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VOLUME 12 EDITION 42 THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2025

WEEKLY NEWS

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Hockey heroes

EXPRESS PHOTO BY BRETT MITCHELL

Members of the Interlake Lightning U17 AAA team met with former NHL players during the Selkirk Steelers Alumni NHL Fundraiser game in Selkirk. The players had the chance to chat with hockey greats, take photos and even hoist the Stanley Cup during the special event.

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Here's How.

Soul'd Out Trio to perform gospel concert in Ashern Nov. 2

By Lana Meier

A special evening of music and inspiration is coming to the Ashern Centennial Hall on Saturday, Nov. 2, when the Soul'd Out Trio takes the stage for a high-energy gospel concert.

The Manitoba-based trio — known for its powerful harmonies, heartfelt lyrics and engaging performances — brings together elements of contemporary Christian and southern gospel music. Their shows are filled with uplifting messages, stories of faith and songs that resonate with audiences of all ages.

"Our goal is to share a positive message through music and bring people together," the group says. "Every concert is a celebration of faith, friendship and community."

The Ashern concert came about thanks to local organizer Conrad Anderson, who has followed the group for years.

"I've listened to Soul'd Out for around 15 years, with different members over those years and mostly as a quartet," Anderson said. "We took a family vacation on a gospel music cruise in January and Soul'd Out Trio was one of the groups on the cruise,

so we finally had the opportunity to meet them. We talked on the ship a few times and started texting shortly after it ended, trying to see if we could work out the details to bring them up to Ashern."

Anderson noted that this will be the group's first performance in Manitoba.

"They're based in Ohio and, if I recall correctly, have only been in Canada once before in southern Ontario," he said.

Since the announcement, he's been encouraged by the local response.

"I've heard from a few people that they are really looking forward to the concert," Anderson said. "I hope that excitement grows as we get closer to the date. We continue to hand out posters as we try to get the word out and invite as many people as possible."

He added that hosting a gospel concert of this scale is something special for the region.

"We don't have too many events like this in Manitoba, so to be able to bring these guys to Ashern is unique," he said. "My hope would be that through the songs that are sung and words that are shared, everyone in at-



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Members of the Soul'd Out Trio perform together as part of their Manitoba concert tour. They blend contemporary and southern gospel sounds in their high-energy performances.

tendance is encouraged and reminded that there is true hope still today."

The concert is being presented by the Anderson Family Funeral Home,

which is celebrating its 30th year in business and is covering the costs to

Continued on page 5

Ever Wonder Who School Trustees Are — and Why They Matter?



Trustee Spotlight: Sandra Davies - Ward 2

Trustee Sandra Davies has served on the Evergreen School Division Board for 16 years and is now in her fourth term as trustee and Chair of the Board. A confident and courageous leader, Sandra brings clarity and experience to her role, grounded in a lifelong commitment to young people and public education.

She is especially proud of Evergreen's governance model, which keeps the board focused on high-level decision-making while drawing on community voice and expert advice. Under her leadership, the Board has consistently prioritized student-centered decisions.

"There aren't just one or two accomplishments I would consider myself proud of. I'm proud of all that we've achieved together..."

Each year, one of Sandra's most meaningful moments is the staff celebration, where she has the honour of recognizing long-serving employees and retirees. For her, it is a reminder that Evergreen's success is built on the dedication of its people.

Sandra's Icelandic and Métis heritage runs generations deep in this region, and her connection to the land and its people shapes who she is today. From an early age, she committed herself to service: at just 13 she began working at Gull Harbour Resort, where she stayed for 20 years. Today, she serves as Park Manager for Hecla-Grindstone Provincial Park, continuing to steward the place she calls home. She brings that same sense of responsibility and care to her work in Evergreen, ensuring every decision at the board table reflects the division's priorities and the values of the communities it serves.



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Family Advocacy Network (FAN) empowering families with loved ones with disabilities

By Patricia Barrett

A support and advocacy organization for families who care for loved ones with intellectual or physical disabilities is in the process of broadening the scope of its disability support in the Gimli area by encouraging more people in the area and in surrounding areas such as Arborg and Riverton to reach out to them with issues and perhaps join the organization.

The Family Advocacy Network (FAN) of Manitoba, which a mostly volunteer, not-for-profit organization, has a branch in Gimli. It hosts in-person meetings at the Bayview Church in the town's South Beach neighbourhood. It also hosts a private Facebook page where people can obtain advice and information.

The Gimli FAN branch's past president Debra Roach, who has a seasonal residence in Gimli and served for about seven years as president of the branch, said they are hoping younger families will consider becoming a member of FAN as they may not be aware of the support network.

FAN membership is free and it connects people to others in the community that can act as mentors as they navigate issues such as the school system or government support pro-

grams.

"It will be eight years next March that we've been up and running. We started with four families. We had all felt isolated," said Roach. "Then we met each other and thought we really should try to get more families together and let them know they're not alone. That took quite a long time."

FAN now has about 1,400 members in active branches across Manitoba including Gimli, Stonewall, Beausejour, Winnipeg, Steinbach, Morris, Carman and Portage la Prairie. It's also making inroads in the north in the Thompson, Flin Flon and The Pas regions.

Its members include parents, family members and caregivers of adults and children with intellectual and physical disabilities. FAN advocates with a united voice for people with disabilities, and branch members get together in person to share experiences and advice.

"We also bring into the fold people who are fostering because they run into the same issues," said Roach. "FAN includes all disabilities. We are not just for autism or Down's or cerebral palsy and so forth — we accept everyone."

Some of the major disability issues FAN addresses include respite, in-

clusive education and the transition from school to adulthood, which results in "fewer opportunities" for people with disabilities. Members can broach issues during in-person FAN meetings, via virtual meetings, FAN's private Facebook page or by phone.

"If someone phones FAN to talk about something that's going on, we can get together with them for coffee. Or if they have to go to a meeting at a school, for example, to talk about their child and they feel intimidated, we'll go with them," said Roach. "Parents know their children better than we know them so they know what they want to say. But we can be there with them and talk beforehand about experiences we ourselves have been through and maybe coach them. What we really want to see is parents

feeling empowered."

In the realm of schooling, Roach said school divisions across the province get funding to support students with disabilities but each division is different in terms of what supports they offer. That could either "work very well for our folks or not." Educational assistants (EAs), who work with students with disabilities, are "worth weight in gold and we need more of them at a living wage and fully trained."

FAN works with other disability advocacy organizations such as Community Living Manitoba, which is hosting a 2025-2026 "Exclusion Tracker" survey (a cross-Canada survey) that asks the parents or guardians of

Continued on page 4

EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Members of the Family Advocacy Network (FAN) Manitoba gather at Camp Manitou Oct. 24-25 for a two-day retreat supporting caregivers of people with intellectual and physical disabilities. The event offers workshops, relaxation time and peer connection for families from Gimli, Arborg, Riverton and surrounding areas.

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GJ Chemical Co.
Junction of Hwy 30 & Rd. 9 N
(204) 324-8090

ARBORG
Monday, Oct. 27th
Nutrien Ag Solutions
55 Main St. S
(204) 376-5990

BALDUR
Tuesday, Oct. 28th
Pembina Co-op
121 2nd St. S
(204) 535-2598

BEAUSEJOUR
Thursday, Oct. 30th
Nutrien Ag Solutions
73010 Rd. 40 off Hwy 44
(204) 268-3497

BIRTLE
Thursday, Oct. 30th
Twin Valley Co-op
66 Hwy 83 S
(204) 842-3388

BRUNKILD
Monday, Oct. 27th
MK Agro
3062 Rd. 39 NW
(204) 736-4769

DAUPHIN
Tuesday, Oct. 28th
Dauphin Co-op Agro
601 Whitmore Ave. E
(204) 622-6080

DELORRAINE
Friday, Oct. 31st
Nutrien Ag Solutions
Junction of Hwy 3 & Broadway St. S
(204) 747-2877

DOUGLAS
Wednesday, Oct. 29th
Heritage Co-op - Brandon
Agro Centre
South on Rd. 100 W, 8 miles E
of Brandon on Hwy 1
(204) 763-8998

GLADSTONE
Friday, Oct. 31st
Parrish & Heimbecker
64084 Rd. 64 W
(204) 385-2139

GUNTON
Tuesday, Oct. 28th
Paterson Grain - Crop Inputs
89113 PTH 7
(204) 886-3401

HOLLAND
Monday, Oct. 27th
Nutrien Ag Solutions
Junction of Hwy 2 & Centerville Rd.
(204) 723-2423

INGLIS
Wednesday, Oct. 29th
Prairie Giants Crop Supply
2 km E of Hwy 83 on PR 366
(204) 564-2293

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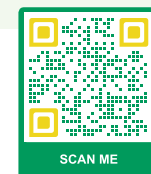
PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE
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Portage AgriSales Portage
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Redfern Farm Services
101 2nd Ave.
(204) 328-5325

ST. CLAUDE
Wednesday, Oct. 29th
R-Way AG
38084 PTH 2
(204) 379-2582

STEINBACH
Friday, Oct. 31st
Clearview Co-op
- Steinbach Agro Centre
33124 Rd. 39 N (Corner of Rd.
39 N & Hwy 12 N), Between
Steinbach and Blumenort
(204) 326-9921

SWAN RIVER
Monday, Oct. 27th
New Era Ag
520 3rd Ave. S
(204) 734-6222



• For collection dates in other regions, visit: cleanfarms.ca/materials/unwanted-pesticides-animal-meds/
• Next collection events in this region in 2028.

Cleanfarms.ca
info@cleanfarms.ca @cleanfarms

cleanfarms 15 YEARS

Santa's Little Helpers revives Christmas hamper program in Ashern and Moosehorn

By Lana Meier

A long-running holiday tradition is returning to the Ashern and Moosehorn area after a one-year pause — and organizers say it's needed more than ever.

The community's Christmas hamper program, now operating under the name Santa's Little Helpers, is back thanks to a dedicated team of local volunteers and the support of the RM of Grahamdale.

"In the past we've prepared around 50 hampers, but with the economy the way it is, we're expecting 80 to 100 families this year," said Sharon Foster, director of Santa's Little Helpers. "The need in our community has grown, and we didn't want to see this program disappear."

When Foster learned last winter that no one had stepped forward to coordinate the former Christmas Cheer Board, she reached out to Craig Koch, who contacted the RM of Grahamdale for support. From that meeting, a volunteer group was formed that included the Community Development Corporation (CDC), with members Sandy Smith, Charlotte Lindell and Greg Jabesh.

Jacqueline Kiesman, an RM of Grahamdale employee, also helped guide the restart by sharing a detailed timeline and instructions based on her previous work with the women's centre.

"This really has been a community effort from day one," Foster said. "Everyone came together to make sure families won't go without this Christmas."

The renamed Santa's Little Helpers program will run for two full months, with donation boxes placed in businesses across Ashern and Moosehorn starting Oct. 15. Applications for hampers opened the same day and can now be completed in person at the RM of Grahamdale office or Moosehorn Co-op, or online through the group's Facebook page.



Foster said they've also partnered with Alf Cuthbert School and Ashern Early Years School, whose principals will arrange to collect donations at their Christmas concerts.

All local businesses have the opportunity to host a brightly decorated donation box, and residents are encouraged to drop off non-perishable food, toys and clothing for infants through teenagers.

"We're in need of toys, boys' and girls' clothing, and all types of non-perishable food — things like Kraft Dinner, soups and canned goods," Foster said. "We'll take anything we can get."

Monetary donations can be made by e-transfer to santaslittlehelpersboard@hotmail.com

Donations are being stored at a central facility in Moosehorn, where volunteers will later organize the hampers.

Hampers will be distributed on Dec. 21 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at several pickup locations, with delivery available if needed.

Foster said a public volunteer call will go out closer to the date for anyone able to help with packing and distribution.

"This is about neighbours helping neighbours," she said. "It takes a community to make Christmas brighter for everyone, and I know ours will step up."

For more information, contact Sharon Foster,



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Santa's Little Helpers director Sharon Foster and co-chair Craig Koch are leading the revived Christmas hamper program for the Ashern and Moosehorn area, working with local volunteers, schools and the RM of Grahamdale to bring holiday support to families in need.

director, at 204-302-1301.

> (FAN), FROM PG. 3

children with disabilities in K-12 to fill out a survey each and every time their child experiences an incident of exclusion at school. Forms of exclusion can include being sent home or not being able to take part in class activities or field trips.

"We're asking parents every time exclusion happens — every time their child is sent home from school for being dysregulated or parents being asked to bring their child in late or kids not being allowed on field trips — to document that in the Exclusion Tracker survey and to send in a separate survey for each incident. Exclusion shouldn't be happening. Every child has a right to go to school and that is law," said Roach. "People wanting to do the survey can contact either Community Living Manitoba or us at FAN, and we'll refer their request to Community Living or get the survey for them."

FAN meets once a month with the provincial government through its Community Living Disability Services to advocate for programs or services on behalf of their members, said Roach.

"The fact that we have the province's ear is very important to us. We're thankful for that," she said. "They try to help out where they can."

At various times of the year, FAN offers events for its members and other self-advocates. In the past, Fan Gimli has teamed up with the RM of Gimli's recreation department to host pickleball. This week it's hosting an event for caregivers at Camp Manitou (Oct. 24-25).

The Gimli FAN branch is scheduled to meet on Oct. 30 at the Bayview Church.

To become a member of FAN and its private Facebook page, parents and caregivers can fill out a short registration form on FAN's website, email families.caregivers@fanmb.ca or call 431-489-2542.

Visit FAN Manitoba online www.fanmb.ca or its public Facebook page.

Graymont invites applications for the 2025 community-focused Carbon Reduction Fund

We are proud to announce that we are accepting applications for the Graymont Carbon Reduction Fund, an innovative, grass-roots initiative designed to support the development of carbon-reduction initiatives in the communities across the globe that we call home.

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- Protecting the environment by the responsible use of resources
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If you have a project idea that relates to any of these topics, the GCRF is looking for you!

For additional information, please contact Justin Filion - jfilion@graymont.com

Applications are due by November 28, 2025

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carbon reduction fund
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Manitoba Hydro inspecting Natural Gas meters and regulators

By Patricia Barrett

Manitoba Hydro employees and contractors will be visiting homes and businesses over the next 12 to 14 months to conduct a province-wide audit of natural gas meters and regulators.

The audit will take place in communities across Manitoba — both urban and rural — and will include about 90,000 residential and commercial customers, the utility said.

If Hydro personnel need to enter a premises to inspect a meter, customers will not have to provide their names, account numbers or any other type of personal information. Personnel will also be displaying a Manitoba Hydro identification badge.

"Meters measure the volume of natural gas consumed. Regulators control the pressure. The meters and regulators may be located together or in separate places outside or inside a residence or business," said Manitoba Hydro in an Oct. 9 news release. "This audit is critical for the continued safe and reliable delivery of natural gas to our customers. It is a separate process from meter reading."

In addition to their identification badge, Manitoba Hydro employees and contractors will be wearing specific Hydro-branded high-visibility shirts or vests.

"The personnel will inspect natural gas meters and regulators if they are readily accessible, but if necessary, they will come to the door and ask to be directed to the gas meter and regulator," states the release.

Customers should be aware that Manitoba Hydro employees or contractors performing this work will display their identification, be working from sunrise to sunset (as adjusted to the season) and may also work later hours in rural areas, may ask to enter a private residence or business for the purpose of auditing gas meters and regulators, and will not ask for names, account numbers or any other personal information.

Customers can contact Manitoba Hydro at 1-888-624-9376 with any questions about the gas meter and regulator audit.

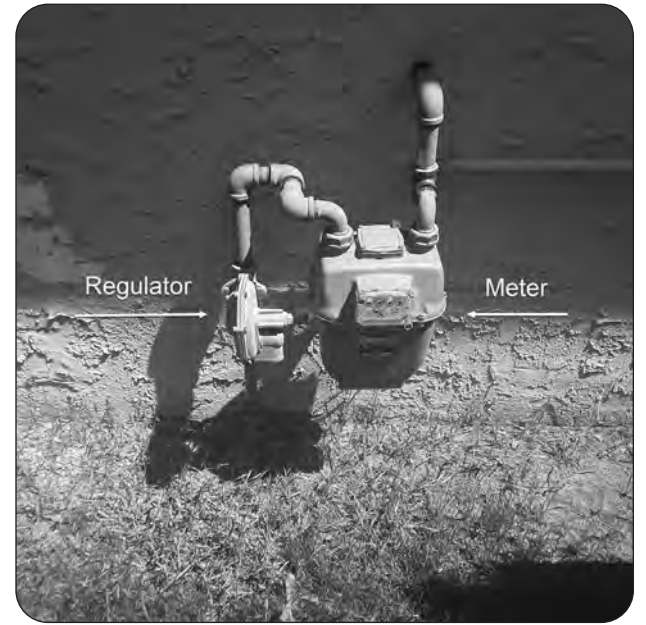


PHOTO BY MANITOBA HYDRO

A gas meter and regulator located outside a building.

letter to the editor

Letters to the Editor:
news@expressweeklynews.ca

Visitor urges town to restore Gimli's charm

I lived in Gimli for 51 years and throughout those years, the town was falling apart before my eyes. I recently returned to Gimli as a visitor and I was saddened to see the condition of the once attractive,

charming summer get-away. Current conditions of Gimli are a disgrace. The grass should be cut and maintained in the ditches and roadside to make Gimli more appealing for visitors and residence. Sprucing up the town for one weekend in August is not enough to encourage people to return to Gimli. Building one sidewalk on Sixth Avenue should be a start. You need to do more. The interlocking stones you call a sidewalk are uneven, crooked, caved-in holes

with weeds growing everywhere. It is very dangerous to walk on and impossible for strollers, walkers and wheelchairs to stroll the streets safely. The road is also horrible and dangerous for everyone. Gimli has become a retirement community and seniors have difficulty getting around town without harm.

The cleanliness of our main streets also reflects on the town. The litter and debris in front of some downtown restaurants and businesses

detract from Gimli's beauty and the pride so many residents have in their community. Business owners and homeowners alike share responsibility for maintaining their properties and presenting Gimli at its best.

I am very disappointed in the "mess" Gimli has become. I am not Icelandic but I am embarrassed for the Icelandic community who have cherished Gimli for so long.

- Nadine Zdebiak

> GOSPEL CONCERT, FROM PG. 2

make the evening possible.

"Music is powerful," Anderson said. "It can change your day — from calming an anxious heart, giving energy to a tired body, bringing tears to the eyes. Music transcends barriers and creates connections and a sense of community. We live in a tough world, and so many people are hurting. By having music events like this, we can experience those connections in our small towns."

He said there will be no tickets or admission fees.

"We don't want cost to keep anyone from attending," Anderson said. "Come expecting to hear some great music along with personal stories of faith, hope and restoration."

For those who have never attended a Soul'd Out Trio concert, Anderson has one simple message:

"Please come on out — this concert is for you! Matt, Blake and Nathan are a team fulfilling their calling and are travelling a long way to

sing for us in Ashern. I'm thankful we have this opportunity to have them visit us. It will be a great evening."

Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and the concert begins at 7 p.m. For more information or to hear their music, visit www.souldouttrio.com or follow the group on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok.

Winnipeg Beach Legion Br. 61
20 Hamilton Avenue Legion 204-389-2660

November 22 - Honours & Awards Dinner
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ANNUAL IMMUNIZATION CLINICS

The wrong address was printed for the annual immunization clinic taking place in Fisher Branch on Nov. 15 from 10:00 am to 2:00 p.m.

The correct address for Fisher Branch Community Health Office in Fisher Branch Medical Clinic is 23 Main Street

Visit this webpage for clinics in the region:
<https://www.ierha.ca/programs-services/public-health/immunization-clinics/>

 **Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority**

THE **EXPRESS**
WEEKLY NEWS



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Province sees progress in hip, knee surgeries at Selkirk hospital

By Haley Cvar

The Manitoba government says it's making steady progress on reducing surgical wait times, with nearly 400 hip and knee replacements now completed through the new outpatient program at Selkirk Regional Health Centre.

As of Oct. 16, the program has performed 399 procedures — nearly halfway to its target of 800 by the end of the fiscal year — Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care Minister Uzoma Asagwara announced this week.

"This investment is about helping more Manitobans live free of pain so they can get back to what they love," said Asagwara. "Too many Manitobans have had to wait a year or more for a relatively simple hip or knee replacement, but we are helping the 'long waiters' by investing in the Selkirk program. We're seeing progress as our waitlist drops, but we know we have to keep going."

The province invested \$5.7 million in March to launch the outpatient surgical program, expanding operating

space and hiring additional staff. Provincial data shows the number of patients removed from the hip and knee waitlist rose sharply this year — from 104 in February to 378 in June.

Asagwara said more Manitobans are now receiving surgeries than being added to the waitlist. In September 2024, the list grew by 167 patients, but this September, 213 patients received their surgeries, marking another decline.

Dr. Ed Buchel, provincial surgery specialty lead for Shared Health, said the program's success reflects strong collaboration between Selkirk and Winnipeg surgical teams.

"By adding 800 surgeries — about 11 per cent of the roughly 7,000 joint replacements in Manitoba — we are taking a major step toward reducing the wait list and helping people access care within recommended timelines," said Buchel. "We're already seeing the number of people waiting and the time they wait going down."

The government has also expanded

health-care capacity across the Interlake-Eastern region, adding 30 medicine beds, a 15-bed transitional care unit and funding for seven-days-a-week discharge at the Selkirk hospital. Construction is also underway on a new 95-bed personal care home in Lac du Bonnet, with additional projects planned for Arborg and Winnipeg's Transcona neighbourhood.

For Selkirk resident Ronald Borecky, the expansion made all the difference.

"I didn't expect to be the first hip replacement after the expansion, but then in March I got the call," he said. "Everything went smoothly from the moment I walked in. The doctor and nurses were kind, they explained everything, and the hospital looked impressive. I couldn't believe I walked out of the hospital hours after my operation."

Since October 2023, the Manitoba government has added more than 3,400 net new health-care workers provincewide, including 285 physicians and over 1,100 nurses.

Farmers invited to safely dispose of old pesticides, animal meds

By Lana Meier

Manitoba producers will have an opportunity to safely dispose of unwanted farm chemicals and expired livestock medications later this month through Cleanfarms' free collection program, running Oct. 27 to 31 at 20 sites across the province.

The initiative, supported by the Canadian Animal Health Institute and crop protection industry partners, helps farmers responsibly manage hazardous materials and reduce environmental risks.

"This is one of our longest-running programs and continues to provide meaningful environmental benefits across the country," said Barry Friesen, Cleanfarms' executive director.

"We're proud to offer Manitoba farmers a free drop-off and a trusted way to dispose of these materials."

Local collection sites include:

- Arborg – Oct. 27: Nutrien Ag Solutions, 55 Main St. S.
- Gunton – Oct. 28: Paterson Grain – Crop Inputs, 89113 PTH 7.
- Meadows – Oct. 29: Ag Advantage Ltd., 68156 Rd. 6 W.
- Beausejour – Oct. 30: Nutrien Ag Solutions, 73010 Rd. 40 off Hwy. 44.

Drop-off hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day.

Farmers can bring obsolete agricultural pesticides with a Pest Control Product number and livestock or equine medications bearing a DIN,

serial number or notification number.

Items not accepted include treated seed, sharps or needles, medicated feed, aerosol containers and household pesticides or medications. Cleanfarms reminds producers to ensure materials are clearly labelled and securely packaged before drop-off.

More details, including a full list of Manitoba collection sites and preparation guidelines, are available at cleanfarms.ca/materials/unwanted-pesticides-animal-meds.

Cleanfarms operates across Canada, recovering and recycling agricultural plastics, packaging and products to support a more sustainable farm environment.

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IEHF celebrates record year of community impact

By Annaliese Meier

The Interlake Eastern Health Foundation (IEHF) is celebrating a record year of community investment after directing more than \$524,000 toward local health-care facilities and programs in 2024-25 — a 52-per-cent increase over the previous year's \$344,000.

The milestone was announced at the foundation's annual general meeting on Oct. 1, where leaders highlighted growing donor support, new fundraising initiatives and expanding partnerships across the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority (IERHA).

"These investments are only possible because of our donors," said Terri Otto, chair of the board of directors. "Every dollar helps ensure care is available close to home when it's needed most."

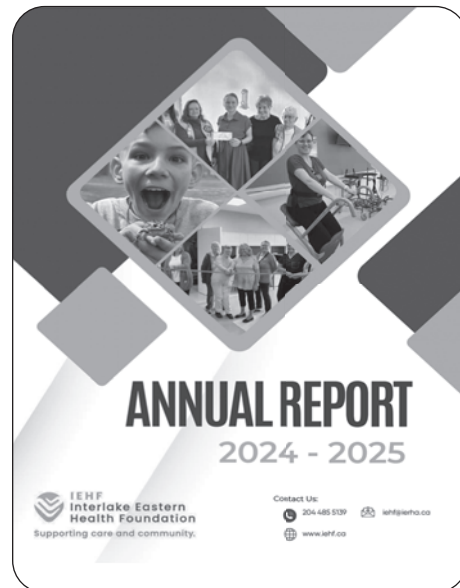
Funding supported specialized medical equipment, facility upgrades, staff training and community wellness initiatives such as Camp Stepping Stones, a grief camp for children. The top five grants in 2024-25 included:

- Clinic Equipment for Eriksdale Wellness Centre – electronic scale, electronic exam table and vital-stats monitor – \$23,032.09
- Specialty Mattresses for Selkirk Regional Health Centre (x5) – \$17,229.04
- Bladder Scanner for Pinawa Hospital – \$17,070.16
- Bladder Scanner for Gimli Hospital – \$17,070.16
- Saebo Hand Treatment Kit for Beausejour Hospital and Rehab – \$16,000

In total, 151 initiatives received funding for equipment, training and renovations benefiting patients, staff and communities across acute care, rehabilitation, long-term care and community wellness.

New initiatives such as the KinKar Raffle, One Great Lottery and a new 50/50 Payday Payout helped fuel the record growth. KinKar and One Great Lottery raised \$4,230.08 (net), while the Payday Payout, launched in 2025-26, is expected to net about \$40,000 this fiscal year.

The foundation's \$5 Club, a staff-led giving program, raised \$25,000 and distributed the funds evenly among 13 community programs, each receiving \$1,923: Teulon Elementary School Breakfast Program; Lac du Bonnet and Area Food Bank – Satellite Food Bank (Pine Falls); Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen; Big Hearts Christmas Hamper Program; Interlake Sexual Exploitation Educators; Wings of Power; Community Bridges (Gimli);



li); IERHA basic equipment; Hero's Youth Mentorship Program; Growing Years Family Resource Centre; Camp Stepping Stones; Lord Selkirk RFM Pipe Band; and Selkirk Friendship Centre Daycare.

For the first time, IEHF also distributed grants from its endowment funds, marking a major step toward sustainable, long-term support for regional health care.

At March 31, 2025, the endowed principal totalled \$518,358, with a 4-4.5 per cent disbursement rate based on board policy.

THIS YEAR'S ENDOWMENT FUND GRANTS INCLUDED:

- Cynthia Turner Fund – \$940.93 for a Chester Chest training mannequin and palliative-care lunch-and-learn programs.
- McLeary Dalman Fund – \$1,000 for a full-body training mannequin.
- Barbara Buffie Fund – \$1,553.51 for CPR mannequins to support staff training.
- Cathy and Roger Coss Fund – \$1,000 to support patients at Selkirk Mental Health Centre.
- McLeary Family Fund – \$1,000 for shade canopies and Memory and Aging Program supports at Selkirk Regional Health Centre.
- Interlake Eastern Health Fund – \$3,898.90 for a replacement cast cutter for Stonewall Hospital.
- Bill and Susan Rivers Fund – \$570 for rehabilitation equipment to assist patient recovery.
- Gaynor Family Children's Fund – \$664.23 to support Camp Stepping Stones.

Otto noted that some fund holders top up their contributions to enable additional purchases or training opportunities.

Audited statements confirm total fund balances of \$1,974,261, verified



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

IEHF 2025 board of directors Chris Saunders, Averill Stephenson (executive director), Debbie Fiebelkorn (IERHA board liaison), Kevin Tordiffe, Tracey Epp, Ted Lewis (treasurer), Terri Otto (chair), Julius Joseph. Missing from the photo: Judith Cameron (vice-chair), Brent Wynnyk (past-chair) and Christy Ring-Snell.

by Gislason Targownik Peters, Chartered Professional Accountants, LLP on Aug. 14, 2025, with a clean audit opinion.

PROJECTS PRIORITIZED FOR 2025-26 INCLUDE:

- Stonewall Palliative Care Patio (Sunshine and Peace) – completed September 2025
- Camp Stepping Stones – June 2026
- Courtyard Planting Program for all personal care home recreation departments – June 2026
- Specialized equipment for allied health, including a TIMS system upgrade for swallow-analysis diagnostics (approx. \$40,000) – January 2026
- Specialized audiology equipment for the birthing centre to screen newborn hearing (approx. \$25,000) – December 2025
- REALiTi360 patient device simulator for training on monitors, defibrillators and ventilators (approx. \$17,000) – March 2026

Other priorities will depend on operational needs and include equipment purchases, continued staff training, and facility renovations.

During the AGM, Otto also welcomed new board members and recognized two long-serving directors for their outstanding service.

Ted Lewis, involved since the Foundation's inception, was thanked for stepping in as treasurer during a transition year.

"Ted's willingness to do whatever is needed and his thoughtful leadership have been invaluable," Otto said.

Tracey Epp, who chaired the nominations and governance committee,



Kelsey Haresign, director of health services at Selkirk Mental Health Centre, joins Interlake Eastern Health Foundation executive director Averill Stephenson and donors Cathy and Roger Coss of Warren, who contributed \$1,000 through their family fund to support patients at Selkirk Mental Health Centre.

was also honoured for her role in board development.

"Tracey's insight, steady hand, and commitment to good governance helped shape this board into what it is today," said Otto.

"The foundation's strength lies in the generosity of our communities and the dedication of people like Ted, Tracey and our many donors and volunteers," she added. "Together, we're building healthier, stronger communities."

For more information or to support local health care, visit www.iehf.ca or call 204-485-5139.

Manitoba maker unleashes creativity with her small business

By E. Antonio

When Winnipeg seamstress Veronica Abaunza couldn't find a collar that fit her beagle Duke just right, she decided to make one herself — and ended up tailoring a business instead.

What began as a single handmade collar for her tri-coloured companion has grown into Duke's Dashing Designs — a small-batch pet accessory line featuring custom collars, leashes, poop bag holders, keychains and lip balm holders. Abaunza sews every product by hand and plans to expand her line in 2026 to include stylish bandanas and accessories for cats.

"I wanted to start making my dog custom products because he was in between sizes and I wanted him to have something fun," she explained.

Although Duke's Dashing Designs only recently launched, Abaunza has been experimenting with her sewing machine for about two years. Unlike many who learn sewing from family members or in school, she taught herself from scratch — fitting her creative practice into rare spare moments outside her full-time job.

Her hobby soon turned into something more when a friend noticed her natural skill.

"My friend was simply amazed at what I created and told me I could make a business out of this — so I gave it a whirl and now I do it all," she said. "I pick the fabric, sit, cut and sew and do the packaging for the finished product. I put love and dedication into everything I make because if I don't, then it's just an ordinary prod-



A custom collar crafted by Abaunza designed with both style and safety in mind.

uct — people can't love what I make if I don't put my own love into it."

Abaunza offers a wide variety of fabric choices, from playful prints to seasonal designs, allowing customers to show off their pets' personalities.

"There are so many different patterns out there," she said. "I have pet patterns, Halloween designs, Christmas fabrics, and even licensed characters like Spider-Man, Snoopy and Captain America — just to name a few."

Beyond looks, Abaunza prioritizes practicality and safety. Her design philosophy was shaped by a nerve-racking encounter with Duke at a dog park. When another dog bit him, she realized she didn't have a leash within reach to



Continued on page 9

Winnipeg Beach Curling Club LEAGUE REGISTRATION 2025/26

Senior/Stick League

Tuesdays, 1 pm
Starting Nov 4 \$2 drop-in/curler
18+ 2 curlers per team

Ladies League

Tuesdays, 7 pm
Starting Nov 4 \$220/curler*
*includes ticket to windup dinner

Men's League

Thursdays, 7 pm
Starting Oct 30 \$220/curler*
*includes ticket to windup dinner

Doubles League

Every 2nd Wednesday 7 pm
Starting Nov 5 \$150/curler
*includes ticket to windup dinner

Kids' Program

Wednesdays
Grades 3-6 (4:00-5:00 pm)
Grades 7-12 (5:00-6:00 pm)
Starting Nov 19 \$50 for 10 weeks

Mixed League

Fridays, 7 pm
Starting Nov 7 \$205/curler*
*includes ticket to windup dinner

Glow Fun League

Monthly 6-end games
Saturdays 7 pm
Nov 8, Dec 6, Jan 17, Feb 21, Mar 14
All ages. \$300 per team for 5 games
*includes 4 windup event tickets
Possibly 2 draws depending on interest

EVENT SCHEDULE

Men's Bonspiel

Jan. 30- Feb. 1
\$180 per team. Cash prizes

Ladies' Bonspiel

Jan. 9-11
80's Glow theme
\$180 per team. Cash prizes

Glow Bonspiel

Feb. 13-15
\$180 per team.

What the Heck

March 20-22
Mike MacVickar Memorial
\$180 per team.

Windup dinner

April 25
\$40/ticket. Most league fees incl.
ticket, includes social, dinner &
elimination draw entry.

Golf Tournament

July 19 or 26 (TBD)
\$90/person. Dinner included

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etransfer is now available for fee payments. 2nd night \$40 price reduction (cost of windup event ticket)

EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Veronica Abaunza, owner of Duke's Dashing Designs, and her dog Duke show off one of her handmade collars and leashes. Abaunza creates custom pet accessories from her Winnipeg home, blending creativity, craftsmanship and care for fellow pet owners.



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FUNDINGCHANGE

Hidden gems in and out of the Manitoba Dairy Museum

By Dawn Peter

St. Claude is home to Manitoba's only dairy museum, a seven-building complex with more than 2,000 artifacts that transports visitors back to the late 1800s.

Located on Third Street, just east of Provincial Road 240, the site reflects the spirit of its sister city, Saint-Claude, France, with a display of pipes. But here, the focus is on the detailed history of prairie life and the settlers who worked to survive on the region's flat, sandy land.

Admission includes access to the two-storey Canadian Pacific Railway station, dairy barn, horse barn, Bell School, chapel, freight shed and blacksmith shop.

The large red CPR building features the agent's desk, clothing from the period — including wedding dresses — a mock hospital room and a pioneer kitchen. Photographs and uniforms line the walls in tribute to the many local veterans, mostly French immigrants, who volunteered in the First World War to defend France.

"When the First World War broke out ... they took off en masse to France ... to serve as volunteers," said Robert De Smet of the St. Claude Historical Society. Up to 70 residents served with both the French and Ca-

> CREATIVITY, FROM PG. 8

quickly separate them. Duke wasn't seriously hurt, but the experience stuck with them both — and changed the way she designs her products.

"There are reasons why I create my products the way I do, and that's because I want to make sure everyone stays safe and that my products remain safe," she said.

All her leashes now feature a D-ring clip, allowing owners to easily attach the leash to themselves for hands-free convenience — keeping both dogs and handlers prepared and in control.

Customization is another hallmark of Duke's Dashing Designs. Abaunza knows not every dog fits neatly into small, medium or large size categories, so she gladly accommodates special sizing requests. She also welcomes fabric requests and will search for specific prints to meet her customers' visions.

Those looking for a custom-made product can contact her at 204-619-3571, email dukesdashingdesigns@gmail.com or visit @DukesDashing-Designs on Instagram to start the planning process.

As her business grows, Abaunza looks forward to connecting with more pet lovers at community markets.



A display in the Manitoba Dairy Museum's pioneer kitchen includes a wood stove, iron, pots and vintage kitchen gadgets.

nadian armies.

The chapel contains models of two former churches and a design for the current one by an architect. Along its walls are dolls dressed in the robes of the silent Trappist monks and a dark, hand-crafted spiral staircase that leads to a priest performing mass.

Bell School is furnished with wooden desks, slate boards and inkwells, along with a quaint list of rules for teachers that allots time for courting and Bible study but discourages shav-



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

From left: Jonathan Dondo, Father Roger Bazin and Robert De Smet stand in front of the chapel at the Manitoba Dairy Museum in St. Claude.

ing at a barber shop.

The dairy barn — envisioned by life-long cream producer Raymond Phillipot — houses five-gallon cream cans, veterinary equipment, butter churns, milk-testing bottles and curiosities such as a Siamese twin piglet and a calf. Framed photographs show barns

across Manitoba alongside the names of producers and executives from the

Continued on page 13

Community Support Service

AA Arborg

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

AA Eriksdale

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

AA Winnipeg Beach

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

Gimli Group AA

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

Al-Anon Gimli and Winnipeg Beach

It takes great courage to go to that first Al-Anon meeting. It isn't easy to go against old beliefs and fears and reach out to people for strength, guidance, and support. When we finally realize that we are sick and tired of being sick and tired, we open a door to unlimited possibilities for change, for hope, and for a happier and richer life. Reaching out for help in Al-Anon is unlike asking for help in most other places. In Al-Anon, we do not give advice. Nobody tells anyone else what to do about their own private situation. We don't know what is best for another person. Alcoholism is a family disease. Friendships, employment, childhood, parenthood, love affairs and marriages all suffer from the effects of alcoholism and that's why attending Al-Anon meetings is so important. Having suffered alone with the effects of this brutal disease, the Al-Anon meetings, fellowship is an unexpectedly rich and nourishing source of compassion and support. Please 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...

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Manitoba

Emerson-Franklin looks to spark new growth with housing incentives



EMERSONFRANKLIN.COM

Thanks to federal dollars through the Housing Accelerator Fund, the RM of Emerson-Franklin has launched a housing incentive program in the hopes of getting new builds going in both Dominion City and Emerson.

By Pam Fedack

The RM of Emerson-Franklin is taking bold steps to boost its population and support local amenities by launching a new housing incentive program aimed at drawing developers to the communities of Emerson and Dominion City.

Reeve Dave Carlson said the municipality was among the first in Canada—and one of only a few small municipalities—to secure federal Housing Accelerator Fund support, receiving about \$2 million. That investment helped council create By-law 2025-03, which establishes a suite of incentives for new housing construction.

"This is more or less our response to the housing crisis," Carlson explained. "We were among the first group of recipients of housing accelerator fund monies, and it has definitely kick-started some excitement and some great potential opportunities in our area."

Under the new by-law, developers can qualify for grants of up to \$25,000 per dwelling unit, as well as property tax rebates and permit fee reductions. Projects with eight or more units receive the highest level of support, while smaller developments, such as duplexes, are also eligible for funding.

Carlson said the program is designed to be performance-based, meaning payments are made when units are completed.

"If you're building eight units or

more, there's \$25,000 available per door. Four to seven units is \$15,000 per unit, and even a two-unit duplex could receive \$10,000 per door," he explained. "We also have property tax rebates on a declining scale over four years, plus permit fee rebates."

To make the most of the incentives, the municipality has identified key development sites. In Dominion City, 20 acres in the southeast corner have been secured and flood-proofed, with sheltering trees and the community pool and park next door.

"It's a beautiful piece of property," Carlson said. "We feel we can create a whole new neighbourhood there that will attract families and maybe bring back people who want new housing options."

In Emerson, a four-acre parcel near the golf course is municipally owned and strategically located in the northeast corner of town.

Other infill opportunities exist in both communities, offering the potential for multi-family housing, row housing, or condos. Near Dominion City's healthy living centre, council also envisions 55-plus housing options.

Carlson said these opportunities are about more than bricks and mortar. With amenities like schools, golf courses, pools, parks, curling rinks and fibre-optic Internet, the communities are well-equipped to grow.

"We have kind of an embarrassment of riches when it comes to local ame-

nities," he said. "Many new communities must fight to get things like this, but we already have them. What we need is more people using them."

Emerson has a K-12 school, community complex, arena, pool, golf course and local businesses that would benefit from more residents. Dominion City also boasts a K-12 school, curling rink, community hall, golf course and parks. Carlson said both towns are proud of their recreational and cultural assets.

"You look around at many places, and they're scrambling to fundraise or apply for grants to build amenities," he said. "We've already got them. We just need the population growth to support them."

ADDRESSING POPULATION DECLINE

The populations in both towns have declined in recent decades. Emerson, once a busy border community where customs workers were required to live nearby, now has around 660 residents. Dominion City, historically a farming hub, has declined to a population of roughly 320 people.

Carlson said growth is essential to support local businesses and spread out the cost of utilities such as sewer and water.

"When you have sewer and water utilities, the more users, the better," he said.

Carlson believes the municipality

offers a quality of life that will appeal to families and remote workers alike. High-speed fibre Internet has already made a difference, he said. "I'm a mortgage broker by trade, and I work from home quite a bit. I've got better Internet here than at my Winnipeg office."

He also pointed to natural features like the Roseau River in Dominion City and the Red River in Emerson, along with historic sites, golf courses and trails. "We've got beautiful landscapes and a lot of history here," he said. "Not everyone wants to live in the city anymore, and people are opening their eyes to these opportunities."

While some developers prefer projects closer to Winnipeg, Carlson said Emerson-Franklin has already seen strong interest in its sites. "Once the first project starts, I think it will feed off itself and really go," he said.

The RM has invested in marketing, using drone footage to showcase the communities and preparing a tourism platform to highlight attractions. Carlson said the vision is to combine housing opportunities with promotion of the area's lifestyle.

"We're excited for what we have to offer," he said. "We have great communities, relatively safe, with amenities people are looking for. Now we want to attract more families to live here and see our towns prosper."

Community grieves for well-respected physician

By Jennifer McFee

The Stonewall community shared heartfelt tributes, fresh flowers and fond memories of a doctor who made a difference in the lives of many.

Dr. Majid Zahiri died in the evening on Tuesday, Oct. 14 surrounded by people who cared for him, including Stonewall health-care staff who worked alongside him.

Zahiri received his medical training in Iran and graduated in 1995. After moving to Manitoba, he completed the medical licensure program for international medical graduates and launched his local career with family practice in The Pas. Over time, Zahiri relocated to the Interlake.

In 2016, he worked under Dr. Michele Matter's supervision in Selkirk's emergency department. Soon after, he agreed to help provide coverage in Arborg for family practice and in the emergency department to cover a two-week planned vacation leave.

Later that year, he began his practice at Stonewall and District Health Centre, where he served as a family physician and emergency care provider.

For Matter, she looks back fondly on the time she spent working with Zahiri.

"I felt so sad when I heard of his passing. I remember him fondly, especially how excited he was at the birth of his son, which occurred in his early 40s. We had a lot of fun working together in the Selkirk ER where he was loved by staff and patients alike," she said.

"I found him to be a true empath as he would go out of his way to help his patients, whom he considered like family. His passing is a loss to Stonewall, the IERHA and the province of Manitoba. Majid, you will be very



The Stonewall community is mourning the loss of Dr. Majid Zahiri, shown here in a photo from 2017. Dr. Zahiri died last week surrounded by people who cared for him.

much missed."

Dr. Scott Gregoire, vice-president of medical services and chief medical officer, said Zahiri left a mark by providing exceptional care to patients in the Interlake-Eastern region for the past nine years.

"Dr. Zahiri has been an integral part of the care team in Stonewall, and we can't thank him enough for his contributions to our region and our province," Gregoire said.

"His dedication to providing compassionate care to his community alongside his colleagues will not be soon forgotten. We offer our deepest condolences to Dr. Zahiri's family and friends, his patients and every-



EXPRESS PHOTO BY LANA MEIER

Community members placed flowers and cards at a memorial for Dr. Majid Zahiri in the Stonewall and District Health Centre following his passing on Oct. 14. Zahiri, a longtime family physician and emergency doctor, was remembered for his compassion, dedication and impact on countless lives in the Interlake.

one who knew him."

On social media, tributes flooded in with shared memories and appreciation for the hard-working doctor. One person, who dropped off flowers at the hospital, expressed gratitude for Zahiri's years of care in the community.

"We are here to show our support to our Stonewall hospital staff and our love we had for such an amazing soul," she wrote.

It's a terrible loss for the Stonewall community, noted another person on social media.

"I'll miss seeing his big truck parked outside the hospital and his assortment of hats," she wrote. "Dr. Zahiri was such an intelligent man and an incredible doctor."

Another person described Zahiri as an extraordinary individual who touched countless lives, including her own.

"Your kindness, compassion and generosity inspired me to be a better person," she wrote. "I'll carry your memory with me always."



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Gimli internship offers inside look at occupational therapy



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED
Internship student (front) Frejya with occupational therapist Kim Desveaux and rehab assistant Gayle Vermaak.

By Jennifer McFee
A Gimli high school student shared appreciation for her positive experience through Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority's internship program.
Freyja, who is now in Grade 12, had the opportunity learn about occupational therapy at Gimli Community Health Centre.
"My favourite part of occupational therapy is the endless opportunities. Within this job, you are able to work with a variety of different people and places. I wasn't certain what I wanted my future career to be, but I knew I didn't want to have a job with a specific path and limited options — I wanted some flexibility, which is exactly what occupational therapy allows," Freyja said.
"Overall, I truly did enjoy this internship and I am highly considering occupational therapy as a future career."
Lori Buors, Indigenous human resources officer, said the occupational therapy and physiotherapy department has welcomed many internship students over the years.
"I would like to thank Karen Wood, health services manager for home care and allied health therapy services, and all her staff for welcoming students in their department to job shadow," Buors said.
"Throughout the years, there has been an increase in internship and summer students wanting to choose a career in occupational therapy and physiotherapy. IERHA needs these services to help patients regain quality of life."

> DAIRY, FROM PG. 9

Lactalis cheese-processing plant in St. Claude.

Although the number of dairy farms has declined over the years — even as automation, refrigeration and transportation have advanced — the industry here grew thanks to settlers who traded surplus cream for cash.

That legacy is represented by the life-size Holstein-Friesian cow outside the barn, painted in black and white. Look closely: the spots are shaped like the continents of the world.

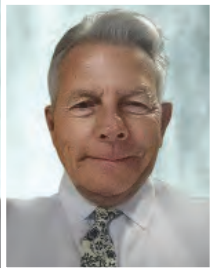
The museum grounds are also home to a popular geocaching location. Geocaching is a family-friendly treasure hunt that uses GPS coordinates to locate hidden containers filled with trinkets and trackable items. The difficulty can range from an easy find under a bench to a search a mile uphill.



Descriptions of each cache, along with terrain ratings, hints and waypoints, can be found at www.geocaching.com.

From June 26 to Sept. 5, 2025, the theme is "hidden gems." Visitors might find something shiny and valuable at the Manitoba Dairy "Moo-seum." Just steer clear of the manure spreader, and you'll be free to wander and wonder until the cows come home.

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EBN looking to food recovery as Canada gets a D on food poverty

By Patricia Barrett

Gimli-based Evergreen Basic Needs is exploring a new way to provide food to people turning to the food bank as food prices, the cost of housing, household expenses and wages failing to keep up with costs continue to put pressure on area residents.

EBN executive director Karen Bowman said food banks, including EBN, can't continue to operate under the old models they started out with and have to find new ways to supply food to those struggling to pay for food.

Food Banks Canada's *Poverty Report Card* was recently released and she said Canada got a grade of D overall for its support of people experiencing food insecurity.

"We're not doing great in this country. Food Banks Canada's report focused on the federal level rather than the provincial level because a lot of the innovations that need to happen have to come from a higher level of government. The feds have to get on board. We can't continue the way we are with the models we have," said Bowman. "Most of the food banks in and around this area were started 40 years ago out of church basements to support smaller needs. But the needs have grown so beyond our scope and

we aren't set up to deal with that."

The *Poverty Report Card* grades the federal government based on a number of factors including people's experience of poverty, measurements of poverty, a standard of living and the government's progress on passing anti-poverty legislation. It included assessment on the percentage of income people spend on housing and fixed costs beyond housing. Forty-three per cent of respondents, for instance, said they're paying more than 30 per cent of their income on housing, which earned the government a grade of F.

In addition to the continuing rise of food prices, housing costs affect how much food — and what type of food — people can afford and whether they're forced to turn to a food bank for support. Despite the poor report card, Food Banks Canada said the federal government's announcements on affordable housing, a national housing plan and other initiatives could be "game-changers."

In the meantime, Bowman said food recovery is one way food banks can pivot to meet the growing demand for food. Food that either passes its expiry date — essentially a marketing tool — but is still fit for human consumption or food that's left on the grocery

Section 1: Experience of Poverty				
Indicator	Data	2025 Grade	2024 Grade	2023 Grade
People Feeling Worse off Compared to Last Year	40%	C	D+	C-
People Paying More than 30% of Income on Housing	43%	F	F	D-
People Having Trouble Accessing Healthcare	22%	F	F	D
Government Support Recipients Who Say Rates are Insufficient to Keep up with Cost of Living	65%	F	F	D
Percent of Income Spent on Fixed Costs beyond Housing	57.3%	D+	C-	C-
OVERALL		D-	D-	D+

FOOD BANKS CANADA POVERTY REPORT

store shelf because people can't afford it is being thrown into landfills.

In Canada that amounts to about 47 per cent of food being wasted each year that could be eaten, according to Second Harvest, a charitable organization that works with the food

industry to redirect surplus food to non-profit organizations in every province and territory.

Throwing food away is exactly what Bowman wants to avoid.

Continued on page 19

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Concerns raised over Highway 8 mowing, provincial roads in Lakeside riding

By Patricia Barrett

After encountering the aftermath of two deer strikes in as many weeks along a stretch of Highway 8 on the way to Hecla Island, a Gimli commercial fisher is questioning why the provincial government hasn't maintained the vegetation beside the highway.

A five-mile stretch of Highway 8 from the junction of Pine Dock Road northwards has bush growing too close to the highway and trees in the ditch, making it ideal habitat for deer, said commercial fisher Robert T. Kristjanson, who lives in Gimli and commutes regularly to and from Grindstone to work during the commercial fishing seasons.

"All the way down the line when you're driving to Grindstone, the trees are almost growing over top of you," said Kristjanson. "On the south side of the highway, the bush is growing right to the road."

A few weeks ago, he said he stopped to assist a young couple who had struck a deer early in the morning and were stranded on the highway. The girl was in shock.

"I saw the young girl, 18 years old maybe, standing on the highway with her boyfriend beside her. They had just run into the deer that came from the south side of the highway. There are so many deer here," said Kristjanson. "This little girl was in shock; I could see it in her eyes. I have served in the Canadian Coast Guard for 45 years; I have seen shock. I asked her if they needed a ride to Gimli hospital or somewhere else they wanted to go, but she wanted to wait for her mother to come get them. I'm still sick about it because I've got grandkids."

The five-mile stretch of vegetation "inches closer every day," he said. Some of the spruce trees in the ditch are about 10 feet high.

"The province doesn't cut the grass. They go along and cut grass three feet off the highway and forget about the rest of this [five-mile stretch] because there are trees in the ditch and they can't get around them and won't cut them down," he said. "This is our main highway."

Kristjanson said people pay high insurance rates on their vehicles. People who rely on their vehicles for work are out of luck if they strike a deer because MPI [Manitoba Public Insurance] won't loan them a truck while their vehicle is being assessed.

According to MPI's latest available Traffic Collision Statistics Report (from 2022), five per cent of all collisions were caused by the action(s) of a wild animal.

Last week on his way to work, Krist-



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Provincial Road 323 is shown a few weeks ago after it rained. The gravel road turned into a slurry in spots, trapping vehicles and causing dangerous driving conditions. High ridges of earth and gravel were formed by the passing of vehicles, and when they dried out, formed ruts.

janson said he encountered a large dead deer on the highway along that stretch, but there was no vehicle around.

The condition of highways can impede the smooth operation of commerce, said Kristjanson. And Highway 8 is a main artery used by commercial fishers, anglers, farmers, tourists and truckers carrying goods to and from communities.

"I travel back and forth on this highway for work. Everything on the highway is commerce-related. Farmers and fishers and other trades moving their grain, timber, fish and other products to market," he said. "And a road has to be in suitable condition to allow commerce to proceed."

The Express reached out to the department of transportation regarding vehicle collisions with deer, asking how often the department is supposed to mow the verge and cut trees along the five-mile stretch of Highway 8 from the Pine Dock Road.

A spokesman said the department inspected that stretch of Highway 8 and found the brush there posed no sight-line concerns.

"Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure's (MTI) current practice is to mow ditches and boulevards along all provincial roadways twice per year. Ideally, this occurs once during summer and again in fall. The department works to schedule mowing early enough to address driver visibility concerns but late enough to minimize vegetation regrowth before winter to mitigate snow drifting. MTI staff monitor areas during summer

and fall to identify possible safety concerns with sight lines and address these as required," said the spokesperson. "Department staff have completed all mowing for this fall and have inspected the site on Provincial Trunk Highway 8, confirming that the brush does not pose a sight line concern."

Having roads in suitable condition is a going concern on the west side of the Interlake in the provincial riding of Lakeside, which includes the communities of Stonewall, Warren, Woodlands, Balmoral, Argyle and Stony Mountain. In this case it's provincial roads or secondary arteries.

Lakeside MLA Trevor King said his constituents have been "raising the alarm" about PR 323 and PR 220, in particular, for "months and months."

King presented a lengthy grievance in the legislature on Oct. 8, listing "most" of the provincial roads in his riding that require repair.

Calling them the veins of rural Manitoba and vital connectors between communities, farms and businesses, King said:

"Yet, despite how important they are, these roads are falling apart while this government looks the other way. I'm talking about roads like PR 323 and PR 220 especially. But I can't help but mention PR 321, PR 424,

PR 334, PR 332, PR 322, PR 518, PR 427, PR 227 and PR 241, Honourable Speaker, which is most of the secondary PR roads in [the] constituency of Lakeside."

PRs 323 and 220 are "vital" for farmers, businesses and families, he said. But after a light rain, they become impassable and vehicles need to be towed out. The poor condition of the roads affects commerce, teachers on their way to work in Hutterite colonies, kids on their way to school and emergency vehicles.

"These roads are key routes for hauling grain, delivering supplies and getting kids to school. Yet they remain in such poor shape that even basic travel is becoming dangerous," said King.

The roads are subject to deep ruts, soft shoulders, standing water and "washouts that appear faster than they can be repaired," he said. And the problem doesn't lie with the workers who maintain the roads for the provincial government.

"It is with the priorities and leadership at the ministerial level," he said. "All of these roads lack material to maintain them properly, to withstand any amount of rain or spring thaw."

Tabling photos showing the condition of the roads after a recent rainfall, King asked NDP transportation and infrastructure minister Lisa Naylor why the government has let "critical provincial roads" fall apart throughout Lakeside, as well as throughout the "rest of the province,"

Naylor said the condition of provincial roads stems from the action of the previous provincial Progressive Conservative government, which neglected to repair them.

"If members opposite think that these roads have fallen into disrepair over one year or two years, they are ... sorely mistaken," said Naylor during question period. "This is the result of years of neglect by [m]embers opposite."

The minister also added that the government is "fully focused" on infrastructure and noted that the government announced investments this summer for rural Manitoba.

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For more information regarding our services or if you would like to register with us to become a volunteer / fee-for-service worker please call 204-642-7297 or come see us in the Gimli Community Health Centre, office #22 122-6th ave.

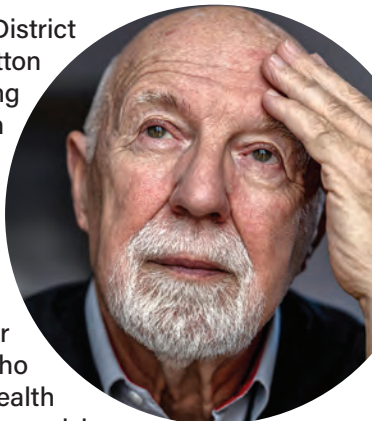
Gimli District Lifeline

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Red Apple food drive



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Red Apple staff collected donations for the Riverton & District Friendship Centre Food Bank during a community food drive.

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Bifrost-Riverton council approve rezoning for 18-lot development in Finns

By Patricia Barrett

Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton council approved rezoning of land in Finns so that a proposed residential development on a 148-acre parcel can proceed.

Landowner Marg Wopnford and Stephen Wopnford are intending to build an 18-lot development along Lake Winnipeg. The development will have 17 lots for residences and one lot for either public parking or drainage works. It includes an access road from Finns Road (Road 126N).

In order to let the project proceed, council had to change the zoning of the land (via Bylaw No. 09-2025) from agricultural limited zone to recreation residential zone. Council passed first reading of the bylaw on July 10, according to the Eastern Interlake Planning District's rezoning package. Council then scheduled a public hearing on Sept. 11 in council chambers before the final two readings of the bylaw.

After the hearing, council approved the Wopnfords' rezoning request subject to conditions that include the public reserve remains zoned as agricultural limited, that council confirms whether an environmental groundwater management review is required, that all elevations for development meet or exceed minimum requirements and that the developer has approval from the provincial government and other agencies.

Bifrost-Riverton resident Glenda Whiteman lives near the development. She attended the public hearing in September and was permitted to express her objections to the project, which she says will destroy wetland and wildlife habitat and lead to flooding.

"I spoke about my concerns about birds [loss of habitat], flooding and people buying houses then finding out later they're in a swamp," said Whiteman. "I forgot to tell them about my concern that the road can't handle this much construction; they're already potholed. So I called the RM and spoke with [a woman], saying that if council approves this, could a condition be that the road is oiled. She said she could put that in for council to approve. She seemed to think it was a forgone conclusion it was approved."

Whiteman said council had received other objections in addition to hers, and that they "flashed" one up on a screen during the public hearing, but it was too small to read.

She said council asked her if Wopnfords' property is a "designated wetland" to which she said she didn't know.

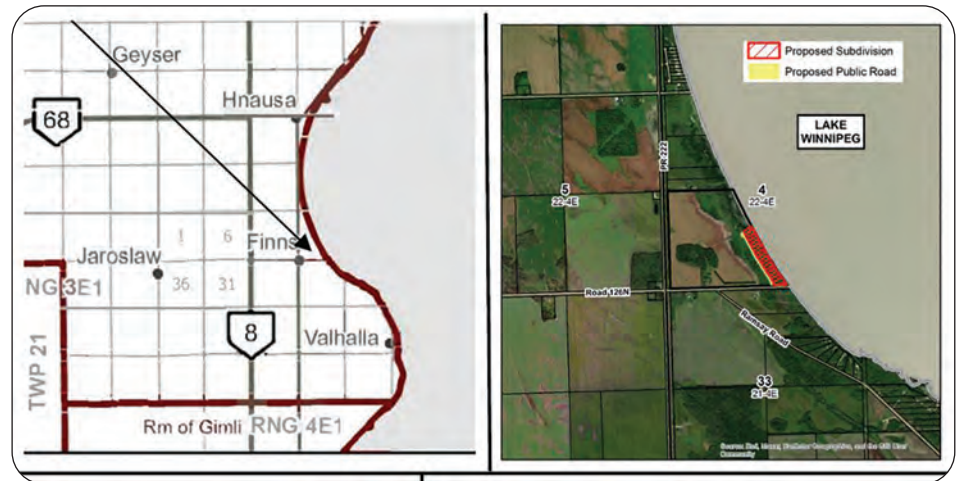
"For some reason they thought I would know that. I didn't know about designated wetlands," said Whiteman. "In my opinion, all wetland is important and there's no such thing as ones we should save and ones we shouldn't save. They should all be preserved."

A couple that attended the hearing were in favour of the development, said Whiteman.

Council's approval of the rezoning request comes after its approval of the developers' subdivision application. Council had passed a resolution on March 13, approving the 18-lots and new road with conditions that included permanent structures be located on land at "at least 722 feet ... or raised by fill to that elevation," that lot lines, permanent structures and roads be set back from the existing top of shoreline embankment "a sufficient distance" [undefined] to allow for a stable slope, and that the riparian area be protected by a "100-foot [30 metres] restricted development area" to preserve natural vegetation next to the high water mark.

Objections included a letter from two engineers, Wayne and Colleen Flather, who own property to the north of the 18-lot development. They said alterations to the Wopnfords' property will likely flood theirs and that a previous development had failed.

"With more than 50 years in the vicinity, we have historical knowledge of the previous failed development of the subject property, resulting in flooding and environmental damage," wrote the Flathers. "Approximately 40 years ago, a developer filled in the wetland, construct[ed] an access



EASTERN INTERLAKE PLANNING DISTRICT

Developers intend to create an 18-lot residential development in the community of Finns along Lake Winnipeg.

road, and removed the trees and other vegetation along the shoreline of the subject property. The fragile sand ridge had been held in place by the trees and vegetation, and when they were removed, the sand ridge eroded and our property flooded, rendering it temporarily unusable. The development proposal was deemed unusable and was abandoned."

The Nature Conservancy also objected to the development.

As a commenting agency and in accordance with its Integrated Watershed Management Plan, the East Interlake Watershed District (EIWD) told the Express that it had provided its feedback regarding the Finns development to the provincial community planning branch in Selkirk in December 2024.

EIWD had recommended the property not be developed because the land is below 722 feet and that coastal wetlands or "other types of wetlands"

might be in or near the property. It also recommended a 100-metre [over 300 feet] setback from the lake.

"[This] property is at a high risk of flooding from Lake Winnipeg and is below the flood protection level of 722 feet Canadian Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1928 (CGVD28). Land below that elevation shall not be developed," said the EIWD. "Coastal wetlands or other types of wetlands might be in or near the property in question. EIWD recommends a Wetland Assessment Report (WAR) should be needed before further development."

The EIWD also said a 100-metre buffer [not a 100-foot buffer] is crucial for preserving natural vegetation along waterways, essential for a "healthy riparian ecosystem," helps with erosion protection by stabilizing soil with plants, acts a filter to trap pollutants from entering waterways, and

Continued on page 19

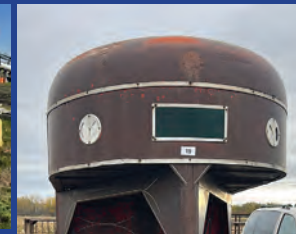


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Community celebrates NIHM for 50 years of preserving local heritage

By Patricia Barrett

It was a packed house at Johnson Hall in Gimli's Waterfront Centre last Saturday night as the community celebrated the New Iceland Heritage Museum, a cherished institution that has preserved New Iceland and local and area heritage for 50 years.

The museum's annual fundraising dinner and dance included special guests such as Tammy Axelsson, who served as the NIHM's executive director from 1995 to 2016, Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman MP James Bezan, Interlake-Gimli MLA Derek Johnson and Gimli Mayor Kevin Chudd.

The museum shares stories about the arrival of the first Icelanders to the New Iceland colony in 1875, the history of Lake Winnipeg's commercial fishery, life in the colony in the early days, and Indigenous communities helping the first settlers survive. It has a number of permanent displays and hosts travelling exhibitions. It also provides exhibit space for artists and their work, and informs and enlightens everyone who steps through its door.



Tammy Axelsson shared some anecdotes about former board members and volunteers and how the museum transitioned over its 50-year history.



Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman MP James Bezan presented the New Iceland Heritage Museum with a commemorative plaque to honour its 50th anniversary. From left: past NIHM executive director Tammy Axelsson (1995-2016); executive director Julianna Roberts, who has served since 2017; James Bezan; and Chris Brooks, who serves as chairperson of the board of the directors.

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Special guests included Interlake-Gimli MLA Derek Johnson (third from right); Vilhjalmur Wium, the Icelandic Consul in Canada (middle); MP James Bezan (third from left); and Gimli Mayor Kevin Chudd (front left), along with their partners.



NIHM executive director Julianna Roberts said the museum was pleased to receive a commemorative plaque from James Bezan, recognizing the museum for its 50 years of cultural preservation.

"The New Iceland Heritage Museum is extremely pleased

to be recognized for this milestone, our 50th anniversary," said Roberts. "I think the founders who had the vision and passion to start the museum — and who gathered together the artifacts — would be pleased to see that their vision carries on."

Roberts said past executive director Tammy Axelsson, who served from 1995-2016, spoke about the museum as being a "community place" and shared some anecdotes about past board members, volunteers and the transition of the museum over time.

Kindergarten kindness warms hearts at Arborg Assisted Living

By E. Antonio

The halls of the Arborg Assisted Living Facility were filled with love, music and laughter on Oct. 9 during afternoon tea time. Residents enjoyed a special visit from the Arborg Early Middle School (AEMS) kindergarten class ahead of the Thanksgiving weekend.

"It was such a great way to brighten up the seniors' days," said Maureen Sigurgeirson, Arborg Assisted Living property manager. "It's the perfect way to put a smile on their faces — these activities mean so much to them."

Each kindergarten student introduced themselves to the seniors before performing a selection of songs and poems they had been practising during morning circle time. The children also created colourful handprint turkeys for the residents to enjoy, which are now displayed near the dining room.

Amber Semenek, the kindergarten teacher, said intergenerational connections like these are important.

"Our visit was beneficial for our young students," she said. "They got to see how small acts of kindness can impact others. They felt like important guests and also had a chance to practise singing and speaking in front of an audience. The residents and staff of Arborg Assisted Living were so appreciative that afterward several children told me they felt happy inside."

Sigurgeirson hopes other classes in the community will arrange visits, noting that seniors love spending



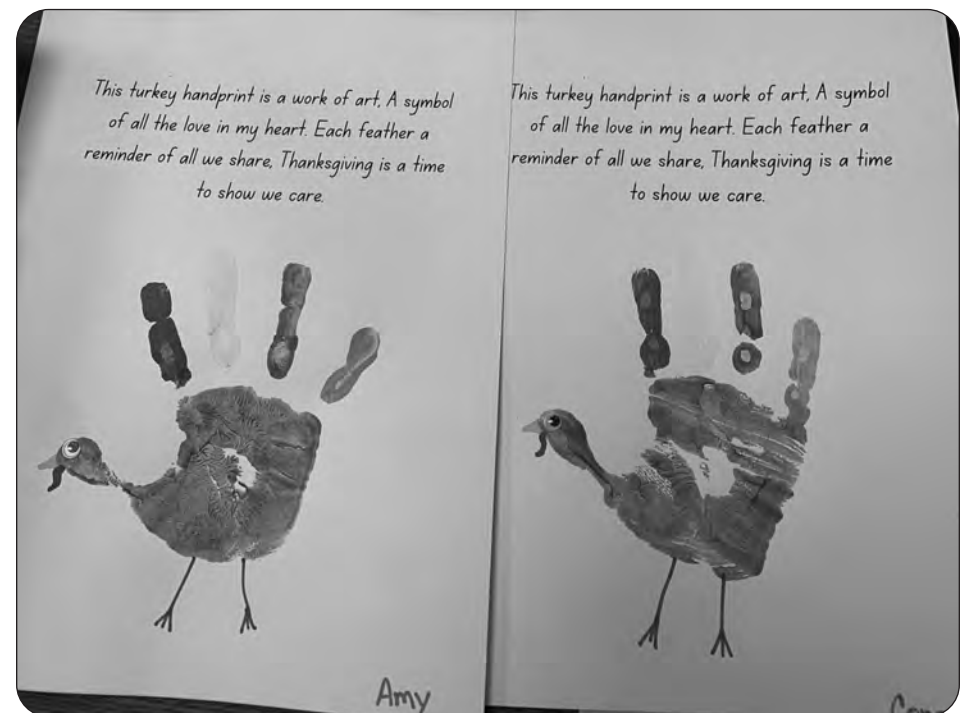
Amber Semenek's Arborg Early Middle School kindergarten class performs songs and poems for residents at the Arborg Assisted Living Facility on Oct. 9.

EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

time with younger generations. She invites any classroom teacher interested in an outing to contact the centre at 204-376-3494.

Semenek's class is already planning a second visit in early December to highlight the importance of connecting with others.

"I want the children to feel connected to their community, to see the impact of being kind, and to know that they have the power to positively impact others even though they are so young," she added. "Our class looks forward to many more visits this school year."



Students made colourful handprint turkeys with a special message: "The turkey handprint is a work of art — a symbol of all the love in my heart. Each feather a reminder of all we share. Thanksgiving is a time to show we care." The artworks are now displayed near the dining room at Arborg Assisted Living.

> EBN, FROM PG. 14

"A very high percentage of food ends up in the landfill because there's either no one to buy it or there's no resource that can take it and turn it into something else. So, there's a bigger push going into reclaiming food and keeping it out of landfills," said Bowman. "Food that is still acceptable — it still has nutritional value and is fit for human consumption — might need a few modifications. And [food recovery] reduces greenhouse gas emissions. This is not just a food crisis: it's an environmental crisis as well."

Bowman is currently engaging local grocery stores on the idea of food recovery and seeing whether they and EBN can enter a partnership.

There are food-recovery partnership programs in place in larger centres. For Gimli and area, a partnership would entail a coordinated

team of "businesses, volunteers and other stakeholders," she said. A system would have to be set up whereby the food bank could respond quickly to a grocery store offering food that will otherwise be discarded. It would also entail EBN staff with food-handling licences following Health Canada guidelines.

"We're in the very early stages of chatting with local grocers. This would require manpower because EBN would have to have people sorting through food and seeing what can be reclaimed and repackaged. I don't know what this looks like exactly because it's still early days. But we are in conversation," she said. "There might be food that we can't reclaim and that could go to area farms for livestock feed rather than end up in the dump."

EBN is expecting to see another increase in the need for hampers for the upcoming holiday season.

> 18-LOT, FROM PG. 17

provides habitat to wildlife.

"Given these benefits, it would be very difficult to approve development within this 100-metre setback area," said the EIWD.

The Express asked council and its chief administrative officers if council will be requesting a wetland assessment report, whether the developer has permission under the Water Rights Act and from the federal government to alter wetlands, whether council is aware the property is below 722 feet (as indicated by the EIWD), and whether the developer will be

bringing in fill material to raise up the property.

"Conditions are listed on the resolution," said CAO Larissa Love, in response to the questions about the property being below 722 feet and if council is requesting a wetland assessment report.

She said the developer will have to answer the questions about fill material and permission to alter wetlands.

Love shared Stephen Wopnford's contact email, but the Express's email bounced back.

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Lundar Kodiaks join WHSHL for inaugural season

By Kieran Reimer

A new team is hitting the ice in the Winnipeg High School Hockey League this season.

For the first time, the Lundar School Kodiaks have iced a boys' hockey team competing in the WHSHL's Price Division, playing home games out of Lundar Arena.

The team was formed following strong interest from the school's middle years hockey academy, which began last year.

Head coach Tyler Medeiros leads the Kodiaks alongside assistant coaches Eric Eronen and Jayson Christensen. The coaching staff is just as excited as the players about the opportunity to bring high school hockey to Lundar.

"It's great. The goal is just to give kids an opportunity, and I think they realize the opportunity they have here. They're working really hard and trying to make the most of it," Medeiros said.

The Kodiaks operate as a co-op, with a few players from St. Laurent School and Ashern Central School joining the

roster.

Medeiros and Eronen were among the key people behind the team's creation, along with Brad and Diana Drews, Lundar School, and the Lakeshore School Division.

The Kodiaks dropped the puck on their inaugural 2025-26 season with a preseason win on Sept. 25. Since then, they've split a pair of tournament games and played their first two regular season contests. Their schedule includes 22 more games, including their home opener against Niverville at 4:30 p.m. on Oct. 30 at Lundar Arena.

"It's about trying to be consistent and bringing our game every night — getting good team buy-in and showing them what hockey looks like in all these other communities we play against," said Medeiros.

The middle years hockey academy is also helping build the program's future by developing players before they become eligible for the high school team in Grade 9.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

Lundar Kodiaks' Kolton Bell netted his team's lone goal in a 4-1 loss to the Linden Christian Wings during Winnipeg High School Hockey League Price Division action in Winnipeg on Oct. 16.

This year's academy includes 21 students from grades 5 to 7, after launching last year with grades 5 and

6. Medeiros said they hope to expand the program to include Grade 8 in the future.

Gathering Thunder: Interlake to play Moosomin for RMFL championship berth

By Kieran Reimer

The time is nigh for the Varsity Interlake Thunder.

On Sunday, the Thunder will head into the Rural Manitoba Football League (RMFL) playoff semifinals as the No. 1 seed, taking on the fourth-ranked Moosomin Generals.

The season has been everything they'd hoped for and more: an undefeated regular season, a revenge win over the defending champion St. Vital Mustangs, steady growth from the entire roster, and home-field advantage secured throughout the playoffs.

Now, they're just two wins away from an RMFL championship — something they've come close to, but never fully achieved in recent years.

"We've got two left and then hopefully we're holding that trophy up, and I can breathe a big sigh of relief," said head coach Christof Hasselfield. "Looking forward to giving all those guys the hug and thanking them for everything they put into the program — all the off-season stuff they put in, everything they've done for me and

the coaching staff and for the Thunder.

"That's always been the goal and we're getting closer to achieving it, but there's lots of work to do still. It would mean everything to get those guys a championship in their Grade 12 year for all the work they've put in for me, no question."

In his third season as head coach, Hasselfield admits he's grown alongside the program and its players.

The Thunder's best regular season together has come as no surprise to him, given their talent and tight team bond.

The challenge of playoff success still remains, however, with three other quality teams also in contention.

Despite finishing fourth, Moosomin boasts the second-best defence in the RMFL. Just a few weeks ago, the Generals stood with the Thunder as the league's only other undefeated club. The Thunder kept rolling while Moosomin suffered a few losses, partly due to injury trouble.

The two sides were slated to meet in

Week 7 of the regular season in Moosomin, but injuries forced the Generals to forfeit ahead of the match — leaving both teams with an element of unfamiliarity heading into Sunday.

On the other side of the bracket, the St. Vital Mustangs and Dauphin Clippers are also vying for a spot in the finals.

The Mustangs, who defeated the Thunder in last year's Urban Division title game, once again lead the league in points scored this season. The Thunder, however, hold bragging rights after beating them in Week 1.

Interlake also downed Dauphin in dominant fashion in their lone regular-season meeting in Week 4.

On Sunday, quarterback Jessie Batenchuk is expected to lead the Thunder offence. One of the league's top passers, he'll have plenty of passing and handoff options available. The Thunder have also prepared to adapt their game plan based on whatever weather conditions arise.

Defensively, the Thunder allowed the fewest points in the RMFL during

the regular season.

"We know that we are the top team and people are gunning for us and they're going to bring their all," said Hasselfield. "But for so many of these guys who've spent three years coming up as the underdog, we've got a mentality of 'bring it.'"

"We've been preaching to them the whole time — it's not about the other teams. We're playing against ourselves all the time. That's why we finished a couple games with blowouts and I probably didn't have the nicest post-game talk because we were sloppy in a couple areas, but that's what being a championship team is."

"We've told these guys the whole time that really we're playing against perfection. Regardless of who shows up, what colour they're wearing or where the game's played, you've got to do your job. We've got to take care of business."

Kickoff against Moosomin is slated for 1 p.m. Sunday at Stonewall Collegiate Field.

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Morweena varsity girls win Teulon tournament



EXPRESS PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER AND SUBMITTED

The Morweena Raptors varsity girls' volleyball team went undefeated until the final against the host Teulon Saints in tournament action Oct. 17. The Raptors dropped the opening set 21-25 but battled back to defeat the Saints 25-18 and 15-13 to claim the championship. In the semifinal, Morweena downed St. Laurent's Aurele-Lemoine 25-18 and 25-21. Earlier in the tournament, the Raptors beat the Fisher River Hawks 25-11 and 25-17, the St. Laurent Hawks 25-10 and 25-15, St. Laurent Aurele-Lemoine 25-20 and 27-25, and the Saints 25-11 and 25-16. Left photo: Raptors' Lillanie Klassen battles at the net with an Aurele-Lemoine player; Right photo, back row (left to right): Jake Dyck (coach), Marissa McKay, Tamika Klassen, Nia Dyck, Lillanie Klassen, Alyviah Dueck, Tamesha Penner and Brittney Dueck. Front row: Autumn Plett and Petrova Klassen (coach). Missing: Raneisha Kornelsen and Keirra Reimer (assistant coach).

Ice Dawgs getting back on track following first win of season

By Kieran Reimer

It was a week off for the Arborg Ice Dawgs, who are coming off their first win of the Capital Region Junior Hockey League season.

The break provided time to regroup and reflect on a timely 4-3 overtime victory against the Lundar Falcons on Oct. 12. Arborg will look to build on that momentum when they once again face the Falcons this Friday.

Through five games, the Ice Dawgs sit seventh in the CRJHL standings with a 0-4-0-1-0 record and two points. Rookie defenceman Tytan Johnson leads the team in scoring with seven assists.

Head coach Jack Einarson's squad will host Lundar at the Arborg & District Arena on Friday at 8 p.m. It's the club's lone matchup this week before they return home to face St. Malo the following Friday.

Falcons finding footing through first weeks of CRJHL season

By Kieran Reimer

The Lundar Falcons enjoyed a week off from Capital Region Junior Hockey League action after splitting their previous two games — earning an overtime win over the North Winnipeg Satellites and falling in extra time to the Arborg Ice Dawgs.

Through six games, the Falcons hold a 0-3-0-2-1 record with two victories and are showing steady improvement each week. Dylan Care leads the team offensively with eight points (three goals, five assists).

Head coach Tyler Medeiros and his squad now prepare for back-to-back games this weekend, facing Arborg on Friday and North Winnipeg on Saturday.

UPCOMING GAMES:

- Friday, Oct. 24 — at Arborg Ice Dawgs, 8 p.m., Arborg & District Arena
- Saturday, Oct. 25 — vs. North Winnipeg Satellites, 7 p.m., Lundar Arena

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Lightning Report: Interlake clubs all in action last week

By Kieran Reimer

The U13 AA Female Interlake Lightning opened their season with a pair of losses, falling 4-1 to the Winnipeg Avros Black on Saturday and 3-1 to the Winnipeg Avros Red on Sunday. The team sits at 0-2. They'll look to rebound this weekend when they visit the Central Plains Capitals on Saturday, Oct. 25 at 5:45 p.m. at the BDO Centre for the Community, before hosting the Brandon Wheat Kings on Sunday, Oct. 26 at 12:15 p.m. at Stony Mountain Community Centre.

The U15 AAA Female Interlake Lightning also faced a tough stretch, dropping all three games last week against the Winnipeg Avros Red, Winnipeg Avros White and Winnipeg Ice White. Sitting at 0-3, they'll aim to earn their first win when they host the Winnipeg Ice Blue on Saturday, Oct. 25 at 3:30 p.m. at the Arborg & District Arena.

The U18 AA Female Stonewall Blues battled to a 3-3 tie with the Winnipeg Ice on Tuesday before falling 4-1 to the Eastman Sharks on Sunday. With an 0-1-1-0 record, they'll visit the Winnipeg Ice on Tuesday, Oct. 21 at 7:45 p.m. at Eric Coy Arena, then return home to face the Winnipeg Avros on

Saturday, Oct. 25 at 4:30 p.m. at Access Credit Union Arena.

The U18 AAA Female Interlake Lightning found better success south of the border, earning two wins, a loss, and a tie over four games at the NIT Tournament in Blaine, Minn. In league play, they sit at 1-6 and return home for a pair of games — Saturday, Oct. 25 against the Central Plains Capitals at 8 p.m. and Sunday, Oct. 26 versus the Eastman Selects at 4:30 p.m., both at Veterans Memorial Sports Complex.

The U15 AA Male Interlake Lightning dropped a 5-2 decision to the Wild Red on Saturday, sitting at 0-1 to start their campaign. They'll play three games this week — Thursday, Oct. 23 at Thrashers Blue (8:15 p.m. at Gateway Recreation Centre), Saturday, Oct. 25 at Bruins Brown (4:15 p.m. at Transcona East End Community Club), and Sunday, Oct. 26 at home against Thrashers Grey (3:45 p.m. at Stony Mountain Community Centre).

The U15 AAA Male Interlake Lightning were blanked 12-0 by the Brandon Wheat Kings on Saturday, falling to 0-7-1-0. They'll host the Norman Northstars next on Saturday, Oct. 25



EXPRESS PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

Interlake Lightning U15's Owen Webb of Fisher River dangles past Brandon Wheat Kings' Daniel Flett-Neapew during the Lightning's 12-0 loss in Warren on Oct. 18. The Lightning are back in action Oct. 25 at 5:15 p.m. in Stonewall when they host the North Stars.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY LANA MEIER

Interlake Lightning's Jocelyn Hueging battles through Winnipeg Avros defenders during U13 AA action Sunday in Stony Mountain. The Lightning opened their season with a pair of losses, falling 4-1 to the Winnipeg Avros Black on Saturday and 3-1 to the Avros Red on Sunday. The team sits at 0-2.

at 5:15 p.m. at Veterans Memorial Sports Complex.

The U17 AAA Male Interlake Lightning went winless in three outings last week, leaving them at 1-5-0-1. They'll host the Thrashers on Thursday, Oct. 23 at 7:30 p.m. at Veterans Memorial Sports Complex before visiting the Cougars on Saturday, Oct. 25 at 7:30 p.m. in Souris.

The U18 AAA Male Interlake Lightning also continue to search for their first victory after dropping all three of last week's games, leaving them at 0-8. They'll visit the Central Plains Capitals on Wednesday, Oct. 22 at

7:30 p.m. at Stride Place, then head to Kenora to face the Thistles on Friday, Oct. 24 at 7:30 p.m. at Moncrief Construction Sports Centre.

What's *Your* story?

We want to hear from you.

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

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

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

A young entrepreneur starting out?

Please share your story ideas at news@expressweeklynews.ca or Phone 204-467-5836

THE **EXPRESS**
WEEKLY NEWS

To see more photos
of your favourite
Interlake Athletes

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get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



Cheesy Baked Little Potatoes

1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
Preheat oven to 400 F.

Pierce potatoes with fork and microwave for 7 minutes. Cut in half and place cut side up in parchment-lined 9-by-13-inch baking dish.

In a bowl, mix cheese, cream, garlic powder, thyme, salt and pepper. Pour over potatoes, spreading cheese evenly.

Bake for 10 minutes then broil 3-5 minutes until golden brown.

Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 15 minutes
Servings: 4
1 1/2 pounds Little Potatoes (any variety)
1 1/3 cups sharp cheddar cheese, grated small
1/2 cup cream
1 teaspoon garlic powder
5 sprigs thyme



Goat Cheese and Thyme Mashed Potatoes

Add potatoes to a large pot and cover with water. Add 1 teaspoon salt and boil for 15 minutes, or until potatoes are tender.

In a small saucepot over low heat, heat milk and butter until butter is melted and milk is steaming.

Once potatoes are cooked, strain and transfer to a medium mixing bowl.

Using potato masher, smash potatoes with milk and butter mixture and season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Remove thyme from stems and lightly chop.

Once potatoes are mashed, stir in goat cheese and fresh thyme.

Prep time: 5 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes
Servings: 6
1 1/2 pounds Little Potatoes water
1 teaspoon salt, plus additional, to taste
1/2 cup milk
1 tablespoon butter
pepper, to taste
2/3 cup goat cheese
1 tablespoon fresh thyme



Popcorn Granola Snack Bars

3 cups popped popcorn

Line 8- or 9-inch square baking pan with foil. Spray foil lightly with nonstick cooking spray; set aside.

In large saucepan, heat honey until boiling. Stir in peanut butter until well blended.

Remove pan from heat and stir in granola, peanuts and popcorn until coated.

Press mixture evenly into prepared pan. Refrigerate until cool; cut into bars to serve.

Recipe courtesy of The Popcorn Board
Yield: 16 bars
Nonstick cooking spray
1/2 cup honey
2/3 cup peanut butter
1 cup granola cereal
1 cup roasted and salted peanuts

Ask the Money Lady

Dear Money Lady:

Hi Christine, I don't want to go back into the office this Fall so I am thinking of starting my own business. Do you think other people are planning to do this too and is it a good idea? I am in my 50's and I am not sure.

Cheryl

Great question Cheryl – one that a lot of people are now pondering with the mandated “back-to-work” movement with Canadian big corporations. To be an entrepreneur, you’ll need an “iron will,” to keep going during the times when you’re not making money, when the obstacles seem too big, and when the time investment becomes too intense.

The key to becoming a successful business owner is to find and fill a niche market or demand. I know this is hard to do, but honestly this will be the one thing that sets your business apart and ensures your success long term. Being in your 50's does not matter. Often it is better to be older with life experiences, to bring more expertise to your venture and to be better able to relate to your customers. Another trait you must have is the ability to be flexible. Never be too rigid in your ideas for the growth of your business. Once you get in and begin establishing your brand, realize that sometimes you may need to pivot on your original focus to expand and grow. And lastly, my advice would be to constantly look for ways to involve your business with more and more people so that you can create a “buzz” in your industry or area to have more people talk about you. Of course, social media platforms help with this process but also look for ways to get down to the “street-level” and meet your potential customers.

I run a Vibrant Living Speakers Series in towns and cities across Canada, and currently this 2025/2026 season we are in Ontario. We always have local professionals come to speak – many times they have a good story and can provide value to our participants on a variety of different subjects. The series is open to the public, free of charge, and aims to empower older adults by



providing opportunities to learn something new. I'll be there at every event – so if you are in the GTA, why not come out to see me and get inspired in the process!

You should always be looking for ways to spread your message. Never be too cheap to advertise. Too many small business owners, especially in Canada, err on the side of being frugal. Being too sparing on your advertising budget or just relying on Goggle to bring you customers will never make you highly successful; instead, it will guarantee you stay small and mediocre in your field. To become a super-star, you need to get out there, talk to as many people as you can every single day, attract more and more customers, inform everyone about your business in your community and build customer trust so that people spread your message too. Remember, to make money, you will need to spend money and to grow your business you must get involved with your audience.

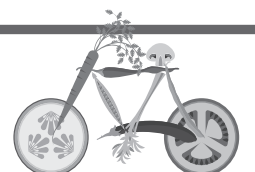
Cheryl, believe in your brand and invest in your business. Become a passionate whirlwind powerhouse. If you do that, I know you will be successful.

Good Luck and Best Wishes,
Money Lady

Written by Christine Ibbotson, Author, Finance Writer and Syndicated Money Coach on BNN Bloomberg. Christine is also part of the everyday lineup on CTV Your Morning in every province. No AI. Follow Christine on Instagram @askthemoneylady, or on Facebook (Christine Ibbotson) and join me at our vibrant living speakers events!

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News Tips? Story Ideas? Call the Express 204-467-5836

REMINDER - ONLINE FARM AUCTION SALE

For Bettina Baumgartner, Ashern, MB
Sale is currently running online
Closes - 10:00 a.m. Friday, October 24th.

To register/login go to: apro.bid

For information on items
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THE LOCAL URBAN DISTRICT OF FISHER BRANCH SNOW CLEARING STREETS

The Local Urban District of Fisher Branch is inviting
proposals for street snow clearing and removal within the
town of Fisher Branch.

- Equipment required is grader with wing, loader, truck and skid steer.
- Interested applicants must have own liability insurance coverage and must be registered with the Workers' Compensation Board of Manitoba.
- Equipment must be available upon request at the call of Public Works Supervisor.
- Windrows to be cleaned

Snow clearing must be done in a timely fashion after snow
accumulation. Priority routes to be completed first.

Sealed envelope to be marked "Snow Clearing Streets".

For further information, call the RM of Fisher Office at (204)
372-6393.

Deadline for proposals is **4:00 p.m. November 3, 2025.**

Tenders to be dropped off at:
Local Urban District of Fisher Branch
30 Tache Street, Fisher Branch, MB
or email fishercao@mymts.net



Rural Municipality of
FISHER

Box 280, Fisher Branch, MB R0C 0Z0
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THE LOCAL URBAN DISTRICT OF FISHER BRANCH SNOW CLEARING SIDEWALKS

The Local Urban District of Fisher Branch is inviting
proposals for snow clearing sidewalks within the town of
Fisher Branch.

Snowblower is required.
Equipment must be available upon request.

Lowest bid may not necessarily be accepted.

Sealed envelope to be marked "Snow Clearing Sidewalks".

For further information, call the RM of Fisher Office at (204)
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Deadline for proposals is **4:00 p.m. November 3, 2025.**

Tenders to be dropped off at:
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quarter has approx. 110 cultivated acres.
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- 3 mi south of Fisher Branch on hwy #17 & ½ mi west
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- Terms:**
- January 1, 2026 possession
- The highest or any bid not necessarily accepted
- The names of all bidders will be kept confidential
- Bidder's responsibility to inspect the parcel for accuracy and condition
- All bids must be received by November 14, 2025.

Submit bid by mail to:

Ron Sobkowich,
Box 371 Fisher Branch MB, R0C 0Z0
204-372-6728 (h) or 204-214-3003 (c)
or email ronsobkowich@gmail.com



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI

PUBLIC NOTICE

BOARD OF REVISION 2026

& ADJUSTED ASSESSMENTS 2025

APPLICATION FOR REVISION

42(1) A person in whose name property has been assessed, a mortgagee in possession of property under Section 114(1) of *The Real Property Act*, an occupier of premises who is required under the terms of a lease to pay the taxes on the property, or the assessor may make application for the revision of an assessment roll with respect to:

- liability to taxation;
- amount of an assessed value;
- classification of property; or
- a refusal by an assessor to amend the assessment roll under sub-section 13(2).

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

43(1) An Application for revision must

- be made in writing;
- set out the roll number and legal description of the assessable property for which a revision is sought;
- state the grounds on which the application is based; and
- be filed by
 - delivering it or causing it to be delivered to the office of the RM of Gimli in the RM of Gimli, Manitoba, or
 - serving it upon the Secretary, at least 15 days before the scheduled sitting of the Board of Revision.
- provide a daytime contact telephone number

The Board of Revision will sit on **November 13th, 2025** in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Office of the Rural Municipality of Gimli, 62 2nd Avenue, Gimli, Manitoba.

ADJUSTED 2025 PROPERTY TAXES must be appealed **within 30 days after mailing.**

The final date on which all other applications must be received by the Secretary of the Board is **Tuesday, October 28th, 2025 no later than 4:30PM.**

**APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THIS TIME
WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Dated at RM of Gimli Office, in Manitoba, this 4th Day of September, 2025.

Cindy Makowsky
Board of Revision
Rural Municipality of Gimli
Box 1246
Gimli, MB R0C 1B0
Telephone (204) 642-66566
Fax (204) 642-6660

take a break

> GAMES

SUDOKU

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

Level: Intermediate

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!

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!

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

Sudoku Answer

N	E	L	G			E	D	G		S	E	R	V
V	S	T	V	S		B	E	N		R	U	O	L
A	T	I	R	E	E	O	D	I	O	G	R	E	
E	R	I	C	K	E		D	I	D	A	B	G	
						R	O	T					
V	R	H	T	E	R	U		E	B	E	L	P	
C	I	D	I	S	H			R	A				
O	M	A	V	A				O	H	N	I	M	
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N	O	E	N		O	R		T	B	B	A	R	
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INVITATION TO TENDER SNOW REMOVAL

For the Hamlets of Hodgson, Broad Valley and Poplarfield

Please state what equipment will be used. Streets to be cleaned full width and will be free of windrows. Interested applicants must have liability insurance and registered with Workers Compensation Board. Equipment to be available upon request of the Public Works Supervisor. Tenders to be dropped off at the Municipal Office, 30 Tache, Fisher Branch, or emailed to fishercao@mymts.net no later than November 4, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.

Hodgson

17.7 km from the town of Fisher Branch.
Approximately 1.91 KM Road to be cleaned

Broad Valley

15.4 km from the town of Fisher Branch
Approximately .9 km of Road to be cleaned

Poplarfield

22.5 KM from the town of Fisher Branch
Approximately 1.9 km of Road to be cleaned

Kelly Marykuca, CMMA
Chief Administrative Officer
Rural Municipality of Fisher

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IN MEMORIAM



Jim Smolinski

March 5, 1945 – October 19, 2009

In loving memory of
my dear husband, father and grandfather
Gone are the days we used to share
But in our hearts you are always there.
The gates of memory will never close
We miss you more than anyone knows.
Life goes on we know that's true,
But it's not the same since we lost you.

-Always loved and remembered,
wife Elaine,
children and grandchildren

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Your
Loved
Ones
with an
Announcement
in the

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OBITUARY



Gloria Diane Sigurdson

1949 – 2025

Heaven has another Angel

On Tuesday, October 7, 2025, Gloria peacefully passed away at home with her loving husband, Allan, by her side.

Left to cherish her memory are her husband of 55 years, Allan; her children, Nicole (Vince) and Derek (Kendra); and her beloved granddaughters, Courtney, Halley, and Lacey. She also leaves behind her bonus grandchildren, Whitney, Damian, Damien, Darrius, Logan, Malkin, Zachary, and Tatiyana. Gloria will be missed by her brother, Larry Maksimchuk; her sister, Donna (Tony) Bartecki; and her cherished "perogy family": Sheila Martin, Ruth Kennedy, Susan Wallace, Lillian Zolinski, Wendy Sowa, and Arline Collins.

She was predeceased by her parents, Peter and Joan Maksimchuk, and her father-and mother-in-law, Konrad and Kristjana Sigurdson.

Gloria worked as an Educational Assistant for 29 years, where she shared her kindness, patience, and deep love for children. She took immense pride in her immaculate flower gardens and was happiest when tending to them. When not in her garden, Gloria could be found in the kitchen - her cooking was second to none and enjoyed by all who were lucky enough to share a meal with her.

She was also instrumental in helping to preserve the legacy of MPC Park. Known for her exceptional organization and preparedness, Gloria always had a checklist and timeline for every project - just ask her "perogy ladies." In quieter moments, she loved cross-stitching, gifting her beautiful creations to family and friends.

Gloria was a caring and compassionate woman who touched the lives of many. Always ready to lend a hand, she will be remembered for her warmth, generosity, and unwavering spirit.

The family extends heartfelt thanks to the Gimli Dialysis Unit for their exceptional care and compassion over the past five years.

As per Gloria's wishes, a private service will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Kidney Foundation of Manitoba, 209-2211 McPhillips Street, Winnipeg, MB R2V 3M5.

OBITUARY



Kimberly Dawn Ostafichuk (nee Howse)
November 9, 1963 – October 15, 2025

It with broken hearts we announce the passing of Kimberly Ostafichuk on October 15, 2025 at the Lakeshore General Hospital, Ashern, MB at the age of 61 years surrounded by the love of her family.

In keeping with Kim's wishes, cremation has taken place, and a celebration of her life will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her memory to Peace Lutheran Church Memorial Fund, PO Box 68, Moosehorn, MB R0C 2E0 or to CancerCare Manitoba Foundation Inc., 675 McDermot Ave., Room ON 1160, Winnipeg, MB R3E 0V9.

Arrangements by:

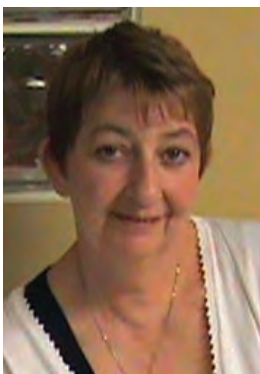
ARNASON FUNERAL HOME

Ashern - Lundar

1.204.768.2072

1.866.323.3593

OBITUARY



Sharon Joy Scharf (nee Jackson)
May 8, 1953 - October 18, 2025

Peacefully on October 18, 2025, Sharon passed away at the E.M. Crowe Memorial Hospital in Eriksdale, MB at the age of 72.

Sharon is survived by her husband Richard, her two daughters Jacqueline and Susan Scharf and her brothers John (Orisha) Jackson and Wayne (Loretta) Jackson.

Sharon was born on May 8, 1953 in Winnipeg, MB and grew up on Logan Avenue until she was 16 years old. Sharon was getting into too much trouble so her Dad retired in 1969 from Hudson Bay and they moved to their land east of Lundar on their farm. She met Rick and were married on September 16, 1972. Jacqueline was born on May 31, 1974 and then came Susan on March 30, 1979.

Sharon worked in Home Care for a while and after five years she decided to work in the kitchen in the Lundar Personal Care Home.

She left her employment due to health concerns then started to learn and paint ceramics, interior decorating, growing flowers and looked after the animals on the farm.

She was also proud of her radio Ham Operator certification with her call sign of VE4SJS.

She lived a full life and enjoyed it until the end.

In keeping with Sharon's wishes, a family graveside service will be held in the Otto Church Cemetery at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Sharon's memory to Lundar Personal Care HomeGuild, c/o Judy Gleich, PO Box 60, Lundar, MB R0C 1Y0.

Arrangements by:

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OBITUARY



Albert Ward Hochbaum
August 5, 1942 - October 14, 2025

Albert Ward Hochbaum, age 83, formerly of Ashern, Manitoba, passed away peacefully at St. Boniface Hospital Cardiac Ward October 14, 2025.

A proud Manitoban who devoted his life and career as a conservation officer, protecting the wildlife, lakes, rivers and forests across the province he so loved.

He is survived by his children Jo-Anne (Ian) Cushon, Molly Hochbaum, Susan Hochbaum; grandchildren Liam and Anna; brother Peter Hochbaum and sister Trudi (Barry) Heal.

He is predeceased by his infant son Joseph, wife of his children Marlene (nee Naherny) Hochbaum, wife Carol Hochbaum, brother George Hochbaum and parents Hans Albert and Joan (nee Ward) Hochbaum.

In keeping with Albert's wishes, cremation has taken place and a memorial service celebrating his life will be held on Saturday, October 25, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. in the Coutu Funeral Home, 680 Archibald Street with reception to follow.

Tributes at: ejcoutu.ca

E.J. Coutu & Co. Funeral Directors

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CLUES ACROSS

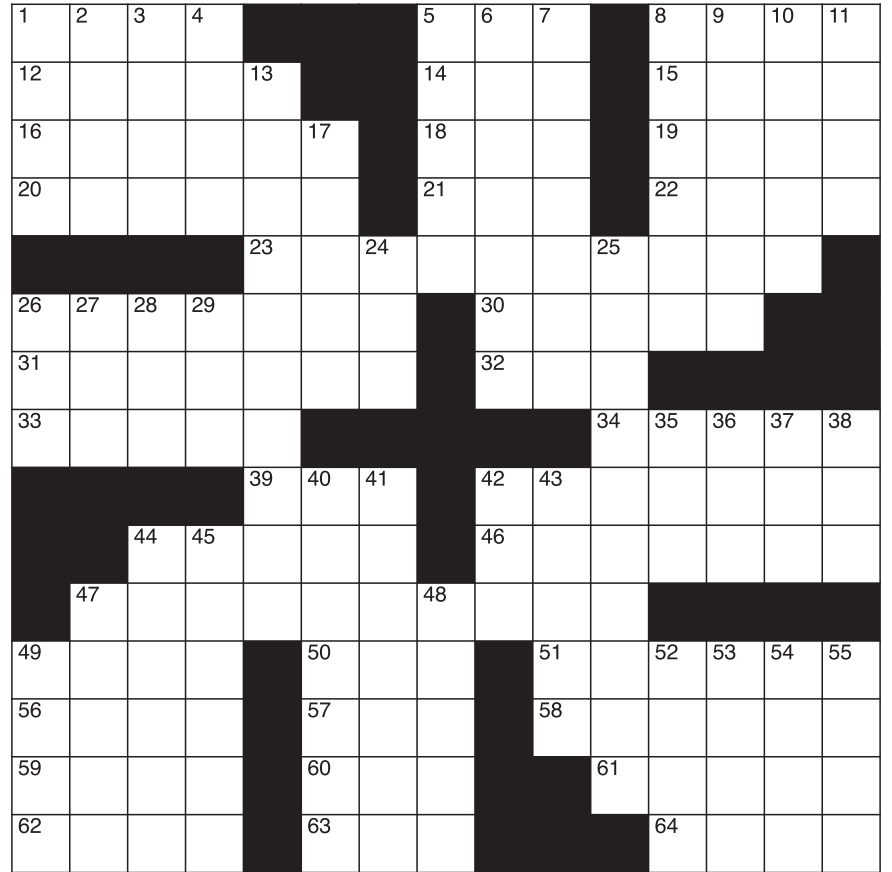
1. Remark
5. Upper body part
8. Expression of dismissiveness
12. Alternate name
14. Popular beverage
15. Swiss river
16. Step-shaped recess
18. Rocker Stewart
19. Bright shade of color
20. Popular "street"
21. Wrath
22. Heat units
23. Nocturnal omnivorous mammals
26. Fall back into
30. Remove from the record
31. Sound a splash made
32. Popular Dodge pickup model
33. Jamaican river
34. Notable event in Texas history
39. Cool!

42. Subset of Judaism
44. Newly entered cadet
46. Duct in urinary system
47. Exterminator
49. Snatch quickly
50. Have already done
51. Less healthy
56. Therefore
57. What couples say on the altar
58. Mysteriously
59. Look angry or sullen
60. Bird's beak
61. Taco ingredient
62. Square measures
63. Google certification (abbr.)
64. Singer Hansard

CLUES DOWN

1. Pubs
2. Wings
3. Popular BBQ dish
4. Small sponge cake
5. Open-roofed entrance halls

6. Organize anew
7. Type of wine
8. Forums
9. North Atlantic islands (alt. sp.)
10. Pond dwellers
11. Large integers
13. Signaled
17. Brief
24. Type of student
25. Tibetan monasteries
26. Revolutions per minute
27. NY Giants great Manning
28. Local area network
29. Residue from burning
35. Illuminated
36. Vasopressin
37. Notable space station
38. Wood sorrel
40. Adhering to laws
41. Chose
42. Hovel
43. Stood up
44. European city



45. Works ceaselessly
47. Mistake
48. Sun-dried brick
49. Sicilian city

52. A steep rugged rock or cliff
53. Murder
54. Other
55. "Deadpool" actor Reynolds

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