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## Making holidays merrier

EXPRESS PHOTO BY LANA MEIER

Arborg's Red Apple Store and The Bargain! Shop employees, left to right, Benjamin Danielson, Joanne Beaubien and John Mulvena are hoping to make the holidays much merrier for everyone this Christmas season. The store is hosting a Together We Care® Toy Drive from Nov. 20 to Dec. 11 and Fill-a-Sleigh Day on Dec. 11. They are collecting toys and gifts for families in need and on Dec. 11, 10 per cent of all in-store sales will be donated to local charities.

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# Holiday craft sales continue across the Interlake

By Nicole Brownlee

Local craft sales continue as the holidays creep closer, and one community organization hopes for great success.

The Riverton & District Friendship Centre is continuing its tradition of hosting a holiday craft sale to fundraise for the food bank that services the municipality of Bifrost-Riverton and Arborg.

"Anything we can get is just greatly appreciated," said Tanis Grimolfson, executive director of RDFC.

The Friendship Centre has already received a donation of \$3,000 from the Town of Arborg to sponsor the food bank as an early holiday gift.

"That is a huge help for us," said Grimolfson.

The community organization usually brings in around \$4,000 from their annual markets.

In past years, the Riverton market attracted around 40 vendors and the Arborg market over 60.

"With COVID-19, we know we're not going to get as many vendors, but we still thought we would give it a try," said Grimolfson.

The Friendship Centre is also hosting their annual pierogi fundraiser at both markets, with all proceeds from pierogi purchases going towards the food bank.

The market will be held on Dec. 3 at the Riverton Community Hall from 5 to 9 p.m. and on Dec. 10 at the Arborg-Bifrost Community Centre from 5 to 9 p.m.

All vendors and attendees need to be double vaccinated to participate at both markets.

The New Iceland Heritage Museum in Gimli is also hosting its annual craft sale at the museum.

"It's a way to bring people into the museum and for them to check out our own gift shop ... and some of our vendors have an Icelandic spin on them," said Juliana Roberts, executive director of the museum.

The museum is welcoming eight vendors at the market this year, selling quilted items, clothing, handcrafted items and more. Admission is free, and complimentary hot chocolate and cookies are available to visitors as they exit the museum.

"We are really supported by the community," said Roberts.

"I have great confidence that it will be a successful market."

Visitors can also check out the current exhibit at the museum, called From the Attic, which showcases items from their archived collection.

"We have 3,500 artifacts, so a volunteer, Chris Brooks, went into our col-



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Annual Christmas Markets are being held in Riverton, Arborg, Gimli and Winnipeg Beach. Vendors in attendance will include crafters, home-based businesses, baking and more.

lection and brought out some interesting items that we haven't shown before," said Roberts.

All visitors must be double vaccinated to attend the market.

The Moonlite Madness Indoor Craft and Vendor Market has returned to Winnipeg Beach.

The market is a part of a larger event hosted by the town of Winnipeg Beach that includes performances at the bandstand, lighting the community Christmas tree and enjoying a roaring bonfire.

"It's kind of a nice, warm, fuzzy, merry Christmas, family event," said Allan Sulyma, Winnipeg Beach recreation director.

On Dec. 3 from 4 to 9 p.m. at the Winnipeg Beach Community Centre and the Winnipeg Beach Legion, visitors can peruse a variety of vendors selling handcrafted wares, baked goods and decorations.

Around 40 vendors will be available between the two locations. Local businesses are also offering special deals and attractions to join in the holiday

fun.

"The businesses are staying open and doing special things," said Sulyma.

Carlo's Cucina, Shenanigans on the Beach, the Winnipeg Beach General Store and more businesses will stay open late on Dec. 3.

Visitors can also take a socially distanced photo with Santa Claus at the community centre at 7:30 p.m.

The community bonfire will be lit near the bandstand around 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 3, where cookies and hot chocolate will be distributed.

Mayor Tony Pimentel will kick off the event wishing the community happy holidays, and Elvis Presley impersonator Adam T. Elvis will get the community moving and grooving.

"It's something that people should experience," said Sulyma.

All visitors 12 years and older must bring proof of double vaccination to attend the markets.

Visit the Town of Winnipeg Beach Facebook page to learn more about the event.

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# Interlake woman, 100, forced to give up hospital bed

By Patricia Barrett

Age doesn't matter when it comes to mandatory transfers of Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority patients from their hometown hospitals to facilities in other health regions as the provincial government tries to create acute care bed space.

Ruth Sampson, who is 100 and a half years old, was in the Stonewall hospital recovering from a serious fall she had at Thanksgiving, but became a transfer victim last week when the Stonewall & District Health Centre sent her to Crystal City.

Crystal City is in the Southern health region, near the Manitoba-North Dakota border. It's about 214 kilometres southwest of Stonewall.

The IERHA was following the provincial government's mandatory patient transfer protocol, which came into effect in October, to free up hospital bed space for COVID patients and other acute care patients.

Sampson's niece, Linda Tyerman, and her husband David said they were given fewer than five hours' notice on Nov. 23 that their aunt was being transferred to the Rock Lake Hospital in Crystal City. When they protested — saying family members, including great-nieces and nephews, would have no opportunity to say goodbye — they were given a reprieve until the following morning.

"We had absolutely no say in this decision. It was all up to the IERHA," said Linda last Friday. "Some people were transferred to Roblin and Russell, we heard. I heard that one person was going to be transferred to Flin Flon but that got stopped because they probably took their family member home. This is just ignorant on the IERHA's part."

Linda, who is her aunt's primary caregiver, said they drove to Crystal City on Nov. 24, about an hour after the ambulance left with their aunt, to ensure she didn't feel abandoned and had family with her to help her settle in.

"There was no way in hell I was letting my Auntie Ruth be taken halfway across the province to an unknown hospital all alone," said Linda. "There were many, many tears and that was very hard to see. Very hard."

David Tyerman said the forced transfer of a 100-year-old senior far from her family and her friends, and from the only home she has ever known, showed a complete lack of compassion.

"She's 100 frickin' years old and she's lived in this community for 100 years. On top that, some of our relatives who work in health-care are saying, 'Why



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

One-hundred-year-old Ruth Sampson was transferred from the Stonewall & District Health Centre to free up bed space for COVID patients and others requiring acute care. Pictured with Ruth is her niece Linda Tyerman and nephew David Tyerman.

are we working so hard, putting in all these hours to support this system when we can't even keep our centenarian aunt in our own community?" he said. "What's it all for when somebody turns you around when you're 100 years old and gives you a good swift kick and says, 'We're done with you. Bye-bye.'"

The forced transfer is having a ripple effect through their family, said David. And Ruth's friends, who are in their 80s and 90s, can't make the 200-plus-kilometre drive down to Crystal City to visit her.

"There's not a hope they can make that journey. Before this, Ruth was a block and a half away. And she has lots of friends. She has been in the Lions [club] for 15 years," he said.

Linda said it didn't make any sense sending her aunt from one hospital to another hospital. And taxpayers are the ones picking up the tab for the ambulance ride out of the region. They'll also be paying for the ride back should capacity in the IERHA improve and patients are allowed to

return.

"People are going to hear about this [transfer protocol] and might be scared to go into the Stonewall hospital because they could get shipped off to Timbuktu," she said.

The Tyermans received a letter from the IERHA dated Nov. 24 — the same day their aunt was bundled into an ambulance and taken away — stating the health region, in accordance with "provincial patient transfer protocols," is relocating low acuity patients outside the region because of COVID-19 pressures and to "accommodate ongoing non-COVID related acute care needs."

It goes on to say that Sampson's repatriation to a personal care home in the region is a priority.

"Transfer will be arranged at the first opportunity that a personal care home bed becomes available in the region," states the letter.

The problem is PCH beds in the IERHA are at a premium. Linda said her aunt has already been "panelled" (had a request for placement in a personal care home approved), but she won't be able to come back to Stonewall because the town's Rosewood Lodge PCH has a two-year waiting list. They've instead had to put Ruth on the waiting lists of nursing homes in Selkirk. She has no idea when her aunt will be allowed back.

Linda and David said they reached

Continued on page 5

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- Riverton Moonlight Madness & Christmas Market

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- Arborg Christmas Market

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# TJ's Gift Foundation provides resources for youth

## Helping young people choose to be drug-free

By Katelyn Boulanger

There are many excellent resources in our community that help people with addictions — from the Manitoba Harm Reduction Network to the health-care providers at our local health authority to the businesses in our communities that have chosen to keep available and sometimes even distribute naloxone kits.

TJ's Gift Foundation is a Manitoba organization that comes before those resources, helping kids feel empowered to say no to drugs.

T.J. Wiebe was a caring 20-year-old who played many musical instruments, liked to go snowmobiling, and felt the weight of the world on his shoulders from a young age.

He was murdered on Jan. 5, 2003. Though he was not killed directly due to drug consumption, his mother and executive director of the TJ's Gift Foundation, Karen Wiebe, says his use of drugs put him in touch with the person who ultimately took his life.

"This foundation was created as a response to the drug involvement that T.J. had and the wish to have help kids make safer choices so that they were not ending up being involved with people they didn't know, being in unsafe situations, and as an extreme, of course, losing in their lives — and, their families not having to be put in the same position that we were put in when T.J. was murdered," said Wiebe.

The foundation reaches out to chil-

dren in many ways to tell T.J.'s story and let youth know that getting involved in drugs can mean they are put in situations that they don't have knowledge or experience in, and that could turn out poorly for them.

One of the ways T.J.'s mother spreads this message is by presenting to schools free of charge, either in person or over Zoom, telling his story and allowing kids to understand what happened.

"I do go to schools, I teach, and I talk about the choices he made, about the choices the killers made, [and] about their choices that they can make to be safe. I encourage them to take a pledge to themselves. We actually handle pledge cards that are for themselves. They're not for their parents or teachers; they're for themselves and ask them that when they're ready to sign, they sign it and hold it in an important place. And we know that that actually has been a very important function because we've had kids through the years that have reported to us," said Wiebe.

Another way that they help is through Battle of the Bands, which is hosted every year in February.

"It's an opportunity for kids in high school that have garage bands to have their bands perform and to win prizes to share," said Wiebe.

Last year, the grand prize was a recording by Bedside Studios and 25 custom T-shirts printed by Crazy



**EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED**  
*Little One*, a book for children who come from homes with addictions, is put together through TJ's Gift Foundation.

Maiden.

"We open this up to every kid without saying you have to be drug-free. We want all kids to come. But we also tell T.J.'s story at this event," said Wiebe.

Pre-COVID, they also hosted Rock-in' for Choices as an event where local bands come together to perform and speak about their experiences with drugs and why they choose to be drug-free.

Another project they have created is a children's book called *Little One*, written in collaboration with stu-

dents. This book is for children who are coming from homes where there may be addictions present.

"[Students who come from homes with addictions] come to school. School is a safe place for them, but it's also a foreign place because the other kids that go to school also go to the zoo with mom and dad, have Fort Whyte memberships, and go Christmas shopping. These kids don't receive those things. So, it's also a place of alienation for them, and we want to get something in their library, something that's for those kids that would offer them hope and offer acknowledgement of their own resiliency," said Wiebe.

Currently, the group is hosting a video contest until the end of January.

"[The video contest] is wanting kids to create videos, talking about the dangers of drugs, as they understand it, because kids are so amazing. They present things and the ideas they have and their understanding of how their friends think [in their own ways]," said Wiebe.

She believes that sharing her lived experience of T.J.'s story allows the kids who hear it to understand the impact that the choice to use drugs can have on not just them but their whole community.

"What we're trying to do is reach kids at a basic level with a very true, very powerful message," said Wiebe.

To learn more about TJ's Gift Foundation, their programs or purchase a copy of *Little One*, visit their website at <https://www.tjsgift.com/>.

# New COVID variant, Omicron, confirmed in Canada

## Travel ban from southern Africa implemented

By Patricia Barrett

A new COVID-19 variant that is making swift progress in southern Africa, and has already found its way to Canada, has prompted the Canadian government to restrict travellers from that region.

The World Health Organization has named the new variant Omicron (B.1.1.529). It was confirmed in Ontario on Nov. 28.

Last Friday the federal government placed a two-month travel ban on foreign nationals from the southern Af-

rican region, including from countries such as South Africa, Lesotho, Eswatini, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Namibia.

Foreign nationals who were in the southern Africa region within the last 14 days will not be permitted entry into Canada. Canadian citizens who were there are required to quarantine for two weeks and undergo testing, according to a statement released by the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Two cases of Omicron were detected in Ottawa in individuals who recently arrived from Nigeria, according to a Nov. 28 statement from the Ontario government.

The virus has also been confirmed in the Netherlands, Israel and the U.K.

South Africa was the first country to report B.1.1.529 to the World Health Organization on Nov. 24, according to

the WHO.

"The epidemiological situation in South Africa has been characterized by three distinct peaks in reported cases, the latest of which was predominantly the Delta variant. In recent weeks, infections have increased steeply, coinciding with the detection of B.1.1.529 variant. The first known confirmed B.1.1.529 infection was from a specimen collected on 9 November 2021," states the WHO.

The WHO decided to designate the virus a variant of concern because of the alarming number of mutations it has and its potential for increased transmissibility and severity of disease — although those have yet to be determined. What is also unclear at this point is how well COVID vaccines will stand up to the variant, as well as drugs such as corticosteroids.

Studies are already underway to evaluate the variant's transmissibility, disease severity, immune escape and diagnostic or therapeutic escape, says the WHO.

The WHO is asking countries around the world to enhance their surveillance and sequencing efforts, share genome sequences, report initial cases and, where capacity exists, assess immune responses and severity of the variant.

The organization is also reminding individuals to continue to wear well-fitting masks, practise physical distancing, avoid crowded spaces and get a COVID vaccine.

Canada's travel ban from the southern African region is in place until Jan. 31, 2022.



# letter to the editor

Letters to the Editor:  
letters@expressweeklynews.ca

## Gimli ski club frustrated with disregard for club property

As we make ready for another snow-filled cross-country ski season, we feel a sadness and frustration for the lack of respect received for the ski club's equipment and warm-up facilities. We manage trails and wood supply in concert with Parks and Water Stewardship and have for years witnessed cord wood theft and general misuse of our warm-up facilities. The past two years, we have fallen victim to a higher level of crime as we have faced a litany of "break and enter" events as well as theft of equipment over \$5,000! The chronology of the crime wave is as follows:

October 2019 - East side warm up facility - Fisher wood stove and interior stove pipe assembly stolen.

February 2020 - East side wood storage crib was emptied in theft.

April 2020 - West side fuel containers stolen (pre-

mium gas in both).

March 2021 - East side warm-up facility door vandalized and wood crib broken and all wood stolen. Solar security lighting also taken.

June 2021 - West side Ski Club storage was vandalized using pry bars and a vehicle to ram the steel core garage door to gain access. A 2020 Stihl 170 Chainsaw and 2020 Echo Field saw were absconded.

November 2021 - West side warm-up facility had the second Fisher wood stove and chimney assembly stolen, following the removal of a security barrier. The executive has met with the RCMP and Parks regarding next steps toward improved security measures, which all are attainable with further fundraising efforts next year. In the meantime, we will reach out to members and Park enthusiasts to



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

This west side Fisher woodstove was stolen October 2019 and then a second one November 2021.

increase our security vigilance in hopes of avoiding further loss for our outdoor enthusiasts and volunteers alike.

- Craig Mackie  
President of Gimli Ski Club

## > HOSPITAL BED, FROM PG. 3

out to their local MLA, who "never responded," to their MP, who gave them phone numbers of people to call, Manitoba's health minister Audrey Gordon and the IERHA. Only non-Conservative MLAs responded to their plight.

"Our focus is Auntie Ruth. But we want to have accountability, too," said David. "We're tired of governments having no accountability, making decisions and doing stuff that we have to live through."

Stonewall Mayor Clive Hinds said his thoughts are with Ruth Sampson and her family, and council is extremely sympathetic.

"I'd like to give my sympathy to the family," said Hinds by phone last Friday. "We'll do what we can."

Ruth's longevity is remarkable, he said, and he was sad to see her transferred so far from home. Given her age, he thought the IERHA could have found somewhere closer to home for her.

"For a 100-year-old lady that has lived here her whole life, it's sad to see this," said Hinds. "It's sad we have to lose a lady of this stature from our community, but on the other hand we have to be thankful there is a facility that can take her away from the COVID patients coming in. At 100, you're vulnerable to sickness. I'm thankful they got her out of that environment, but it could have been somewhere closer to home like Selkirk. I would like to see the lady make 120 as a Stonewaller."

Shared Health, which oversees health-care delivery, declined to comment on the Ruth Sampson case. The provincial health organization instead forwarded the *Express'* questions to IERHA, which then alerted the *Express* that its chief executive officer Dr. David Matear would respond.

Shared Health did, however, provide patient transfer statistics from the time the protocol was put into effect sometime in October. Twenty-one patients from the IERHA and 29 patients from the Winnipeg RHA have been transferred (as of Nov. 26).

Matear said he's unable to comment on individual patient cases because of privacy legislation but understands the hardships the provincial protocol is having.

"I'm not underestimating the amount of distress this causes. It does," said Matear last Friday. "[We've had] difficult conversations and taken difficult decisions in terms of how we're maximizing capacity in the health-care system, especially as patients are older. That's what we're dealing with, more or less, older patients and most of them are in

the ALC [alternative level of care] category. Some are panned, waiting to go to PCH beds."

The patients being transferred aren't acutely ill and don't require the type of care an acute care facility is set up to deliver, he said, and are thus categorized as ALCs.

In order to free up bed space for COVID patients and others requiring acute care (e.g., cardiac or cancer patients), ALCs are being transferred to facilities that can appropriately meet their needs, he said, because acute care is not a "long-term option." Unfortunately, capacity is available in other regions of the province. There is more capacity in the Prairie Mountain, Southern and Northern RHAs than there is in the Winnipeg and Interlake-Eastern RHAs.

"We actually have capacity in the health-care system in the province, but the issues we're having are in the regions where we don't have capacity. We also have to look at capacity in settings such as homecare support, assisted living, supportive housing and personal care homes," said Matear.

Unvaccinated people who acquire COVID — and who are several times more likely than vaccinated people to require both hospital and ICU care — are driving down capacity in acute care. That has also led to a backlog in surgical and diagnostic procedures, which has reached 136,000, according to Doctors Manitoba.

Matear said the health-care system is doing everything it can to make COVID vaccines available, including third doses, and informing the public about the protective benefits of the vaccines.

When asked why the government wouldn't just set up a field hospital for COVID patients so that there'd be no need to transfer patients hundreds of kilometres away from their home health region, Matear said he's not against field hospitals per se, but the government wants to utilize

the system's existing capacity.

Liberal Leader Dougald Lamont said the government's transfer protocol is really a storage protocol that overlooks the fact that there are humans on the receiving end.

"We're dealing with patients here. It's not like having empty storage space where we can say, 'OK we filled up all our warehouses here with boxes, but we've got some space in warehouses in the South or in Prairie Mountain or in Flin Flon that we can use,'" he said. "That's the way the government is running this. When you look at the board of Shared Health, it's not doctors running the organization; it's all accountants."

The transfer protocol comes down to a government unwilling to "put up the money" to sustain the health-care system, he said. And it's telling RHAs to make do.

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&gt; Got news?

## Province invites applications for building sustainable communities grants

### Program continues to protect and enhance community projects

#### Submitted by Manitoba government

Applications are now being accepted for the 2022-23 Building Sustainable Communities (BSC) program, which helps to support important community development projects, Municipal Relations Minister Derek Johnson announced Monday.

"Our government recognizes the importance of community-based organizations in building thriving and sustainable communities across the province," said Johnson. "The Building Sustainable Communities program provides community organizations a much-needed boost as we continue to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic

and helps to bolster Manitoba's economy."

The program responds to local neighbourhood, municipal and regional priorities to support a broad range of community development projects, including planning, capital, capacity building, community initiatives and recreation and equipment purchases. Eligible applicants include non-profit organizations, charitable organizations, municipalities and Northern Affairs community councils.

The program provides a grant contribution of 50 per cent of eligible project costs up to \$75,000 and up to \$300,000 for large capital projects. This

funding will respond to community need and support projects across the province, noted the minister.

"The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) commends the Province of Manitoba for continuing to invest in our communities through the Building Sustainable Communities program," said Kam Blight, president, AMM. "As municipalities look to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, the BSC program is essential to promote economic development and build stronger communities throughout our province."

The deadline to apply for the 2022-23 Building Sustainable Communities program is Jan. 17, 2022. For more information about the program or to submit an application, visit [www.manitobagov.ca](http://www.manitobagov.ca).

## Workers Compensation Act amended to enhance support and benefits for firefighters

### Firefighters put their lives at risk every single day

#### Submitted by Manitoba government

The Manitoba government is amending the Workers Compensation Act (WCA) to include coverage for five additional cancers to the list of presumptive cancers, pertaining to firefighters and at-risk personnel in the Manitoba Fire Commissioners Office, becoming a national leader in taking this step to protect Manitobans on the front lines, Premier Heather Stefanson announced.

"Each and every single day, firefighters in every community of our province put their lives at risk to help those in need and for that we are deeply grateful," said Stefanson. "We

recognize firefighters are at a heightened risk of contracting various cancers due to the nature of their work and the inevitable exposure to carcinogens on the job, despite all efforts to prevent and mitigate exposure risks. We are pleased to work with the firefighters association to make these changes that will enhance supports and benefits for their members."

Being added to the 14 types of cancer already included in the act are:

- primary site thyroid cancer;
- primary site pancreatic cancer;
- primary ovarian cancer;
- primary site cervical cancer; and
- primary site penile cancer.

"These additions to the firefighters presumptive cancer list will make Manitoba's legislation one of the strongest in the world and our legislation will be a template for proper WCB support for firefighters around the world being diagnosed with occupational cancers they received due to the exposures they encountered while simply doing their job," said Alex Forrest, president, Manitoba Professional Firefighters Association. "This support for our sisters in the fire service to have equal protection as their male counterparts would not have been possible without Heather Stefanson becoming our premier."

The first list of presumptive cancers for firefighters was added to the act in 2002. The list was expanded in 2005,

Continued on page 7

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# getinformed

NEWS > VIEWS > GIMLI > ARBORG > HIGHWAY 6 > SURROUNDING AREAS



EXPRESS PHOTO BY KEEVIN ERICKSON

Mother Nature provided a spectacular view on Lake Manitoba with interesting ice formations as far as the eye could see last weekend. Help the *Express* record the weather of the week and send in your photos of friends or families enjoying the outdoors. Email: [weather@expressweeklynews.ca](mailto:weather@expressweeklynews.ca).

## > SUPPORT, FROM PG. 6

with coverage extended to part-time firefighters. The list was further expanded in 2009, and again in 2011, along with the addition of coverage for Fire Commissioner personnel.

"We are pleased to be able to offer this expanded WCA coverage as a show of support to our firefighters, the men and women who serve our communities every day with courage and professionalism," said Finance Minister Scott Fielding. "Today's announcement marks another step forward in recognizing and mitigating the human costs of the dangerous work they do."

The proposed amendments to the act do not contain any regulatory requirements. The Workers Compensation Board will be responsible for administering the changes and identifying any concerns that arise, the minister noted.

## Winnipeg Beach councillor resigns; Christmas on the Bandstand

By Patricia Barrett

A Town of Winnipeg Beach councillor resigned last month after he no longer qualified for his seat.

Coun. Larry Banks handed in his resignation after he sold his residence.

"Larry sold his property in the Beach and because of that he had to resign. You have to have property here in order to serve as a councillor. When the property exchanged hands, he put in his resignation at that point," said Mayor Tony Pimentel last week. "As soon as a councillor hands in their resignation, they're off council."

Banks wasn't anticipating selling his house so quickly, said the mayor. And at council's last meeting, it was agreed that the town wouldn't hold a by-election because by the time that would be organized, there'd probably be only six months or fewer to go before the next election and it wouldn't be prudent to spend the money.

"Although we've got less than a year before our next election will be held and council has the opportunity to vote for a by-election, we decided not to because we've already had two by-elections and they cost \$7,000 each time," said Pimentel.

Municipal elections are held in July in the Town of Winnipeg Beach. Councillors are elected for a four-year term.

Although there were posts on a local social media site about a complaint being made against a councillor, Pimentel said it had nothing to do with Banks. Because of legislation, he cannot discuss personnel matters.

"Larry is going to be missed around my table," said Pimentel.

### Other Beach news:

- Pimentel said he had taken part in one of the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority's briefings for municipal officials a few weeks ago and learned that the IERHA is doing well in terms of its population receiving a COVID vaccination.

The Winnipeg health region has had the highest vaccine uptake at 89.5 per cent followed by Northern health at 85 per cent and the IERHA at 83.2 per cent, according to statistics presented at the briefing. Prairie Mountain health is at 82.1 per cent while the Southern health region is at 68.8 per cent.

"We're getting inundated through television and other media about COVID, and the number one thing people have to realize is that vaccination is a way to get out of this situation and get back to normalcy," said Pimentel. "In Winnipeg Beach we were quite lucky in that we were able to hold our summer events. We're hoping this continues, especially as our kids can now get vaccinated. I believe we'll be a lot safer and be able to return to a much more normal summer than what we've had in the past couple of years."

People living in congregate settings in the Beach were given an opportunity to receive their third shot of a COVID vaccine recently, said the mayor. The local pharmacy is also offering COVID vaccine jabs.

"As long as people continue to practise social distancing and mask-wearing, that will not only help with cutting down COVID transmissions but also the flu," said Pimentel. "And our businesses are doing a good job of following health orders, so people can go out and enjoy some company."

- The town will be spreading a bit of cheer tomorrow (Dec. 3) when it lights the Christmas tree on the bandstand near the lake and offers some family-friendly events.



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT  
Santa typically visits Winnipeg Beach to light the town's Christmas tree. The tree will be lit this year on Dec. 3.

row (Dec. 3) when it lights the Christmas tree on the bandstand near the lake and offers some family-friendly events.

"In addition to the tree lighting, we will be having sleigh rides," said Pimentel. "People should be following the requirements to be masked outside."



# IERHA updates municipal officials on nurse shortages, patient transfers, PCH beds

By Patricia Barrett

Although there has been a good uptake of COVID-19 vaccines in the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority, the region needs a shot in the arm as Manitoba's fourth wave magnifies its lack of health-care resources and sees patients getting moved hundreds of kilometres away for care.

The IERHA's chief executive officer Dr. David Matear held virtual briefings for municipal leaders last week to update them on the condition of the health-care system in the region.

The briefing and a question-and-answer session on Nov. 24 addressed bed closures at three hospitals (Gimli, Stonewall and Beausejour), a shortage of acute care nurses, patients transferred out of the region in order to free up acute care beds, personal care home beds at maximum occupancy and the impact the unvaccinated are having on the system.

The uptake of COVID vaccines in the IERHA is the third highest in Manitoba at 83.2 per cent behind the Northern RHA at 85 per cent and the Winnipeg RHA at 89.5 per cent. But that doesn't mean the vaccinated can rest easy because the virus can still infect them (hence the continuing need for facemasks and physical distancing), and they can pass it on to others.

But being vaccinated greatly reduces a person's chances of becoming seriously ill and dying from the virus, which has killed 1,304 Manitobans (as of Nov. 25).

Matear said COVID case numbers are expected to rise.

"The [COVID] case numbers are rising and they're predicted to continue to increase in the current modelling," he said. "Major features of this particular wave are younger populations affected, a heavy reliance on vaccination and we also have the impact of the unvaccinated on our health-care system."

Between December 2020 and the present, the unvaccinated were six times more likely to be infected with COVID than the vaccinated. They're nine times more likely to be admitted to hospital beds (non-ICU) and 22 times more likely to be admitted to ICU beds. They're also 13 times more likely to die than the vaccinated, according to data Matear shared.

With staff and resources focused on COVID care, surgical and diagnostic procedures have had to be delayed. Doctors Manitoba released an updated estimate of backlogged procedures on Nov. 22, putting it at over 136,000, up from 130,000 in mid October.

The IERHA is also burdened by a critical nursing shortage, said Matear, and staff have been pulled from



Chief executive officer  
Dr. David Matear

other parts of the system to support patients.

"COVID-19 has left us with a nursing shortage in hospital and acute care and that's not just in Manitoba but also across the country," said Matear. "There's no pool of nurses available to fill the gaps in the health-care system that arise from those transfers."

Because of nurse shortages, acute care beds were closed this month in three IERHA hospitals: Gimli (six beds closed), Stonewall (five beds closed) and Beausejour (10 beds closed). Matear said the nurse shortage made it unsafe for patients.

The provincial government promised last week to have 400 new nurses trained. In 2019 the party under then-premier Brian Pallister promised to hire 200 nurses.

Matear said it will take several years to get those 400 nurses in place, as well as bring in internationally trained nurses.

"The longer type of capacity-building, the 400 nursing seats in the province and international [nurses], will be several years in the making. You won't see that additional capacity for a number of years," he said. "For internationally educated nurses, we did have a process in place and they were welcomed into our health-care system, but COVID suspended that because they were unable to travel and emigrate to Canada. We're trying to get that back on track now."

In the meantime, the IERHA is having nurses work overtime where feasible. It's also using agency nurses (temporary hires from a private organization), which Matear said are more expensive.

The health region's average use of agency nurses increased over the past

Compared to fully vaccinated people unvaccinated people are\*

6 times more likely to be infected with COVID-19

9 times more likely to be admitted to non-ICU beds

22 times more likely to be admitted to ICU beds, and

13 times more likely to die after adjusting age differences.

\*From December 16, 2020 till November 11, 2021

Source: Ali Millar, Operations, Vaccine Implementation Task Force

PHOTOS/GRAPHS COURTESY OF IERHA

The odds are stacked against people who remain unvaccinated for COVID.

three months, according to follow-up information obtained from the IERHA. And it's the health region that incurs the cost of those nurses.

"Interlake-Eastern RHA relied on agency nurses to cover gaps in schedules even before the pandemic. Maintaining staffing at some health-care facilities, where we have historically had difficulty recruiting, requires us to rely on the use of agency nurses more frequently than others," said an IERHA spokesperson.

"With the current nursing shortages, we are not alone in our need to access nursing agency staff resources more frequently. Our use of agency nursing staff will fluctuate. Over the last three months, our average use of agency nurses has ranged from 23 to 36 per cent of nursing staff regionally. This compares to a range of 9 to 13 per cent from August to October 2019."

Patient transfers from IERHA hospitals to other health regions under the provincial government's mandatory patient transfer protocol (to free up acute care bed space) has sparked great concern in Ashern, said RM of Grahamdale Reeve Craig Howse, who took part in the briefing. No personal care home capacity in the IERHA meant patients were transferred out of the region.

"You said personal care home beds are almost at 100 per cent occupancy. We've had in Ashern at the Lakeshore General Hospital patients under alternative care being moved," said Howse. "Is there an immediate plan to address personal care home beds? Are you adding more or trying to find more beds because we've had concern from our residents? Some people have been moved three and a half hours away."

Matear confirmed that there is no bed capacity in personal care homes and that's why some patients were moved to other health regions under

the government's scheme.

"We don't have capacity [at local PCH sites] to move patients. That's the reason we're moving patients farther away to an environment or site where they can receive more appropriate care," said Matear. "If there was a local alternative, we would use that. And we continue to explore that."

Patients that have been moved to other RHAs will not lose their place on any IERHA PCH waiting list they're on, he said. And they'll be able to return once a bed opens up for them.

Some communities are still waiting for the provincial government to approve the construction of new PCHs. Councils for the Town of Arborg and the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton, for instance, had asked the government a number of times since 2015 for permission to construct a new 80-bed PCH in Arborg.

Matear said the provincial government is still reviewing RFPs [request for proposal] for new PCHs. And there's also a need to address other levels of care in the IERHA, such as home care, assisted living and supportive housing, which may be more appropriate than PCHs for patients.

"As far as PCH beds are concerned there were RFPs some time ago [and] some recommendations were made. They are still under consideration by government," said Matear. "Within our region ... we haven't got the capacity in a number of levels of health-care that we should. What we ought to be doing is building up home care to the level at which we can support patients safely at home ... then look at assisted living or supportive housing before we get to a point where a patient requires a PCH bed. We haven't got all those levels of care in place which would be more appropriate for patients who are currently in a PCH or sitting waiting for a PCH bed in an acute care setting."



# No cases of Omicron variant in Manitoba yet: officials

## Staff

The first cases of the new variant of COVID-19 have been identified in Canada, but Monday's COVID-19 bulletin from the provincial government noted no cases have been detected here yet.

Two cases of the Omicron COVID-19 variant, which has been declared the fifth variant of concern by the World Health Organization, were announced in Ontario over the weekend.

The variant was first found in South Africa but has since popped up in other parts of the world, prompting many countries, including Canada, to

issue travel bans for certain regions.

Scientists are still doing research to determine how dangerous omicron might be, including whether it is more transmissible, causes more severe illness, or may have an impact on vaccine efficacy.

"Vaccine still provides one of the best defences against COVID-19," the province stressed in its release, noting it will continue "to monitor the situation and work with federal officials in the fight against COVID-19 and its variants."

In the meantime, Manitoba reported 11 new deaths due to COVID-19 on Monday and 495 new cases of the

virus since the previous Thursday. A total of 1,315 Manitobans have died due to COVID-19 since the pandemic began.

Southern Health once again leads the way in new cases with 216, followed by Winnipeg with 148, 52 in Prairie Mountain, 50 in the Northern health region, and 29 in Interlake-Eastern.

Manitoba's active caseload is at 1,493, with 142 people in hospital with COVID-19.

Fifteen of the 25 patients in ICU on Monday due to COVID-19 were from Southern Health, which has the lowest vaccination rate in the province.

Chief provincial public health officer Dr. Brent Roussin expressed his concern over the rising case counts and high test positivity rates in Southern Health at a press conference last week.

"It's certainly a level of concern right now when you see a test positivity at that level," he said.

The last official update from the province had test positivity in the region at over 14 per cent, though there have been media reports putting it at closer to 17 per cent last week.

Roussin wouldn't rule out additional regional restrictions if these numbers continue.

"It's certainly a level of concern right now when you see a test positivity at that level, so I wouldn't say I'm confident that no further restrictions won't be required."

In the Interlake-Eastern region: Arborg/Riverton, 13; Beausejour, 5; Ericksdale/Ashern, 5; Fisher/Peguis, 5; Gimli, 1; Northern Remote, 5; Pinawa/Lac du Bonnet, 1; Powerview/Pine Falls, 1; Selkirk, 6; Springfield, 23; St. Clements, 13; St. Laurent, 3; Stonewall/Teulon, 8; Unknown District, 2; Winnipeg Beach/St. Andrews, 7; and zero in Whiteshell.

## Harken, holiday hampers

By Nicole Brownlee

Interlake community organizations are giving back this holiday season with the help of toy, food and hamper donations.

Shenanigans on the Beach is organizing their fourth annual Christmas hamper collection and is asking for donations of non-perishable food items and toys for all ages.

"It's a community effort," said Shannon King, co-owner of Shenanigans with Misty McDonald.

Four years ago, the Winnipeg Beach restaurant contacted local schools to find families in need. Now, families contact the waterside eatery directly to request some help supplying holiday cheer.

"We actually have community members that let us know if there's a family in need that can use a little extra help," said King.

"It's kind of by word of mouth."

Shenanigans is collecting supplies to fill around four hampers this season.

"Right now, we have the age range from 12 to three, and we are also looking into perhaps doing a hamper for a senior," said King.

While they ask for a variety of donations, Shenanigans often receives calls from community members asking if they can buy specific presents to fit the needs of receiving families.

"Our community is great," said King.

"We say that if you want to buy a gift specifically for a child or somebody, then just contact us, and we give you the age or (gender), and they go and buy a gift for them."

Community members who nominate families-in-need deliver the hampers so the families remain anonymous.

"We would be more than willing to put together a hamper for anyone in

the Interlake," said King.

Shenanigans is also hosting their fourth annual silent auction. The restaurant offers around 15 items for the community to bid on to raise money for additional hamper presents.

The auction is live-streamed on Facebook around mid-December, and community members can buy tickets through the restaurant.

The RM of Coldwell is hosting its first toy drive this year.

"We are accepting anything, and we're grateful for any donation," said Breanna Rae, recreation director for the municipality.

To nominate a family-in-need, contact Rae at rec.coldwell@mymts.net or 204-739-3459 and include the children's ages. The municipality requests all toys are new. Gift cards and monetary donations are also accepted.

"We're hoping we'll have donations suitable for all ages, right up to 18 years old," said Rae.

Donations can be dropped off outside the Lundar fire hall or at the RM of Coldwell office before the Santa Clause Parade on Dec. 11.

The Riverton & District Friendship Centre is also collecting donations for Christmas hampers.

"We have no funding for our hamper program. It's strictly all on donations," said Tanis Grimolfson, executive director of RDFC.

The Friendship Centre is looking for monetary donations, non-perishable food items and toys for children aged one to 13 years old.

Toy or food donations can be dropped off at the Riverton Co-op, Riverton Shop Easy or the Riverton & District Friendship Centre. Monetary donations can be e-transferred to rdfe\_bk@mymts.net.

## Build Interlake Growth Program



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Phone: 1-800-378-5106

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# Federal throne speech full of recycled promises: Bergen

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Liberal federal government's speech from the throne in Parliament didn't illicit much confidence from Portage-Lisgar MP Candice Bergen last week.

Bergen, who is also the Conservative deputy leader, voiced her concerns about what the 44th parliamentary session will accomplish in the weeks ahead.

"After waiting over two months to bring Parliament back following the federal election, Justin Trudeau has returned with the same recycled promises as before with no plan to curb inflation, fix supply chain issues and make life affordable for Canadian families," Bergen said. "As a Western-

Canadian MP, I'm nervous about the blatant neglect of the agricultural sector and the doubling-down of Justin Trudeau's attack on our energy workers.

"In Portage-Lisgar, businesses are continuing to experience staffing shortages, farmers are still being hit with the carbon tax, and the cost of everyday items are skyrocketing," she continued. "Instead of focusing on these important issues, Justin Trudeau is more interested in focusing on issues that divide Canadians."

Premier Trudeau stressed in a released statement that the fall election gave the Liberals "a clear direction to work together to put the COVID-19 crisis behind us and find the real so-

lutions needed to build a better future for all Canadians.

"The Government of Canada has listened to Canadians, and we are ready to finish the fight against COVID-19, take strong climate action, make life more affordable, walk the shared path of reconciliation, put home ownership back in reach, create jobs, and grow the middle class."

Getting the pandemic under control is the first step, Trudeau noted, stressing the importance of vaccination.

"The government will better support all Canadians by taking action to clear the backlog of delayed procedures caused by COVID-19, strengthening long-term care, and improving access to mental health and addiction treat-

ment," he said. "We will keep Canadians safe and healthy now and into the future."

Bergen noted the Conservatives will be holding the Liberals to account in this session, in addition to "presenting solutions to the inflation crisis, labour shortages and skyrocketing deficits. Conservatives will be focused on a recovery that champions jobs, the economy and Canadian energy.

"Conservatives have a positive vision that will unify our country and put Canadians first," Bergen said. "I look forward to the new session of Parliament and being the voice of the people of Portage-Lisgar in Ottawa."

## Throne speech misses the mark on affordability: NDP

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Official Opposition Leader Wab Kinew of the NDP says last week's throne speech from the Conservatives missed the marks on a number of fronts.

"The big thing that stood out to me, that was very notable with its absence, was there was no mention in the throne speech about affordability, inflation, the rising cost of living," Kinew said a few hours after Premier Heather Stefanson's government laid out its plans for the Legislative session.

"To me, this is something that's causing so many people pain and stress right now, the fact your groceries are going up, the hydro bill's going up, the price at the pump's going up — everything seems to be getting more expensive and yet the government didn't even mention it.

"To me, Manitobans need some help there and I think they would be reasonable to expect that the government would have at least some ideas for how we could make life more affordable in Manitoba given everything that's going on with inflation rates."

A week before the government's throne speech the NDP released their own alternative throne speech calling for an independent, expert-led inquiry into Manitoba's pandemic response.

Kinew was disappointed the government didn't officially commit to such an investigation.

"To me, it's the responsible thing to do after such a big, disruptive experience like the pandemic. We should just take a bit of time and ask what worked, what didn't, what do we have to do now.

"One of the areas that we want to

look at in there is seniors care, personal care homes," Kinew continued, noting the throne speech raised this matter as well but in a way that didn't sit well with him and other government critics.

"They're basically patting themselves on the back when it comes to seniors living in personal care homes, older adults," he said. "To me, that was pretty tough to take given what we know about what's happening with so many families right now, where their loved ones are being moved to personal care homes hundreds of kilometres away from where they live.

"It was just another sign of how the throne speech today seemed to be out of touch with the reality that's facing a lot of people in the province right now.

"We know there's a lot of challenges in personal care homes. We've got to

do better."

In the session ahead, the NDP will continue in its role of holding the governing party to account, Kinew said.

"I think there's still a lot of those lingering questions about health care, many rural centres that are dealing with closures or even temporary shutdowns of health facilities in their region, so we've got to deal with those issues, including health care for seniors.

"And then at the same time we want to bring forward some of our plans and ideas, like, for example, our need for an inquiry to give us some recommendations for after the pandemic. How can we strengthen the economy, strengthen health care, improve mental health, improve education? Those will be some of our focuses as we go through this session."

## Gimli Running Club gets into the festive fundraising spirit

### Dancer Dash and Santa Shuffle

By Patricia Barrett

The Gimli Running Club will be hosting some jolly good community fun this Friday and Saturday while fundraising for Evergreen Basic Needs' food and toy bank.

Organized by Gimli residents Michelle Belanger and Kim Giesbrecht, owner of the Inn on Centre, the Dancer Dash on Friday night and the Santa Shuffle on Saturday will get people

moving.

On Friday evening, the club will be at Evergreen Basic Needs (71 Fourth Ave.) at 5 p.m. They'll be accepting non-perishable food items, toys or money donations. At 5:30 p.m., they'll set off on the one-kilometre Dancer Dash walk. They'll walk by the Betel Personal Care Home to spread some holiday cheer then head to the harbour for the Christmas tree lighting at

6 p.m.

"We would like to get as many people as possible and would really like to encourage this to be a family event," the club said by email. "We are going to have volunteers on hand to help out at intersections for safety. Due to current COVID restrictions, we will need everyone to be double vaccinated at this event and will be checking at the start."

On Saturday, Dec. 4, the club will be back at Evergreen Basic Needs at 9:30 a.m. to collect donations. At 10 a.m.

they'll head out on the Santa Shuffle, a five-kilometre run around Gimli.

"We are planning on putting up markers at the turns, but we do have to share the sidewalks and roads and there won't be people watching the route so runners need to be cautious," said the club.

There will be a "little surprise" for everyone who participates.

Visit the Gimli Running Club on Facebook to register for the two events. The entry fee is a donation to EBN.



# Doors closed on restored historic Farmers Hall

By Nicole Brownlee

A restored former community hall in Gimli is up for sale as the founding family reflects on the past 14 years.

Elaine and Darrell Klym bought the Farmers Hall in Gimli in 2007 after years of considering the property's possibilities.

"We've renovated many properties in the past. ... It's something we do really well together as a husband-and-wife team," said Elaine.

"We were looking for a summertime, seasonal business to run when we retired."

Darrell grew up on his family's farm near Gimli, next to the United Farmers Community Hall.

The Klyms contacted the RM of Gimli council and were told the hall would be left to rot if it wasn't purchased.

"It was all boarded up for at least 15 years ... and we began our process of renovating it from there," said Elaine.

Over the following five years, the Klyms took their time assessing the property and planning renovations, and in 2010 they set to work.

"It took a good four or five years to get it into shape," said Elaine.

The hall needed more than just elbow grease to renovate it. The building's roof had a hole, the floor was flooded and the foundation was unstable. The hall also needed new windows, doors and shingles.

With the help of the community, family and local expertise the hall was completed in 2014.

"The original floors are still in there, and this past summer, we added a patio and brought the kitchen up to a commercial kitchen standard," said Elaine.

The Farmers Hall hosted weddings, funerals, dances, reunions and anything the community wanted.

"We responded to the community need ... and that's how we got into the banquet hall business."

One function that stands out to Elaine is the 80 Years of Weddings event the hall hosted around 2018.

Community members collected wedding dresses from the past century and held a fashion show at the Farmers Hall.

"It kind of showcased and recognized the history of the hall," said Elaine.



Elaine and Darrell Klym

After six bustling years, activity halted at the Farmers Hall with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"That one summer in 2020, when everything was shut down due to COVID and there were no functions, nothing happening. We kind of caught our breath," said Elaine.

Despite Elaine retiring from teaching and Darrell retiring from electrician work, the couple was busier than ever running functions every weekend at the hall.

The public health restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic gave the Klyms a vacation they hadn't had in years. "We realized a little glimpse into what life might look like."

The decision to sell the hall wasn't easy, but the Klyms feel it's time to move on.

"It was very successful, but it's a lot of work," said Elaine.

"It's a tough decision to be made."

They hope the hall will continue to be available for community functions as the property changes

hands, but they're unsure what the future of the Farmers Hall will be, said Elaine.

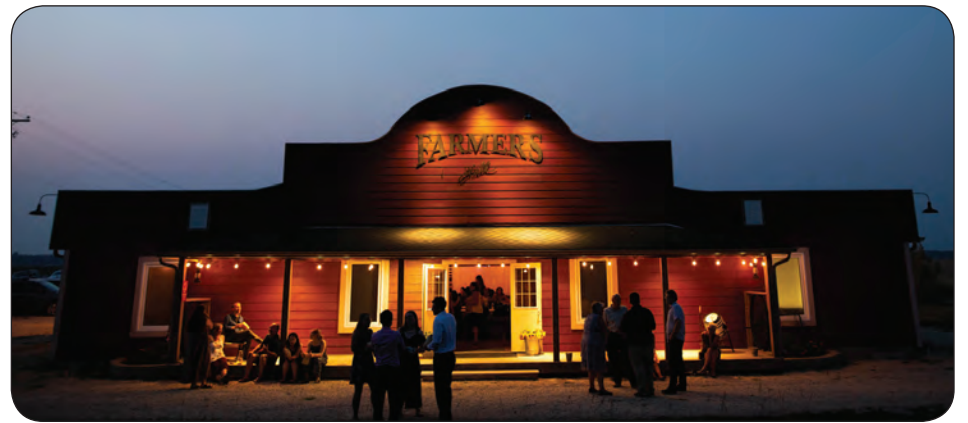
"It's got a long history in the Gimli area that was started by a group of farmers in the 1930s," said Elaine.

"There are generations of families around Gimli who've grown up attending functions there, and I hope it carries on."

Gimli mayor Lynn Greenberg said the Klyms did an excellent job restoring the hall.

"Anytime you have a venue like that, it helps the community," said Greenberg.

"I wish them all the best."



Elaine and Darrell Klym have made the tough decision to sell the Farmers Hall after re-opening the historic community hall in 2014.



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

The Klyms bought the United Farmers Hall in 2007 after the property had been boarded up for around 15 years.



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**"THERE ARE GENERATIONS OF FAMILIES AROUND GIMLI WHO'VE GROWN UP ATTENDING FUNCTIONS THERE, AND I HOPE IT CARRIES ON."**



# Weather phenomena throughout the Interlake



EXPRESS PHOTO BY PAT PAYJACK

Ice pancakes were spotted at Winnipeg Beach last week.

**Staff**

Mother Nature has been providing very interesting sights on the lakes throughout the Interlake.

A weather phenomenon has left Lake Manitoba near Steep Rock covered in balls of ice.

Experts believe snowflakes freezing on top of the water, mixed with waves or wind can cause everything to turn and create snowball shapes.

Meanwhile in Winnipeg Beach and

York Landing, ice pancakes have been spotted.

Greg McCullough, a geographer at the University of Manitoba, said the formations are created when ice crystals start gathering in little groups on the water's surface in slightly wavy conditions.

"They'll tend to grow outwards in roughly a circle, and then gradually the ice will form up and these groups will be jostling around together. So



EXPRESS PHOTO BY ADRIENNE HALKOWICH PHOTOGRAPHY

Ice balls formed on the water at Steep Rock last week.

they will rock around and they will knock any rough edges off and you end up with a whole lot of fairly rounded pancake shapes," said McCullough.

He added with the waves, the ice doesn't get the opportunity to stick together and form one big sheet and that will only happen as the water calms.

McCullough said these formations are neither rare nor common and that if people search for them, they will find them eventually, adding the right conditions are needed to make the shapes.

(with files from Devon McKendrick - CTV News Winnipeg).



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# Moonlight Madness

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# DECEMBER 3 & 4



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## Gimli events happening over the weekend.

### Friday, December 3:

- 12:00 - 8:00 Senior Fletcher's Galleria - \$10.00 DIY glass ornaments
- 12:00 - 8:00 Hidden Treasures \$8.00 DIY wood or clay ornaments
- 4:00 - 8:00 Lake Winnipeg Visitor Centre Open
- 4:00 - 8:00 New Iceland Heritage Museum Craft Fair - Free Hot Chocolate
- 4:00 - 8:00 Icelandic Christmas - Pop UP - Flatland
- 6:00 - 8:00 Ship & Plough Happy Hour with Piano Man Ray Moss
- 4:00 - 8:00 Christmas Sale at the Gimli Art Club

### Sales and special events at businesses

- 5:00pm Dasher Dance - I K walk, run or dash
- 6:00 pm Lighting the Christmas Tree - RM of Gimli -

Following all COVID Protocols for outdoor events

Johnson's - Open 9am to 8pm In-store specials all day

### Saturday, December 4:

Santa Shuffle at 10:00am - <https://www.santashuffle.ca/>

### ATV Parade at 6:30pm - ATV Club

- Christmas Sale at the Gimli Art Club
- New Iceland Heritage Museum Craft Fair
- Sales and special events at businesses

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Interlake

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throughout the  
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# Local businesses lighting up for Moonlight Madness

By Nicole Brownlee

Communities are lighting up for the holidays to raise spirits and awareness of local businesses.

The RM of Coldwell is hosting its second annual Holiday Yards of the Season contest. Homes and businesses are placing delicate ornaments, colourful lights and festive décor on their properties for the chance to win one of three prizes.

"This lights contest was done years ago ... and I started it up again last year," said Breanna Rae, RM of Coldwell's recreation director.

"It brought a lot of Christmas spirit." Judges will award three rural and three town properties a first, second and third place prize.

Last year, 15 properties participated in the contest, and the top contestants won a variety of items from local businesses like gift cards and treats.

"We're still looking for more local gift cards for the winners," Rae added.

Neighbours can also nominate their fellow community members whose jolly yards should be recognized.

A team of judges, including Reeve Brian Sigfusson, his wife Hope Sigfusson, Deputy Reeve Virgil Johnson and wife Cathy Johnson, will tour the nominated properties on Dec. 11 and announce the winners on Dec. 13.

"There were some really fabulous houses last year. It was so hard to make a decision," said Rae.

Last year, Rob Einarson and Craig Sooley won first place for rural contestants. Carey and Bonnie Rae won second place, and Joyce Monkman, Erin and Blaine Fortin tied for third place. Darrel Sweetland won first place for town participants. Joe and Ruby Hordal won second place, and Lillian Halldorson, Roy and Judy Fortin tied for third place.

To join the RM of Coldwell recreation department's contest, register with Breanna Rae at [rec.coldwell@mymts.net](mailto:rec.coldwell@mymts.net) or 204-739-3459 by Dec. 6.

## Business lighting contest

The Central Interlake Chamber of Commerce is hosting its first annual holiday lights decorating contest this winter.

Kristi Meek, executive director of the Assiniboia Chamber of Commerce, started the tradition after finding grants operated through the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce to run community contests.

"The intent is to put some money

back in small businesses' pockets but also to give them some awareness out in the community and beyond," said Meek.

All participants will compete for best window display, most creative use of lights, best overall and three fan favourites positions with one winner from Arborg, Gimli and Riverton each.

"The public gets to vote and then maybe be aware of some businesses in their community that they may not even know about," said Meek.

The business must be located in the CICC or the Gimli Chamber of Commerce district, register by Dec. 1 and display their lights from 6 to 10 p.m. on Dec. 17 and 18. A panel of anonymous judges will decide the winners of the best window display, most creative lights and the best overall decorations.

All winners receive \$200 cash, a \$200 donation to a local charity and an article about the business in the *Express Weekly News*.

"We just want to see everyone having fun building community," said Meek.

"We want to see people participate and support our local businesses and support each other."

Visit the Central Interlake Chamber of Commerce and the Gimli Chamber of Commerce Facebook pages to learn more about the contest and vote for fan favourite locations.

Moonlight Madness will take place in Gimli, Riverton, Arborg. The Annual Christmas Market will take place in Riverton and Arborg on Dec. 3 and 10 respectively. Many businesses will stay open late in Gimli on Dec. 3, and there will be special events and in-store specials around the community over the Moonlight Madness weekend. Some of the special events include a community walk in support of Evergreen Basic Needs put on by the Gimli Running Club, the official lighting of the town Christmas tree, a parade to light up the streets put on by the Interlake ATV Offroad club and much more.

All COVID-19 protocols will be followed.

For more information about Moonlight Madness, follow the Gimli Chamber of Commerce Facebook page and the Central Interlake Chamber of Commerce Facebook pages. Support Local.



# Duo to perform enlightening song with WSO

By Nicole Brownlee

A Gimli-born singer-songwriter and provincially recognized traditional signer and drummer have paired up to reflect on reconciliation.

In a chance partnership, Kael Sauerborn and Ray "Co-Co" Stevenson created a meaningful relationship discussing the concept of reconciliation, which is the attempt to raise awareness about the impact of colonization on Indigenous peoples, personal experiences and the meaning of friendship.

"I wanted (to write) something worth saying," said Sauerborn.

Sauerborn, 23, and Stevenson, 52, met through a Winnipeg Crankie Festival series called Prairie Panorama. The series paired artists from rural Manitoba communities with local visual artists to illustrate songs.

Emerging performers were mentored by established artists to pen an original song.

"I was a little scared to do it because I've never written a song with anybody," said Stevenson.

"When it came time for me and Kael to collaborate and come up with a song I mentioned at the beginning it would be nice to do something about reconciliation."

The duo convened for over 20 hours discussing the discovery of 215 Indigenous children's remains at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School in Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, Indigenous teachings and reconciliation through the lens of an ally.

"(Kael) took everything that I talked about and he put it down in his own words, and he came up with the music for it," said Stevenson.

"I was totally blown away." Sauerborn considered Stevenson's stories, reconciliation and creating new relationships when he was working on the lyrics to what would become "Comes to Light" but knew he couldn't write the song from an Indigenous perspective.

"Ray gave me every liberty to follow what I was feeling with either the music or the lyrics. ... He truly handed it over to me, but I didn't feel that was right for the project," said Sauerborn.

"Ray recognized that it's a song about two friends supporting each other, and it started to demonstrate what allyship could be when that can be a fragile topic."

After Sauerborn played Stevenson a draft of the song, Stevenson added his own elements, like integrating Cree hymns.

"It became more of a story of a relationship," said Stevenson.

"That's the true reconciliation ... be-



PHOTO BY MATT DUBOFF

Kael Saurborn and Ray "Co-Co" Stevenson are performing their song "Comes to Light" with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra Dec. 10-12.

cause it's supporting one another regardless of whether you're First Nation or not."

After five weeks of writing and rehearsing, Sauerborn and Stevenson performed Comes to Light at the Crankie Festival at the Gimli Dance Pavilion on Oct. 3. Their performance was accompanied by a moving panorama, also known as a crankie, created by James Culleton.

"It was just a blessing and something that was meant to happen," said Stevenson.



**New Iceland Heritage Museum**

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**Annual Christmas Market**

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**Saturday, December 4th 10am-4pm**

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The duo is set to perform their breakout song on Dec. 10, 11 and 12 at the Centennial Concert Hall in Winnipeg, accompanied by the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra as a part of the WSO Holiday Pops! event series.

The WSO event will showcase several artists performing songs, dances and aerial routines.

Stevenson was already a featured performer at the WSO event when he played Comes to Light to Julian Pellicano, associate conductor of the WSO.

"(Pellicano) liked it. He showed it to his boss, and the next day I get an email," said Stevenson.

Though performing with the WSO is nothing new for Stevenson, the opportunity to join Stevenson on stage was hard to believe for Sauerborn.

"I don't think it set in for a couple of days," said Sauerborn.

"I've been doing this now for over 30 years, so it's nice to be able to help somebody young, upcoming and be able to give them the recognition they deserve for the talent that they have," said Stevenson.

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**EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED**

The trophy for the kingfisher walleye tournament made it to Gimli last week. Juliana Roberts, the New Iceland Heritage Museum manager, stands beside the six-foot, chainsaw-carved walleye now on permanent display in the visitor centre by the wharf.

## 2022 Kingfisher Walleye Tournament begins next month

**By Brian Bowman**

A very unique series of ice-fishing tournaments will be held in the Interlake beginning next month.

The 2022 Kingfisher Walleye Tournament will consist of four tournaments to take place in four different locations.

"It's a big tournament, it's huge," said tournament director John Wheeler. "This allows you to have the bragging rights of being the champion of the champions. It's plain and simple, you are the best."

The first event will take place in Petersfield on Jan. 22, followed by one in Matlock on Feb. 5, Gimli on Feb. 19, and Powerview/Pine Falls March 5.

Cost to enter the tournament is \$100 which gives an angler a hole to fish out of. If that same angler wants an additional hole, the cost is \$50. There will be \$80,000 in prize money spread over the four preliminaries and the grand finale.

The top 100 participants from each preliminary will have the right to advance to the grand finale, which will take place in Hecla on March 19. If individuals finish in the top 100 at more than one event, they

have the ability to transfer a ticket or tickets to other people.

The winner from the Hecla tournament will have their name on a beautiful six-foot chainsaw-carved walleye which will be placed on permanent display.

This the first year, of what organizers hope, will be an annual event. Last year's event was iced due to COVID.

Registration for the tournament closes at 8 a.m. on Jan. 21. Each preliminary is limited to 400.

Proceeds from the tournament will go towards the renovation of the St. Amant Stabilization Unit, which will help countless families who are at immediate risk and near total-family breakdown. With the public's help, more families will have access to immediate stabilization care.

The current list of Kingfisher Walleye Tournament personnel includes Danielle Gagnon (Facebook and website), Gary Roy (advertising and interviews), and Chris Caslake (promotions).

Any questions can be directed to Wheeler by phone at 807-323-2767 or at [info.ticktockfish@gmail.com](mailto:info.ticktockfish@gmail.com).

## Fisher Branch Women's Institute is thinking of others

**Submitted by Patricia Witzke**

Are you looking forward to the holidays? Will you spend time with your loving family or special friends?

Not everyone has that opportunity. Sometimes, circumstances alter situations in peoples' lives. It can be an emotional time when individuals are alone at this festive time of year.

The Fisher Branch Women's Institute decided to assist women and their children who have left their homes. These families have moved to Nova House.

Sometimes, they may have very little clothing with them. They would benefit from having a variety of clothes, shoes and other apparel to select from

to meet their daily needs.

When the ladies from the Fisher Branch WI put out a call, many people from the community and surrounding area came to their aid. A large number of clothing items, shoes and crafts were given to assist these families. It is heartwarming to see so many people contribute to this cause. The WI ladies are very thankful to the generosity of our community. It is nice to think that everyone will have the essentials of life especially during the Christmas season.

If you would like to contribute clothing or other items to Nova House, Shelter For Women and Children in Crisis, contact 204 482-7882.



**EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED**

Darcy Truthwaite, president of the Fisher Branch Women's Institute, delivered four vehicles loaded with donations to Nova House, Shelter for Women and Children in Crisis.



# Woodworking hobby turned birdhouse venture

## Birdhouse display at Winnipeg Beach Moonlite Madness Dec. 3

By Nicole Brownlee

Self-taught Aussie woodworker Allan Grills never expected his most popular product would be a birdhouse.

"The first few (birdhouses) I made, I basically just gave them away," said Grills.

Soon after he gave away his prototypes, requests for birdhouses rolled in one after another and have been consistently requested since spring 2020.

"Someone else wanted one, then someone else wanted one, and everything else that I was doing at the time got pushed aside. That's how the name came about. It had all just gone to the birds," said Grills.

Gone to the Birds is the name of Grills' online store for his products. Grills lists custom signs, game boards

and decorations in addition to his identifiable birdhouses and feeders.

Grills creates a character with each birdhouse he makes. A ribbiting frog, gap-toothed donkey or singing Viking are just a few of the Sandy Hook-based artist's pieces showcased on his website, [gonetothebirds.net](http://gonetothebirds.net).

"I've drawn all the patterns myself for all of the (birdhouse) designs," said Grills.

Grills creates each piece alone, taking anywhere from a few hours to a few days to complete, but sometimes asks his wife Brenda for help painting.

"I just picked it up," said Grills. "The only lessons I've ever had was in high school."

To learn about different techniques, projects and tools, Grills mostly turns to the internet for answers.

"I always like new challenges," said



One of Grills' most recent projects is creating charcuterie boards and working with resin.

Grills.

He recently created a sign for a customer's cottage with a carved pelican sitting atop, which helped him practise his detail work. Orders for custom pieces have picked up as word of Grills' work has spread.

"One of the big benefits, especially being new to the country and area where we're living, is meeting so many people," said Grills.

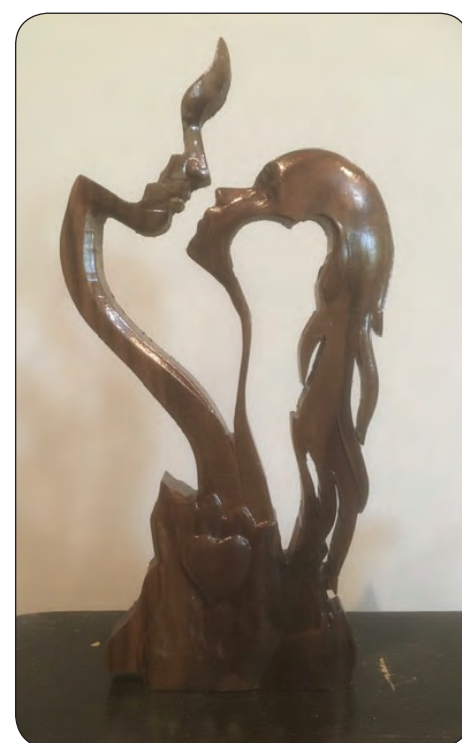
Grills moved with his wife Brenda to Sandy Hook six years ago after moving to Canada from Australia one year prior.

"We were looking at different areas for a little cottage, and we found (Sandy Hook) and fell in love," said Grills.

Grills grew up in Newcastle, a few hours north of Sydney, and worked in the mines in Mackay, Queensland, for a few years.

Before mining, Grills worked in transportation logistics for around 20 years. He now works at the Gimli Sobeys part-time and works on his craft.

"I'm lucky enough that I've got a hobby that can also make me a dollar here and there."



Grills is a self-taught woodworker who enjoys challenging his abilities and learning more about the craft.

Gone to the Birds will be at the Winnipeg Beach Moonlite Madness Market on Dec. 3.

To learn more, visit the Gone to the Birds Facebook page or [gonetothebirds.net](http://gonetothebirds.net).



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Allan Grills said he's finished over 100 birdhouses since launching Gone to the Birds in spring 2020.

## What's *Your* story?

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The Express Weekly News connects people through stories to build stronger communities. Do you know someone who has a unique hobby?

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THE **EXPRESS**  
WEEKLY NEWS

## Arborg & District Christmas Cheer Board

Once again, the Arborg & District Christmas Cheer Board is preparing Christmas hampers. To request a Christmas hamper, please contact Krista at 204-641-2137.

The deadline for requests is Monday, December 13th and the Christmas hampers will be available for pick up or delivery on Tuesday, December 21st.

Monetary donations can be sent by e-transfer to [ADcheerboard@gmail.com](mailto:ADcheerboard@gmail.com), mailed to Box 185 Arborg MB R0C 0A0, or may be deposited at the Arborg branches of Noventis Credit Union or CIBC. Non-perishable food items can be dropped off at participating local businesses.

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# Interlake-Eastern RHA closes beds in three hospitals

By Patricia Barrett

At least three hospitals in the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority have closed acute care beds because they're unable to maintain safe patient care.

The IERHA's chief executive officer Dr. David Matear said the bed closures at the Gimli, Stonewall and Beausejour hospitals are temporary suspensions and were necessary as the hospitals don't have enough staff to care for patients.

"If we can't safely care for a patient, we daren't [keep beds open] because that puts a patient at risk. And, obviously, we want to make sure the staffing levels support the acute care units, as well as the emergency departments because ... that's essential as well," said Matear during a virtual briefing for municipal leaders Nov. 24. "It's not an easy scenario to face and take these difficult decisions. It's not easy for communities. We want to help the communities as much as we can. We have a mandate to care for communities and we're doing our best to be able to provide those services."

Gimli's Health Centre (Johnson Memorial Hospital) shut down six beds and the Stonewall & District Health

Centre closed five beds. Beausejour hospital closed 10 beds (as of Nov. 24).

Gimli hospital has a total of 26 acute care beds; Stonewall, 15; and Beausejour 30, according to the IERHA's website. The bed closures represent losses of 23 per cent, 33 per cent and 33 per cent respectively.

A spokesperson for the IERHA, responding to a follow-up request for more information, said the bed suspension process started Nov. 1 because of "nursing shortages," but the beds weren't taken out of commission until the patients occupying them were discharged.

"We don't fill them with more patients once they are suspended. By suspending beds, it ensures that nursing staff are available to support both safe in-patient care and emergency department care," said the spokesperson by email.

During the briefing with municipal leaders, Matear shared slides showing the percentage of nursing vacancies in the three hospitals' acute care units.

The Gimli hospital is suffering an acute care nursing vacancy of 29 per cent while Stonewall is suffering from a 32 per cent vacancy. Like Stonewall,

## Influence of COVID-19 hospitalizations in Manitoba

- Staffing pressures - Nursing vacancies in acute care

Stonewall	31.7%
Beausejour	31.5%
Gimli	28.5%

### NURSING SHORTAGE GRAPH COURTESY OF IERHA

The graph shows nursing vacancies in acute care units at the Gimli, Stonewall and Beausejour hospitals. The three hospitals have closed a combined total of 21 beds since Nov. 1 because there aren't enough nurses to safely care for patients.

Beausejour hospital also has a 32 per cent vacancy.

Matear said the IERHA is actively trying to recruit staff and intends to re-open the beds.

"We've got ongoing recruitment efforts [underway] to as quickly as possible open those beds again and take that suspension away," said Matear. "We're working on that on a day-to-day basis."

The IERHA also moves staff between sites to fill the gaps, uses overtime and pays for agency nurses, which are hired from private organizations.

"We do try to move staff between sites wherever possible to be able to support acute care beds. But where that is not possible, we look at overtime and agency costs. If we can secure agency [nurses], we do. We know that over time that's a higher cost," said Matear. "We're looking at how we can structure a staffing model to maintain our acute care beds in Beausejour, as well as in Gimli and Stonewall."

Municipality of Gimli Mayor Lynn Greenberg said he had been alerted about the bed closures at the hospital before they occurred.

"I'm not sure exactly when it [bed closures] happened, but they did phone me to say it was going to happen in the near future because of a shortage of staff," said Greenberg by phone last week. "It's not anything the municipality can do anything about. We can't control that. We can lobby them to open the beds, but they're doing this out of necessity."

Greenberg said rural municipalities are trying to mitigate the health-care crisis. While he was at the Association of Manitoba Municipalities convention last week, a resolution was introduced by the RM of Stuartburn to lobby the provincial and federal governments to work on the retention of medical staff in rural areas by offering incentives. And other communities, such as Altona and Niverville, asked for a stretcher service and a reduction

of hours required by emergency personnel to complete training.

Stonewall Mayor Clive Hinds, who had taken part in the IERHA's virtual briefing Nov. 24, said by phone that the town was notified roughly two weeks ago about the hospital's bed closures.

"At the end of the day, I am thankful it was only five beds in Stonewall as compared to other jurisdictions where they had 10 beds taken out," said Hinds last Friday. "We're dealing with a lot of seniors in this municipality and we are mindful of that. We're trying to do our best as municipal leaders to get those beds reinstated as soon as possible."

Hinds said he has lived in Stonewall for 50 years and the hospital is the mainstay of the community.

"We need our hospital here," he said. "We also need to get some renovations done to get the hospital up to date, which they discussed with us last year."

Manitoba Liberal Leader Dougald Lamont said the nursing shortage was critical before the pandemic arrived in Manitoba. As early as January 2020, the Manitoba Nurses Union had warned about the system having been cut to the bone.

"The [bed closures] are shocking to me in part because these are hospitals that are really close to Winnipeg and they should be able to maintain staffing levels," said Lamont last Friday. "But we knew as far back as January 2020 — before the pandemic hit here — about nursing shortages and that the Manitoba Nurses Union was warning that there was no surge capacity in the system at all."

Lamont said mandatory nurse overtime and subsequent burnout needs to be addressed now before it gets worse. Legislation could remedy some of that.

"I'm getting emails from nurses who



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Continued on page 20



# Lung Assoc. reaching out to COVID-19 survivors

By Lorne Stelmach

The Lung Association of Manitoba sees itself as helping fill a void as the pandemic and its impact continues to be felt by so many people.

The organization is coordinating an online support group for people who continue to live with the effects of COVID while also wanting to support research and studies to better understand the long-term effects.

It's about contributing to understanding life after COVID-19 as there remains so many unknowns about what the future will look like post-pandemic, said Hailey Coleman, health programs and operations coordinator for the Lung Association of Manitoba (LAMB).

"People are coming out and saying this is what's happening to me, it's not going away ... so we can give them the information as more comes along," said Coleman. "We needed something started ... so we hope individuals take us up on this and ask to join this group because right now there's nothing else."

As part of their efforts, LAMB has connected with leading experts in this field and particularly with Manitoba based studies being conducted by Professor Diana Sanchez-Ramirez,

who is an assistant professor in the Department of Respiratory Therapy, College of Rehabilitation Sciences, at the University of Manitoba.

Many people are dealing with a vast difference in the experience of long COVID effects, so continued research is important to help patients and health care providers understand how and why COVID affects the lungs and how it should be treated, said Sanchez-Ramirez.

"There are many unknown aspects of post-COVID-19 that we have yet to unravel. Therefore, we are planning some research studies that will help identify the best ways to optimize rehabilitation interventions for patients with persistent long COVID symptoms," she noted.

"We have identified that a large proportion of post-COVID-19 patients may experience persistent respiratory symptoms, fatigue, decreased functional capacity and decreased quality of life for up to six months after infection," she said. "However, evidence from the previous coronavirus first identified in 2003 suggested that long-term effects may continue for years."

"As researchers and as health care providers, we must aim to identify the best way to support the recovery

of post-COVID patients. I think one of the first steps is to raise awareness and provide patient support," added Sanchez-Ramirez. "That is why I applaud LAMB's initiative to offer a virtual space that could make it easier for patients to connect with their peers, discuss their concerns and needs, and share information on existing local resources."

Coleman said they have seen how their support groups have good mental health and wellness benefits in other categories of health management, so they wanted to provide that for individuals post-COVID.

One of the first steps to provide patient support is to raise awareness, so that is why it took initiative to offer a virtual space that could make it easier for patients to connect with their peers, discuss their concerns and needs, and share information on existing local resources.

"We've had an influx of calls asking for programming or just what we offer ... we wanted to put together this Facebook support group where individuals can come safely, discuss their post-COVID symptoms," said Coleman.

A priority was to connect people with respiratory therapists and other

leading experts to help get them the information they need.

"Because there are such different experiences with post-COVID symptoms, and this is still such a new reality people are dealing with, we wanted to create a support system that anyone can access to work through this uncharted territory," said Coleman.

"It's just a starting foundation so there's somewhere for people to go ... and as the studies progress, we can share the information," she said. "We just felt that at least having this available is what we can offer right now, and it gives individuals a place to come and feel safe to discuss things with professionals."

"We are seeing an influx of individuals saying how their lung capacity decreases, how they're more fatigued ... so we are seeing long term effects from individuals who have had COVID six plus months ago and still having to deal with lung health issues."

You can find "Manitoba's Post COVID-19 Support Group" on Facebook. You can also find more information and join the study at [www.respirabilitylab.com](http://www.respirabilitylab.com) or email to [respirabilitylab@gmail.com](mailto:respirabilitylab@gmail.com).

## Conservatives lay out their plan for new Legislative session

By Lorne Stelmach

There was a strong emphasis on collaboration as the Manitoba government set out its new course last week.

The throne speech delivered by Lt.-Gov. Janice Filmon on behalf of new premier Heather Stefanson set out what the government billed as a new vision for a strong economic and social recovery with a focus on the health and well-being of all Manitobans.

"Our government is embarking on a path in a new direction. We are committed to working side by side with all Manitobans in the spirit of collaboration, co-operation and reconciliation," said Stefanson.

"As we continue to address the challenges posed by COVID-19, we are also focused on creating a stronger, more sustainable health-care system, providing greater supports for families, seniors and vulnerable Manitobans, improving education and training opportunities and laying the ground work to foster investment, job creation and economic growth."

Key initiatives cited in the throne speech include:

- Working with Indigenous leaders, elders, knowledge keepers, families and community members to advance shared goals and seek reconciliation, healing and a path forward together.
- Removing barriers that delay Manitobans from getting the medical care they urgently need.
- Addressing the nursing shortage with increased and targeted training opportunities.
- Implementing a renewed seniors strategy so aging Manitobans are able to stay safe in their own homes, close to family and their personal support systems, for as long as they choose.
- Improving access and co-ordination of mental health and addictions services.
- Working with community partners to meet the needs of single parents, Indigenous youth and people with disabilities.
- Expanding supports for those experiencing family violence.
- Accelerating the implementation

of the federal-provincial agreement on early learning and child care.

- Improving the kindergarten to Grade 12 education system to better prepare students for their future.
- Promoting collaboration between advanced education and training institutions and employers to provide Manitobans with the right skills to succeed that meet the evolving needs of the labour market.
- Advancing the skills, talent and knowledge strategy to accelerate post-pandemic economic recovery.
- Ensuring Indigenous and new Canadian students are given opportunities to participate in post-secondary education and training.
- Partnering with the federal government to boost immigration and provincial nominee programs.
- Implementing a venture capital framework to attract international investment and help businesses grow at all stages of their development.
- Committing to a renewed partnership with the Government of Canada to advance shared priorities and op-

portunities including transportation and strategic infrastructure, agriculture and food production.

• Creating a greener Manitoba with an energy policy framework to explore innovative technologies that will reduce emissions and stimulate the economy.

• Preserving nature and heritage spaces, and promoting tourism and the arts and culture sector throughout Manitoba.

"Our government is here to listen to Manitobans, to engage and collaborate with Indigenous leaders, all levels of government, business leaders and owners, members of the public sector, the private sector and non-profit organizations so we can emerge from this pandemic together," said Stefanson. "While we still face difficulties, I am confident that together, we can build a more prosperous, inclusive and safe future for all Manitobans."

To read the speech from the throne in full, you can visit [www.manitoba.ca/thronespeech](http://www.manitoba.ca/thronespeech).



# Prestigious curling championship returns to Selkirk

By Katelyn Boulanger

Selkirk has once again been chosen to host the 2022 Viterra Championship meaning that curlers from all across the province will be sliding into the city in January to show off their skills.

"You're going to see some of the best curlers in the world competing to represent Manitoba at the Tim Hortons Brier," said Reid Henderson, marketing and sponsorship chair for the Viterra Championship and vice-president of the Selkirk Curling Club.

The Viterra Championship is the Manitoba Men's Provincial Curling Championship and, like Henderson said, the winner will represent Manitoba at the Tim Hortons Brier, the Canadian Men's Championship.

This tournament rotates throughout the province to various CurlManitoba curling clubs and this year Selkirk Curling Club has been chosen to host.

"It's 100 per cent put on by volunteers. CurlManitoba helps give guidelines and what to expect and they always have a representative at

our meetings helping guide the process. This is the sixth time that Selkirk has hosted it and so we have a good record," said Henderson.

As has been done before, the Selkirk Recreation Complex will be transformed from a hockey rink to several sheets of curling ice for the event from Jan. 25 to 30, 2022.

"We probably, arguably, have one of the best facilities in the province to host it at the Recreation Complex. The ice, it's very consistent. Not to bash other clubs or other centres, but ours is very dedicated. The city helps us out getting this in there the week before to get the ice prepared. It takes a lot of work converting hockey ice to curling ice. Basically, the ice-makers there, he sleeps there for two weeks," said Henderson.

In addition to help from the city, to make this bonspiel happen they are going to need volunteers from the community to rock on over to the House of Steel to make this event a hit.

"Nobody has to be a curler to be



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Photos from Selkirk Curling Club's previous hosting of the Viterra Championship in 2016.

## Jones off to the Olympics

By Ty Dilello

St. Vital's Jennifer Jones will be returning to the Olympics as Team Canada after her team defeated East St. Paul's Tracy Fleury in the finals of the Canadian Olympic Curling Trials on Sunday afternoon.

In a back-and-forth game, Jones actually missed an open hit to win the game in the 10th end. But then in the extra end, Fleury also missed a chance to win the game when a last rock hit overcurled and wrecked on a guard.

"We thought we had lost in the tenth for sure. Jen makes that 99 percent of the time that shot, so lucky to go to an extra," said Fleury, who took the blame for her final stone in the extra end that left Team Jones escape with the win.

"It felt close, but it caught the curl," she said. "I wasn't positive enough with it."

For Jennifer Jones, she had already been to the Olympics once in 2014 when they took home the gold medal. She is relishing the chance at getting to compete in one more Olympics before her career is over.

"It was a dream come true to get to do this twice," Jones said of getting back to the Olympics. "It's such a privilege to do it with these girls. We've had our ups and downs and worked our butts off, just to see what we can do on the ice and to support each other. It's just phenomenal."

Gimli's Kerri Einarson had a disappointing week at the Olympic Trials. Seen as possibly the favourite heading into the event after winning the Scotties Tournament of Hearts the past two years, Einarson finished the round robin with a 4-4 record before ultimately being bounced in a tie-breaker by Northern Ontario's Krista McCarville.

In the men's Olympic Trials, Brad Gushue of Newfoundland and Labrador will represent Canada in the Olympics after defeating Brad Jacobs of Northern Ontario in Sunday night's final.

Winnipeg Beach's Colton Lott played third for Saskatchewan's Matt Dunstone during the event and finished with a 3-3 record. Lott will now look forward to competing at the upcoming Mixed Doubles Olympic Trials with his partner and fiancée, Kadriana Sahaidak.

West St. Paul's Mike McEwen finished fourth in the Olympic Trials after going 4-4 and failing to reach the playoffs. Jason Gunnlaugson of the Morris Curling Club also competed and finished out of the playoffs with a 2-6 record.

Jennifer Jones and Brad Gushue will now represent Canada in four-person team competition at the Winter Olympics Games in Beijing, China, from Feb 4-20.

a volunteer. There's no precursor; they're just coming out. There're different areas that they can help out [with]. They can help with making the ice by converting the ice over and that's a cool process or you can be a volunteer working at the door, you can be working in the bar, you can be just checking tickets or there're lots of areas [that we could use a hand with]," said Henderson.

They expect to need between 120 and 140 volunteers during and prior to the event who will work with volunteer director Shayne Merritt to make

the event happen.

Henderson is most excited to see the amazing level of curling play that will be in our community in a few months' time.

"It's fantastic. The shots those guys make are out of this world," he said.

He also encourages potential volunteers to take the time to check it out and register so that they can also be part of such a great event.

To find out more information, register or get your tickets, visit <https://selkirkcurlingclub.com/viterra-2022>.

## > CLOSED BEDS, FROM PG. 18

are afraid they'll hurt or kill somebody because they're so tired," he said. "Right now, if you have one terrible traumatic event, you can get coverage for that. But if you break down during a pandemic because you're exhausted and worn out, that isn't covered. That means we're losing staff from the health-care system because we're not helping them. That's the critical missing piece — there's nothing for burnout."

The use of agency nurses, where you pay a temporary nurse for service and also pay a fee to the agency for the use of that nurse, is a "massively expensive band-aid solution," said Lamont. "The PCs [provincial Progressive Conservatives] have cut and cut until there weren't enough people to do the work safely. That's where we're at."

Shared Health, which delivers health-care services, is funded by the provincial government yet can't be

held to account because of the way the PCs set up the organization, said Lamont. As an MLA, he can sit on legislative committees and question the CEOs of Hydro, MPI and Liquor & Lotteries and their board chairs but is not allowed to question Shared Health.

Given the multiple health-care crises in the rural regions — critical shortages of nurses, doctors and paramedics, ongoing periodic ER closures and now bed closures — Lamont said it's time for a reckoning.

"We have a health-care system where no one, including MLAs, can get any answers from the people who run it. That's why we introduced legislation (private member's bill) last week that would require Shared Health and regional health authorities to answer questions at the Legislature," said Lamont. "Our health-care system is being run by people who are not being held to account."



# sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

## Ice Dawgs blow out Warriors

By Brian Bowman

The Arborg Ice Dawgs and Lundar Falcons were on the opposite ends of lopsided scores last Saturday.

Arborg had a great night with a dominating 13-3 road win over the St. Malo Warriors while Lundar was drubbed 12-0 by the Fishermen in Selkirk.

In the Ice Dawgs' victory, Arborg came out flying, taking a 7-0 first-period lead and then went ahead 11-2 after two periods.

Jack Einarson and Kalen Guimon each had three goals and two assists while Dyson Pelletier added a pair of goals.

Logan Clarke, Cadrack Dueck, Ben Danielson, Tyson Barylski and Austin Adair also scored for Arborg.

Teagan Fillion, Ashton Dubois and Cole Holdnick replied for St. Malo.

Tre Strachan made 27 saves for the win.

Arborg will travel to Selkirk on Friday (7:30 p.m.) and St. Malo Saturday (7 p.m.).

Lundar, meanwhile, had a horrific night in a 12-0 loss to the league-leading Fishermen in Selkirk.

Reece Tessier paced the Fishermen with a hat trick and two assists while Jordan Donald had a goal and three assists.

Other Selkirk players with big offensive games included Josh Poponick (four assists), Kasen Andrushko (two goals and an assist), Matt Brooks (goal, two assists), Kyle Folhoffer (goal, two assists), Travis Spratt (goal, two assists) and Braeden Hummel (two goals).

Braeden Wyrha scored Selkirk's other goal.

Brendon Hocaluk made 20 saves for the shutout.

Michael Merpaw and Dillon Rapinchuk split the goaltending duties for Lundar.

On Nov. 23, the Falcons pounded the North Winnipeg Satellites 5-1 at the Billy Mosienko Arena.

Lundar's Andrew Henry scored twice in the first period while Jayden



EXPRESS PHOTO BY JOHN PODWORNIAK

Lundar Falcons' goaltender Michael Merpaw makes a save despite the Selkirk Fishermen's Travis Spratt flying through the air in front of him during CRJHL action last Saturday.

Allary had a goal and two assists.

Ryan Gleich and Logan Miller also scored for the Falcons. Nicholas Fernandes and Colby Choken each had two assists.

Nicolas Andrews scored North Winnipeg's goal in the second period.

Rapinchuk made 23 saves for the victory.

Lundar played at North Winnipeg on Tuesday but no score was available. The Falcons will visit St. Malo on Friday (8 p.m.) and then host Selkirk on Saturday (7:30 p.m.).

## Lakers ousted at MHSAA 'A/AA' JV boys' volleyball provincials

By Brian Bowman

A solid season by the Gimli Lakers ended on Saturday at the MHSAA "A/AA" junior varsity boys' provincials in Wawanesa.

The Lakers lost 2-0 (12-25, 20-25) to the Gabrielle-Roy Les Roys in a quarter-final game.

"They're pretty well coached and they have a lot of big hitters and a great setter," said Lakers' head coach Chad Hemminger. "We gave them one of their closer games (in the second set) all weekend. The boys should be proud of the way that they played. We

played some of our best volleyball in terms of we weren't able to play outside of our zone and that limited our ability to prepare for provincials.

"In a normal year, we would have played some of those ranked teams prior to being there (at provincials)."

Gabrielle-Roy went on to win the provincial title after beating the Elton Sabres 2-0 (25-22, 25-15).

Gimli finished its four-team pool play with an 0-3 record. The Lakers lost 2-0 to the MacGregor Mustangs (19-25, 26-28), Landmark 96ers (14-25, 17-25), and the Boissevain Broncos

(23-25, 23-25).

"If you look at the scores in the round robin every game was close," Hemminger said.

This year's Lakers' JV team had five players in Grade 9. The experience of playing in a provincial tournament will help them immensely next season.

"We haven't had a boys' team from Gimli go to provincials in about 20 years," Hemminger said. "It was a pretty big deal to get (to provincials), especially with not playing much volleyball for a couple of years."

With Hemminger also coaching the Lakers' varsity team, he already has a good idea of what talents each player brings to the court. The players also know what Hemminger expects from them.

"The core of our starting group in JV are Grade 10 athletes and they'll be pushing for starting spots next year," Hemminger said. "Having the same coach, they know the system and a lot of the thinking is over and they can just play, which is huge for them."

## U15 'AAA' Lightning suffer shootout loss

Staff

The Interlake Lightning was defeated 4-3 in overtime by the Winnipeg Thrashers Gold in U15 "AAA" action last Saturday in Lundar.

Maddox Malmquist scored on a penalty shot in the OT. It was his third goal of the game.

Cole Swanson and Skylar Farrington

scored first-period goals for Interlake and then Dainen Jacobson tallied in the third.

Winnipeg's other goal was scored by Noah Banera.

Swanson and Talon Hogg each had two points.

Last Wednesday, Interlake defeated the Central Plains Capitals 7-4 in

Stonewall. No scoring summary from that game was posted on the league website at press time.

Interlake will play the Winnipeg Bruins Gold on Wednesday (6:30 p.m.) at Southdale and then will head west to play the Wheat Kings in Brandon on Saturday. Game time is noon.

The U17 "AAA" Lightning, mean-

while, lost 7-2 to the Brandon Wheat Kings on Sunday in Warren.

Brandon Burak scored a first-period goal for Interlake and then Russell Watts tallied in the third.

Brandon goals were scored by Kaelan Huibers (three), Jackson Aldcroft, Declan Hoad, Liam Puchailo and Will Wiseman.

Dylan LeClair stopped 35 Brandon shots. The Lightning will host the Winnipeg Wild on Friday at 8 p.m. in Warren.



# U18 Lightning winless in November

**By Brian Bowman**

November was a tough month for the U18 Interlake Lightning “AAA” male hockey team.

Interlake finished the month with an 0-9 record after a 6-3 road loss to the Parkland Rangers on Saturday afternoon.

The Lightning led 3-2 in the third period but surrendered four unanswered goals.

Interlake’s Kaydyn McMahon scored a first-period power-play goal and then Hayden Wheddon tallied in the second.

Liam Foley gave Interlake a 3-2 lead with a power-play goal at 3:05 of the

third period.

Parkland’s Will Munro scored three power-play goals while Hayden Seib, Carter Zalischuk and Madden Murray tallied at even strength.

Ty Hogue made 32 saves in the losing cause.

On Friday evening, Parkland skated to a 9-5 victory.

Evan Calder scored twice for the Lightning while Wheddon had a goal and two assists.

Rylan Slatcher chipped in with a goal and an assist. Alexander Kaczowski scored Interlake’s other goal. McMahon had two assists.

Carter Zalischuk (three), Jayce Le-

gaarden (two), Munro (two), Kyan Gouette and Murray scored for the Rangers.

Hogue and Zack Meadows split the goaltending duties for the Lightning. Interlake was outshot 52-29.

The Lightning, now 4-16-1, will play the Winnipeg Wild on Wednesday (7 p.m.) at the Bell MTS Iceplex and then will take on the Pembina Valley Hawks on Saturday (8 p.m.) in Morden.

The U18 AAA Female Lightning, meanwhile, lost 4-0 to the Westman Wildcats on Saturday.

Westman scored three first-period goals and then added another in the third.

Brooklyn Franklin, Hayley Kolosky, Paige Kozak and Callie Rice scored for the Wildcats.

Lightning goaltender Katelyn Dorsch made 27 saves.

On Friday, Interlake was defeated 5-1 by the Yellowhead Chiefs.

Bre-Ann Windross scored a first-period goal for the Lightning, assisted by Brooke Barylski.

Levi Derkatch (two), Abigail McKinnon, Kora Tibbatts and Kennedy Wood scored for Yellowhead.

Lightning goaltender Rachel Hall-dorson stopped 41 Chiefs’ shots

# MJHL to host 2021 Futures Camp

**From the MJHL**

The Manitoba Junior Hockey League is pleased to host the 2021 MJHL Futures Camp on Dec. 27-28 in Niverville.

This event is intended to be an initial in-

troduction to the MJHL brand and sanctioned high-performance hockey for potential U15 (2007-born) junior prospects.

“The MJHL is committed to building lasting relationships with the young tal-

ent in this province, this a great icebreaker event for players to get a taste of what high-performance camps entail,” said Kyle Prystupa, MJHL manager of programming and communications.

The camp will be professionally operated by the MJHL to provide meaningful insight and preparation for future high-performance events in our province such as U16 Program of Excellence camps, MJHL U16 Draft Prospect Camp, MJHL U17 Draft Combine and more. This event will also see MJHL and Western Hockey League scouting personnel attending to evaluate the 80 invited players to compete.

MJHL Futures Camp includes:

- 1 Hybrid skills competition and combine testing session (skaters)
- 1 Goalie Mentorship session (goalies)
- 3 Exhibition games (round-robin)

Enhanced high-performance exposure

Lunch provided daily for athletes

MJHL camp jersey and socks

MJHL apparel item

Invited players were identified through preliminary recommendations from the local MJHL and WHL scouting network. The full camp schedule and assigned rosters will be announced in December as all plans become solidified.

## take a break > GAMES

### SUDOKU

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

Fun By The Numbers

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

Level: Intermediate

**Here's How It Works:**

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

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

Sudoku Answer

S	V	E	R	O	N	V	E	S	O	D	
E	H	O	H	S	A	V	E	S	G	E	I
I	N	G							N	I	V
S	E	I	C	N	E	G	V		E	D	
S	N	V	I	W	N	E	D	O	I	O	
				O	A						
W	W	B	S								
G	V	T	V	S		I	N	V	H	E	T
O	O	V	S		O	I	T	O	V	H	E
B	S	S			S	I	S	E	H	O	

Crossword Answer

## CROSSWORD

**CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. Topsides
- 7. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
- 10. A Sultan's court
- 12. Maine city
- 13. Largest living land animal
- 14. Appetizer
- 15. Encounters
- 16. Leader
- 17. The source of bacon
- 18. Nuclear near reach weapon (abbr.)
- 19. Celery (Spanish)
- 21. Pie \_\_\_ mode
- 22. Eye disease
- 27. Hello (slang)
- 28. Those in their 80s
- 33. Law enforcement agency (abbr.)
- 34. Business organizations
- 36. Mimic
- 37. For indicating speed of rotation (abbr.)
- 38. Feeling
- 39. Visual way to interact with computers (abbr.)
- 40. "Let It Snow!" songwriter
- 41. Essential oil used as perfume
- 44. Norwegian composer
- 45. Coast
- 48. \_\_\_ lang syne, good old days
- 49. Gland behind the stomach
- 50. Tooth caregiver
- 51. King of Camelot

**CLUES DOWN**

- 1. N. American indigenous people
- 2. Fascinated by
- 3. Root of out
- 4. Patti Hearst's captors
- 5. Atomic #50
- 6. Habitual drunkard
- 7. Arabic for "peace"
- 8. Trickery
- 9. One's physique (slang)
- 10. Not quite there
- 11. Wistfully mournful
- 12. Popular dance
- 14. Cut of meat
- 17. A way to stand
- 18. "Gunga Din" screenwriter
- 20. 10th month of the year (abbr.)
- 23. A way of jumping
- 24. Utah town
- 25. Of I
- 26. Actress de Armas
- 29. Silver
- 30. Play a role
- 31. \_\_\_ Falls
- 32. Attaches to
- 35. Japanese title
- 36. Expressed pleasure
- 38. Buckets
- 40. Dirt
- 41. Hypnotists' group (abbr.)
- 42. Restaurant drive-\_\_\_
- 43. Digs up
- 44. He voices "Olaf"
- 45. Relaxing place
- 46. Body part
- 47. Pesky house critter



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## NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: PAULINE PASIEKA, late of the City of Gimli, in Manitoba, deceased. ALL CLAIMS against the above estate must be sent to BOUDREAU LAW, Barristers and Solicitors, 100-1619 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3T 3Y6, to the attention of John Isfeld, on or before the 4th day of January, 2021. Dated at Winnipeg, Manitoba, this 23rd day of November, 2021. BOUDREAU LAW SOLICITORS FOR THE ADMINISTRATOR

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Phone: 204-768-3016  
Fax: 204-768-3916

## R.M. of Grahamdale and Ashern Christmas Cheer Board

The R.M. of Grahamdale and Ashern Christmas Cheer Board are again preparing for the Christmas season. Lakeshore Women's Resource Centre has volunteered to coordinate and distribute Christmas Cheer Board hampers in the area. We are appealing to the community for donations of non-perishable food items, new toys, knit items, home-made baked goods, vegetables or donations of any kind. If you can help in any way or need more information please call Janice at (204) 768-3016.

Please have all donations in by 12: Noon on Monday, December 20, 2021.

Non-perishable food items and new toys are being accepted at Moosehorn and Ashern Co-ops and Ashern Shop Easy. Cash donations can be made at the Noventis Credit Union (Moosehorn and Ashern Branch).

To request a hamper please call Lakeshore Women's Resource Centre at (204) 768-3016.

NOTE: Lakeshore Women's Resource Centre IS THE ONLY OFFICE RECEIVING REQUESTS. DECEMBER 6TH TO DECEMBER 10TH WILL BE THE ONLY DAYS TO CALL IN TO REQUEST A HAMPER. PLEASE CALL BETWEEN 10:00am and 5:00 pm. Only names registered will be considered (last year's list will not be used).

Respectfully we ask that you only request a hamper for your family, not on behalf of someone else and you MUST reside in the R.M. of Grahamdale or Ashern.

## McSherry Auctions

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## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

### Seasonal Casual Snow Clearing Personnel -

Aspen Park, Gimli on an on-call basis and may include weekends. Applicants need to be in good physical health and be familiar with the use of snow blowers.

To apply, forward letter or resume to the following:

Winnipeg Condo Corp 208 (Aspen Park)  
Box 3577, RR #1  
Gimli, MB R0C 1B1 or fax to 204 642-1243  
or e-mail: Nead1@mymts.net

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204-389-2023

102086 Hwy #9, Wpg Beach, MB

## RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE PLANNING ACT NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

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

THE RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI BY-LAW NO. 21-0012

Being an amendment to the Rural Municipality of Gimli Zoning By-law No. 11-0013, as amended.

HEARING LOCATION:	RM of Gimli Council Chambers 62 - 2nd Avenue, Gimli, MB
DATE & TIME:	December 22, 2021 6:30 p.m.
AFFECTED AREA:	Rural Municipality of Gimli
GENERAL INTENT:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To amend Part 1 - Interpretation, by adding and/replacing definitions;</li> <li>2) To amend Part 2 - Administration, confirming minor variances;</li> <li>3) To amend Part 3 - General Regulations, by making alterations to regulations pertaining to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporary Buildings, Structures and Uses;</li> <li>• Travel Trailers;</li> <li>• Truck, Bus, Rail, Coach Bodies and Storage Containers;</li> <li>• Public Utilities, Services and Streets;</li> <li>• Home Occupations; and</li> <li>• Guest Houses</li> </ul> </li> <li>4) To amend Part 4 - Zones, by making corrections, amending and/or adding uses as either conditional or permitted in various zones; and</li> <li>5) To amend all references of "MP Industrial Park Zone" in the text and map portions of the Zoning By-Law to "MP Multi-Use Business Park" Zone.</li> </ol>
FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:	Nancy Thom, Chief Administrative Officer/Development Officer Eastern Interlake Planning District, 62-2nd Ave, Box 1758 Gimli MB R0C 1B0 Ph: (204) 642-5478 Fax: (204) 642-4061 Email: <a href="mailto:eipd@mts.net">eipd@mts.net</a> Web: <a href="http://www.interlakeplanning.com">www.interlakeplanning.com</a>

COVID-19 PROTOCOL: Should you wish to attend the hearing, you must PRE-REGISTER NO LATER THAN 5:00 p.m. ON THE DAY OF THE HEARING with the RM of Gimli office - PH: 204-642-6650.

A copy of the By-Law Amendment may be provided upon request to the contact person as mentioned above.

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

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### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

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**For further information call  
Shaunne at 204-886- 2929 ext 205 or  
email resume to [shaunne@charisons.ca](mailto:shaunne@charisons.ca)**

## CLANDEBOYE AVE in Selkirk *Executive Mall* OFFICE SPACE FOR LEASE



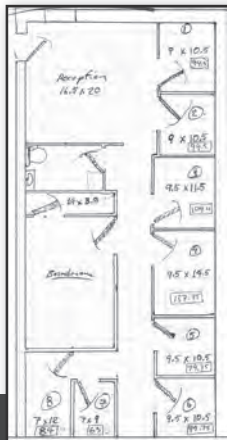
### Property Features

Total square Footage 1700, includes eight offices of various sizes, a board room and a front reception area. Current tenants include Sun Life Financial, a Massage Therapist, an Esthetician, Glow Fitness for Women and the Selkirk Record. The building was upgraded in 2012. Both the reception and board room are shared, there are currently two offices available for lease.

For information please contact:

**BIG Real Estate**  
**204-485-0010**

**email [bigandcolourful@mts.net](mailto:bigandcolourful@mts.net)**



# get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



## Kimchi Fried Rice Bowl with Fried Egg

1 tablespoon ginger, minced  
4 cups baby spinach  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
4 teaspoons sesame oil  
4 eggs, fried  
Prepare rice according to package directions.  
In large wok or skillet over medium-high heat, heat oil. Stir-fry mushrooms and onions 3-5 minutes, or un-

til softened. Stir in kimchi, garlic and ginger; stir-fry 1-2 minutes, or until well coated. Stir in rice, spinach, soy sauce and sesame oil. Stir-fry 2-3 minutes, or until spinach starts to wilt and rice is heated through.  
Divide rice between four bowls and top each with one fried egg.

## Lemon Cake



Prep time: 10 minutes  
Cook time: 1 hour, 15 minutes  
Servings: 30  
1 1/3 cups Pompeian Light Taste Olive Oil, plus additional for oiling pan  
2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 cup sugar

3/4 cup brown sugar  
1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda  
1/2 teaspoon baking powder  
1 1/4 cups whole milk  
3 large eggs  
1 1/2 tablespoons grated lemon zest, plus additional for garnish (optional)  
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice  
1/4 cup limoncello  
powdered sugar, for garnish (optional)  
dried sweetened lemon rings, for garnish (optional)  
Heat oven to 350 F. Oil 8-by-12-by-2-inch pan with olive oil and line bottom with

parchment paper.  
In bowl, whisk flour, sugars, salt, baking soda and powder. In another bowl, whisk 1 1/3 cups olive oil, milk, eggs, lemon zest, juice and limoncello. Add dry ingredients; whisk until just combined.  
Pour batter into prepared pan and bake 60-75 minutes until top is golden and cake tester comes out clean. Transfer cake to rack and let cool 30 minutes.  
Run knife around edge of pan, invert cake onto rack and let cool completely, 2 hours.  
Sprinkle with powdered sugar, lemon zest and lemon rings right before serving, if desired.



## Sugar Cookies with Orange Glaze

1/2 teaspoon almond extract  
2-3 tablespoons unsweetened milk of choice

### Glaze:

1 cup powdered sugar, plus additional if needed, for thickening  
2-3 tablespoons fresh orange juice  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
orange slices or blood orange slices, for topping  
To make cookies: Preheat oven to 350 F. Lightly grease baking sheet.  
In large bowl, stir flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt to combine.  
Add olive oil, vanilla extract and almond extract. Stir until crumbly dough forms.  
Add 2 tablespoons milk; stir

until soft dough ball forms, adding more milk if needed.  
Place dough ball on lightly floured surface. Roll out dough until 1/4-inch thick. Using jar lid or other circular object, cut out cookies; place on baking sheet. Repeat until all dough is used.  
Bake 8-10 minutes; do not overbake. Set aside to cool.  
To make glaze: In small bowl, stir powdered sugar, 2 tablespoons orange juice and salt until thick glaze forms. Add more juice, if needed, to thin out glaze or add more powdered sugar to thicken.  
When cookies are cooled, glaze them. Top with orange slices or blood orange slices and pinch of sugar.



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## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

### PELLET PLANT OPERATORS NEEDED

Applicants must be mechanically inclined, self motivated, and available to work shift work. Night shift premiums, overtime and bonuses available.



Send resume to [info@sprucewoodloggers.ca](mailto:info@sprucewoodloggers.ca).  
Or call 204-378-2997



## RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT FULL TIME OPPORTUNITY

**Position: Facility Maintenance Operator**  
40 hours per week. Position will require evenings and weekend shifts.

The Facility Maintenance Operator, under the direction the Manager of Parks and Recreation Services will assist in the operations and maintenance of the Gimli Recreation Centre and other municipal park spaces and buildings.

### Duties:

- Operation and maintenance of a 180-ton refrigeration ammonia plant
- General facility cleaning duties - floors, bathrooms, common areas, etc.
- Hockey and Curling ice maintenance
- Building maintenance on various public buildings throughout the municipality
- Development and maintenance of sports field, including grass cutting
- Maintenance and beautification of playgrounds, park and recreational spaces, including Gimli Beach

### Qualifications:

- Priority given if you hold a Power Engineers Refrigeration Class Certificate or higher, as issued by the Province of Manitoba.
- Beneficial qualifications - Arena / Curling Ice Level I, Ice Making Certificate

### Skills:

- Good communication skills, as this position deals with the public on a daily basis
- Ability to work well with others, have initiative and be flexible
- Ability to work alone and make decisions, with minimal supervision
- Wide range of skills to perform a variety of maintenance duties required for the position
- An understanding of sports, recreation and leisure services in the R.M. of Gimli
- Previous experience in Recreation, Public Works or Arena setting would be considered an asset
- Preference will be given to those with experience in the following trades: carpentry, electrical, mechanical, plumbing and ice making

Salary as per union collective agreement

For more information, please Contact Tyler Yellowega at 204-642-6670 or [tyellowega@rmgimli.com](mailto:tyellowega@rmgimli.com). This posting will remain open until position is filled.

Please submit resume with detailed skill set and references to:

Tyler Yellowega  
Manager - Parks & Recreation  
Rural Municipality of Gimli  
45 Centennial Road, PO Box 1258  
Gimli, MB R0C 1B0  
Email: [tyellowega@rmgimli.com](mailto:tyellowega@rmgimli.com)  
Fax: 204-642-4307

**We thank all applicants for their interest; however only those selected for an interview will be contacted.**

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## EVERGREEN SCHOOL DIVISION

Invites applications for the  
following temporary positions,  
effective January 6, 2022:

### 21.EA.17-21.EA.24 Educational Assistants Temporary (6.0hr/day)

**These positions are indefinite terms  
and will end no later than June 30, 2022.**

See website for details and application procedures:  
[http://www.esd.ca/Employment under Support Staff.](http://www.esd.ca/Employment%20under%20Support%20Staff)

**CLOSING DATE: December 8, 2021 (3:30 pm)**

We wish to thank all applicants for their interest,  
however only candidates selected for an interview  
will be contacted.

Employment will be subject to satisfactory criminal  
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Confirmation of COVID-19 vaccination/or routine testing  
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## INVITATION TO TENDER

**Noventis Credit Union Limited**  
**Gimli Janitorial Contract**  
(36 month term)

**You are invited to tender for the above-mentioned Janitorial Contract.**

### Forward to:

**J Collins; AVP, Operations**  
Email: [jcollins@noventis.ca](mailto:jcollins@noventis.ca)  
Subject line: Gimli Janitorial Contract

**Deadline: December 16, 2021 by 4PM**

**Any questions regarding this tender may be referred to:**

**Nicole Skorupski; Manager, Branch Experience**  
Email: [nskorupski@noventis.ca](mailto:nskorupski@noventis.ca)  
Phone: 204.641.2172

[noventis.ca](http://noventis.ca)





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THE **EXPRESS**  
WEEKLY NEWS

## OBITUARY



**David M. Bergman**

March 18, 1950 - November 21, 2021

It is with great sorrow, mixed with gratitude of a life well lived, that the family of David M. Bergman announce his passing at the St. Boniface Hospital on November 21, 2021. David died peacefully with his wife and boys beside him.

He was a loving husband of 52 years to his wife Mary Anne (nee Keller); Dad to his four sons and families David (Mandi), Karl (Tammy), Chris (Kim) and Joe (Laura); and Afi to his grandchildren Dylan, Sadie, Haley, Kole, Destiny, Tristan, Johannes, Kyler, Krewyen, Ethan and Jace. He will be missed by his sister Lorraine (Arnie); brothers Ken and Rich; sister-in-law Mary along with in-laws, Rich (Betty), Carol, Ken (Jane), Albert, Sylvia (Luke), and Lynne and many nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

David was predeceased by his parents Joe and Sella Bergman; brother Ray; Mary Anne's parents Rudolph and Leona Keller; in-laws Martin and Bernice.

David and Mary Anne married on April 18, 1970. They began their married life on the Keller family farm, and lived there the rest of his life. Together they raised their four sons. David had a special relationship with each of his 11 grandchildren. Afi always made time for all of them and always enjoyed having them around.

David loved farming, the animals, working on his fields and 'moving dirt' whenever he could. (Any reason to get on the tractors and ride). When he semi-retired recently, he learned the zero turn lawn mower (tractor) could go just about anywhere and so he claimed another couple acres of yard to cut.

Another favourite pastime was his love of hunting. He would spend countless hours searching for the ultimate buck only to shoot the first one or two ish that came across his scope, then of course getting one of his boys to come help him retrieve it/them. He had even earned himself the nickname of Rambo after one very successful hunt. Although, it won't be the same without you, happy hunting Dad!

He loved watching his kids do what they loved. He spent many hours in the rinks of Manitoba watching his boys play hockey. Or maybe more so supervising the referees. He could walk into any rink and be welcomed by someone in any given town. A testament to how easy going and sociable he was. He had a comment about everything and anything and every stranger was a new friend.

One of his purposes in life was to help others. If you hit rock bottom he was right there to help guide you out. Anytime, anywhere, he was willing to drop everything and be there for you. Numerous people have changed how they live their lives with his help. He was a rock for so many people.

**IN OUR HEARTS FOREVER**

You did your best to stay with us for as long as you could. We will always love you.  
**REST IN PEACE**

Lo, there do I see my Father,  
Lo, there do I see my Mother,  
Lo, there do I see my Brother.

Lo there do I see the line of my people back to the beginning.

They bid me take my seat amongst them, in the halls of Valhalla.

Condolences may be left on his tribute wall at [www.gilbartfuneralhome.com](http://www.gilbartfuneralhome.com)

Gilbart Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



## OBITUARY



**Ernest John Victor Johnson**

October 8, 1936 - November 12, 2021

Peacefully, on November 12, 2021, following a brief illness, Ernie (Papa) passed away with his daughters at his side at 85 years of age.

Left to cherish his memory are his daughters Mona (Jerry) Allen of Eriksdale and Lisa Miller (Gerald Falk) of Ashern; his grandchildren, Meaghan (Aaron) Allen, Trista (Lyndon) Miller, Chelsey (Owen) Miller and Andrew (Kristy) Miller; great-grandchildren Shaemus, Izabella and Sophie, Brittan and Ayla; his brothers Pete, Fred, Beverly (Vicki) and Rob (Bette); sister Suinn (Ron) and in-laws Wanda Johnson, Karen Johnson, Gary Shapiro, Thomas Bent and Al and Sandra Jira along with so many nieces, nephews and cousins too numerous to list.

Ernie was predeceased by his wife Shirley of 41 years in 2004; his parents Peter and Freda; brothers Brian and Danny; sisters Thora, Mona, Nona, Sandra and Rosalee; in-laws Marg, Leona, Evelyn, Ken, Marvin, Paul and John; his parents-in-law Lawrence and Hilda Jira and sister-in-law Elaine.

Ernie was born October 8, 1936 in Winnipegosis, Manitoba, where he grew up, attended school, and first met the love of his life, Shirley Jira. He started working for Manitoba Hydro in 1956 and was stationed all over the province. In 1963, he married Shirley and they settled first in Steinbach and then Falcon Lake where they started their family.

The family moved to Lynn Lake in 1979 when Ernie took the position of District Operator. While there he was heavily involved in the community with Kinsmen, old-timer hockey, volunteer firefighter, refereeing minor hockey and more. He really enjoyed fishing, taking the family out often in the boat, and of course moose hunting with Fred, Rob and Matt.

In 1979, another move, this time to Ashern, also as District Operator, getting the nickname "Ernie the enforcer". Again he was involved in the fire department becoming Deputy Chief. Papa really enjoyed refereeing minor hockey and was one of the oldest and longest serving refs at the age of 70. While the moose hunting eventually became replaced by elk and deer, he enjoyed fishing until the last couple years.

While with Hydro he took some temporary positions in Winnipeg and Selkirk and eventually became the Manager of the Interlake area. Papa retired in 1993 after a long career with Hydro. After retirement he and Shirley enjoyed traveling all over North America and creating crafts which turned into a small business that kept them busy.

A celebration of Papa's life will be held next summer, the date to be determined later.

The family would like to thank the staff at Ashern Hospital for your care of Papa these last couple weeks. We also appreciated all the visits and calls from family and friends.

Arrangements by:

**ARNASON FUNERAL HOME**

Ashern - Lundar

1-204-768-2072

1-866-323-3593

## OBITUARY

**Clifford Donovan Sveinson**

April 26, 1936 - November 30, 2021

Peacefully, on the morning of November 30, 2021 Cliff passed away.

He will be missed by all.

Funeral details and longer obituary to follow.

## INVITATION TO TENDER

**Noventis Credit Union Limited**  
**Lundar Janitorial Contract**  
(36 month term)

You are invited to tender for the above-mentioned Janitorial Contract.

**Forward to:**

**J Collins; AVP, Operations**

Email: [jcollins@noventis.ca](mailto:jcollins@noventis.ca)

Subject line: Lundar Janitorial Contract

**Deadline: December 16, 2021 by 4PM**

**Any questions regarding this tender may be referred to:**

**Adrienne Halkowich; Manager, Branch Experience**

Email: [ahalkowich@noventis.ca](mailto:ahalkowich@noventis.ca)

Phone: 204.302.1289

[noventis.ca](http://noventis.ca)



## INVITATION TO TENDER

**Noventis Credit Union Limited**  
**Riverton Janitorial Contract**  
(36 month term)

You are invited to tender for the above-mentioned Janitorial Contract.

**Forward to:**

**J Collins; AVP, Operations**

Email: [jcollins@noventis.ca](mailto:jcollins@noventis.ca)

Subject line: Riverton Janitorial Contract

**Deadline: December 16, 2021 by 4PM**

**Any questions regarding this tender may be referred to:**

**Nicole Skorupski; Manager, Branch Experience**

Email: [nskorupski@noventis.ca](mailto:nskorupski@noventis.ca)

Phone: 204.641.2172

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OBITUARY

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OBITUARY



**Muriel Irene Henrotte**

January 11, 1931 – November 10, 2021

With profound sadness we announce the passing of our mother, grandmother and great-grandmother Muriel Henrotte.

She is survived by her daughter Karen (Jim); grandson Walter (Amie) and great-grandchildren Alyssa and Kayla; granddaughter Danielle (Tom) and great-grandchildren Chloe and Zoe; along with her sister Margret (Tom).

In accordance with her wishes, cremation has taken place. An interment will take place at a later date.

Special thanks to Elaine Henrotte, Norman and Carol Lamoureux for all the help they have given to Mom over the years.

Arrangements by:

ARNASON FUNERAL HOME  
Ashern – Lunder  
1-204-768-2072  
1-866-323-3593

OBITUARY

**Bernice Johanna Eyolfson (nee Einarson)**

October 20, 1934 – November 29, 2021

With heavy hearts we announce the passing of our dear mother and Amma, Bernice, on Monday, November 29, 2021 at the Gimli Hospital.

Funeral details and full obituary to follow.



**Pauline Gulay (nee Mryglod)**

November 27, 2021

Heaven has gained another long-awaited special angel at the young age of 95 with Chris and Jena by her side. Her long-awaited reunion with her husband Joe. She was a mother of four and leaves to mourn Adam James (Marlene), Glen, Gladys (Morris) and Patrick (Julia) and special daughter-in-law Chris. Grandkids Ryan (Olga), Rena (Andrei), Rita (Greg), Jena (Bhavdeep), Alyssa, Lisa (Kevin), Conrad, Jason (Alexandra), Jaclyn (Clinton) and Janelle (Mario). Her great-grandkids Milana, Nate, Brae, Jonah, Gemma, Jack, Jori, Eli, Isabel, Lily, Nash, Summer, Claire, Caitlyn, Carter, Sebastian.

Pauline was predeceased by her parents Michael and Katherine Mryglod; brothers William, Nicholas, Dymetro, Anothony; sisters Tekla, Anne and two infant sisters. She leaves to mourn her sisters

Mary, Milly and Julia.

Pauline was born in Sylvan, MB on May 30th, 1926 and moved the short distance to her lifelong homestead a few miles up the road where they raised their family. Joe and Pauline successfully operated a farm forever, owners and operators of a farm vacation property where she entertained and fed many people from around the world. She was an active member of the Roman Catholic Church where she faithfully attended each service. Rain or snow she would go. One particular snowy winter Sunday morning she called the local tow truck guy (also a family friend Kenny) to let him know that he could find her car in the ditch near the bridge outside of town and to bring it to the church parking lot. Nothing could stop her, when he went to get her car to his surprise Kenny found it flipped in the middle of the field.

Grandma, often referred to by her grandchildren, always made time for them and anyone that crossed her path. She made many lifelong friends along the way. She served on various volunteer boards and committees. During her "free" time she loved to travel. These trips took her all over Canada, United States, South Africa, South America, Europe, specifically Ukraine to visit her family history and connect with her heritage. Her highlight lifetime trip was with Joe and their 1987 Chevrolet Van to the Yukon and Territories where they dabbled in nature and gold mining.

Pauline was the greatest Great-Grandma any kids could ask for. She would make her daily, often multiple, three mile trip to join her great-grand kids for breakfast, lunch, supper and most importantly tea with Baba. She was referred to early on as Baba Tea.

Viewing will be held on Sunday, December 5, 2021, further details can be found at [mackenziefh.com](http://mackenziefh.com). Due to existing health restrictions, the funeral service will be by invitation only.

In lieu of flowers it is Pauline's wish to provide donations to Arborg and District Health Auxiliary - donations can be sent to Box 301, Arborg, MB. R0C 0A0.

A heartfelt thanks to the Arborg Personal Care Home Staff.

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