 record, good enough for third and earning them a spot in the qualifying round.

In the qualifying round, they defeated Team Eastern Door and North 7-0 before falling in the semifinals to Team Alberta in triple overtime after a shot bounced off two players and into Team Manitoba's goal early in the sixth frame.

"There was a lot of people there," said Windross. "A banquet was supposed to happen after, but our game took so long because we went into three overtimes that everyone started showing up and the stands were full. Basically, every team came and watched the game."

Unfortunately, the tournament ended there for Team Manitoba as wildfires in the area forced the bronze medal game against Team British Columbia to be cancelled.

However, both teams were awarded bronze medals in the process, though they are still waiting to receive their medals as there weren't enough to go around to both teams at the time.

The tournament's end concluded Halldorson's NAHC career as she now ages out after two years of representing Manitoba at the tournament.

She walks away with a bronze medal from this year's tournament and a silver medal from the 2023 tournament in Winnipeg last year.

"It's an honour to be able to represent Manitoba and the Indigenous people of Manitoba," said Halldorson. "Words can't describe how happy I was and the fun you have there because it was really an honour to live on tradition and keep this tournament going."

Halldorson, one of Team Manitoba's returnees, took a leadership role this year. She and her teammates got to know each other for months ahead of the tournament through a lengthy tryout process, team bonding events and exhibition games as the tournament drew closer.

She thanks her coaches and teammates for their welcomeness and support she received along the way.

"These coaches have helped me so much in my life," said Halldorson. "Throughout the two years, they've stayed in contact with me and have always been there for me. I've never had a coaching staff that's been better, and I don't think anybody will ever top that. The staff and the teammates are the best part. They're like a second family."

Though the tournament is over, Team Manitoba is already planning its identification camp dates for the 2025 NAHC. No dates have been announced but prospective players can visit masrc.com or follow @femaleteammb on Instagram to stay up to date.



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED
Bre-Ann Windross of Eriksdale, left, and Rachel Halldorson of Lundar returned home with bronze medals from the National Aboriginal Hockey Championships earlier this month.

Laxdal's Generals fall in Ontario Hockey League Championship

By Kieran Reimer

Stonewall's Derek Laxdal's incredible hockey season has come to an end, however, not quite with the finish he would have hoped for.

The Oshawa Generals head coach Laxdal, coached his team to the Ontario Hockey League Championship final in only his second season with the junior hockey club.

Even the most ardent Oshawa Generals fan couldn't begrudge the powerhouse London Knights over their

dominant four-game sweep as the Knights dropped the Generals 7-1 last Wednesday and outscored them 31-9 in the series to win their fifth OHL title in 19 years.

Despite going the minimum number of games, the Knights scored the most goals in an OHL finals series since 1999, showing massive offensive firepower and a very successful power play (12-21 or above 50 per cent) that was deadly while Oshawa's own



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED
Derek Laxdal, coach of the Oshawa Generals.

Continued on page 21

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Interlake athletes preparing for track provincials



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY BRETT MITCHELL AND HALEY FISHER

Track and field athletes from all over Manitoba competed in the Lord Selkirk Regional Comprehensive Royal Rumble on the Rubber track on May 14. Athletes had an opportunity to showcase their abilities and gain a better understanding of their opponents leading up to the Manitoba High School Athletic Association Track and Field Provincials. The Provincials will take place on June 6-8 at the University of Manitoba.

> LAXDAL, FROM PG. 20

power play was just about powerless (1-17).

So the Knights, led by star forward Easton Cowan's OHL-leading 34 points in the playoffs in just 18 games — he won the Wayne Gretzky 99 Trophy as playoff MVP to go with the Red Tilson Trophy as regular season MVP — and Kasper Hulttanen's 17 goals, had a right to celebrate winning the J. Ross Robertson Cup (the Generals have won it 13 times) long into the night at the Tribute Communities Centre.

The Generals, who were mired in ninth place in the Eastern Conference back in mid-November and looked like they'd struggle to even make the playoffs at that point, deserve a lot of credit for winding up in the OHL finals.

The Generals steadily climbed all the way up the division and conference standings, adding pieces like overage

forward Connor Lockhart, overage defenceman Connor Punnet and defenceman Zachary Sandu throughout the season thanks to the moves of general manager Roger Hunt. They also got help in November with the return of key veterans like star forward Calum Ritchie and tough hometown forward Luke Torrance from injuries, and the team's buy-in to the coaching of Laxdal. Combine that with stellar goaltending from Jacob Oster — which didn't show in the OHL final series but was there all season and through the first three rounds of the playoffs — and it made for a memorable season for Oshawa.

Laxdal helped the Generals to one of the best seasons in franchise history, winning the Eastern Conference and having the league's best record after Jan. 1.

The Generals finished the regular season with a 40-19-7-2 record and eliminated the Barrie Colts, Ottawa 67's and North Bay Battalion in the playoffs en route to the finals.

Laxdal is the OHL's nominee for

the Canadian Hockey League's Brian Kilrea Coach of the Year award that will be presented during the 2024 Memorial Cup in Saginaw, Mich. He will be formally presented with the Matt Leyden Trophy (Ontario Hockey League Coach of the Year) during the league's June 12 awards ceremony at the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto.

Laxdal is now 58, with a resumé that could appeal to NHL teams.

To see more photos of your favourite Interlake Athletes

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Icelandic River Community Foundation

GRANT APPLICATIONS

Icelandic River Community Foundation is accepting applications for grants from registered charities and organizations for projects in the Arborg and Bifrost-Riverton catchment areas.

Projects can include assistance for health care, recreational purposes, buildings, vehicles, furnishings or new equipment not normally covered in operating budgets. Please provide projected costs and timeline for completion. Application form is available at the IRCF website at <https://ircf.ca/>

Please mail application to the Icelandic River Community Foundation, Box 159, Arborg, MB, R0C 0A0

Applications must be received by September 30 2024



Rural Municipality of **FISHER**

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

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

LUD of Fisher Branch Green Team Summer Student(s) July 2 to August 30, 2024

The Local Urban District of Fisher Branch is accepting applications for the above position:

Requirements:

- Must be between the ages of 16 and 24.
- Valid drivers licence is an asset but not required.
- Must be able to work with minimal supervision.


Duties:

- Grass cutting and trimming along roadways, ditches, riverbank and vacant lots.
- General garbage cleanup and related light maintenance.
- Assisting with other duties as required.

Please submit applications by 4:30 p.m. June 4, 2024 to:

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Fisher Branch, MB R0C 0Z0
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We thank all applicants for their interest, but only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

THE RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ARMSTRONG

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Part-Time Public Works Coordinator

The Rural Municipality of Armstrong invites applications for the position of Part-Time (20-24 hours/week) Public Works Coordinator

Under the direction of the Chief Administrative Officer, the Public Works Coordinator is responsible for the direction, coordination, efficient operation, construction, repair, and general maintenance of all municipal infrastructure.

Qualifications - Public Works Coordinator

- *Minimum of five years related experience, three of which were in a foreman or supervisory capacity.
- *Must have experience in construction and maintenance of various municipal infrastructure.
- *Must have the ability to operate and maintain various types of heavy equipment. (tractor/mower, compact track loader, grader, loader, tandem)
- *Valid Manitoba Drivers Class 3 License, air brake license or an air brake endorsement.
- *Knowledge in computer software (Work, Excel, etc.)
- *Above average organizational skills.
- *Ability to multi-task numerous projects simultaneously.
- *Above average skills to manage and direct staff.
- *The ability to perform physical labour.
- *The ability to work outside in all weather conditions

The Rural Municipality of Armstrong offers a competitive salary and benefits package including health/dental and pension.

Applications must contain a resume, covering letter and three references. Application deadline is 4:30 PM on Friday June 6, 2024. Only those candidates chosen for an interview will be contacted.

Please forward applications marked "Application for Part Time Public Works Coordinator" to the Interim Chief Administrative Officer at:

RM of Armstrong
Box 69, Inwood, Manitoba R0C 1P0
Fax: (204)278-3437

e-mail: cao@rmofarmstrong.com

To view a full job description please visit www.rmofarmstrong.com or call the Municipal Officer at (204) 278-3377.

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Interlake Forest Center

July 2 – August 30, 2024

(Funded by Manitoba Metis Federation)

The Rural Municipality of Fisher is accepting applications for a Summer Student Grounds Keeper at the Interlake Forest Center, Hodgson.

Requirements:

- Must be a Red River Metis citizen aged 16+.
- Attended school full-time during the current academic year and will be returning to school full-time in the fall.
- Must hold a valid drivers licence.
- Must have transportation to and from the job site.
- Knowledge of chain saws, pole saws and lawn mowers.

Duties:

- Trail maintenance including cutting trees with chainsaw and hauling debris away. Light carpentry experience.
- General garbage cleanup and cleanup of outhouses and outbuildings, painting, and assisting with other duties as assigned.
- Required to work outdoors in all weather conditions and able to work alone.
- Hours of work will be 8:00 am to 4 pm, Monday to Friday, \$15.30 per hour, 1/2 hour lunch break.

Please submit applications by
4:30 p.m. June 4, 2024 to:

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IN MEMORIAM



Jim Leduchowski
In loving memory of our
husband, father, and grandfather
who passed away a year ago
on May 27th, 2023

We hold you close within our hearts
And there you will remain.
We will always love and miss you.
-Vivian, David, Cathy, Donna
and their families

OBITUARY



Nora Mabel Chartrand
November 20, 1928 – May 14, 2024

With heavy hearts, we lost our most beloved gem, our Mom, Nan and Great Nan.

With a heart full of love for her family and great friends, Nora Mabel Chartrand of Lundar, MB lost her fight to a stroke, with her family by her side, at the Selkirk General Hospital on Tuesday, May 14, 2024 at the age of 95 years.

Nora will be sadly missed by her daughters Teresa Forbister and Janice (Raynard) Howardson; brother Greg (Dianne) Forbister; sister Louise Nobess; grandchildren Jason (Geo), Kurtis and Tammy; great-grandchildren Harlon, Carrigan and Michaela; stepson Darcy Pottinger and Doug Harris whom she considered her son.

Mom is predeceased by her husband Jim Chartrand Sr., her son Jimmey, son Wayne Burns, parents Archie and Mary Forbister, stepson Les Gregg, sister Sharon Sweetland, daughter Linda Burns, son-in-law Rose Reimer Banman and special nephew Gary Burdett.

Mom lived in her home in Lundar until the age of 92 years then moved to the Senior Citizen's Home where she was well known to many. She was such a strong independent person to her family, as well as her wonderful friends she accumulated along the way. Her passion was making bread (which we all couldn't wait to get a hold of) and canning, and what she loved to do most was taking care of her pets including the ones that just showed up. It made her day when her grandsons would phone or come over, take her for a ride and bring her homemade soup and Bannock. Harlon was her joy as she loved the stories he would share with her.

Mom worked at the burger shack in Lundar Beach with her sister-in-law Lucy McLeod until she retired.

Cremation has taken place. A family graveside service will be held in the Minnewakan Cemetery. Family would like to thank the Selkirk Regional Health Centre, Lakeshore General Hospital in Ashern and the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg for the wonderful care given to her.

Arrangements by:
ARNASON FUNERAL HOME
Ashern – Lundar
1-204-768-2072
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Your memory will live forever Engraved within our hearts

BRIDAL SHOWER



Bridal shower in honour of
Laurn Johnson,
bride-elect of Kirk Johnston
on June 1, 2024
at the Riverton Hall at 1 p.m.

Donations can be made at Arborg Home Hardware Building Centre, Arborg Co-op and the Riverton Co-op. The couple are also registered at myregistry.com and Arborg Home Hardware.

IN MEMORIAM

Fred Ralke
March 22, 1933 – May 23, 2019

It has been five years since you left us.
Not a day goes by that we don't think of you,
Or speak your name.
Loved too much to be forgotten.
Big hugs.

-Love,
Vera and family

IN MEMORIAM

Anne Chudd
May 27, 2005

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

-You are both lovingly remembered
by son-in-law David and
grandsons Jon and Eric

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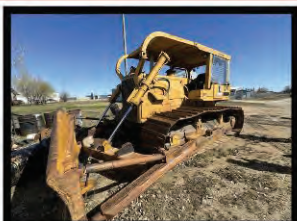
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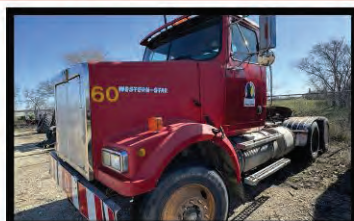
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OBITUARY

Randall "Randy" John Hordal
January 29, 1960 – May 15, 2024

With heavy hearts and deep sadness our family announces the passing of Randy on May 15, 2024 at the Selkirk Regional Health Centre, surrounded by his loving family.

In keeping with Randy's wishes, cremation has taken place and a Celebration of Life will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 1, 2024 in the Lundar Curling Rink with Cindy Thorkelson officiating. A luncheon will follow with a private interment to be held at a later date.

Arrangements by:
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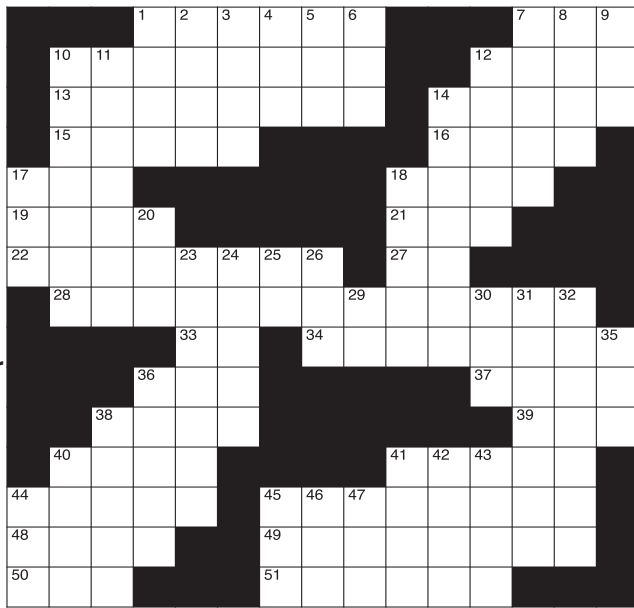
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> GAMES

CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

1. Lunatic
7. Doctor of Education
10. Able to make amends
12. Tight-knit group
13. Gland
14. Intestinal pouches
15. Fungal spores
16. Erstwhile
17. Engine additive
18. Nasal mucus
19. Fit a horse with footwear
21. Consumed
22. Settle
27. Larry and Curly's pal
28. Basketball's GOAT
33. Exclamation of surprise
34. Made tight
36. Before
37. Actor Nicolas
38. Not hot
39. Talk
40. Pledge
41. Abandon a mission
44. Trims by cutting
45. Aspects of one's character
48. Boxing GOAT's former surname
49. Holy places
50. Body art (slang)
51. Attributes



CLUES DOWN

1. How one feels
2. American Nat'l Standards Institute
3. Information
4. Licensed for Wall Street
5. Keyboard key
6. Born of
7. Choose to represent
8. Small European freshwater fish
9. Everyone has their own
10. Line from the center of a polygon
11. Lebanese city
12. Type of watercraft
14. A way to twist
17. Soviet Socialist Republic
18. Greek island
20. Medical practitioner
23. ___ DeGaulle, French President
24. Partner to "ooled"
25. Atomic #52
26. Santa's helper
29. Rapper ___ Rule
30. Month
31. Word formed by rearranging letters
32. Nullifies
35. Young woman ready to enter society
36. Unemployment
38. Weight unit
40. Formal party
41. Computer language
42. Residue formula in math
43. Duty or responsibility
44. Part of (abbr.)
45. Time zone
46. Body part
47. Nucleic acid

OBITUARY



John (Jassen) Chwartacki

John passed away peacefully on May 14, 2024 at the Health Sciences Centre with family by his side.

John was predeceased by his parents Rose (Zawacki) and Anthony; his mother and father-in-law, Leonard and Elva Thompson; a baby sister in infancy; brothers Joe, Bill (Felicia) and Ralph (Barb); sisters Joyce and Mabel (Walter) Zaborniak; sister-in-law Jeanne and brother-in-law George Thompson.

He is survived by his loving wife of 55 years Joan; sons Derik (Lisa) and Scott (Tannis); and his loving grandchildren whom he was so proud of Braydon, Reise, Ashlyn, Jessica and Alexis. John is also survived by his siblings Mel, Tony (Vi), Rose-Ann (Jim); sisters-in-law Adele Chwartacki and Pearl Thompson; as well as brother-in-law Gordon (Janice) Thompson and many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Dad was born in Winnipeg Beach on Valentine's Day, 1939. The 9th of 10 children born to his parents, Dad spent his early years in a small but very busy farmhouse at "The Beach". The family later moved to St. Andrews where Dad received his schooling and later met his life partner Joan. With hard work, Dad and Mom built a family home on McLennan Road where the backyard pool was a focal point for family and friends get together. Dad was very active in the community, coaching hockey, baseball and soccer. Mom and Dad became grandparents and became rabid season ticket holders to their grandkids' sporting events where they were their fiercest supporters, rarely missing a hockey, baseball or volleyball game or practice. No rink was too cold, or diamond too hot, Grampa was always there. During these travels numerous lifelong friendships were made with the great people of Selkirk and St. Andrews.

An electrician by trade, Dad was able to start his career with his brothers Ralph and Tony eventually moving on to a number of companies including CPR and CNR where he made more life-long friendships.

Dad loved the outdoors; from his large garden to family camping and fishing trips. Dad especially loved hunting and looked forward to the annual Thanksgiving weekend hunt with his family. Dad enjoyed playing hockey and baseball in his younger years and was an avid golfer. Dad was a card player and enjoyed games with his family and friends and let his sons and grandchildren win a few until they got older then taught them a few lessons!

In 2021 Mom and Dad sold their family home and moved to Selkirk. Here they met new friends and embraced their old ones. Dad enjoyed his "town" living.

Quiet, unassuming, caring, loyal, and hard-working are just a few words to describe you Dad. But your unwavering love and devotion to Mom and family down to your last breath will forever be our inspiration and guiding light.

Thanks for all you've done for us Dad. Whenever we needed anything, you were there for us. From your compassionate advice to your infectious smile, you have shown us time and again the bumpiest of roads can be paved for smooth travel. Always being quiet by nature and strong in stature. We will love and miss you forever and think of you always.

The family would like to thank all the wonderful doctors and healthcare professionals who have helped Dad over the years, especially his family doctor of many years, Dr. Jack Nepon.

Anyone who knew Dad knows he never wanted to be the center of attention. Cremation has taken place and we will respect his wishes with no formal service being held.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests if you so choose a donation to the Kidney Foundation of Manitoba can be made.

Tributes: www.gilbartfuneralhome.com

Gilbart Funeral Home, Selkirk in care of arrangements.



SUDOKU

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

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!

get inspired

> MEAL IDEA



Southwest Ranch Taco Salad

Total time: 25 minutes
 1/2 head romaine lettuce
 1 pint cherry tomatoes
 2 small avocados
 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
 1 pound ground beef (80/20 ground chuck)

2 teaspoons Newman's Own Mild Taco Seasoning
 1/4 cup water
 1 can (15 1/2 ounces) black beans
 1 1/2 cups canned corn
 1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro, plus additional for serving (optional), divided
 1 cup Newman's Own Southwest Ranch Dressing
 6 ounces tortilla chips
 Coarsely chop lettuce, halve cherry tomatoes and pit, peel and slice avocados. Set aside.
 In large frying pan over medium-high heat, heat olive oil. Brown ground beef, stirring occasionally, 4-5 minutes. Add taco seasoning and water; cook according to package directions, 5-8 minutes, or until meat is

thoroughly cooked.
 Drain and rinse black beans. Set aside.
 Divide lettuce among serving bowls or plates. Top with ground beef, tomatoes, avocados, black beans, corn, cheese and 2 tablespoons cilantro. Tuck in tortilla chips.
 Drizzle with southwest ranch dressing and sprinkle with additional cilantro, if desired.



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