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Finding freedom through faith and community support

By E. Antonio

Nov. 16 to 22 marks National Addictions Awareness Week, and Pastor Dylan Chambers visited Ashern on Nov. 1 to share his story of addiction and recovery, hoping to inspire others to believe that change is possible.

Chambers was a guest speaker at an evening concert hosted by Conrad and Sherry Anderson of Anderson Family Funeral Home. The event, originally scheduled to feature U.S.-based southern gospel group Soul'd Out, shifted unexpectedly when the group was unable to cross the border. Local musician David Bracken stepped in on short notice, and Chambers delivered a message of faith and recovery as part of the evening program.

"Dylan grew up in Winnipeg, was involved in drugs, and today he's a pastor at the church just down the street from where he grew up," Anderson said. "He has a great story to share of how God set him free from a life of addiction."

Born and raised in central Winnipeg, Chambers began experimenting with cocaine and marijuana at age 12, just two years after his father passed away. By 16, he had started using methamphetamine.

"The neighbourhood is a dark and depressed place that is engulfed in alcoholism and drug addiction," Chambers said. "Even though I was raised in the inner city, I like to say I was brought up in the best of both worlds, in both a stable and unstable way in terms of parenting."

His family lived near Believer's Church, and while his mother attended services, Chambers said



PHOTO BY EMILY THORLACIUS

Pastor Dylan Chambers shares his testimony of addiction and recovery during a sold-out concert event in Ashern on Nov. 1.

he never felt personally connected to God or faith growing up.

By junior high and high school, he was smoking and selling marijuana before progressing to cocaine. As a young adult, he dropped out of school and experienced recur-

ring episodes of drug-induced psychosis.

"It was not a good season of my life," he recalled.

At age 22, he attended an evening church service that marked a turning point.

"I had a radical encounter with the presence of God. It was like a veil was torn from my eyes and the blinders were taken off — I knew I needed to get help."

Chambers began engaging with church programs and his faith community. While he saw early progress, he later relapsed and struggled with addiction for another three years.

"I found myself at rock bottom again, so I reached out to my church and the pastor encouraged me to go into a program," he said.

With support from his pastor and his doctor, Chambers began formal treatment but said his faith continued to be the strongest force in his recovery.

"I was in a place where I was surrounded by drugs. In the neighbourhood where my peers were all doing them, it was hard to get out of that environment," he said. "I always tell people that a tool God gave me to get me out of the environment was my church community. My sobriety and me not using drugs is because of my higher power — Jesus Christ."

Chambers first completed a 28-day program through the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, followed by two years in a sober living home with other men rebuilding their lives. He later lived independently at AFM's River Point Performance apartments, where he worked and finished his high

Continued on page 7



Evergreen Staff Spotlight Celebrating the People Who Make Our Schools Work

Meet Jessica Vandersteen – Principal, Arborg Early Middle School

For the past ten years, Jessica Vandersteen has dedicated her career to ensuring every student receives the education and care they deserve. From her early days as a classroom teacher, to her work in Resource and Student Services, to her current role as principal of Arborg Early Middle School, Jessica's journey has always been guided by a simple truth: every child deserves the best support, no matter their abilities.

Inspired by the passionate teachers she had growing up, Jessica knew she wanted to follow in their footsteps. "My teachers' passion for teaching and helping others inspired me," she says. "I was also passionate about coaching, working with children, and creating meaningful programming for them."

While her role is rewarding, Jessica notes that much of it happens behind the scenes. "My brain has a hard time shutting off because I'm always reflecting on how to best support both students and staff," she explains. "There is a great deal of behind-the-scenes planning to ensure our school days run smoothly."

What Jessica loves most about Evergreen is the community. "The staff here are supportive, caring, dedicated, and collaborative, which makes coming to work each day something I look forward to."

She wants the public to know that educators are much more than teachers delivering curriculum. "They are mentors, supporters, and advocates for students. At the heart of it all, we share the common goal of helping students become the very best version of themselves in every aspect of their lives."

Thank you, Jessica, for your leadership, vision, and unwavering dedication to students and staff at Arborg Early Middle School.

Interviewed by and pictured
with trustee Penny Helgason



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Breakfast with Santa returns to Arborg Legion

By Lana Meier

Families will have a festive new way to kick off the holiday season later this month when Breakfast with Santa comes to the Arborg Legion #161 on Nov. 29.

The event is being organized by legion manager Lori Reed and legion president Ron Johnston, with help from a host of volunteers and community partners. Local businesses including the Arborg & District Christmas Cheer Board, Interlake Co-op, Arborg Home Hardware, Arborg Pharmacy, Access Credit Union, Zan's Family Inn and Arborg Nic Nacs are contributing food supplies, materials and volunteer support.

Reed said the idea was sparked by a desire to bring the community together for a good cause at a time when the need is growing.

"It's been a number of years since we've had Breakfast with Santa, and with the growing demand on the Christmas Cheer Board, we felt it was time to bring the community together to support this worthwhile cause," she said.

The family-friendly morning will feature a hot pancake breakfast, holiday activities and, of course, a visit from Santa Claus. For a \$5 admission

or a donation of a non-perishable food item for the Cheer Board, families can enjoy breakfast and take part in children's crafts. There will also be a low-cost kids' gift shop, where youngsters can choose a present for someone special.

Reed said the legion was the natural venue.

"As part of the main organizers, the legion was a natural place to host," she said.

All proceeds from the event will go toward the 2025 Arborg & District Christmas Cheer Board Hamper Drive. Reed said the hope is that community support will allow the event to grow into an annual tradition.

"We all love Christmas and want to make sure everyone has a chance to find peace and happiness, if only for the day," she said. "Christmas is all about sharing the love."

Organizers say volunteers are still welcome — especially someone willing to take on the role of Santa.

"If anyone is willing to be Santa, we would love to hear from you," Reed added.

The Breakfast with Santa event takes place Friday, Nov. 29 at the Arborg Legion from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Breakfast with Santa is returning to the Arborg Legion on Friday, Nov. 29, with a hot breakfast, kids' activities and photos with Santa. The community event supports the Arborg & District Christmas Cheer Board.



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Fisher Branch WI empowering youth with knowledge about sex trafficking

By Patricia Barrett

The Fisher Branch Women's Institute (WI) brought the Joy Smith Foundation to Fisher Branch a few weeks ago in order to raise awareness among students and parents of sex trafficking and help prevent it from impacting their community.

Debra Barrett, who is a member of the Fisher Branch WI and president of the Manitoba Women's Institute, prepared a backgrounder on behalf of the Fisher Branch WI about the presentations and information about sex trafficking. She also spoke to the *Express* about the event.

Joy Smith's daughter, Janet Campbell, presented informative and eye-opening education sessions in late October to Fisher Branch's school students and community members.

Sex trafficking, which is sometimes referred to more broadly as human trafficking, forces children of various ages, women and men into sexual slavery. It's defined as the buying and selling of another human being for sex. Joy Smith established her foundation in 2011 to teach kids, parents and society about the exploitative and criminal activity, which can have devastating physical and mental impacts on its victims. Youth can live with their families and be attending school while being forced into sex trafficking.

The level of knowledge about sex trafficking among Fisher Branch students varied.

"Some of the students were aware of it and some, frighteningly, were

unaware. A lot of students had a minute grasp of the issue," said Barrett. "That's why our WI felt this was something that's really necessary. We wanted to reach at least one group of students this year, especially those who will be graduating, and provide them with knowledge before they go off to the city or beyond our community."

The average age of a child lured into sex trafficking — providing sex, working in massage parlours and/or stripping — is 13 years old, according to the Joy Smith Foundation, which not only educates people on sex trafficking but also on other human trafficking crimes such as forced labour. Ninety-three per cent of Canadian sex-trafficking victims are Canadian-born.

And it's a lucrative crime with traffickers making, on average per year, \$280,000 from a single victim. Traffickers use a variety of sophisticated manipulation techniques — including gifts, flattery, coercion, blackmail, threats of harm and so forth — to lure then force their victims into the sex trade. And they work on their victims online and/or in person. They search for victims in both urban and rural communities across Canada.

The Manitoba Women's Institute and its branches promote the well-being of women regardless of their ethnic, educational or political backgrounds, as well as families and communities.

Campbell presented three education sessions in total, tailored to dif-



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY CORRINE EINARSSON

Janet Campbell from the Joy Smith Foundation presents an educational session on sex trafficking to students in Fisher Branch.



Students were taught to recognize manipulative techniques sex traffickers use to lure them into the sex trade, including excessive flattery, things being too good to be true and being isolated from friends and family.

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ferent age levels. One session was for grades 7, 8 and 9 students (53 students) and another for grades 11 and 12 students (40 students) at the collegiate, said Barrett. Campbell also presented an

evening session to parents and other members of the community at the Ukrainian Hall community centre.

"During the presentation to the students, there was a lot of dialogue back and forth where the students could ask questions," said Barrett. "But Janet would also ask them questions to elicit responses. In that way, we were able to figure students' level of so-

Continued on page 8

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Progressive Conservatives refresh brand, choose new leader

By Lana Meier

The Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba unveiled a new logo and elected a new party president during its annual general meeting on Saturday, signalling what party officials described as a “new era” for the PCs.

The redesigned logo incorporates a stylized “P” formed within the negative space of a “C,” which the party says represents progressive values within a conservative framework. The

“C” features a gradient of classic blue to sky blue to reflect movement between tradition and renewal, while a red charging bison is centred between the letters to symbolize forward momentum and Manitoba identity.

“When the logo was unveiled, the room erupted in cheers. It gave me chills,” said Obby Khan, leader of the PC Party of Manitoba. “Delegates, guests, supporters and their friends and families could see elements of the

old logos carried over into the new design. Everyone really appreciated the blending of tradition and a bold new look for a bold new era of the PC Party.”

Delegates also elected a new party president. Peter Smith, a Navy veteran and business and community leader, will take over from outgoing president Brent Pooles.

“I’m absolutely thrilled that my fellow Progressive Conservatives have put their trust in me,” said Smith. “We have to be ready for the next election and I look forward to shifting the PC

Party to an election-ready footing.”

Members elected additional board and regional representatives, including James Teitsma, first vice-president; Sean Kopytko, second vice-president; Katya Labelle, secretary; and Kai Jassal, youth representative.

“Progressive Conservatives are united going forward,” Khan said. “This weekend, PCs demonstrated that we are a big tent party ready for the future. We have the passion, energy and momentum going forward. The new era of the PC Party is here.”



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Manitoba Progressive Conservatives revealed a redesigned logo.

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Labour and immigration: not so simple

By **Cam Dahl**, general manager, Manitoba Pork Council

Immigration is a hot-button political issue. High unemployment for young Canadians, housing shortages and rising rents have many politicians calling for dramatic changes to Canada's immigration policies. Some are even calling for an end to critical programs like the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and for sharply reducing the number of new permanent residents.

From 2015 to 2023, federal policy was one of wide-open doors, with Canada admitting a record number of newcomers. But facing housing shortages, rising rents and high unemployment among youth and some immigrant populations, the Government of Canada has made a 180-degree pivot. Immigration targets were cut sharply — with planned admissions for 2025 nearly 20 per cent below 2024 levels and further reductions expected. The initial allocation for the Provincial Nominee Program was cut in half. These broad reversals do not serve the Canadian economy, nor new Canadians.

The drivers behind the shift are real. Canada's large cities are experiencing a housing crisis. Young Canadians are struggling to find work. Some regions have seen increased pressure on social services and health care. Too many newcomers have been admitted without a clear link to employment opportunities. But a nationwide one-size-fits-all approach to immigration and labour is not the right answer.

What is needed in Toronto, Vancouver or Montreal is not the same as what is needed in other regions. The

pressures facing rural parts of Canada differ significantly from those in big cities — and new Canadians are a critical part of the Manitoba labour force in places like Notre Dame de Lourdes, Neepawa, Brandon and Winnipeg. Provinces are best positioned to understand and manage labour needs in their regions.

Labour shortages are already affecting hog producers. Some farmers have had to shutter barn sites due to a lack of workers — a trend that will worsen if immigration is further restricted.

To ensure sustainable hog production and pork processing, Manitoba producers and processors rely on programs like the Provincial Nominee Program. The sector hires foreign workers and supports them on a pathway to permanent residency to fill vacant, full-time positions.

This model works. Retention rates are high. Workers receive training, build careers and put down roots in the communities where they settle. Neepawa is a clear example — one of the fastest-growing towns in the country, with new infrastructure and a strengthened local economy supported by hog-sector investment and the newcomers who make that industry possible.

Labour shortages also have implications beyond productivity. The hog sector has invested heavily in biosecurity and disease management, including preventing and responding to Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea (PED), Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS) and foreign ani-

mal diseases such as African Swine Fever (ASF) and Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). Without sufficient labour, these efforts become more difficult, increasing risks to herd health and animal care.

These risks are not hypothetical. The PED outbreak in Manitoba from late 2021 through spring 2023 is estimated to have cost the industry more than \$100 million. In the United States, PRRS is estimated to cost \$1.65 billion annually.

Hog production and processing in Manitoba can grow — but only if barriers like labour shortages are addressed. New barns and processing investment support not only rural employment but also help sustain communities by growing population, school enrollment, local business opportunities and community services.

Budget 2025 included positive commitments to prioritize immigration for rural, remote and tariff-impacted sectors, and to increase the number of newcomers arriving to fill specific job needs. However, more action is needed. Canada must move away from blanket national targets and adopt policies tailored to regional needs. The Provincial Nominee Program has proven successful in doing exactly that — and should be strengthened, not reduced.

Second, policy emphasis should shift from the sheer number of arrivals to the alignment between newcomers' skills and labour market needs — including those in Manitoba's hog sector.

Immigration and labour realities vary widely across Canada. Rather than short social-media-ready soundbites, governments should focus on thoughtful policies that respond to regional and sector-specific needs.



Cam Dahl
Manitoba Pork Council

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Phoney 'Manitoba Justice' texts demand payment for bogus fines

By Lana Meier

An Interlake woman is warning others to be cautious after nearly falling victim to a convincing text-message scam claiming to be from Manitoba Justice.

Paulette Leduchowski said she received a message on Nov. 3 that appeared to be an official "final notice" about an outstanding traffic fine linked to her vehicle. The text urged her to "review and complete payment as soon as possible to avoid further administrative action" and included what looked like a legitimate provincial link.

The text read:

+1 (250) 466-2370 >

Manitoba Justice – Final Notice

Our records indicate an outstanding traffic fine linked to your vehicle.

Please review and complete payment as soon as possible to avoid further administrative action.

<https://manitobajustice.com/Pay>

Leduchowski clicked the link, which asked her to confirm her driver's li-

cence number. Because she didn't recall the number off the top of her head, she asked her husband, Gordie, to help her look it up and enter it. After submitting the information, she began to feel uneasy.

"It just didn't sit right," she said. "If they already had my name and phone number on file, why would they need my licence number? And if they have your licence number, they have your photo too. That's when I knew something was off."

She immediately phoned Manitoba Justice directly to verify. A representative confirmed that no fine existed and that the message was a scam.

Leduchowski did not cancel her licence, but she promptly contacted friends and family to warn them.

"I just want people to be aware," she said. "It looked so real. It could happen to anyone."

The couple has encountered scams before. Three years ago, Gordie nearly fell victim to the "Grandparent Scam," where fraudsters pretend to

be a family member in distress.

"They called him and said, 'Grandpa, I need help,'" Leduchowski said. "But no one in our family calls him Grandpa — he's Gigi."

Suspicious, he asked the caller to confirm his grandson's birthdate. The scammer couldn't answer and hung up.

"That's what saved him," she said. "Sometimes one small detail can stop everything."

Manitoba Justice confirms it does not send text messages to collect fines. Legitimate fines are mailed and can be verified. For more information, call 204-945-3156 in Winnipeg or toll-free 1-800-282-8069 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, not including holidays.

RCMP remind residents not to click on links or provide personal information in unsolicited messages. Suspected scams can be reported to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre at 1-888-495-8501.

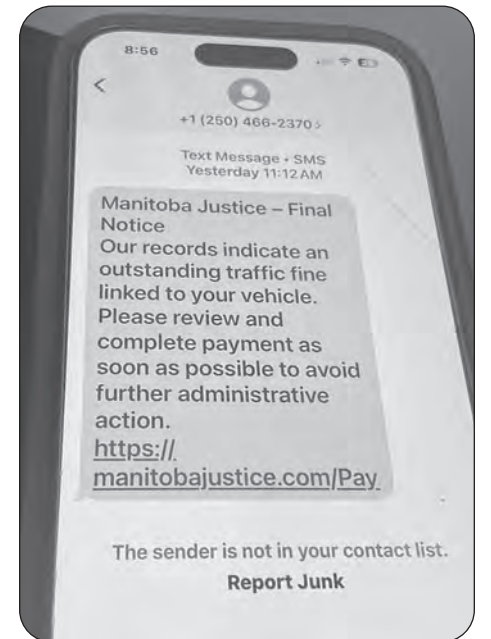


PHOTO SUBMITTED

A fraudulent text claiming to be from Manitoba Justice urged Paulette Leduchowski to pay an alleged traffic fine. The message is part of an ongoing scam.

> FINDING FREEDOM, FROM PG. 2

school courses.

He said the biggest difference between his first and second attempt at recovery was access to support and accountability.

"I knew I needed to be sober, I just didn't have the tools to do it," he said. "The second time around I had those supports."

He encourages others to take the first step, even when it feels overwhelming.

"Initially anyone who is addicted and bound to drugs just wants to get their life back," he said. "We know the barrier everyone struggles with is they think they will be judged. But it's really that first step of recovery — admitting you need the help and seeking it."

Chambers believes complete abstinence has been key to his long-term recovery. After trying a methadone program, he found that structured abstinence-based treatment combined with strong community support was the best fit for him. For Chambers, that support came from his church.

"Church family is more family to me than my real family. We go where the need is and want to support everyone who needs it."

In 2018, Pastor Wayne Bustard began mentor-

ing him, a relationship Chambers now describes as paternal.

"Since I lost my biological father, I consider him to be like a dad and I actually call him Dad now," he said.

In 2020, Chambers was ordained at Believer's Church, and last year he accepted a full-time pastoral role.

"It's been a great journey with a lot of community support. It's almost been like a movie — I never thought any of this would be possible."

Now 31, Chambers continues to serve full time while pursuing a bachelor of social work, with the goal of working directly in addiction support.

He encourages anyone seeking help to contact agencies such as the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, Main Street Project, Salvation Army, Bruce Oake Recovery Centre, local health teams or faith-based organizations.

"If there is a hope for recovery, there is help," he said. "There's a ton of resources available both spiritual and non-spiritual. Jesus is real, God is real and he does have a plan for us — and we can find freedom and victory in this."

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 - Difethialone
 - Diphacinone
 - Sulfur
 - Zinc Phosphide
- To control insects from January 1 - December 31, 2026, using the following pesticides:
 - Abamectin
 - Beauveria Bassiana Strain GHA
 - Beta-Cyfluthrin
 - Boracic Acid
 - Clothianidin
 - Cyfluthrin
 - Dichlorvos
 - Dinotefuran
 - D-Phenothrin
 - D-Trans Allethrin
 - Hydramethylnon
 - Lambda Cyhalothrin
 - Imidacloprid
 - Lambda Cyhalothrin
 - Methoprene
 - N-Octyl Bicycloheptene Dicarboximide
 - Permethrin
 - Piperonyl Butoxide
 - Propetamphos
 - Pyrethrins
 - Silica Aerogel
 - Silicon Dioxide
 - Tetramethrin

The public may send written submissions or objections within 15 days of the publication of the notice to:

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



Men's Sheds MB talks 'The Shed Effect'

By Ashleigh Viveiros

In honour of International Men's

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...

**Contact 204-389 4777
All ages are Welcome**

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

Day Nov. 19, Men's Sheds Manitoba is working to get the word out about the profound impact their groups can have in reducing social isolation, improving mental health and strengthening community.

A Men's Shed is a group of men who get together on a regular basis to connect, be it through shared activities (woodworking, gardening or card games, say), educational guest speakers or simply a cup of coffee.

There are 14 Sheds currently operating across the province, half in Winnipeg and half in rural Manitoba communities such as Beausejour, Selkirk and Minnedosa.

They're hoping to grow that number significantly across the province, says Vic Thiessen, Men's Sheds Manitoba secretary.

"I've been with it since 2019, and I've just found it personally to be so beneficial," he shares. "It's such a good way for men to connect and support

one another."

Provincial organizers are aiming to raise more awareness about what they're calling The Shed Effect.

"It's about making people aware of how Men's Sheds are impacting society, how it's impacting individual men's lives," explains Thiessen. "They're places where you can find community, where you can find men of like mind and do things together."

Camaraderie is a big part of Men's Sheds but so too is getting involved in the community at large.

"One of the big things that we like to do is get involved in giving back to the community — meaningful projects either put forth by a community centre or another organization that would benefit the community," Thiessen says, explaining each Shed decides for itself how its members will pour back into the place they call home.

There are Men's Sheds across Cana-

da, and on Nov. 19 they'll be coming together to host a national webinar that is open to all.

The day will feature guest speaker presentations on the importance of volunteerism and new research on the social value of Men's Sheds. There will also be panel discussions on the topic and the debut of a video highlighting volunteer projects from Sheds across the country.

You can register to take part in the webinar at mensshedsmanitoba.ca/the-shed-effect-2025/.

Next week will also see open houses at a few of the Manitoba Sheds, including the Woodhaven Shed Nov. 18 and the Park City Shed the following week.

If you'd like to learn more, head to mensshedsmanitoba.ca or connect with Thiessen via email to mensshedmanitoba@gmail.com or by calling 204-396-2123.

> FISHER BRANCH WI, FROM PG. 4

phistication and knowledge of the issue."

Campbell also spoke about how perpetrators will search for children online to lure them into sex trafficking.

"The students who have public [social media] profiles were amazed that within two minutes of putting their profiles online a perpetrator somewhere else in the world could find them and use their photos and [unique details from items] in their bedrooms to figure out within a matter of minutes where the child is located," said Barrett. "They were absolutely shocked by that."

With the growing recognition of the harmful impact of social media on children and teens — including the ease with which they can be lured and exploited sexually — some countries around the world are starting to ban social media for certain age groups.

Australia recently passed a law banning children under 16 from social media sites including Facebook, X, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Reddit, Snapchat and Threads. It will take effect on Dec. 10. The move was deemed necessary in order to "protect" children and make social media companies responsible for verifying ages and blocking users under 16. And Denmark announced on Nov. 7 that it plans to ban access to social media for children under 15 years of age.

The third sex-trafficking education session Campbell provided at the Ukrainian Hall had over three dozen parents attend.

"I think a lot of people were quite frightened. There's a core group of us that work with children so we were more knowledgeable, but some parents went home absolutely shocked at how easily a child can be groomed," said Barrett.

In Barrett's backgrounder she provides tips from the session on how to recognize manipulative techniques used by sex traffickers. They include strangers making contact with you, people promising things that are too good to be true, people who are angry and threatening you or your loved ones, people encouraging you to keep secrets from your family and friends, people who are trying to isolate you from your family and friends both socially and/or emotionally, people you feel uncomfortable being around, people who use excessive flattery, and people who try to push you to break rules.

The Fisher Branch WI is planning to bring the sex-trafficking education sessions back to Fisher Branch in future.

"We are hoping to continue. We're working with the school counsellor. We want to continue to prepare our children and educate them about sex trafficking," said Barrett.

In addition, Barrett said the Manitoba Women's Institute plans to pass a resolution and send it to Manitoba's families minister, requesting formal education about sex-trafficking in Manitoba schools so that children can be armed with the knowledge and skills to avoid becoming victims of sexual exploitation.

You have options.

kl

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news@expressweeklynews.ca or Phone 204-467-5836

THE EXPRESS
WEEKLY NEWS

Manitoba government announces early reading screening and supports for students

By E. Antonio

Manitoba government announces early reading screening and supports for students

Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister Tracy Schmidt announced the Manitoba government passed Bill 225, the Public Schools Amendment Act (Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities), which ensures every student in kindergarten to Grade 4 in the province receives early reading screenings to identify and address potential reading difficulties.

"We know parents and teachers want kids to excel in school. We supported and strengthened Bill 225 to focus squarely on early reading, which is the foundation of all future learning," said Schmidt during the Nov. 4 announcement. "By acting early, we can support students before reading difficulties become learning barriers. This bill will ensure educators have the right tools and families have the right information to help children thrive."

Schools will be required to apply:

- universal early reading screening for all students in kindergarten through Grade 4 using standardized, evidence-based tools that meet criteria established by the minister;
- two screenings per year in at least three of the five early school years, to identify students at risk of future reading difficulties including dyslexia;
- parent communication through report cards, ensuring families receive timely updates on their child's progress; and
- ongoing supports and progress monitoring for students identified as needing additional help.

Evergreen School Division (ESD) has used the DIBELS 8 screening tool in their schools for the past three years.

Scott Hill, ESD superintendent, said all of their students are screened three times per year and they have already seen the benefits.

"With regard to early literacy, we have a target for end of 2026 to have 80 per cent of Grade 3 students at benchmark. In 2023-2024, we had 57 per cent of Grade 3 students meeting that benchmark and in 2024-2025 we had 77 per cent meeting benchmark, so we're very close and hope to meet our target at the end of this school year," he explained. "We believe that our board's investment in full-time kindergarten, combined with our embrace of structured literacy, is really going to prove to be a game-changer in our pursuit of enhanced literacy

outcomes for our students."

He noted they've opted for DIBELS 8 as its screener due to its "gold standard" and meets or exceeds the criteria experts have set regarding reading screening.

Once students are screened, their results will be shared with their parents or guardians in addition to the regular reports that are already shared. Any intervention suggestions will be provided for those needing additional support.

Hill said if a parent has concern regarding their child's reading progress to speak with their teacher first.

"In our school division, our teachers and divisional clinicians and consultants work as a team to do our best to provide timely access to assessments and supports that kids need to support their learning," he said.

Since initiating the program, ESD has already hired several support staff as well as made strategic investments towards full-time kindergarten and single-grade classrooms to better support their students' literary needs. Staff have also been trained thoroughly on the screening program, support implementation for students and about structured literacy practices.

"We undertook a significant investment in professional learning for teachers, and our clinicians and consultants have a very deep, thorough understanding of these tools and support the implementation in schools," Hill added. "Some of our screening is now undertaken by 'assessment teams' that include our divisional clinicians and school-based student

services staff. Teachers also use a tool called the Quick Phonics Screener and this informs their classroom practice."

Overall, Hill is satisfied with this announcement as it will hopefully lead to stronger students.

"I believe that early reading screening provides a helpful step toward closing learning gaps among our students," he said. "We view our commitment to evidence-based literacy instruction and intervention as part of our responsibility to all students and especially those students who may historically have been less successful."

Lakeshore School Division Supt. Darlene Willetts is hopeful about the prospective impacts on students in her division.

"I think we have a lot of information about our students and their reading habits right now, but this may give us a different perspective on what might be hampering our students' learning," she said.

Lakeshore is piloting the Acadience and EasyCBM screeners at some of their elementary schools, with plans on implementing full screening in fall 2026.

"In Lakeshore, supporting our students in literacy has been a priority for many years, which has included using assessments to support plan-

ning for our students. While some of the details in Bill 225 are new, overall, the adjustments required will be extensions of our current practice and will not require large changes," she added.

Lakeshore will select their screening program based off of ease of use and time it takes to administer the screenings and plan to train all early year's staff who will then work with the literacy lead teach to support consistent, division wide screenings.

She doesn't expect any new staff needing to be hired to support the initiative but understands the additional stress it might impose on staff and is looking into ways to best support them.

As for students, she says those identified as needing extra support will work with the students in small groups, as well as have specific targeted intervention work. Their screening reports will be shared with parents, and she asks anyone with concerns about their child's reading skills to discuss with their teacher.

"While we already utilize tools for assessment, we are hopeful that the additional information we gathered will give us further insight into developing next steps for all of our students," she said.

"I BELIEVE THAT
EARLY READING
SCREENING
PROVIDES A
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TOWARD CLOSING
LEARNING GAPS
AMONG OUR
STUDENTS"



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**Give to Westshore Community Foundation
between November 10-16 to help us reach
our Giving Challenge Goal. Every gift made
during this week will be stretched by
The Winnipeg Foundation and the
Manitoba government —
Every \$5 donation becomes \$7!**

Go to endowMB.org or westshorefoundation.ca to give!



Notice of Environment Act Proposal

Manitoba Environment and Climate Change invites public comment on the following proposal:

**DIAGEO CANADA INC. – BOILER REPLACEMENT AND
SUBSTATION – FILE: 6265.00**

Diageo Canada Inc. proposes to build a 230 kV to 13.8 kV electrical substation and replace the existing gas boilers with electrode boilers at its distillery in the Rural Municipality of Gimli. The development is located approximately 2.5 km north of the town of Gimli on NE 20-19-4 EPM. If approved, construction is anticipated to begin in 2026 and be completed by November 2027. This development is proposed to be powered by the Silver to Rosser tap transmission line, a separate Manitoba Hydroowned development currently undergoing environmental assessment and licensing.

This proposal can be viewed at www.manitoba.ca/sd/eal/registries

Anyone affected by the proposal who wishes to provide feedback should submit their comments using the online form at www.manitoba.ca/sd/eal/registries by December 15, 2025.

Information submitted in response to this proposal will be available to the proponent and placed on the public registry per Section 17 of The Environment Act.

**Environmental Approvals Branch
Manitoba Environment and Climate Change**
Box 35, 14 Fultz Boulevard
Winnipeg MB R3Y 0L6
Toll-Free: 1-800-282-8069
Website: www.manitoba.ca/sd/eal/registries



'One glance away': Mother turns tragedy into mission against distracted driving

By Annaliese Meier

When 16-year-old Kailynn Bursic-Panchuk glanced down at her phone while driving near Weyburn, Sask., in August 2018, she could never have imagined how that brief moment would alter countless lives. Her car was struck by a train, and six days later — one day after her 17th birthday — her family said goodbye.

That single act of distraction, her mother Sandra LaRose says, didn't just end one young life — it shattered many others.

"When I found out the cause of Kailynn's collision, and realized it never should have happened, it actually infuriated me," LaRose said. "A simple glance away took everything from Kailynn, took everything from me, my family and her friends."

Kailynn's story is now at the heart of Manitoba Public Insurance's Friends For Life speaker series — a two-week program that brings survivors of impaired, speeding and distracted driving crashes to schools across the province.

This year's tour, running through early November, includes 20 schools in communities such as Teulon, Arborg, Hamiota, Carberry, Powerview, Erickson and Winnipeg. LaRose shares her story alongside fellow speakers Jon Tiessen and Rosalie Finch, whose lives were also forever changed by a preventable crash.

MPI's goal is to reach youth at the stage when they are just beginning to drive — the time they are most at risk for collisions.

According to MPI, 49 people were killed in distracted driving crashes in Manitoba in 2024, while 91 people lost their lives on Manitoba roads that



The logo of Sharing Kailynn's Sunshine Foundation — reflects Kailynn's bright, giving spirit.

same year. The agency says young Manitobans are 2.4 times more likely than other age groups to be involved in a severe collision involving impairment.

"These speakers are taking devastating experiences and using them to advocate for change," said MPI vice-president Maria Campos. "Their stories show that every choice behind the wheel has consequences."

For LaRose, speaking publicly was never part of the plan — until MPI reached out in 2019.

"When Kailynn was being taken off life support to see if she could donate her organs — which she did — I made her one promise: to make her as proud of me as I was of her," she said. "I knew early on that I needed to do something. I just had no idea what that would be."

Since then, LaRose has shared Kailynn's Story with nearly 30,000 students across Canada — first virtually during the pandemic and now in au-



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Sandra LaRose and her daughter, Kailynn Bursic-Panchuk, are pictured together in an undated family photo. Kailynn was 16 when she was fatally injured in a distracted-driving collision near Weyburn, Sask., in 2018 — a tragedy that inspired LaRose to share her story through Manitoba Public Insurance's Friends For Life speaker series. Photo courtesy of Sandra LaRose family.

ditoriums across the country.

"This will be my fourth year participating in Friends For Life," she said. "I have to give MPI credit for starting me on this journey."

When LaRose stands in front of a gymnasium full of students, she asks them to see themselves in Kailynn — to picture their own friends, families and futures.

"My hope is that students realize they are not invincible," she said. "I want them to see their mom or dad in me and themselves in Kailynn. One wrong choice can take away everything."

But her message reaches beyond teenagers. LaRose believes distracted driving is a challenge for all ages — a

symptom of a culture that prizes constant connection.

"We've become so accustomed to being connected that when we disconnect, we feel lost," she said. "Fifty years ago, we planned ahead, told people where we were going and just lived simpler lives."

She urges parents to model better habits.

"If you pick up your phone to text or change a song and your kids see you, they'll think it's OK. Children learn what they live. And to the students — if you know the right thing to do is stay off your phone and you see an adult doing it, please point it out. Share Kailynn's story."

To honour her daughter's giving spirit, LaRose created Sharing Kailynn's Sunshine Foundation Inc. in 2020 — a Saskatchewan-based non-profit that raises funds for causes that reflect Kailynn's values: compassion, empathy and kindness.

Through burger-night fundraisers and online auctions held each August near Kailynn's birthday, the foundation has raised nearly \$40,000 for organizations including STARS Air Ambulance, Ronald McDonald House Charities Saskatchewan, Lulu's Lodge (a home for LGBTQIA2S+ youth), Caring Hearts grief programs and Teddy Bears Anonymous.

"Kailynn's soul was always giving," LaRose said. "Her legacy continues through every act of kindness done in her name."

More about the foundation can be found on Facebook (Sharing Kailynn's Sunshine) and Instagram @kailynnsunshine.



JOIN US FOR THE NOVEMBER CONSIGNMENT SALES 2025

November OFFSITE Consignment Sale. Viewing: November 17th -21st 9PM to 5PM. Bidding starts: Nov 20, 2025 at 10:00AM

Lots start closing on Nov 26, 2025 at 10:00AM. Pick up days: Friday November 27th & 28th from 9AM to 5PM

November ONSITE Consignment Sale. Viewing: November 17th -21st 9PM to 5PM. Bidding starts: Nov 20, 2025 at 10:00AM

Lots start closing on Nov 27, 2025 at 10:00AM. Pick up days: Friday November 28th & 29th from 9AM to 5PM

November ONSITE Week 3 Consignment Sale. Viewing: November 24th -27th 9PM to 5PM. Bidding starts: Nov 27 2025 at 10:00AM

Lots start closing on Dec 3, 2025 at 10:00AM. Pick up days: Thursday December 3rd & 4th from 9AM to 5PM

November ONSITE Week 3 Consignment Sale. Viewing: November 24th -27th 9PM to 5PM. Bidding starts: Nov 27 2025 at 10:00AM

Lots start closing on Dec 3, 2025 at 10:00AM. Pick up days: Thursday December 3rd & 4th from 9AM to 5PM



Ashern Auction Mart First Annual Online Equipment Sale. Viewing: April 20 to 24th 9PM to 5PM. Bidding starts: April 23, 2026 at 10:00AM. Lots start closing on April 29, 2026 at 10:00AM. Pick up days: Thursday, April 30th & Friday, May 1st from 9AM to 5PM.

If you require help or do not have internet access please call the office at (204) 434-6519.

Call today if you would like to consign your items! Office (204) 434-6519 • Brad Kehler (204) 346-2440 Darryl Enns (204) 216-0931 • Ed Pytyjuk (204) 392-8442
ITEMS ARE SOLD AS YOU SEE THEM. Call Now to Consign in Upcoming Auctions.



A roadside memorial marks the site of the 2018 crash where Kailynn Bursic-Panchuk was fatally injured after glancing at her phone while driving.

> ONE GLANCE AWAY, FROM PG. 10

Born in Regina on Aug. 21, 2001, Kailynn spent her early childhood in the city before moving to a family farm and attending Fillmore Central School. She was known for her humour, determination and fierce love for her siblings and cousins, who she called her “BFFs.”

She had a soft spot for animals, a strong work ethic and dreams of becoming a high-school teacher.

“She was funny — hilarious, actually — and loved to make people laugh,” LaRose said. “I know she’s with me every time I stand on a stage.

She’s cheering me on.”

For LaRose, grief and love coexist — both rooted in the same deep bond between mother and daughter.

“Kailynn may have died, but she also lived,” she said. “Her story continues to make an impact. Without love there is no grief — and love will always win.”

For more information about the Friends For Life speaker series, visit mpi.mb.ca. To learn more about Sandra’s work, visit www.sandrarose.ca.



Christmas 2025 is fast approaching. As we begin our preparations, now is a good time to reflect on the past year with the highs and lows that we all have lived through.

The Campaign is as important this year as it has been in the past, perhaps even more so as feelings of uncertainty and anxiety persist in our society. The broader community has, more and more, experienced the same challenges many of our clients already face daily. The increased cost of food, housing and fuel has led to an increase in the number of clients now needing to access the EBN Food Bank. Our area includes the RM of Gimli, Town of Winnipeg Beach, Village of Dunnottar and the Fraserwood area of the RM of Armstrong. In 2024 we provided 230 Christmas Hampers, an increase of 11% over 2023, with a cost of close to \$40,000.00. We anticipate a similar increase again this year.

While we recognize there are many worthy charities in the community competing for your charitable dollars, the use of EBN services has increased significantly and we do need your help so that we, in turn, can continue to help our neighbours as we have throughout the years.

You can help EBN provide a Christmas that will offer warmth and nourishment to individuals and families.

NEW THIS YEAR! In an effort to streamline our process, we will no longer be sending out flyers in the mail. Please consider using our online donation platform on our website listed below or drop off your donation by cheque, cash or credit card in person at 71 4th Ave in Gimli. Check out our website at www.evergreenbasicneeds.com and donate online

Other ways to give:

- New, unwrapped toys for children; newborn and up, or gift cards for the teens!
- Adam T. Elvis Toy Drive Concert - Thursday November 27 7:00 @ Interlake Brewing Co in Gimli
- Giving Tuesday - December 2
- Fill the Sleigh Day - December 6 Red Apple in Gimli



Enjoy the time spent with family and friends this coming Christmas season. Remember those who have gone before. Find time to reflect on those matters that are truly important.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Staff and Volunteers of EBN we wish you and yours a healthy Christmas season. Stay Safe and Stay Well. All the best in 2026!

Karen Bowman, Executive Director

Holiday Schedule

Closed December 22, 2025 - January 01, 2026

Our Christmas Hamper Program will operate out of the warehouse at EBN this year. Christmas Hampers will be delivered Tuesday, December 9 between 10 am - 3 pm. Christmas Hampers can be picked up on Thursday, December 11 between 10 am - 4 pm. The Free Toy Shopping Day will be held on Saturday December 13 between 9 am - 4 pm.

(For more information regarding the Christmas Hamper program, please call Miles at 204 642 9736 ext 3)

Toys may be dropped off at EBN 71 4th Ave in Gimli until Thursday December 11.

Toy collection boxes are also available throughout the community.

Please complete the following information for your donation

DONATION FORM 2025

Company/Individual: _____

Mailing Address: _____ Town/City: _____

Postal Code: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Email: _____

Amount of Donation: _____ Cash _____ Cheque _____

Donate Online at www.evergreenbasicneeds.com

Please make cheques payable to Evergreen Basic Needs and return your donation to: Box 89, 71 4th Ave Gimli, MB R0C 1B0

IS A TAX RECEIPT REQUIRED? (Circle one) YES NO

Tax receipts can be issued to eligible individuals, organizations, or companies.

Donation cheques dated 2025, postmarked on or before December 31, 2025, and received by January 15, 2026, will be eligible for a 2025 tax receipt

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Nov. 10-16, 2025

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Remembrance, gratitude and righting historical wrongs mark Riverton's Indigenous Veterans Day

By Patricia Barrett

Riverton paid tribute to Indigenous veterans and marked Manitoba's first official Indigenous Veterans Day after the provincial government enshrined it into law last week with the passing of Bill 210.

Indigenous Veterans Day has been held in Manitoba since the 1990s, but with the passing of Bill 210 it is now an official day that will be recognized every year on Nov. 8.

Hosted by the Riverton & District Friendship Centre and MCed by RD-FC's Desarae Bilinski, the ceremony last Thursday (Nov. 6) at the Riverton Hall attracted hundreds of people including Indigenous veterans, elders, families and friends of veterans, local students, municipal and provincial government representatives, and members of other veterans' organizations.

Manitoba's Lt.-Gov. Anita Neville said Manitobans are committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples in the



Desarae Bilinski from the Riverton & District Friendship Centre MCed the event, recognizing the courage and sacrifice Indigenous men, women and two-spirit veterans made in war and peace.



Students Kiera and Dexter recited *In Flanders Fields* by John McCrae.

spirit of truth and reconciliation, and that partnership must include honouring those who defended and died for Canada.

"Indigenous people played a ... part in all of Canada's conflicts, from the muddy fields of northern Europe to the dusty hills and plains of Afghanistan. They fought for Canada even when their communities had to fight within Canada for basic rights," said Neville. "So now as we seek to build a new Canada founded on a better understanding and a recognition of Indigenous rights, Indigenous Veterans Day is a time for all of Canada to acknowledge our great debt to those who served and those who never came home."

David Pankratz (NDP MLA for Waverley,) who is the province's special envoy for military affairs, sponsored Bill 210, The Indigenous Veterans Day Act. He said he worked with a number of Indigenous advocates — including Indigenous veterans Randi Susanne Gage and Devin Beaudry — to help bring rightful recognition to Indigenous veterans who "fought shoulder-to-shoulder" with other Canadians in the name of freedom but



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY PATRICIA BARRETT

An Indigenous woman lays a wreath honouring Indigenous veterans from Manitoba during Riverton's Indigenous Veterans Day tribute on Nov. 6 at the Riverton Hall.

who, nevertheless, faced discrimination.

"They weren't allowed to vote. They weren't given the same rights. They weren't given the same treatment," said Pankratz. "This is why it's so important that we have this day so that we can remember the sacrifices that were made and the way we went wrong in our history."

Pankratz presented Gage with a reproduction of Bill 210 that was signed by Manitoba Premier Wab Kinew and members of the government. He thanked PC MLA Richard Perchotte (Selkirk) for voting in favour of the bill and attending the ceremony.

Gage, an American-born Vietnam-era veteran who moved to Winnipeg, worked tirelessly over three decades to bring recognition to Indigenous veterans after they were prohibited by other legion members from laying a wreath during a Remembrance Day ceremony in Ottawa in 1991 because they weren't a "nationally recognized" group and weren't welcome.

The following year — after Gage and other Indigenous veterans estab-

lished provincial and national Indigenous veterans organizations — they were able to lay a wreath at the memorial. The day was both joyous and sad.

"You see these pictures of world war two where soldiers are marching and kids come out to shake their hands, they were doing that [in Ottawa]. And one five-year-old looked at me and said, 'Mommy, that's an Indian. I can do this.' A little Indigenous boy saying he can do this," said Gage, who was overcome with emotion thinking back to that day. "We placed the wreaths ... and there was a group of legion women there — and I can't use the language because we've got children here — telling us we were f-ing Indians and what were we doing there and we're not welcome."

Gage said she went on to "battle" for official recognition for Indigenous veterans, writing countless letters and meeting with politicians. A few thought an official day for Indigenous

Continued on page 13



Manitoba Lt.-Gov. Anita Neville with Tanis Grimolfson from the Riverton & District Friendship Centre.



Veterans Lt.-Col. Rod Berscheid and his wife Capt. Jody Berscheid (left) from the RM of Gimli, with RM of Gimli resident Jojo and Gimli Coun. Andy Damm.



Bifrost-Riverton Coun. Corey Palsson lays a wreath on behalf of the municipality.



Reggie Leach lays a wreath on behalf of the Riverton & District Friendship Centre.



Pedro Correia from the Portuguese War Veterans of Manitoba Association (right) presented an honour to Randi Gage and Devin Beaudry (Métis veteran who served in the Canadian Air Force) for advocating for Indigenous Veterans Day.



The Red Shadow Singers drum group performed memorial songs.



Students were among the attendees.

> VETERANS DAY, FROM PG. 12

vets was a "good idea." Others were "racist, cold and nasty."

"This day, Nov. 8, Indigenous Veterans Day is not a replacement for Remembrance Day," said Gage. "The old guys [veterans] gave me direction to develop a day where they could be with their community ... so they could share the true history of what they did. ... They wanted to be able to tell their stories in their own community and still have time to meet up with [other veterans] on Nov. 11."

Devin Beaudry, who served in the Royal Canadian Air Force for 35 years and worked alongside Gage to bring official recognition to Indigenous veterans, said official recognition is important as it honours those who sacrificed their lives in wars such as the First and Second World Wars, Korea, Bosnia and Afghanistan so that all Canadians could enjoy freedom.

With reference to Turtle Island — a name many Indigenous people use to refer to the continent of North America — Beaudry said people in the southern part of Turtle Island (i.e., the United States) are "suffering" from a lack of freedom that Indigenous people along with other Canadians fought for.

"We as a people in northern Turtle Island have that peace. We're able to come out today to celebrate not only with our brothers and sisters in arms on Nov. 8 but with our brothers and sisters in arms on Nov. 11," said Beaudry.

Veterans Lt.-Col. Rod Berscheid and his wife Capt. Jody Berscheid attended the ceremony to learn more about Indigenous Veterans Day after being invited by Randi Gage.

"We were in a meeting on a separate issue with Randi Gage, and during the course of the conversation she mentioned her military service and I mentioned mine, and she talked about how she had been instrumental in setting up Indigenous Veterans Day. She invited us here today to learn more. It's always good to learn more," said Rod Berscheid. "The questions that I had were, 'Why the second day? Why not just inclusion in the 11th of November?' And [Randi] gave an articulate explanation."

RM of Gimli Coun. Andy Damm said he too was invited by Randi Gage to attend the service. He wanted to learn more about the day since it was the "first time I had become aware of separate days as far as remembrance

goes." The ceremony included a special honour that Pedro Correia of the Portuguese War Veterans of Manitoba Association presented to Randi Gage and Devin Beaudry.

Several organizations and individuals took part in the laying of the

wreaths, representatives from the Aboriginal Veterans Autochtones, Coun. Corey Palsson from Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton, the Riverton Elks and the Riverton Djorfung Ladies Aid.

Pankratz laid a wreath on behalf of the federal government.

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Local Arborg shepherd and his sheep bring poetry to Holiday Alley

Holiday Alley brings four days of creativity, culture and community to downtown Selkirk

By Lana Meier

One of the most popular attractions at the Interlake's largest cultural festival owes its success to a sheep farmer from Arborg.

Three years ago, organizers of Holiday Alley in Selkirk approached Arik Lindal, Interlake director of the Manitoba Sheep Association, to help launch a new art project called Sheep Poetry. Since then, it has grown into one of the festival's signature activities. Holiday Alley runs Nov. 19 to 22 in downtown Selkirk.

Lindal transports eight sheep from his farm, provides the pen and helps fasten bibs around each of the animals. Each bib features a festive word. Visitors of all ages are encouraged to write poems inspired by the words on the sheep as they wander the enclosure. The poems are then displayed on the pen fence as public art, with this year's installation led by artist Claire Boning.

Lindal says he didn't expect to enjoy the role as much as he does.

"Originally I was just going to bring the sheep down and stand back, but I now spend a lot of time answering questions from children and adults about sheep farming," said Lindal, who comes from a long line of cattle farmers.

The event blends culture, creativity and agri-culture — a hallmark of Holiday Alley.

"The enchanting thing about Holiday Alley is the fine balance it creates between dreaming up



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Sheep Poetry on Holiday Alley is made possible by Arborg farmer Arik Lindal and his handsome sheep.

new and creative ideas every year and bringing back fan favourites," said Lois Wales, president of Red River North Tourism. "The team gets a bit wacky — like who would think 200 people every year would write poems based on words on sheep — but it works and is a visitor favourite."

She noted that Travel Manitoba named Holiday Alley the Best Event in Manitoba in 2023.

New programming this year reflects contributions from youth, community members and newcomers across the region.

Eight newcomers from Ukraine, Nigeria and India have collaborated on the Newcomers' Storytelling Café, taking place Saturday, Nov. 22 at 10 a.m. at Knox Presbyterian Church on



Sheep in festive bibs mingle during the Sheep Poetry installation at Holiday Alley in Selkirk, where visitors write poems inspired by the words on each animal.

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McLean Avenue in Selkirk.

A new culinary workshop hosted by Nobüz Market will explore the art of crafting non-alcoholic cocktails on Saturday, Nov. 22 at 5 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Students and educators are introducing three new art pieces exploring reconciliation through lanterns, hand drums and ceramic tiles. An Indigenous ribbon skirt fashion show will take place on the outdoor stage Saturday, Nov. 22 at 1 p.m.

For visitors seeking a slower pace, Glow Fitness will host a sound bath on Friday, Nov. 21 at 8 p.m.

Holiday Alley will also feature two choral performances at the United Church on McLean on Thursday, Nov. 20 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 22 at 4 p.m.

Fire on the Red III returns to the Selkirk waterfront Saturday, Nov. 22 at 7 p.m., where two giant straw sculptures created in collaboration with local students will be set ablaze. It remains the only public straw-burning art installation of its kind in Manitoba.

Back by popular demand, Easel Wars will run Saturday, Nov. 22 from noon to 3 p.m. at the Gwen Fox Gallery, where friends and family compete to complete paintings in rapid-fire rounds. Spots fill quickly.

Santa will also make multiple appearances, including selfies on the street Friday evening and Breakfast with Santa at the Mighty Kiwi in the Riverside Grill on Saturday, Nov. 22 from 9 to 11 a.m.

The full Holiday Alley schedule is available at holidayalley.ca.



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Manitoba Hydro, Fisher River Cree Nation sign collaboration agreement

By Lana Meier

Manitoba Hydro and Fisher River Cree Nation have signed a new collaboration agreement aimed at advancing energy self-sufficiency and supporting long-term economic development in the community.

The agreement, titled “mâlawi-atoskêtân” — meaning “working together” — establishes a framework for the two parties to jointly explore and evaluate energy projects that reduce consumption, increase local energy generation and create sustainable economic opportunities. The arrangement will see both groups meet regularly to identify priorities and carry out feasibility studies on proposed initiatives.

“Manitoba Hydro is committed to strengthening and improving our relationships with Indigenous communities,” said Allan Danroth, Manitoba Hydro president and CEO. “Through the mâlawi-atoskêtân agreement, we are charting a new path toward understanding the evolving energy needs of Fisher River and providing the service to support those needs as part of our commitment to economic reconciliation.”

Chief David Crate said the agreement aligns with the community’s vision for long-term growth.

“Our community is looking to the future and the mâlawi-atoskêtân agreement lays the groundwork for greater energy self-sufficiency and economic growth,” Crate said. “We’re



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Manitoba Hydro president and CEO Allan Danroth and Fisher River Cree Nation Chief David Crate sign the mâlawi-atoskêtân (Working Together) collaboration agreement in Fisher River Cree Nation. The five-year agreement will explore opportunities for energy self-sufficiency and community economic development.

looking forward to collaborating with Manitoba Hydro to build a brighter future for our people.”

Under the agreement, discussions will centre on projects that could support community needs and eco-

nomc expansion, including district or individual ground-source heating systems, energy efficiency upgrades for older commercial buildings, and analysis of Hydro equipment currently serving the community to determine whether system improvements are required.

A key area of interest is the potential expansion of Fisher River’s existing solar farm, which is currently the

largest in Manitoba. The parties will also explore the feasibility of connecting the community to the natural gas distribution network, as well as opportunities to pilot emerging renewable technologies such as community-scale wind power.

The mâlawi-atoskêtân agreement is in effect for five years. Each party is responsible for its own participation costs.

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Riverview Men's Shed - 90 Ashland Ave
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Lord Roberts Men's Shed - 725 Kylemore Ave
Garden City Men's Shed - Seven Oaks Arena 2nd fl.

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Soul'd Out Trio concert takes unexpected turn – but the show goes on in Ashern

By Lana Meier

What was meant to be an evening of southern gospel music from the U.S.-based Soul'd Out Trio took an unexpected turn Saturday night — but thanks to quick thinking and local faith, the concert in Ashern went ahead as planned.

Organizer Conrad Anderson of the Anderson Family Funeral Home said he received a call late Saturday afternoon with disappointing news.

"On Saturday, Nov. 1 just after 4 p.m., I received a call from Matt with Soul'd Out Trio letting me know they had some issues at the border and could not get into Canada," Anderson said. "They had flown to Fargo, N.D., because the cost of flights was so much less and were planning to drive up to Ashern. When he was calling, I was expecting the call to be him letting me know they were arriving in Winnipeg, but with that news I think I was in a state of disbelief for a few minutes."

Once the initial shock wore off, Anderson and his wife acted quickly to find an alternative performer.

"Thankfully, God provided," he said. "I called David Bracken, a young man from near Portage la Prairie, and within five minutes he called me back to confirm that he could come. That was at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday — and at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, he arrived in Ashern. He did a great job singing and playing his acoustic guitar."

Alongside Bracken's music, the evening also featured a powerful message from Pastor Dylan Chambers, whom Anderson had previously invited to share his testimony.

"Dylan grew up in Winnipeg, was involved in drugs and today he's a pastor at the church just down the street from where he grew up," Anderson said. "He has a great story to share of how God set him free from a life of addiction."

Despite the last-minute changes, the concert still ran smoothly and drew strong community support.

"The concert began at 6:05 and ended at 8:05, and we had a 15-minute break in there too," Anderson said. "I had in-



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY EMILY THORLACIUS

Musician David Bracken performs at a sold-out concert in Ashern on Nov. 1, stepping in on short notice after the U.S. group Soul'd Out was unable to cross the border. The event also featured a message of recovery and faith from Pastor Dylan Chambers.

vited the Ashern Central Grad Committee to sell coffee, drinks and snacks as a fundraiser, and they raised in the area of \$500, so that was a success as well. Our plans for the concert might have changed a bit, but it really was a great evening."

Anderson said he was moved by how the community responded and hopes to host another concert next year.

"I'm really thankful that so many people attended," he said. "We hope to do another concert night next year."

The group, known as Soul'd Out — sometimes billed as Soul'd Out Trio or formerly Soul'd Out Quartet — has built a loyal following for its powerful harmonies and in-

spiring blend of contemporary and southern gospel music.



The evening featured music and messages of hope, organized by Conrad and Sherry Anderson of Anderson Family Funeral Home.

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Gimli council asks residents to register for Clean Environment Commission lagoon hearing

By Patricia Barrett

RM of Gimli council is encouraging residents to register to participate in an upcoming Manitoba Clean Environment Commission hearing on a proposed sewage lagoon the Crystal Spring Hutterite Colony wants to build on the Armstrong-Gimli municipal border.

Council launched a “Speak for the Lake” campaign last week, asking residents to sign up and express their concerns on how they think the proposed sewage lagoon will impact the environment and Lake Winnipeg, into which lagoon effluent will flow.

“The RM of Gimli has registered to participate in the Clean Environment Commission (CEC) Crystal Springs [sic] Lagoon Proposal public hearing. We’ve retained expert consultants and submitted concerns about the potential impacts on Lake Winnipeg, Willow Creek, and surrounding ecosystems,” said communications spokesperson Christine Payne. “Now, we invite you — residents, fishers, Indigenous voices, environmental advocates and all who care about our shared waters — to Speak for the Lake. Your voice matters. Whether in writing or in person, you can Speak for the Lake.”

The Clean Environment Commission was established in 1988 to provide an opportunity for public engagement in the government’s decision-making process regarding environmental issues. The commission provides advice and recommendations to the environment minister.

The Crystal Spring colony bought approximately 640 acres of undeveloped land in the RM of Armstrong around the time of the pandemic. It lies be-

tween roads 106N and 107N and is bound by Road 15E to the east. The land includes a mix of dense forest and open boggy areas.

The colony had asked the provincial government to approve a licence so that it can build and operate a wastewater lagoon, which will treat both human and animal manure. Effluent will enter Lake Winnipeg via a roadside drain to Willow Creek, which runs east under Highway 8 and into the Siglavik residential subdivision and the coastal wetlands on Lake Winnipeg.

Residents in both municipalities, as well as commercial fishers and environmental organizations, have repeatedly spoken out about the proposed sewage lagoon, citing the land as being prone to flooding events and the lagoon’s potential to pollute Willow Creek and Lake Winnipeg by adding more phosphorus and nitrogen to the lake that can kill fish and destroy fish spawning grounds.

The RM of Gimli had expressed its concerns — e.g., impacts on commercial fishing and recreational angling, threatened bird species such as the bobolink and barn swallow, and fish spawning grounds in Willow Creek — in December 2023 via a letter through one of the RM’s lawyers (see the public comments file No. 6 that is posted on the province’s environment website).

It also expressed concern about “gaps” in hydraulic and geotechnical assessments, and the need for broader public consultation and Indigenous engagement.

A delegation from the Silver Harbour Association,



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY GAYLE HALLIWELL

Gayle Halliwell took a photo in 2023 of a thick algal bloom and dead fish in the Winnipeg Beach Harbour. Algal blooms deprive fish of oxygen and create dead zones in the lake. Communities along the west side of the lake were hit hard by extensive algal blooms that year.

Continued on page 20

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EBN launching Christmas hamper fundraising drive to address spiralling food insecurity

By Patricia Barrett

Gimli-based Evergreen Basic Needs (EBN) launched its Christmas-hamper fundraising drive as high food prices continue to put undue financial pressure on individuals and families in the communities the food bank serves.

Executive director Karen Bowman said the food bank fundraises only once a year, before Christmas, and this year she's anticipating an increase in the number of people requesting a Christmas hamper.

"Last year we distributed 230 hampers at Christmas and we had 188 children who were the recipients of our [free] toy-shopping day. That was a lot of kids. Going back to 2023, we made 207 hampers and had 158 children," said Bowman. "This year we're planning for 250 hampers because food prices are going up. Comparing September 2024 and September 2025, we've [the board] seen a general increase of 47 per cent hamper use. The growth has been very significant, and we may need more hampers than 250 this year."

Consumers are being hit hard by food inflation at the grocery store for items including fresh vegetables and meat as pressures such as trade tensions and volatile weather (affecting crop yields) affect prices.

Statistics Canada's Consumer Price Index for September 2025 says food prices continued to rise with a four per cent year-over-year increase in price that month for food purchased from stores. That follows a 3.5 per cent increase in food prices in August. September 2025 marked the "largest year-over-year increase in grocery prices" since April 2024.

Bowman said that because of the increased numbers of people turning to the food bank for help, EBN has had to purchase food again this year for its regular hampers. That's been in addition to the donations it receives from generous individuals and organizations in the community.

"We've had to purchase food a lot more this year than last year; we're up about 15 per cent in food purchases. We're serving more people and the cost of food is still high — even though it's plateaued a little bit," she said.

The food bank purchases food for its Christmas hampers rather than tap its existing stock, which goes towards clients' monthly hampers. The food bank wants to ensure everyone gets the same items in their hampers and that they do "a little extra for our neighbours who want to have a special time" at Christmas.

The average cost of a hamper is \$200, she said. If EBN distributes 250

hampers this year, it will cost the food bank about \$50,000.

Bowman said the communities EBN supports — Gimli, Winnipeg Beach, Dunnottar and Fraserwood — have always stepped up to support the food bank, whether through monetary donations during its Christmas hamper drive or at other time during the year with a tin for the bin. The Gimli Car Show, Red Apple and Gimli Ford were among many supporters that "really got us through this summer ... and helped keep our shelves full."

Bowman said she'd normally mail out flyers asking the community to consider making a monetary donation to the food bank to support a Christmas hamper, but this year she decided to change things up by using the media to get the word out.

In addition to monetary donations, people who want to support EBN's free toy-shopping day can drop off a new, unwrapped toy at EBN or deposit it in a toy collection box that will be set up in various businesses in the community.

"Our toys program is for newborns to 17 years of age. We're asking for donations of new, unwrapped toys. We set out all the toys into age categories in our warehouse, and parents or guardians can come in at their assigned time and choose toys for their kids," said Bowman. "It's our favourite day of the year because it's like Santa's workshop in here. We put on music and our staff and volunteers are dressed up in Christmas hats. In addition to toys, people will get a stocking stuffer, wrapping paper and a gift bag and we have handmade clothing such as mitts, toques, scarves, all brand new."

EBN will purchase toys if it doesn't have enough toys for a particular age group, she said. They're expecting the 11-15-year-old age group to be the largest group this year.

"Whatever age group donors want to buy for is fine. We will fill in the gaps. Older teens sometimes get left out because they're hard to buy for. But gift cards or gaming gift cards or hoodies are fine," she said. "We like a good cross-section of gifts such as Lego, books, puzzles, diaries or personal health care items."

There are a number of upcoming events in Gimli that will help support EBN's Christmas hamper and toy drive.

Adam T. Elvis will be performing at his annual EBN toy-drive event that's tentatively scheduled for the end of November, said Bowman. He typically holds the concert at EBN but this year it will be held in a different ven-



EXPRESS PHOTOS COURTESY OF KAREN BOWMAN

Evergreen Basic Needs' food bank team is shown in 2024. The food bank is expecting to provide 250 Christmas hampers this year as the cost of food is persistently high.



Generous donors filled the food bank with toys for children in 2024.

ue (date and place to be announced).

Giving Tuesday is scheduled for Dec. 2. The international day encourages people to make a donation to a food bank or other charity of their choice as a response to the consumerism of Black Friday.

And Fill a Sleigh Day at the Gimli Red Apple store on Centre Street is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 6. The event will include a barbecue, pictures with Santa (to be confirmed) and some "special guests" stopping by. People can either bring a toy to the event or buy a toy at the store or donate money.

People who need a Christmas hamper this year, toy-shopping time (if they have children) and options for hamper pick-up or delivery must pre-register with EBN so that the food bank can start to coordinate the hampers and delivery or pick-up times.

EBN is scheduled to deliver hampers on Tuesday, Dec. 9. People who are able to pick up their hampers at EBN can do so on Dec. 11. People who register to toy shop for their kids can

do so on Dec. 13.

To register for a Christmas hamper, pick-up or delivery options and toy-shopping, call EBN at 204-642-9736 and press 3 for Miles in the food bank.

People who wish to make a monetary donation to EBN for its 2025 hamper program, can drop by EBN in person (cheque, cash, credit card accepted). They will be asked to fill out a donation form and will receive a receipt.

People who prefer online can visit Canada Helps.org and search for Evergreen Basic Needs, which is registered on the site. Or they can visit EBN's website (evergreenbasicneeds.com) and find a link to Canada Helps.org.

People can also mail in a cheque to EBN. Canada Post is on rotating strikes so there could possibly be a delay.

For more information about EBN's Christmas fundraising drive, please call Karen Bowman at 204-642-9736. The food bank is located at 71 Fourth Ave. in Gimli.

Rotary Club supports young curlers, seeks Red Nose volunteers

By Lana Meier

The Gimli Rotary Club has kicked off its annual season of youth support with a \$1,000 donation to the community's fledgling U18 curling program, now in its second year.

The funds will help cover the registration fee for young athletes taking part in the Access Credit Union Youth Camp Jan. 17, 2026. It costs \$80 per participant and is intended for youths age 9-18.

"There are curling programs for kids and there are curling programs for adults here in Gimli," said Jay Boaz, a curling instructor for CurlManitoba. "The U18 program is to fill the gap and to encourage kids to continue playing as they get older."

Boaz said he applied to Rotary for the grant to ensure that cost isn't a barrier for youth who want to develop their skills on the ice.

You can register and pay online, and Boaz will then use the grant to at least partially reimburse participants. The

clinic will last five to six hours and lunch will be provided.

"This donation is just the start of our yearly commitment to youth programs," said Rotary Club member David Connors.

While the current contribution comes directly from the Rotary Club, one of its major fundraiser — Operation Red Nose — is set to return later this fall. Operated by the Gimli Rotary Club, Red Nose provides safe rides home during the holiday season and raises thousands of dollars each year for youth activities.

Last year alone, proceeds from Red Nose allowed the club to distribute \$8,000 in grants to local youth initiatives.

With the busy driving season approaching, the Rotary Club is now putting out an early call for volunteers to join the Operation Red Nose team.

If you or your organization is interested in lending a hand this year,



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Gimli Rotary Club president Dave LeBlanc hands over a \$1,000 cheque to Jay Boaz to support an upcoming U18 curling youth camp.

watch the Rotary Club of Gimli Facebook page for details on how to get involved.

Remembering a Hecla Island soldier who paid the price for peace

By Annaliese Meier

When Gudni Agust Amundson returned home from the First World War, he carried invisible scars that would claim his life before the age of 50.

Amundson, the son of Icelandic settlers on Hecla Island, was the only man from the community to enlist when war broke out in 1914. He left behind his family's lakeside homestead, known as Helga Vatn, to serve with the Canadian Expeditionary Force overseas.

Like many young Icelandic men of the time, Amundson had earned his living fishing on Lake Winnipeg before volunteering for service. His family believes he was motivated by a deep love of country and a sense of duty to defend the freedom his par-

ents had sought in Canada.

During the war, Amundson was exposed to poisonous gas on the battlefield, suffering severe and permanent lung damage. He spent a year hospitalized in England recovering from his injuries and wasn't discharged until July 1919 — months after the armistice.

"His lung damage was so extensive that it delayed his return home," said his granddaughter Alexa Okrainec. "He bore the effects of the war bravely, but it ultimately shortened his life."

After returning to Canada, Amundson married Stella Stefanson of Gull Harbour (Grund) and settled in Selkirk, where they raised two sons and two daughters. He continued fishing whenever his health allowed, but his war injuries lingered until his death at

age 47.

Amundson rarely spoke of his time overseas, and few details of his service have survived. His descendants say he carried those experiences quietly.

Though unaware during his lifetime, Amundson had earned the British War Medal and the Victory Medal for his service. Years later, his children accepted the medals on his behalf — a powerful symbol of remembrance for the family.

"It means everything to us to see Agust Amundson honoured and remembered," Okrainec said. "He didn't live to see his children grow up or meet his grandchildren, but we see how much he valued our freedom and the price he paid for the peace we enjoy today."



PHOTO SUBMITTED

First World War veteran Gudni Agust Amundson of Hecla Island.

> LAGOON, FROM PG. 18

near Arnes north of Gimli, had appeared before council last month, asking councillors to launch an awareness campaign.

The RM posted helpful links on its website under its Speak for the Lake campaign. They include an FAQ on what council is doing regarding the proposed sewage lagoon, a link to the CEC's website where people can register for the upcoming hearing and a link to the provincial environment department where all the documents pertaining to the Crystal Spring col-

ony's wastewater lagoon are publicly available.

Under the FAQ section, the RM says it had acknowledged community concerns about the proposed lagoon and discussed it during several council and committee of the whole meetings starting in December 2023 — the meetings are listed under the FAQ and their minutes can be publicly accessed via the agenda/minutes section of the RM's website.

Council has retained the services of a consultant to act as its expert for the upcoming CEC public hearing.

"The RM of Gimli has formally op-

posed the lagoon project and has submitted an application to participate in the Clean Environment Commission," states one of the FAQ answers. "The RM of Gimli has also retained the services of Dillon Consulting to act as its subject-matter expert in relation to the Clean Environment Commission hearing."

Visit the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission's webpage at cecm Manitoba.ca for more information about the proposed hearing, how to become a presenter (either in person or in writing) and how to get added to a CEC contact list for updates with

regard to the Crystal Spring colony's proposed wastewater lagoon.

To read correspondence and technical assessments related to the proposed sewage lagoon, visit the provincial government's department of environment and climate change's public registry to view file No. 6193 titled "Crystal Spring Colony New Development — Wastewater Lagoon 7317434 Manitoba Ltd. — Crystal Spring Colony Farms Ltd."

As of Nov. 9, the Clean Environment Commission had not yet set a date or a location for the public hearing on the sewage lagoon.

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

U17 Lightning looking to 'keep it simple'

By Kieran Reimer

The U17 AAA Interlake Lightning are still working to establish their identity in the early part of the season.

Interlake came close to victory twice on the weekend, but ultimately fell 6-5 to the league-leading Winnipeg Bruins on Saturday and 6-5 in overtime to the Ice Bandits on Sunday — a club the Lightning defeated just one week earlier.

The Lightning held leads in both games and, offensively, enjoyed one of their strongest weekends of the year. However, they collected only a single point when coaching staff felt four were within reach.

"We fell asleep for four minutes, and what good teams do is they take advantage of it," said head coach Jamie Leach, recalling Saturday's loss to Winnipeg. "They scored four goals and all of a sudden it's 4-1."

Leach, a former Stanley Cup champion, has emphasized the need for a consistent, full 60-minute effort in his first season behind the Lightning bench. He and assistants Liam Schioler and Reed Langlois currently have the club sitting eighth in the 10-team

Winnipeg AAA U17 League with a 2-9-0-2 record.

"We're chipping away," said Leach. "One of the main things is, if you show up to a game and you think you're not going to win, you're not going to win. It's definitely been a challenge that way."

"We have a group of kids that work really hard in practice. They have no problem putting the work in and trying to get better. We are seeing improvements in skill development, but thinking the game and hockey IQ have definitely created a challenge and we're continuing to work on it."

Interlake now turns its attention to a single-game weekend, hosting the Winnipeg Wild on Sunday afternoon in Lundar. The Wild defeated the Lightning 8-2 in their lone meeting back in October at Hockey For All Centre.

Sunday's matchup will provide a measuring stick for how far the Lightning have progressed. The club will be hunting its third win of the season.

Puck drop is set for noon at Lundar Arena.



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

Interlake's Declan Sanders moves the puck up ice during U17 AAA action in Warren on Nov. 8. Sanders assisted on two third-period goals as the Lightning mounted a late comeback before falling 6-5 to the Bruins.



Ryder Jacobson finishes a feed from Carson Kirk and Tavyn Sigurdson to cut into the deficit in the third period for the U17 Lightning in Warren on Nov. 8. Interlake scored three unanswered in the final frame before falling 6-5.

Manitoba teams battle world's best in Nevada

By Haley Cvar

Manitoba curling talent was on full display earlier this month as three local rinks lined up against world-class opposition at the KIOTI Grand Slam of Curling's Tour Challenge in Lake Tahoe, Nev., from Nov. 4 to 9.

Gimli's Team Kerri Einarson finished with a 2-2 record and narrowly missed a playoff berth, falling in a tiebreaker after a strong showing in round-robin play. Winnipeg Beach's Elias Huminicki and Team McDonald closed out the event at 1-3.

On the men's side, Team Dunstone — featuring Gimli product Colton Lott — went undefeated at 4-0 through the preliminary round to secure a spot in the playoffs. The rink advanced all the way to the championship

game before being edged by Scotland's Team Mouat in the final.

The Tour Challenge drew 16 men's and 16 women's teams representing 10 countries, including Canada, Sweden, Scotland, Switzerland, China, Germany, Japan, South Korea, the United States and Italy. Each team played four round-robin games, with top finishers advancing to the playoff round.

With the Grand Slam stop now behind them, all three Manitoba rinks will shift their focus to the upcoming Olympic Curling Trials in Halifax, running Nov. 22-30. The Trials will determine Canada's men's and women's representatives for the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milano Cortina.

Ice Dawgs outgunned by Comets in penalty-filled tilt

By Kieran Reimer

The Arborg Ice Dawgs couldn't recover from a second-period barrage and fell 6-2 to the Beausejour Comets in Capital Region Junior Hockey League action Friday at Arborg & District Arena.

Beausejour broke the game open with four goals in the middle frame, including three on the power play, to build a 5-0 lead through 40 minutes. Arborg's special teams pushed back late — Troye Genaille and Tavyn Sigurdson struck on third-period power plays at 17:13 and 13:43 — but the Comets' Evan Groening answered to put it out of reach.

Comets forward Lavery Melsted scored twice (both PPG) and Greyson Wood and Laughlin Cuthbert added first- and second-period markers. Liam Johnston also scored for Beausejour, who finished 3-for-9 with the man advantage.

Arborg went 2-for-10 on the power

play. Goaltender Zavery Wahoski faced 52 shots and made 46 saves in the loss, while Beausejour's Alex Cavanagh stopped 24 of 26.

The game turned chippy in the third, with multiple fights and misconducts whistled on both sides and well over 200 minutes assessed overall. Despite the parade to the box, the Ice Dawgs generated a 13-12 shots edge in the final period and found a bit of life on special teams before time ran out.

The loss drops Arborg to 0-7-0-2-0, holding seventh place in the CRJHL standings. The Ice Dawgs are in the midst of a six-game homestand and will look to rebound this weekend.

UPCOMING GAMES

Friday, Nov. 14 vs. Lunder Falcons, 8 p.m. (Country Night)

Saturday, Nov. 15 vs. North Winnipeg Satellites, 7 p.m. (Minor Hockey Night)



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY RAYME THOMSON

Arborg Falcons's Tavyn Sigurdson celebrates with teammates after scoring a third-period power-play goal against Beausejour on Friday.



Goaltender Zavery Wahoski tracks a shot through traffic during Friday's game against the Beausejour Comets. Wahoski made 46 saves in the 6-2 loss.



Falcons's Noah Smolinski takes control off the draw in Friday's matchup against the Beausejour Comets.

Falcons avenged by Habs in Saturday rematch

By Kieran Reimer

The Lunder Falcons opened the scoring but couldn't hold off a steady La Broquerie push, falling 5-2 to the Habs on Saturday night at Lunder Arena in Capital Region Junior Hockey League play.

After a scoreless first period, Lunder's Braeden Lukas put the Falcons ahead with his sixth of the season, finishing

a feed from Gavin Miller with 19 seconds left in the second. The lead was short-lived, however, as the Habs responded just over a minute later with a goal from Felix Asselin, then struck twice more before the end of the period. Chase Plett and Connor Tallaire both found the back of the net as La Broquerie carried a 3-1 lead into the third.

The Habs added to the advantage in the final frame with goals from Gabriel Asselin and Yanik Gagnon. Lunder's Taylor Paupanekis answered at 14:14, converting a passing play from Tyler Van Dam and Ronin Mouck to make it 5-2, but the Falcons couldn't close the gap further.

Goaltender Seth Hasker made 29 saves for Lunder, while the Falcons

generated 31 shots of their own but were unable to capitalize on six power-play opportunities.

Lunder sits sixth in the CRJHL standings with nine points through 11 games.

The Falcons head to Arborg on Friday, Nov. 14, to take on the Ice Dawgs at 8 p.m.

get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



Whipped Ricotta Toast with Prosciutto di Parma and Hot Honey

hot honey
6 slices (3 ounces) Prosciutto di Parma PDO

In toaster oven, toast bread to desired doneness. Set aside.

In large bowl, with electric mixer, beat ricotta until whipped and creamy, about 2 minutes. Add salt and pepper, to taste.

Spoon ricotta onto each toast evenly. Drizzle each with hot honey, as desired. Top each with two slices prosciutto.

Yield: 3 toasts (6 halves)
3 large slices thick-cut sourdough bread
1 container (16 ounces) whole milk ricotta cheese
salt, to taste
pepper, to taste



Grana Padano and Nutmeg Cheese Puffs

Add flour and stir using wooden spoon over low heat until mixture doesn't stick to bottom of pan. Add 1 cup cheese and stir 1 minute. Remove from heat.

Put mixture in mixing bowl and add eggs one by one until mixture is smooth. Add black pepper and nutmeg, to taste.

Let mixture cool and form dough into small, round parcels.

Fry parcels in hot canola oil, about 325 F, until golden.

Dust with remaining cheese and serve.

Servings: 4
1 3/4 cups milk
1 cup unsalted butter
1 teaspoon salt
1 2/3 cups flour
1 cup, plus 1 tablespoon, grated Grana Padano PDO cheese, divided
6 medium eggs
black pepper, to taste
nutmeg, to taste
canola oil, for frying
In pan, boil milk, butter and salt until butter is dissolved.



Truffle Mushroom Pizza

portobello, button or shiitake), minced

1 tablespoon picked thyme
2 cups heavy cream
2 tablespoons cornstarch
4 tablespoons water
2 tablespoons truffle oil
salt, to taste
pepper, to taste

Pizza:

1 pizza dough
grated or fresh mozzarella cheese
mushrooms
spinach (optional)
cooked sausage (optional)

To make cream sauce: In saucepan

Recipe courtesy of Chef Trimmell Hawkins, Current
Cream Sauce:
Oil or butter, for sauteeing
1/4 cup onions, small diced
3 garlic cloves, minced
1/2 cup mushrooms (such as baby

Expert patient here to help!



Susie Schwartz

NOVEMBER IS DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH

Before you tune out, have a look at this: according to Diabetes Canada, 5,804,740 people in Canada — or about 15 per cent — have diabetes, some of whom are undiagnosed. By 2034, that number is projected to rise to 7,303,620, or roughly 16 per cent of Canadians. About 95 per cent of cases are type 2.

Before I go further, I promise this isn't all bad news. I'm going to put tools in your hands to help.

Why should you care about the stats? Well, first off, look around. Do you see 15 people? One of you will either have or develop diabetes. So it's you, or someone you love.

Why else? Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness in Canada, and it's also a major cause of heart and kidney disease. It affects nerves and muscles, causing pain and dysmotility, and it even affects the bladder. (No one told me that until it happened!)

Having had type 1 diabetes since age nine, I can attest to the nastiness of this disease.

So what can you do? Recognize that lifestyle factors make an enormous difference when it comes to type 2 diabetes — and even small

changes can have a positive impact. These small moves count toward prevention and better control if you already have the disease.

Here's a reminder of some things you probably already know can make a difference:

Park farther away from the door of a public place, like a grocery store. Steps really do count. Pay attention to how much unhealthy fat you eat — and cut some out. (Just noticing doesn't count. Nice try.) If you have a few pounds to lose, lose them. Picture a pound of butter. Now imagine carrying even five or 10 fewer of those. That extra weight makes your pancreas work too hard.

Here are some less obvious choices: increase your fibre intake, especially at mealtime. Start your meals with fibrous foods — think a starter salad or a few mouthfuls of vegetables before you hit the rice or potatoes. Fibre helps create a smaller spike in blood glucose, making your pancreas work less hard. When you start with vegetables, this effect is even stronger. (Follow @glucosegoddess on social media for more info.)

When eating a high-carb meal like pasta, drizzle on some olive or avocado oil. Healthy fats slow down sugar absorption, easing the load on your pancreas. Want your insulin to work more efficiently? Do a few squats (use a wall if you're unsteady) or go for a short walk after your meal. This burns off sugar and makes you more sensitive to insulin.

I really don't want you to get diabetes — or its complications. Please, spread the word.

Less health stress, yes?

A published author and musician, Susie currently lives in the UK. Find her on Instagram @authorsusieschwartz, and at www.lesshealthstress.com. (Email: info@lesshealthstress.com) The 2nd edition of her book, 'Help the Doctor Help You!' is available now on Amazon.

over medium heat, add oil or butter. Saute onions until translucent then add garlic and mushrooms. Cook until mushrooms release moisture and begin to caramelize.

Stir in picked thyme and cook 1 minute to release oils.

Add heavy cream and bring to gentle simmer. Let it reduce slightly, 5-7 minutes.

In small bowl, mix cornstarch and water to make slurry. Slowly whisk into simmering cream sauce until it

reaches desired consistency.

Remove from heat and stir in truffle oil. Taste and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper.

To prepare pizza: Preheat Current Model P Smart Pizza Oven to 850 F. While oven heats up, roll dough out to 8-12 inches and add desired amount of cream sauce.

Top with mozzarella, mushrooms, spinach and sausage, as desired. Once oven is hot, cook pizza 2 minutes until bubbly.

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Expression of Interest for a Contract Technical Advisor

Westshore Community Foundation Inc. will be contracting a part-time Technical Advisor to work with us in implementing the Free to Play Program in our catchment area of Riverton, Gimli, Fraserwood, Winnipeg Beach and Dunnottar. This is a new national funding program for projects supporting outdoor play for children running until the end of 2028. The Technical Advisor will bring expertise on out-door play that helps kids be active, creative and social – away from screens and in safe, welcoming spaces where they can play freely. They will help with:

- Outreach to promote the program
- Providing advice to potential applicants
- Support application review
- Assist in program delivery
- Assist with evaluation and data collection

Please submit your Expression of Interest to:
admin@wcf-foundation.ca by November 21, 2025



Rural Municipality of
FISHER

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

PROPOSALS

SNOW CLEARING RM OF FISHER OFFICE 30 TACHE STREET

The Rural Municipality of Fisher is inviting proposals for snow clearing of sidewalks and rear office building entrance at the RM Office and Fire Hall located at 30 Tache Street.

- Clearing to be completed prior to weekday office hours of 8:00 a.m.
- Snow removal equipment to be provided by the applicant.

Sealed envelope to be marked:

**"Snow Clearing – RM of Fisher Office
& Fire Hall Sidewalks"**

For further information, call the RM of Fisher Office at 204-372-6393. Lowest tender not necessarily accepted. Renewal for future seasons a possibility.

Deadline for proposals is 4:00 p.m. December 2, 2025

Written sealed tenders to be dropped off at:

Rural Municipality of Fisher
30 Tache Street, Fisher Branch, MB
Fisher Branch, MB R0C 0Z0

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Round hardcore bales of alfalfa & brome grass. Ph 204-461-0722.

HAY FOR SALE

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Rural Municipality of
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www.Grahamdale.ca

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

3 Year Gravel Contract

Hauling and Depositing Gravel/Crushed Rock from designated stockpiles in the RM of Grahamdale.

Sealed Requests for Proposals marked "GRAVEL/CRUSHED ROCK CONTRACT" will be received by 12 Noon Tuesday, December 2, 2025, at the RM of Grahamdale Municipal Office.

Please visit www.grahamdale.ca or email rm606@grahamdale.ca for more information on this RFP or to obtain a specification and proposal form.

Shelly Schwitek, CAO
Rural Municipality of Grahamdale



MUNICIPALITY OF BIFROST-RIVERTON REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Food Service - Riverton Curling Rink

The Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton invites proposals from qualified respondents to operate the food service at the Riverton Curling Rink. Interested and qualified respondents must submit their proposals electronically or in sealed envelopes labeled "Canteen Operator – Riverton Curling Rink" by 2:00 p.m. November 18, 2025 to the attention of:

Larissa Love, CAO
PO Box 70
Arborg, MB R0C 0A0
Email cao@bifriv.ca

INTENT OF PROPOSAL The Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton will lease the canteen space to the successful bidder to operate the canteen for the rink season commencing immediately and ending March 31st, 2026, with option to renew the contract for a maximum of two additional one-year terms, based on valuation of performance after each season. The Municipality is looking for a monthly lease option. The lessee is responsible for providing services whenever the rink is open to the public, with hours subject to variation due to tournaments, special events, and ice bookings. Operational decisions are made in consultation with the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton and the selected lessee. The lessee is obliged to be open during rink hours unless alternative arrangements are approved by the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton.

The successful operator agrees to acquire all necessary certificates to operate a food service canteen on the Premises. Proof of these certificates must be provided before signing the lease agreement.

APARTMENT FOR RENT

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Your Interlake Coin Collector – buying old coins & paper money. Phone David 204-798-3045.

MISCELLANEOUS

For sale – 10 yrd. Miskin Field Scraper, \$12,500; 2 pressure vessel semi trailer tanks, \$7500 each; 2 – 2500 new tanks, fibreglass, comes with mounts, \$25,000 ea.; 1 Berming hammer, 8000 lb., \$15,000; 1 tree shear, \$17,500, as new; 1 – 9000 lb. grapple, hyd., \$12,000; used culverts, 18" to 66"; 2 service decks, 1 ton – \$1700 & 5 ton – \$3500; Howard hover craft, 14" x 28", body only, \$4500. Wanted – groups of 16" x 245 or 265 tires; '94 Chev 4x4, ¾ ton pick up; Case 1845 skidsteer; musical – bagpipes, guitars, amps, bangos. Call 431-737-6441.

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Darrell and Ted Hartog invite offers by mail or in person to Pitblado Law, 349 Main St, Box 4045, Arborg, MB, R0C 0A0 by **November 30, 2025**. The SW quarter has approx. 110 cultivated acres. Quarters may be purchased together or separately. Any chattels on the lands may be bargained for. Offers must include a deposit payable to Pitblado Law of not less than 2% of the tendered amount (to be returned if not accepted). The highest or any offer may not be accepted. Successful offeror will be notified upon acceptance. Please direct any inquiries to 204-376-5156.

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204-467-1858
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mcsherrytld@gmail.com



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Impact Assessment
Agency of Canada

Agence d'évaluation
d'impact du Canada

Project 6 – All-season Road Linking Manto Sipi Cree Nation, Bunibonibee Cree Nation, and God's Lake First Nation Public Comments Invited

November 7, 2025 — The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) is conducting a federal environmental assessment of the proposed Project 6 - All-season Road Linking Manto Sipi Cree Nation, Bunibonibee Cree Nation, and God's Lake First Nation, located in Manitoba.

IAAC invites Indigenous Peoples and the public to comment on the draft Environmental Assessment Report that includes IAAC's conclusions and recommendations regarding the potential environmental effects of the project and their significance, and the proposed key mitigation measures and follow-up programs.

Visit the project homepage on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry (canada.ca/iaac-registry), reference number 80138, to:

- Learn more about the project.
- Submit your comments online by **11:59 p.m. on December 8, 2025**. All comments will be published to the Registry

Have a question?

Write to us at project6allseasonroad-projet6routetoutessaison@iaac-aeic.gc.ca or visit our website at canada.ca/ciar.

For media inquiries contact media@iaac-aeic.gc.ca.



Scan the QR-Code
to visit the project
home page

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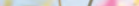
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Victor Dann

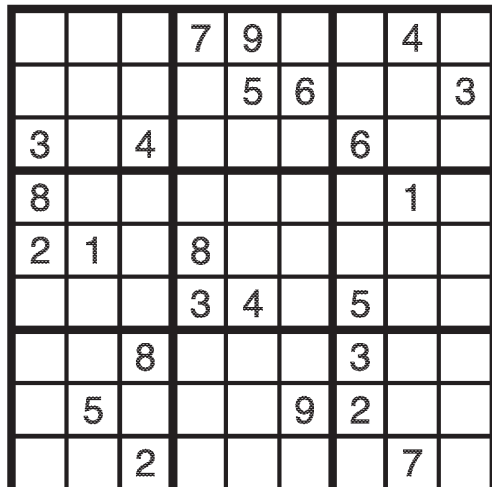
Tributes: www.gilbartfuneralhome.com

Gilbert Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



take *a break*
 > GAMES

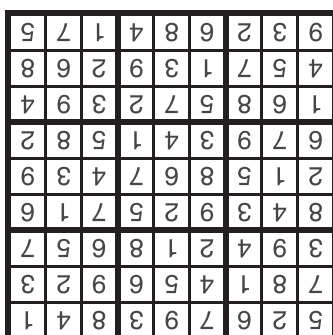
SUDOKU



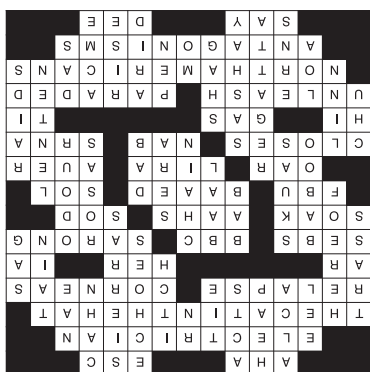
Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Intermediate

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!



Sudoku Answer



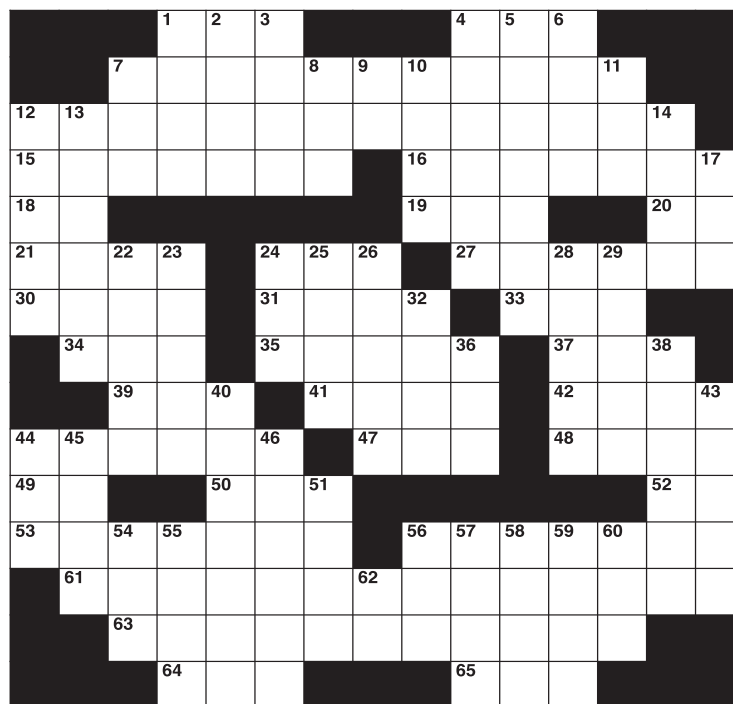
Crossword Answer

CROSSWORD

1. Expression of surprise
4. Keyboard key
7. One who works on lights
12. Notable children's story
15. Fall back into a bad pattern
16. Eye parts
18. Atomic #18
19. Of she
20. Farm state
21. One point south of southeast
24. British media entity
27. Asian garment
30. Drench
31. Expressions of pleasure
33. Turf
34. UK trade union (abbr.)
35. Bleated
37. Fifth note of a major scale
39. Paddle
41. Monetary unit of Italy
42. American classical pianist
44. Shuts down for the day
47. Seize
48. Soluble ribonucleic acid
49. Greeting
50. Some cars still need it
52. Atomic #22
53. Let go
56. Marched in public
61. U.S. residents, Mexicans and Canadians
63. Hostilities
64. Speak aloud
65. River in NE Scotland

1. Razorbill genus
2. Longtime Baltimore tight end
3. Performs on stage
4. Supports a sentiment
5. Rugged mountain ranges
6. Broadway songwriter

Sammv



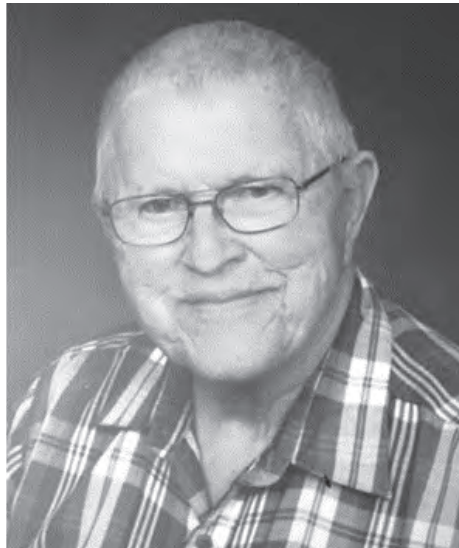
7. Snakelike fish
8. Men's fashion accessory
9. Hospital worker
10. Something to scratch
11. No (Scottish)
12. Volcanic ash
13. Of this
14. American jazz drummer
Watts
17. Drop down
22. English dialect
23. Predatory seabirds
24. Imams' deputies
25. Fertility god
26. Fence material
28. Parks and DeLauro are t
29. Distinctive smell (Brit.)
32. Protein-rich liquids
36. Touch lightly
38. Season for Catholics

40. Boat race
43. Police actions
44. Chinese river
45. Waterfall (Scottish)
46. Walk ostentatiously
51. Type of carpet
54. Mauna __, Hawaiian volcano
55. Sea eagles
56. An enclosure for confining livestock
57. Dry
58. An increase in price or value
59. The highest point of something
60. Government lawyers
62. Larry and Curly's pal

IN MEMORIAM



Helen Lysak
December 17, 1933 – November 14, 1982



George Lysak
August 20, 1932 – November 16, 2021

If tears could build a stairway,
And memories a lane;
We'd walk right up to heaven,
And bring you home again.
God has you in His keeping,
In our hearts you will always be.
Forever loved and missed.
-Your daughter Cathy and family

OBITUARY



Dianna Irene Kryzanowski

Peacefully, on October 27, 2025, Dianna Kryzanowski passed away at Riverview Health Centre.

Mom was predeceased by her husband Wally; son Gregory; parents George and Josie Symyneshen; and sister Verna Dolinski.

Mom will be lovingly remembered by her daughter Denise, son-in-law Michael, grandson Gregory Jr., granddaughter Brandy, Smudrick the cat and Walter the dog.

Mom worked as postmaster for 60 years, and for 25 years at Betel Home. She spent countless hours working on her yard and garden.

Funeral Service will be held on Saturday, November 22, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. at the Fraserwood Hall.

We would like to thank the Doctor and staff of Riverview Health Centre for the wonderful care that Mom received.



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Announcements



OBITUARY



Victor Potoski

October 12, 1942 – November 4, 2025

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our father, Victor, who passed away at Arborg Hospital at the age of 83 years. He was a beloved Husband, Father, Gigi, Brother, Uncle and Friend.

Left to cherish his memories are his daughters Lori-Anne (Chad), Melanie (Bradley); grandchildren Lauryn (Kirk), Keenan (Jessica), Bryden, Gracyn, Colton; great-grandchildren, Alaina, Bostyn, Tytan and Hollynd. Victor is survived by his sisters Josephine and Eva; brother Sam (Lois); sister-in-law Kay and numerous nephews and nieces.

He is predeceased by his loving wife Donna of 50 years and infant son Victor Jason (1971); parents Andrew and Annie; brothers Steve, Harry, Mike (Bernice), Peter, and William; sisters Mary (Andrew), Nellie (Walter), Rose (Kazimir), Pearl (Mike), Dora (Mike), Catherine (Baldur), and Jeannie (Marvin); three infant sisters; and brothers-in-law Gavrock and Frank.

Victor was born on the family farm in Jaroslaw, attending school in Finns to the age of 14, quitting to help on the family farm. He then proceeded to cut pulp in the bush, work on Lake WPG on the Susanne E, packing fish for Albert Magnusson, BACM, Gimli Distilleries, Dad's passion was construction, where he could be found on his Dozer. He worked for MW Orbanski Construction, which gave both him and Mom the opportunity to work in Dawson City mining for gold for 12 years side by side. Adding to his years in construction, he also worked with River East, Pine Wood, Lakeside, Arnason's and in 2023 with his grandson Keenan at Sungro Peat Moss plant.

When Dad was not away at work, you could always find him in his garage working on some project, in his garden or doing yard work. He absolutely loved Christmas, winning many Christmas light contests. Dad also very much enjoyed every visit from his nephews and nieces, especially Johnny and Wayne.

Family would like to thank Dr. Nazim and staff at Arborg Hospital for their support and wonderful care.

On November 10, 2025, a Graveside Service was held at 12:00 p.m., Jaroslaw Holy Eucharist Ukrainian Cemetery, followed by Memorial Service at 2:00 p.m. at Riverton Community Hall.



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OBITUARY

Irene Weidner

August 17, 1923 – November 7, 2025

Peacefully on November 7, 2025, Irene Weidner aged 102, formerly of Moosehorn, MB, passed away at the Ashern Personal Care Home.

A funeral service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 15, 2025 in the Peace Lutheran Church, Moosehorn, MB with Dawn Tober officiating. Interment to follow in the New Home Cemetery.

Arrangements by:
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