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Christmas is in the air

EXPRESS PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

The Arborg and Riverton high schools performed for family and friends at the annual Christmas Concert on Dec. 15. Concert Band trumpeters performed Epic Fantasy on We Three Kings. The hour-long performance included traditional Christmas songs and jazz and folk music.

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WEEKLY NEWS

SWAN VALLEY TRAVEL
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Bifrost-Riverton council eschews indemnity and expenses pay rise

By Patricia Barrett

Bifrost-Riverton councillors voted unanimously for a zero per cent increase to their monthly salaries and expenses at its regular meeting Dec. 14.

Council gave first and second reading to its Council Indemnities & Expenses Bylaw 1-2017, agreeing to forego a raise next year.

Council has yet to give third and final reading to the bylaw.

Other council briefs:

Council gave first and second reading to its Remuneration of Employees Bylaw 3-2017, voting in favour of providing a 1.5 per cent wage increase to staff.

Because of some cost-cutting measures, council expects to be in the financial pink at year's end.

"We're anticipating an approximately \$190,000 surplus at the end of this year," said CAO Cindy Stansell as she provided her financial report. "We found savings in a lot of places."

Stansell reported that total payables and payroll for 2016 was \$358,382.20.

Council discussed reducing the number of RM wards from seven to two. Any changes to wards



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT
Coun. Colin Bjarnason, left, Morley Nordal, middle, and Warren Ostertag.

have to be done 180 days before a municipal election.

Foster said having fewer wards may mitigate "some of the territorial claims."

Deputy Mayor Dave Shott was in favour of reducing wards and for revamping the way money is allocated to each ward for drainage/ditching projects.

Shott suggested having "another set of eyes" on projects going on across all wards, perhaps an oversight committee of some sort, to determine which projects should get the highest priority.

"I had said [earlier] we should pick a few big projects," said Shott.

Coun. Frode Andersen argued in favour of keeping the wards as they are, saying people know who to call when they have a problem and that councillors who live in their wards know the issues best.

Reeve Foster said each councillor should consider the RM as a whole.

"Once elected, you're responsible for the whole municipality," said Foster. "It's [the ward system] just there for election purposes."

Shott agreed, saying, "We're supposed to look after the whole RM."

The majority of council voted in favour of maintaining its seven wards. It will, however, consider alternative ways of undertaking ward projects.

Change to foreign worker program excellent news: KAP

Submitted

The federal government yesterday rescinded the "four-in, four-out" rule of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program that was put into effect in 2011.

Under the rule, foreign workers, who are a vital part of the workforce in the agriculture industry, could only work four years in Canada before having to leave the country for four years. Farmers invested heavily in the training of these workers, only to lose them.

"This has created not only a major labour shortage in the agriculture industry, but it has also resulted in a huge skills gap," said Dan Mazier, president of Keystone Agricultural Producers.

Mazier pointed out that foreign workers take the jobs Canadians

aren't able to fill; not many people are located in the rural areas where these jobs are.

"There is a limited to non-existent labour pool in rural areas," he said.

KAP raised this issue with Employment Minister MaryAnn Mihychuk, as did other farm organizations and the Canadian Agricultural Human Resources Council.

"We are pleased that she listened and acted," said Mazier. "This will help many farm operations in Manitoba, but especially the beekeepers who were hit hardest by this rule."

Mazier also noted that a request was made to help eligible temporary workers to become Canadian citizens. This would allow them to contribute to rural society and help stabilize

shrinking rural communities.

"I thank Immigration Minister John McCallum and Minister Mihychuk for listening to us on this one, too," Mazi-

er said. "They have indicated they will be exploring ways to do this."

Owners of proposed fish processing plant intend to improve fishers' lives

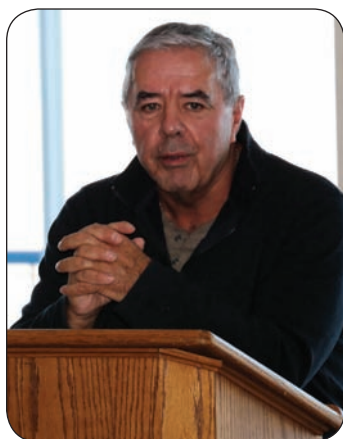
By Patricia Barrett

The former president and CEO of the federally run Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation, which sells fish on behalf of Manitoba's commercial fishers, announced Dec. 15 his intention to build a fish processing plant in Gimli.

Donald Salkeld, who was for reasons unknown placed on administrative leave by the FFMC in March, established a company called Northern Walleye Inc. and has partnered with American company Schafer Fisheries from Illinois.

"He [Schafer] understands the potential of Manitoba fish and he understands the market in the world," said Salkeld to about 30 people at the Lakeview Resort after Gimli MLA Jeff Wharton introduced him. "He does business in over 20 countries in the world."

The provincial Conservatives announced in August they intend to cut



Northern Walleye owner Donald Salkeld announced his decision to construct a fish processing plant in Gimli.



Gimli Mayor Randy Woroniuk wants to see opportunity fish (less desired by the market) utilized by fish plant companies.



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY PATRICIA BARRETT
Commercial fishers Chris Kristjanson, left, and Kris Isfeld, middle, ask Northern Walleye owner Donald Salkeld questions about his plant

ties with Freshwater next year and let fishers navigate the open market on their own. Since then, a few fish plant operators have expressed interest in setting up shop.

Salkeld said he and Schafer want to make things better for Manitoba's fishers.

"Mike Schafer's 40 years of experience in the fish processing business,

he understands that end of it very well," said Salkeld, "and I think we are going to make a good partnership and

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Car battery care in extreme weather

Few things can be more frustrating than jumping into the driver's seat on a frosty morning, turning the key in the ignition and failing to hear the engine roar to life. Frigid weather can cause trouble with a car's battery. Some drivers do not understand why, but getting the facts can help people avoid having to deal with dead batteries on cold winter days.

Cold temperatures wreak havoc on batteries because they slow the chemical reaction inside of the battery. Batteries work by combining lead plates with lead dioxide and sulfuric acid to create electrons. While batteries can function under myriad conditions, the cold weather tends to degrade high-quality batteries and may render subpar batteries useless. The cold weather can cause the fluid in the battery to freeze and lose function. A battery that is frozen will not hold a charge, and, as a result, the car won't start.

There are various ways to protect a battery from failure in the cold, and some of them involve taking precautionary measures even before the arrival of cold weather.

* Assess the age of your battery by bringing your car into your local service provider. If your battery is old, now may be the time to replace it. Batteries differ in how long they last, but many last anywhere from five to 10 years. If your car is still running on its original battery and your car is several years old, it may be a good idea to get a new battery before the arrival of winter. It's important to buy the correct battery for the make of your car, which you can ask your local service provider for information.

* Verify that there is no corrosion. Corrosion can prevent a car from starting just as much as a worn-out battery. Corrosion is caused by a faulty connection that allows battery acid to escape and corrode surrounding areas. Regularly inspect the battery to keep abreast of issues that may cause corrosion. Carefully clean away any corrosive residue that has formed and make sure the battery is correctly seated.

* Get your local service provider to install a battery blanket. A battery blanket is used to wrap around the battery and fit inside of the battery cover. A cord with a plug runs from the blanket to a wall outlet. The blanket can produce enough heat to keep the battery fluid from freezing. A trickle charger can also be mounted on the battery. It will deliver enough power to the battery while the car is off to keep it from freezing.

* Minimize the use of automotive accessories. Do not start the car with the heater and the radio on. They can use up the power coming from the car's alternator and prevent the battery from charging. Do not leave the heat and the radio on while the car is idling. Otherwise the car will not be putting out enough power for the alternator to charge the battery and power the electrical systems.

* Disconnect the battery. If your car will be stored in a garage for the winter, disconnect the battery. Certain devices, such as clocks and alarm systems, continue to drain battery power when the vehicle is off. If your car will not be driven enough to recharge the battery, keep it disconnected when the automobile is being stored.

Cold weather can sometimes wreak havoc on vehicles. Ask your local Interlake service provider how to skirt trouble with your car's battery can keep your car on the road throughout the winter.

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Clarkleigh greenhouse Christmas trees brighten Interlake homes

By Jeff Ward

The Christmas spirit is alive and well at Sabados Greenhouse as the owners sell their last few fresh trees for the holiday season.

Karen Sabados said that it's a great feeling to know that she and her husband Alan are such a huge part of many family Christmases. The Clarkleigh-based business hosts dozens of families in the middle weeks of December and sets up a great indoor forest for customers to walk through and experience the live trees.

Poinsettia, Christmas cacti and Balsam Fir, Fraser Fir and Scotch Pine trees, some as tall as 11 feet, usher in the warmth of the holiday season, helping to make homes look and smell more festive.

"I think that's the most important part of these trees, the smell," said Karen Sabados.

"That's the smell of Christmas right there, and you can't get that with a fake tree. When families come in, we help them go through and look at the trees and find one that will be fit their house. For some people, they just want the biggest, but for others, they just want a nice small tree."

Karen said that she enjoys being able to help families choose their tree and explained that some do really labour with the decision. It's important for families to get the perfect tree because it becomes such a large focal point of their living room for three or four weeks.

This is the second year that Sabados Greenhouse has been importing trees from Quebec, and they feel it offers a great service to members of the community who like to buy local. And they both really enjoy the Christmas atmosphere it brings to the business.



John Wood to retire from FPMC

By Jeff Ward

The current interim president and CEO of Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation (FFMC) will retire effective Jan. 31, 2017, and current CFO Stan Lazar will be his replacement.

This is the second retirement from FFMC for John Wood, who officially retired in December 2014 and was replaced by Donald Salkeld.

Wood returned to the position as interim president and CEO in March 2016 after Salkeld was put on admin-

istrative leave.

Lazar said that the board has appointed him the new interim president and CEO of FFMC and he will begin that assignment on Feb. 1. Lazar added that Wood will remain a member of the board of directors with FFMC.

The Crown corporation has remained quiet on how long Salkeld's administrative leave will last or if he will return to the position at all.

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EXPRESS PHOTO BY JEFF WARD
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A Bombardier to the rescue

Seasons greetings, everyone! This is our time of year when we share love in all its ways as well as helping others in need. It reveals the best in us. The stories that have been given to us this week are fine examples of that.

Jim Zagozewski told me of an experience he had about this time years ago when he and friends were ice fishing off Sandy Bar by Riverton. Five guys on three sleds came by their ice shack lost, asking for directions to make landfall because it was starting to blow.

Jim showed them what direction to go using his GPS. The group climbed back on their sleds and disappeared into the growing storm. Looking out the window once back in his shack, Jim soon realized they were in a white-out situation. He couldn't see 10 feet away. His gang loaded their gear into their bombardier and were about to head for shore and home when out of the vial of blinding snow, the men on the sleds reappeared.

They had become totally lost and had gone around in a gigantic circle. Worse, some of them were not dressed for a storm on the ice of Lake Winnipeg. One was wearing running shoes.

Jim's bombardier was packed to the roof, but they made room for the chap in running shoes whose feet were badly frozen. Then away they went in a convoy, Jim in his bombardier leading using his GPS with the sledgers following. The bombardier bounced viciously over ice crack pileups that couldn't be seen in the storm.

Soon the early darkness of the winter night covered them. The small lights of the bombardier seemed frail



EXPRESS PHOTO BY ARNIE WEIDL

John Klassen, left, and son Kyle Klassen with some of their pickerel catch by Sugar Island on the Red.

against the wind-driven blizzard, but Jim faithfully drove according to his GPS. Then abruptly through the swirling maze, the shore popped up right in front of them. Tensions eased as everyone busied themselves loading the sleds onto trailers.

Lastly the chap with the frozen feet had to be carried to his friend's truck for a trip to the hospital. Jim, you and your friends did just fine. We're proud of you!

A few days ago, I was on the ice of the Red River, which is about a foot thick now, by Sugar Island downstream of Selkirk. I walked from one portable ice shack to the next, passing the time with our fellow anglers. It seemed everyone couldn't get over how many pickerel they were catching!

Later, out on the flat snow pack, I saw two men putting their gear into

a toboggan, obviously quitting for the day, so I trudged over to them and asked how they had made out.

These very pleasant fellows, John Klassen and his son Kyle from Oak Bluff, quickly held up some of their catch, which I took a picture of. I then asked if they had a fishing story for us. After thinking for a moment, they remembered an unusual happening.

Last summer, they were boat fishing on the Winnipeg River. There was another boat maybe a half-dozen boat lengths away from them. Apparently those anglers had enough fishing and started pulling in their lines. The driver started the motor and gunned it. What he hadn't remembered was that the anchor was still out.

The boat shot forward but the anchor

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Road of contention (reprise): Bifrost-Riverton calls for province to pave PR 326

By Patricia Barrett

In July, the RM of Bifrost-Riverton council asked Interlake MLA Derek Johnson to update it on the new government's commitment to pave a three-mile stretch of gravel road in an industrial area near Vidor, northwest of Arborg (see the Aug. 4 edition of the *Express*).

At its regular meeting on Dec. 14, council put PR 326 back on its radar, asking Johnson how things currently stand with the provincially owned road, also known as the Jacob Line.

"We see it's not on the program for this year," said Reeve Harold Foster to Johnson and Manitoba Infrastructure's Director of Regional Operations Kelvin Shuvera, who appeared as delegates. "And we're OK with that because we know you just can't do it like that, but I guess we'd like to know where it's going to fit in the schedule."

During council's July 13 meeting, Foster told Johnson that paving and other construction work would ideally have to be carried out in three phases over the course of three years.

Phase 1 would see the road paved north of PR 329. Phase 2 would encompass work on the road between PR 329 and Arborg. Phase 3 would entail a bridge being built (over the Icelandic River) in the area near the Arborg Fire Hall, which is located at the junction of PR 326 and River Road. The bridge would provide a direct link to Highway 68 and divert semitrailers away from downtown Arborg.

Semis and other heavy goods vehicles going to and coming from the north frequently make their way down Arborg's Main Street (PR 326), crossing the existing bridge that provides access to highways 68 and 7.

"Phase 3, that will be a while, I'm sure," said Johnson, referring to provincial funding for a bridge. "Phase 1 and 2 were talked about during the [2016] election. ... Your proposal got in a little too late this year when you actually got that all sorted out for what order you want to do it in. I guess the [provincial] budget was already pretty much worked out."

Foster asked when the government intends to make a start. "It's going to take engineering and all kinds of stuff to be done. When does that start? How long does it take before we can actually lay some pavement there?"

Johnson said he doesn't have the engineering qualifications to be able to answer those questions, but Shuvera does.

"We can do it pretty quickly," said Shuvera, referring to preliminary work. "We've probably done work on it already, on 326. ... Stuff like the ap-

provals and the environmental take some time."

Johnson said the good news is that the province will be increasing the amount of gravel allocated to PR 326.

He himself has travelled the section and thinks it needs a fair bit of gravel, he said.

Deputy Mayor Dave Shott expressed concern about the quality of gravel — whether it would be of better quality than that previously used.

Foster said limestone crumbles fairly quickly, but harder gravel can rip tires to shreds.

"Pavement is the right way to do it," said Foster. "I guess the bottom line is that as a municipality, we cannot afford massive amounts of pavement. It's too expensive. We can't handle that. [But] we have to stay competitive with our neighbouring municipalities."

At present, two companies are situated in the industrial area and collectively employ about 150 people.

Foster raised the issue of mud and dust on PR 326 that may concern those businesses.

"I can only repeat what I'm told by the manufacturers," he said. "They've had instances where ... they've got to wash equipment after they deliver it ... whatever they do when they deliver it, they've got to wash it because it's covered in dust. ... That's what I'm told."

Johnson agreed, saying he was turned back from the American border for having mud on the running boards of his pickup truck, and had to wash it before he was allowed to cross.

Coun. Richard Chomokovski broached the idea of the province and the RM negotiating a "road trade" near the industrial area, something that had been discussed in the past. The municipality would take over a section of road and the province would continue 326 northwards.

Johnson said that would have to be negotiated with the minister. "I don't anticipate the province just making a whole bunch more PR roads."

He also indicated that the province will be scaling back a bit on new infrastructure projects given the current deficit.

"There's been a lot of newer projects. The newer projects are going to slow down a little bit, and we're going to concentrate on fixing what we have," Johnson said.

The RM has discussed the paving of the Jacob Line with successive provincial governments.

A source contacted for the *Express*' Aug. 4 article had said the estimated cost to pave the three-mile stretch would be over \$6 million, and traffic



Semitrailers and trucks pass through downtown Arborg to and from the industrial area north of town.



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Interlake MLA Derek Johnson and Kelvin Shuvera from Manitoba Infrastructure were delegates at the RM of Bifrost-Riverton's council meeting Dec. 14 to discuss the paving of PR 326.

counts conducted by the province in the Vidor area have shown a decline in traffic volume. That means the required threshold for paving has not been met.

Coun. Chomokovski said the poor condition of 326 acts as deterrent to traffic.

"The trucks and the vehicles all end up going on municipal roads," he said, "and the counters say that there's nobody driving on these [provincial] roads — which is accurate because they're all using municipal roads."

Coun. Chomokovski used to build roads and said if the last three miles of 326 were gravelled in the interim, it would make a difference.

"If it was gravelled really good — we know this is not going to happen this coming year — if more gravel was put on it, it would make a huge dif-

ference."

The gravel could then be reused for the paving project, he said.

He also cited problems with the road when it rains.

"They [the province] put calcium over pure mud," said Chomokovski. "It still is a little better than it used to be years ago, but it's not much. If it rains half an inch, it's a mud bath."

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Province provides annual technology grant to Evergreen Regional Library

By Patricia Barrett

Gimli MLA Jeff Wharton delivered the government's annual library technology grant to the Evergreen Regional Library to help it upgrade services for almost 12,000 patrons.

"I am pleased to confirm funding," said Wharton, who presented \$8,627.45 to Gimli Coun. Danny Luprypa last Wednesday at council chambers.

Luprypa, who is the ERL board's finance chair, said a lot of people rely on libraries for access to the Internet and other services.

"It will help us a lot in upgrading our computer systems ...," he said. "We're finding so many patrons are entering our libraries and using computers. It's phenomenal. And you know ... how quickly computers need upgrading. It's [the grant] a wonderful asset."

The government provides funding to libraries across the province on an annual basis to help them keep abreast of changing technology, said Gimli's head librarian Valerie Eyolfson.

"They give all libraries this grant, and it's for technology like your Internet or other technical upgrades — whatever you need it for," she said. "Every library gets it according to their population."

Eyolfson said the ERL has been receiving the grant for about 10 years, and the amount this year increased by about \$16.

"This [grant] is split between Arborg, Riverton and Gimli," said Eyolfson, referring to the three libraries that make up the ERL.

The ERL provides residents and visitors with a range of technology services, including e-books, free Internet and scanning services. It incurs ongoing expenses to maintain about 18 public access and staff computers in its three branches.

Gimli serves 5,845 people; Riverton, 3,514; and Arborg, 1,152, for a combined total of 10,511, according to the ERL's 2015 annual report. It had 11,932 memberships in 2015 and charged \$35 and \$30 respectively for non-resident

family memberships and single memberships.

The central library in Gimli provides inter-library loan services, collections and acquisitions services (purchasing books, licensing databases) and cataloguing for all the branches.

In a Dec. 14 PC caucus news release, the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage said the province recognizes the important role libraries play in the community.

"Libraries can build bridges between communities, inspire young readers and offer the key that unlocks the imagination," said Rochelle Squires. "We want to ensure the support we provide and the services that are offered are delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible."

Earlier this year, the ERL board considered ways to further reduce a deficit (about \$10,000) that had arisen in 2015 because of the need for additional staff.

The three municipalities from which the ERL rents building space agreed



PHOTO COURTESY OF RM OF GIMLI
Gimli MLA Jeff Wharton (left) presented RM Coun. Danny Luprypa with a letter announcing \$8,627.45 in provincial funding for library technology upgrades to the Evergreen Regional Library.

to reduce the rent they charge. In an interview in September, an ERL spokesperson said the library pays \$17,431 a year in rent.

The provincial grant is used exclusively for technology upgrades.

Refugee family ready for first Christmas in Canada



EVERGREEN BASIC NEEDS

Evergreen Basic Needs Inc. would like to express their deepest appreciation to our extraordinary team of volunteers.

EBN would also like to extend their heartfelt gratitude to the community groups, faith groups, the individuals and businesses who graciously extended their generous support throughout 2016.

Best wishes to everyone in 2017



EXPRESS PHOTO BY LINDSEY ENNS

The Ramadan family was busy decorating their tree and home for Christmas last Friday evening. The refugee family from Sudan, who came to Selkirk in late July, will celebrate their first Christmas in Canada later this month.

By Lindsey Enns

Colourful lights have been hung, the tree has been decorated and plans have been set for the Ramadan family to celebrate their first Christmas in Canada.

Dozens of volunteers from multiple churches make up the Red River Churches Refugee Team (RRCRT), which helped bring the refugee family to Selkirk in late July.

The family includes mother Ache and her three sons Yaya, Habib, Awad and daughter Said. Yaya is also joined by his wife Zara and their baby girl Maisoune.

Before coming to Canada, the family spent 11 years living in a refugee camp in Sudan.

Continued on page 25

> FISH PROCESSING PLANT, FROM PG. 4

help the fishers here in Manitoba improve your lives. That's our intent."

Salkeld said the Northern Walleye plant will have a "limited capacity."

"You get into the plant by delivering your fish to [it]," he said. "You come at a later date when we are at full capacity, we are not going to move anybody out that's been there." (After the announcement, Salkeld said the plant's capacity will be five million kilograms). The plant will deal only with fresh fish.

"Mike Schafer and myself, we intend to market your fish throughout the world with the highest quality that it deserves," said Salkeld. "We don't intend to be in the frozen fish business; we intend to be in the fresh fish business."

In 2014, the U.S. Food & Drug Administration sent Schafer Fisheries a warning letter dated Feb. 6, stating it had found "serious violations" of a food safety act.

"Accordingly, your fish franks, fish salami and gefilte fish are adulterated in that they have been prepared, packed, or held under unsanitary conditions, whereby they may have been rendered injurious to health," wrote District Director Scott J. MacIntire.

Clostridium botulinum growth and toxin formation are a hazard likely to occur in the products, he added, and the FDA could seize them or suspend operation of the company.

In 2015, fire gutted the Schafer Fisheries' plant, according to an April 25 article in the *Clinton Herald*. A fish smoker became too hot and ignited nearby plastic sheeting.

The Gimli plant "will be built in two or three stages" with an opening target date of September 2017, according to a statement from owners of Northern Walleye Inc., which was provided to the media during the announcement. "Processing will be done at our plant in Illinois until the new facility is operational."

"A lot of you have worked with Don at Freshwater ... and understand the integrity and transparency that Don and Mike will bring to the industry again, the struggles that most fishers had concerns with [sic] Freshwater over the years," said Wharton before he introduced Gimli's mayor.

Mayor Randy Woroniuk said the RM sees the fish plant as a "tremendous opportunity" for both the town and the fishers but said he would also wel-

come a processing facility.

"I would like to see a value-added fish plant brought into the community," he said, "where species that are not traditionally utilized would be canned or [made into] frozen fish sticks. It increases the opportunity for employment, and it also increases the money that goes to commercial fishers."

Further to fish waste, the mayor said Iceland's sole fish plant uses every part of a fish, right down to its skeleton, which is dried and sold to Africa. That earns fishers more money.

After the announcement, Woroniuk said Northern Walleye has yet to present the RM with a business plan. In the Sept. 29 edition of the *Express*, the mayor said the RM had entered into a "gentleman's agreement" with Salkeld and set aside 11 acres of land at the Industrial Park for his plant if/when he delivers a formal plan.

Gimli Coun. Thora Palson, who attended the announcement, said fishers face a challenge when it comes to their earnings partly because of the nature of their product.

"The real problem is that you're working with a very perishable commodity. You don't have a product that can be stored until prices go up or down," she said. "The product has to be out of their hands in 24 hours. It has to be marketed within a very short time frame."

The plant announcement garnered mix reaction among the fishers in attendance.

Baldi Johannesson, a Lake Winnipeg fisher since 1977, said he's happy to see an open market on the way.

"It's probably the best thing that's come along in 50 years," said Johannesson. "We have freedom of choice, freedom of marketing. I'll quote [fisher] David Olson: I'll say this is something fishermen all over Canada have except for ... 2,000 fishermen in Manitoba [that] are locked into the [FFMC] system."

Johannesson said fishing had been his primary occupation for most of his career, but he has had to "work out" for the past 15 years in order to supplement his FFMC pay packet.

He said he's not sure whether he'll get a better price from a fish company as opposed to FFMC, but having access to a plant in Gimli will save him transportation costs. He has to drive to FFMC's plant in Selkirk to deliver

his catch.

Johannesson cited issues with the operation of FFMC — particularly the sales end of the corporation.

"Their sales team is absolutely horrible. I don't think they've had a new customer now for the last 10 years. They've haven't really developed any ... big customers. They've got a few niche contracts like tullibee roe and stuff like that, but as far as selling our pickerel, they've failed."

Johannesson said fishers who are adamant about staying with Freshwater are suffering from "Stockholm Syndrome," a psychological survival strategy whereby a hostage develops sympathetic feelings for his/her captor.

"And another thing that hasn't been mentioned, too," said Johannesson, "is that pickerel is driving the marketing board. That's how they pay for everything. We're subsidizing all these other lower quality species."

Although the name of Salkeld's plant refers exclusively to walleye (also known as pickerel), the businessman said after the announcement, "We're going to take all species of fish."

A source who did not want to be identified said the waste of under-utilized species is the industry's "dirty secret." Species that don't fetch the prices walleye does are tossed back (dead) into the water or left to rot on the ice.

"Freshwater has a price list. ... Pickerel pays you the most, then whitefish or tullibee or sauger. ... If I bring 10 boxes of pickerel, I'm getting top dollar. If I bring 10 boxes of whitefish, I'm making half. So I throw out all my whitefish and I only bring in pickerel. Everybody knows this, but it's kind of a dirty secret."

The source said the industry has to find ways to utilize perfectly good species such as sauger, tullibee, sucker, drum and northern pike.

Whether a fish plant(s) can help correct that imbalance in the system is yet to be seen.

"The advantage to [under-utilized species] is they're off-quota fish," said the source. "So you can bring in as much as you want and it doesn't affect your quota. ... That's an incentive to catch off-quota fish."

Hecla fisher Ivan Grimolfson, who was fishing long before the creation of FFMC, said he sees the establishment of fish companies as "going backwards" and does not believe competition between plants will positively

impact fishers' wages.

"I can't see it because that's what we had before. And it just didn't work. That's why we had Freshwater set up," he said. "They say everything has changed [now], but fishing is still the same. And the companies are going to be the same. And the crooks are going to be the same."

As to the limited capacity of the proposed Gimli plant, Grimolfson said Freshwater never has to expand. "They've taken every pound of fish we can give them."

Lake Winnipeg fisher Chris Kristjanson said he counted the fishers among the 28 people in the room and found eight, including himself.

"I think ... the commercial fishery is very poorly represented at this meeting here today," said Kristjanson. "And it shows because of the short notice we were given. ... We have to have a cross-section of grassroots fishermen. I can't ... say, 'Donald, I think you should do this. Donald, I think you should do that.' We have to have representatives from our grassroots fishermen in this area."

He and fisher Kris Isfeld wondered why Salkeld's announcement hadn't been publicized, saying they had gotten wind of it through word-of-mouth a few hours before it got underway at 3 p.m.

Both are skeptical of whether the open market will benefit all fishers.

Isfeld said he has made several attempts to get Sustainable Development Minister Cathy Cox to meet with him and the fishers he represents to discuss the opt-out and other fisheries issues.

It's unknown what percentage of Manitoba's commercial fishers had asked the Conservative government to cut ties with Freshwater.

In 2015, Salkeld himself, as president and CEO of FFMC, painted a rosy picture of the corporation with which he's now intending to compete.

In FFMC's 2015 Annual Report, Salkeld wrote that sales revenue "increased by 3.5 per cent from \$68.5 million in 2013/14 to \$71 million in 2014/15." The corporation processed 15.3 million kilograms of fish during the 2014/15 fiscal year and "initial payments to fishers have been increasing annually since 2010."

The report goes on to state that fishers' total returns for the 2014/15 fiscal year were at a "five-year high of \$29.5 million" despite Russian trade sanctions.

fishing every so often. Jim, John and Kyle, these are their stories and I think it shows they have the spirit of helping others all year round.

So, to all of you, my fine fishing friends, best wishes and bye for now.

> GET FISHING, FROM PG. 6

stayed right where it was! As the rope tightened like a thick rubber band, the anchor decided to come free — like a torpedo! It tore from the water with "whosh," slamming into the side

of the boat at the water line, sounding like a thunder clap.

John and Kyle sat in their boat, eyes and mouths wide open in shock, staring at a situation that could have had a lot worse ending. They took a minute to regain their compo-

sure and then idled over to see what they could do to help.

We continued talking, and John and Kyle mentioned that they belonged to an organization called the Manitoba Pioneer Camp at Shoal Lake where they take disadvantaged kids for some

Riverton Chamber concerned about RM name-change process

By Patricia Barrett

The Riverton & District Chamber of Commerce is raising concerns about the RM of Bifrost-Riverton's name-change survey and wants to ensure that everyone in the RM has a chance to take part in the process.

The RM has a survey form on its website asking whether the name of the municipality should be changed or whether it should remain as Bifrost-Riverton.

Clif Evans, president of the chamber and former MLA for the Interlake, said the chamber is wondering why the RM is considering a possible name change and is questioning the way the RM is consulting the public.

"Seeing the article in the newspaper [the *Express*] surprised us," said Evans. "We've had residents and businesses asking us, 'What's going on?' And the question is, 'Why do this all of a sudden and was there a council resolution?'"

As reported in the Nov. 24 edition of the *Express*, RM Reeve Harold Foster said the survey came as a result of the RM not being sure whether everyone is happy with the length of the Bifrost-Riverton name, which was adopted by legislative process after the former RM of Bifrost and the former Village of Riverton were subjected to a provincially mandated amalgama-

tion in 2015.

Foster had also said that the RM would like to move towards one logo and simplify its paperwork.

Evans said he believes the name-change survey should have been more widely advertised in order to give people time to respond before the new year when the RM plans to review submissions.

"We're [the chamber] asking the community to respond — not just people in Riverton but from across Bifrost," said Evans.

A few Riverton businesses — the Riverton Co-op, the Gateway Gas Bar and Agri'Auto Repair — have printed out the RM's survey form and set up collection boxes in their facilities to raise awareness and to help the public participate in the process.

"People have been approaching the chamber," said Evans, "and that's why the forms are at different places in the community. They'll [completed surveys] all be taken to the municipality's offices."

Having to download the survey form from the RM's website could possibly pose a barrier to some people wanting to participate, he said. The form is not interactive and cannot be submitted via the Internet. It must be dropped off at one of the RM's two municipal offices.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Regardless of whether the RM of Bifrost-Riverton decides to change its name, highway signs, such as this one on Boundary Road and PR 222, may have to be updated.

The RM's satellite office in Riverton is open only two days a week.

"Just having it available online makes it difficult for a lot of people," said Evans. "Not everybody has the Internet."

The RM's website indicates that survey forms will be accepted until the beginning of January.

Evans said the chamber is encouraging people to complete a survey at one

of the above local businesses or to deliver a completed survey to either of the municipal offices before the end of December.

The RM's municipal offices are located at 329 River Rd. in Arborg and 56 Laura Ave. in Riverton.

For more information about the survey, visit the RM's website at www.rmbifrost.com or call the main office at 204-376-2391.

Lundar and Ashern RCMP investigate armed robbery

Submitted

On Dec. 6 at approximately 1:30 am, Ashern RCMP responded to a report of an armed robbery at a gas station in Ashern.

An armed suspect wearing coveralls, white gloves and a green hood, entered the gas station and demanded money and cigarettes from an employee. The suspect then fled southbound on Highway 6.

Lundar and Ashern RCMP immediately began searching the surrounding area for the suspect vehicle, a red GMC pickup truck. Following extensive patrols of nearby highways, the vehicle could not be located.

On Dec. 7, members of the Ashern RCMP responded to a report of an armed robbery at the Lake Manitoba First Nation arena.

Officers attended the scene and determined that an armed suspect had entered the arena and robbed the

VLTs. The suspect fled in a vehicle, described as a GMC pickup, prior to officers arriving. No employees of the arena were confronted. An undisclosed amount of cash was stolen.

RCMP searched the surrounding area for the suspect vehicle. Again, following extensive patrols of nearby highways, the vehicle could not be located.

On Dec. 8, a burnt-out GMC pickup was located.

Police believe the two robberies are connected. There were no injuries in either robbery.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Lundar RCMP at 204-762-5088 or call Manitoba Crime Stoppers anonymously at 1-800-222-8477, submit a secure tip online at www.manitobacrimestoppers.com or text "TIP-MAN" plus your message to CRIMES (274637).



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Ashern RCMP are looking for the public's help in identifying this person and truck. Anyone with information is asked to contact Lundar RCMP at 204-762-5088 or call Manitoba Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477.

Province recommends amalgamation of Bifrost-Riverton's CDCs

By Patricia Barrett

The RM of Bifrost-Riverton invited a specialist from the provincial government to its regular council meeting Dec. 14 to help it decide how to turn its two Community Development Corporations into one.

CAO Cindy Stansell invited rural economic development specialist Ruth Mealy from Growth, Enterprise and Trade to provide some advice.

Over the past few years, the RM has been adjusting to a provincially enforced amalgamation, which occurred Jan. 1, 2015, when the former Village of Riverton and the former RM of Bifrost became one municipality. Each of their CDCs have continued to operate.

Reeve Harold Foster said the RM is trying to reduce the costs associated with having two corporations.

"We're looking at costs, of course," he said, "... and if we go to a reputable auditing firm, it's about \$2,500 per CDC. We're looking at ways to get out of that."

Foster suggested bringing the Riverton-Bifrost CDC "in-house" so that it would become part of the Arborg-Bifrost CDC and be considered under the RM's regular audit.

Mealy, who provides support to municipalities that want to revive, amalgamate or dissolve a CDC, asked what the RM is proposing to do with the Arborg-Bifrost CDC.

Foster said he's not sure yet what would happen to the Arborg CDC as it's currently in the process of creating a development plan for the entire RM, including the town of Riverton.

"What I do see is that we can make

the Riverton-Bifrost [CDC] work within our own office," he said.

Mealy offered council a few options for transitioning to one CDC.

The first would entail letting the Riverton CDC "lapse." She said it had "legally" lapsed a few times in the past, before being revived with corporate status in 2001 and again in 2012.

"If the work that the Riverton-Bifrost CDC is doing is not purchasing land or buildings or things like that, where an incorporation isn't really necessary ...," said Mealy, "you can just dissolve it [and] run it as a community ... development committee, just like a rec committee or something."

The other option — the one Mealy said the province recommends — would be to merge the two CDCs.

"I look at all the things you're already doing," she said. "You're sharing on so many ... things [that] to differentiate the work you do in economic development ... there's no separation."

Arborg, Riverton, Bifrost and Fisher are one self-contained labour area, she said, in which 75 per cent of the people who live in the region also work in the region.

Coun. Colin Bjarnason (Ward 7) said he favours maintaining the Riverton-Bifrost CDC because it's already part and parcel of the municipality.

"Doesn't it make more sense to keep that one [Riverton] in our municipality? Arborg [the Town of] has had the opportunity to be part of the municipality, and they chose not to be. We have one CDC within a municipality, so why aren't we supporting that one? If you quit funding one of them, why wouldn't you quit funding the one



EXPRESS PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Rural economic development specialist Ruth Mealy from Manitoba Growth, Enterprise and Trade recommended the RM of Bifrost-Riverton merge its two CDCs and form a new corporation. Both CDCs are already working towards the same goal of stimulating economic development in the region.

that isn't part of the municipality?"

Coun. Morley Nordal said it's not really a matter of "dissolving" a particular CDC but rather creating a new one.

"We're just creating one for the whole area," said Nordal. "One has got to go — whether it's the Arborg one or the Riverton one. One has to go. One is ... just being encompassed in the other one."

Mealy said that's "not necessarily" so. There is a bit of formality to the process.

"What you would have to do is ... council would have to pass a motion to say that Wards 3, 4 and 5 of the Arborg-Bifrost CDC ... should be moved over to the Riverton-Bifrost CDC," she

said.

The reeve said the tendency to protect one's home turf has to end.

"You can't protect your own territory. At the end of it is the taxpayer. We have to start to do things more efficiently."

Bjarnason said "there'd be uproar" if the recommendation was to dismantle the Arborg CDC.

Mealy said the RM's amalgamated council can't separate itself economically, that both have common regional goals.

Foster agreed that there needs to be "regional thinking."

No decision was made as to how council will create one CDC.

Manitoba, Saskatchewan say no to federal climate change deal

By Jeff Ward

Ron Thiessen, executive director for the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS), is disappointed in the provincial government and Premier Brian Pallister's decision to back away from the federal climate change deal last week.

Thiessen said that he and the rest of the CPAWS staff were surprised by the decision and said that this deal, which puts a national price on carbon — \$10 a tonne in 2018 and rising to \$50 a tonne by 2022 — would've been the perfect opportunity for the Pallister government to show their support of combating climate change.

Instead, Pallister said that his government would continue working on their "Made in Manitoba" plan,

of which the details haven't been released. Thiessen said that this isn't a problem that is going away and that the province needs to act in protecting some of the greatest natural resources on the planet, which help fight carbon emissions.

"Eighty per cent of the Manitoba landscape is helping to keep the carbon away from the atmosphere," said Thiessen.

"The boreal forest stores more carbon per acre than any other place in the world. I think our prime minister was right on the money in terms of the urgent call to address global climate change and how Canada can play an integral role in that."

Thiessen said that further to Pallister opting out of the deal is the fact

that the premier used the opportunity to leverage the health-care system against the deal. Pallister said that a partnership with the federal government on sustainable long-term health-care funding is a priority.

Thiessen said that we can't have other provincial needs competing with each other and that the premier shouldn't be using health care as a bargaining chip.

In a press release, Pallister said that "Manitoba is Canada's greenest province and we've been, and remain, consistent in our commitment to addressing climate change." He added that Manitoba will continue to punch above its weight on addressing climate change.

Pallister did not provide proof of

these claims, and this reporter has found no study that puts the province on the top of any such list.

"I'm not sure where he got that info because Manitoba is certainly not looking too good right now in terms of comparing ourselves to other provinces and territories. I would think that a new government working to set the stage for itself in Canada would be very proactive in the fight against climate change, rather than opposing," said Thiessen.

In terms of the carbon tax itself, Thiessen said that it certainly doesn't fix all problems associated with climate change, but depending on how the tax dollars are invested, they could go a long way in helping win the fight.



Merry Christmas

EXPRESS PHOTOS BY SHAWN COTE OF BLUE RAVEN DESIGN

Young Audrica Lute has her photo taken at the Santa Claus is Coming to Town event in Ashern. The event is a revitalized version of a similar event from many years ago organized by the Ashern Chamber of Commerce. Sweets, popcorn, a free movie and photos with Santa were all part of the free annual event that saw approximately 100 attendees.

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Christmas Greetings 2016

New music director showcases Arborg and Riverton students' talent

By Patricia Barrett

The new director of the shared music program at Arborg and Riverton high schools showcased her students' vocal and musical abilities during an annual Christmas Concert the evening of Dec. 15.

Lauren Dobko, who recently graduated from Brandon University with a jazz performance degree and a two-year after-education degree, arranged an entertaining hour-long performance that included traditional Christmas songs and jazz and folk standards.

"These fine folks behind me have just been giving it their all. ... They are just the cream of the crop," said Dobko to about 300 people at the Riverton Community Hall.

Dobko had select musicians in the Beginner Band, which is composed of grades 7 and 8 students, perform solos to demonstrate the versatility and range of their respective instruments (trumpet, clarinet, flute, etc.) as well as their mastery of them.

Dobko said she was trained on the band side of things and that choir "is a whole new thing" for her.

But judging by the Concert Choir and the Vocal Jazz Choir's ability to handle some musically tricky and challenging scores, it certainly didn't show.

Students performing traditional folksong Old Dan Tucker were tight and polished, and they got the crowd rocking with their rendition of Cat Stevens' classic 1971 song Peace Train.

Towards the end of the concert, Dobko had a surprise for the audience.

"Just as a thank you for everyone's acceptance, support and patience and open arms in this time of transition," she said, "[and] for bringing us



The Vocal Jazz Choir performs Cat Stevens' Peace Train.



Grade 7 tuba player performs Jingle Bells.

into the community, myself and Jacob [her partner], we'd like to share a little piece with you."

With Jacob on piano, Dobko performed a stunning rendition of Let It Snow, Let It Snow, Let It Snow on the alto sax.

"I'm still taking it all in," said Dobko afterwards, with reference to her three months on the job with the Evergreen School Division. "It's a learning experience, but there are a lot of great students here that made the transition a lot easier and make it really rewarding."



Concert band clarinetists perform Epic Fantasy on We Three King.



Music Director Lauren Dobko gave a solo alto sax performance.



The Vocal Jazz Choir performs What Child Is This.



Grade 7 clarinet players perform Cool Cross Buns.

Tidings of Comfort & Joy
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**It's beginning
to look a lot like
our favorite
time of year,**

and we'd like to share well wishes
with the friends we hold so dear:

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happy, healthy and bright, and may
your New Year deliver continued
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locally and making 2016 a great
year for all of us. We appreciate
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a Happy New Year
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Christmas Greetings 2016



ACS Seniors Christmas Cabaret

By Jeff Ward

It was standing room only in the multi-purpose room at Ashern Central School last week when the senior high students hosted their annual Christmas Cabaret.

Students took attendees through a variety of Christmas-themed musical interludes from the classical era, Latin America and other familiar favourites.

There were solo performances by Sage Klyne-Geisler who sang Walking in a Winter Wonderland, Sienna Gould, who sang Late at Night, and Noah Monk, who performed a piano solo.

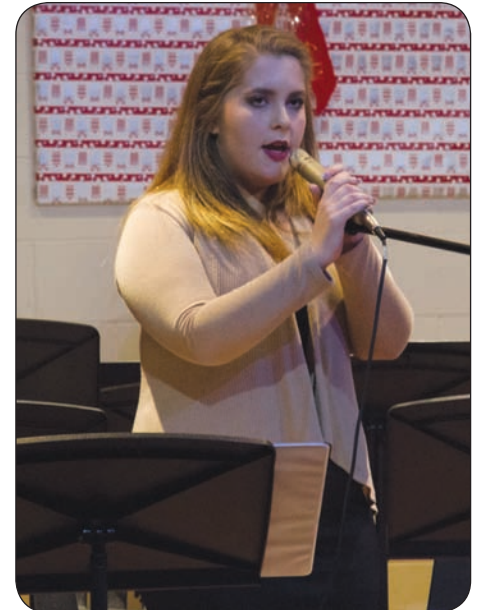
The middle portion of the show featured duets from Michael Taylor and music teacher Jennifer Bjornson, who performed a duet from The Nutcracker, and Courtney Granberg and Brayden Noordenbos, who performed Baby It's Cold Outside. There were also performances by the school's garage band, a guitar ensemble and the senior choir.

The performances lasted just over an hour and were met with thunderous applause for all the work hard from the many talented students.



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY JEFF WARD

Chelsea Gasper, left, Catherine Price, middle, and Alyssa Tritthart sing Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer.



Sage Klyne-Geisler sings Winter Wonderland.



Pictured left to right: Saige Klyne-Geisler, Anna Riddle, Catherine Price, Tyler Sumner, Natasha Kippen, Anjali Shorting, Lincoln Larson as part of the senior choir sing Feliz Navidad.



Sienna Gould performs a solo and sings Late at Night for the audience.

And he whistled, and shouted, and called it by name; **"On, Steiger!"**



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Christmas Greetings 2016



Irayden Noordenbos performed Baby It's Cold Outside as a duet with Courtney Granberg.



Justin Charles, left, Will Mantik, middle, and Paul Park perform their guitar ensemble piece In The Bleak Mid-Winter.



Lincoln Larson left, Courtney Granberg, middle, and Sienna Gould perform This Winter's Night as a part of the senior choir.



Warm wishes to our
many best friends at this
joyous time of year!

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Fisher Branch highlights



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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from our entire team!

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**RM of Coldwell
Reeve & Council and staff**

Season's Greetings

EXPRESS PHOTO BY ROZANNE NEVAKSHONOFF

Fisher Branch middle-year students entertained family and friends at the annual Christmas concert last Monday night. Some of the highlights included a Christmas sweater fashion show to the Christmas classic "It's a Marshmallow World" and the play "Technology or No Technology Christmas?", which provided a humorous account of nerds trying to bring Santa into the 21st century.



Christmas Greetings 2016

Students perform for friends and family Christmas concert



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY ROZANNE NEVAKSHONOFF

The Grade 5 and 6 Christmas students showed off their Christmas sweaters.

MERRY CHRISTMAS! AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Gimli Arborg VETERINARY SERVICES
Gimli 204-642-8398
Arborg 204-376-2797

A collection of various dogs and cats, some wearing Santa hats, are posed in front of a small Christmas tree.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

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A red bow is tied around a holly leaf, with the text "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year" written in a cursive font.

Happy Holidays

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204.768.2674

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

A Christmas tree is decorated with red and white ornaments, with the text "Happy Holidays" written in a cursive font.

Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Jeff WHARTON
MLA, Gimli Constituency
t. 204.642.7843
Gimli@mymts.net

A portrait of Jeff Wharton, MLA, is shown against a blue background with white snowflakes.

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

Smitty's FURNITURE & APPLIANCES
321 Main Street, Arborg
(204) 376-5242

A red bow is tied around a holly leaf, with the text "Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year" written in a cursive font.

RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF West Interlake

Have a Warm and Wonderful Christmas and New Year!
Council and Staff, Rural Municipality of West Interlake

A star is shown against a blue background with white snowflakes, with the text "RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF West Interlake" written in a cursive font.

Christmas Greetings 2016

Christmas Stories 1st Place

The Adventure on Christmas!

By Jayden Crave, age 10

It was Christmas Eve, and everyone was tucked into bed. The clock ticked toward's midnight but I couldn't sleep...So I decided to get up and get a snack. But what I didn't realize was six little eye's looking up at me. But then in a instant three small skinny Elve's were standing right beside my feet. They were wearing bright green and red pocka doted shoe's with a big fluffy ball on the end of them. They also were wearing tight green Pants and one of the famous "ugly" Christmas sweaters!! But suddenly I was looking up at a man with a bright Red suit a pale white beard and a jolly smile! And that very person was "Santa"! Santa said merry Christmas to me, but all I did was stare, I was so shocked to actually be meeting Santa, then Santa asked me to follow him, so I did. He led me all the way to the door, opened it, and there was Dasher, dancer, prance, Vixen, Commet, Cupid, donner, blitzen and the bright and beautiful Ruldoph. Santa asked me if I wanted to go for a ride, but by now I

wasn't freaked out anymore. So I said sure. So Santa led me to the bright red shiny sled I hopped in ad in a few minutes we were in the sky on top of the shiny Golden Boy. I could see lot's and lot's of buildings, and best of all it was snowing. Then we flew back to my house before my parent's knew I was gone. When we got there Santa led me back to my door step, I said thank you for the ride but all Santa did was hand me a snow globe turned around and waved goodbye. So one he left I slowly tiptoed back to my bedroom, hopped into bed and looked out the window and there was Santa high in the sky yelling merry Christmas and a happy New year!!

Goofy Granny 2nd Place Kesa Pidruchny, age 8

When Granny came to Christmas she knocked loudly nine times. When she came in she said Happy Christmas! She entered the house wearing sandals when there was snow on the ground. The first thing Granny did was sit down and eat. She took some turkey and dipped it in her glass of milk. She took mashed potatoes and stuffed them in her mouth. Granny didn't eat her carrots and peas. Then granny asked what was for dessert. Mom brought out cake, pie, and cookies. Granny took a cookie and dipped

it into the gravy dish and ate it all up like a pig, forgetting her manners. Everybody was staring at granny. She went to the fridge and got out some hot peppers and started to chop them and put them on her cake like sprinkles. She thought that was nice and tasty! Granny started to eat. When granny ate her Christmas chocolate she got a chocolate moustache. After she was full she let out a burp that lasted 20 minutes. Granny opened her present and it was a giant nightgown with candy canes and hot chocolate mugs and gingerbread men on it. Granny gave her presents to the kids. It was Granny's homemade cookies with onions and olives in them instead of cherries and nuts. After presents Granny did a Christmas rap Karaoke to RUN-DMC's Christmas in Hollis, which we thought was really funny! It was a strange Christmas with Granny. When Granny was leaving she gave everyone a big hug goodbye. We couldn't wait to see what granny would do next Christmas!

3rd Place

It was Christmas Eve, and everyone was tucked in their beds. The clock ticked towards midnight, but I couldn't sleep, because... all I heard was tink, tink, clink. It repeated and repeated and repeated, until I raced out of my bed in my cozy gingerbread PJ's, and ran down the stairs in hope that it was Santa. It was not Santa, it was my lazy cat Cookie climbing up the Christmas tree. So as I was thinking what to do, my cat kept climbing up the tree.

Tink, clink, tink, tink, until when she touched the star on top of the tree she started to talk. She said, "OMG, I only have a few hours until Santa will be bringing the special present!". I asked my cat Cookie, what the special surprise was.

Cookie said, "that's just it! I don't know! Santa just said to guard the tree from any danger!"

I asked what the danger could be? Her whisker twitched then she said in a very serious tone, "THE DOG!!!!". A couple minutes later we fell asleep

Continued on page 23



Wishing you the joy of family, the gift of friends, and the best of everything in 2017!

Derek Johnson
MLA for Interlake
t: 204-376-3401
interlakemla@gmail.com

To All Our Members and Friends during the Holidays

Christmas is our favorite time of year because it gives us the opportunity to express our gratitude for the fortune of serving people like you



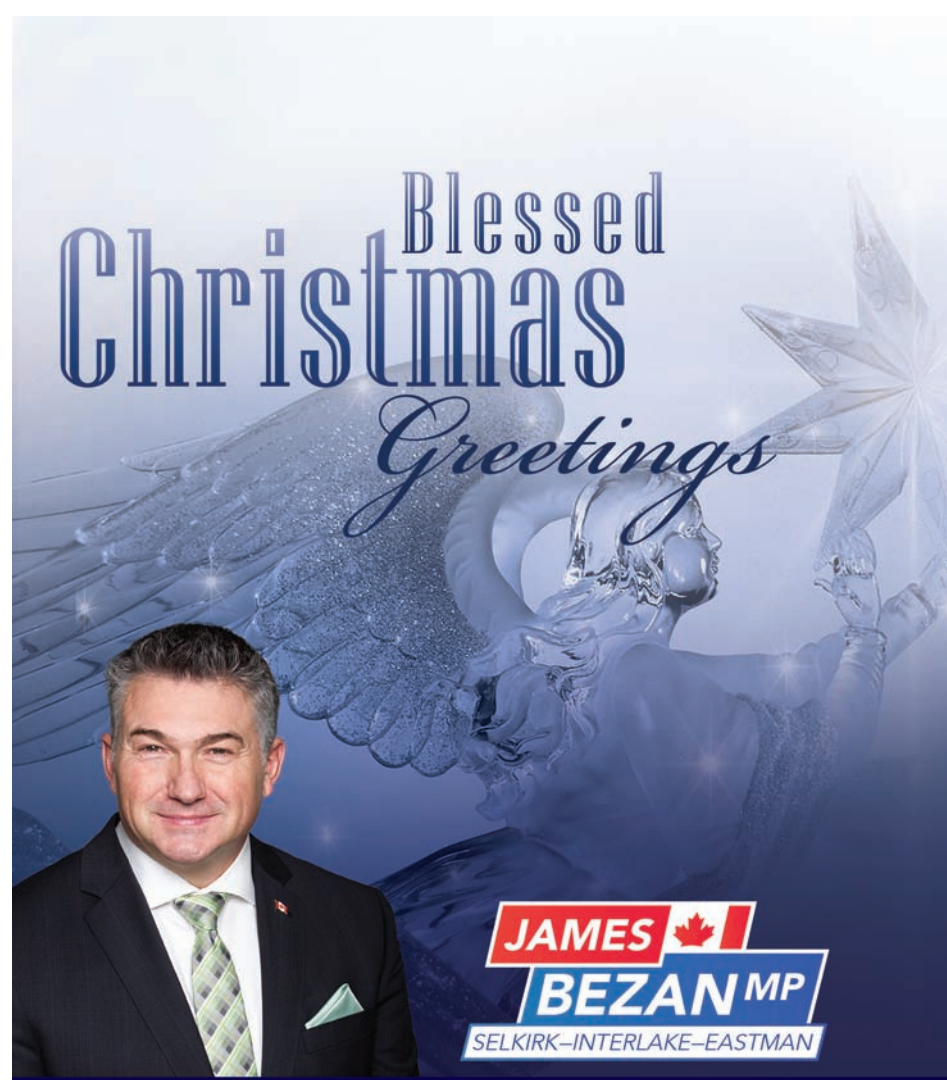
CO-OP Interlake

Eriksdale Food Store
24 Railway Avenue

Eriksdale Hardware
21 Railway Avenue

The Christmas Tree Cat

By Olivia Harapiak, age 9



Blessed Christmas Greetings

JAMES BEZAN MP
SELKIRK-INTERLAKE-EASTMAN

228 MANITOBA AVENUE
SELKIRK, MB R1A 0Y5

204-785-6151

JAMES.BEZAN@PARL.GC.CA
JAMESBEZAN.COM



**Goodwill,
cheer and friendship,**
Twinkling lights here and there,
The signs of the season are everywhere.
As we welcome this time of peace, joy and fun,
We extend our best wishes to each and every one
Who has made our year a resounding success...
With friends such as you, we feel truly blessed!

Welcome to Christmas!



As the Holiday season is upon us, we take joy in extending a sincere "THANK YOU" to those who have helped to shape our business in a most significant way. We value our relationship with you and look forward to working with you in the year to come. We wish you a safe and Happy Holiday season along with a New Year filled with peace and prosperity.

Season's Greetings

From Dwayne Smith and staff at the Eriksdale and Fisher Branch offices.

Holiday Hours.

Dec. 26th : Closed

Dec. 27th : Closed

Jan. 2nd : Closed

Regular operating hours on all other days. Fisher Branch: Mon-Fri 9am-6pm
Eriksdale: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm



Best Wishes

Blue Moon
(204) 333-7773

With Thanks

**Healing
In Style**
(204) 333-7773

All the Best

Eriksdale Inn
(204) 739-2027

Warm Wishes

**Eriksdale
Redi-Mix**
(204) 739-5334

*Wishing you a Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year*

McMunn & Yates
Building Supplies

16 Main St,
Eriksdale, MB
(204) 739-2110

To All Our Members and Friends during the Holidays

Christmas is our favorite time of year because it gives us the opportunity to express our gratitude for the fortune of serving people like you

CO-OP Interlake

Arborg Admin Office 253 Main Street	Arborg Food Store 253 Main Street	Arborg Gas Bar 316 Main Street
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Christmas Greetings 2016

Lundar's Breakfast with Santa



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY ANDERS KUUSSELKA
Loa Thorkelson plays the guitar for attendees of the Lundar Daycare Breakfast with Santa.



Posing for a photo with Santa
are (back, left to right) Breanna,
Chantal and Jodi holding her son
Grayson.



Brittin, left, and Leighton Nikkel
sporting red bows for their photo
with Santa.

Home
for the Holidays!
Arborg
Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year!
451 Main Street, Arborg 204-376-3090

Home
hardware
building centre

*Celebrating the gifts of
friendship & community*

ARBORG
Town of Arborg
Mayor, Council
& Staff

Merry Christmas!

One Stop Food & Gas
Fisher Branch, MB 204-372-8765

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

**Wishing you a
Merry Christmas &
A Happy New Year**

MAYOR, COUNCIL AND STAFF
**RURAL MUNICIPALITY
OF GIMLI**

GIMLI
RURAL MUNICIPALITY

**Blessings
OF THE
SEASON**

*May peace, love, harmony and joy
be your constant companions, and
may faith be your guide wherever
you go this holiday season.*

MacKenzie
FUNERAL HOME

Chapels at Stonewall, Teulon, Arborg

Christmas Greetings 2016

Ashern Early Years students dazzle in Christmas concert

By Jeff Ward

The young students of Ashern Early Years School (AEYS) brought to life some classic Christmas music for an audience of more than 200 last week.

There were very few empty chairs inside the Ashern Centennial Hall as kindergarten to Grade 4 students took to the stage to sing songs and dance to the delight of parents and loved ones.

Songs like Twinkle Twinkle, Little Star, Santa Claus is Coming to Town and Winter Wonderland brought

smiles to the faces of everyone in the audience. Students even performed a modern song, Can't Stop That Feeling from Justin Timberlake, which was one of the most popular songs of 2016.

Students decked the Centennial Hall with dozens of decorations and performed dance numbers in costumes like cowboy hats and used giant candy canes and gingerbread men to help bring their performances to life.



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY JEFF WARD





Dear Santa Claus
My name is Ashlynn. I am 7 years old. I live in Hnausa, MB. I wonder how the reindeer fly? This year I been good by waking up good and I make my mom happy by doing that. My wish for Christmas is Fur Real friend puppy, snow man stuffie, or an Elf on the shelf.

Love, Ashlynn

Dear Santa Claus,
My name is Brayden. I am 6 years old. I live in Hnausa, MB. I wonder if the reindeer are doing good? This year I have been good by helping my mom and dad cleaning. My wish for Christmas is to get a toy race car and a tow truck.

Love, Brayden

Dear Santa Claus,
My name is Brock. I am 7 years old. I live in Menville, MB. I wonder do your reindeer actually fly? This year I have been a good boy because I do sweeping jobs. My wish for Christmas is a puppy.

Love, Brock

Dear Santa Claus
My name is Callan. I am 6 years old. I live close to Gimli, MB. I wonder do your reindeer actually fly? I was a good boy by cleaning my room everyday. I want a dog house and a box of treats and a motorized nerf machine gun for Christmas.

Love, Callan

Dear Santa Claus,
My name is Daggur. I am 6 years old. I live in Riverton MB. Do you really know when kids are naughty or nice? This year I have been good by listening to my parents. My Christmas wish is to get a toboggan and remote control plane.

Love, Daggur

Dear Santa Claus,
My name is Dexter. I am years 6 old. I live in Riverton MB. I wonder how do you deliver so many presents in one night? This year I've been good by cleaning up. My wish for Christmas is nerf guns, basketball, and a teddy bear Luigi.

Love, Dexter

Dear Santa,
My name is Eli. I am 6 years old. I live in Mennville, MB. How do the reindeer fly? This year I have been good by doing extra chores. My wish for Christmas is to get a remote control car that you can drive inside or outside or Star Wars lego and also a pet hamster.

Love, Eli

Dear Santa Claus,
My name is Jake. I am 6 years old. I live in Riverton, MB. I wonder how many presents you have to deliver in one night? This year I have been a good boy by helping kids build their forts at recess. My wish for Christmas is to get a Nerf gun or a puppy.

Love, Jake

Dear Santa Claus,
My name is Jo. I am 6 years old. I live in Hnausa MB. I wonder if reindeer are real? This year I have been good by swimming. My wish for Christmas is to get a video game, Mario brothers two for my Wii and a remote control dinosaur.

Love, Jo

Dear Santa Claus
My name is Johannes. I am 6 years old. I live in Mag-nusville, Manitoba. I wonder how many hours does it take to make presents? This year I've been good by helping somebody. My wish for Christmas is to get a Spider Man spider web, jets blanket, and a jets away jersey.

Love, Johannes

Dear Santa Claus,
My name is Kanyen. I am 6 years old I live in Washow Bay, MB. Do the reindeer actually fly? This year I have been a good boy because I did chores. I want a dirt bike, iPod and an Xbox 1.

Love, Kanyen

Dear Santa Claus
My name is Kiersten. I am 7 years old. I live in Riverton, MB. I wonder does Rudolph's nose glow? This year I have been good by helping my mom cook cookies. My wish for Christmas is to get a puppy!

Love: Kiersten

Dear Santa Claus,
My name is Kiesha. I am 7 years old. I live in Riverton, MB. I wonder how tall is your house? This year I have been good by cleaning my room. My wish for Christmas is to get a puppy or 1 Barbie doll or the Trolls movie.

Love, Kiesha

Dear Santa Claus,
My name is Kristjana. I am 6 years old. I live near Riverton, MB. I wonder how mean elves you have? I am good because I help my mom with chores. My wish for Christmas is a real puppy, Fur Real friend pet and Bunchy.

Love, Kristjana

Dear Santa Claus,
My name is Leah. I am 6 years old. I live in Riverton, MB. I wonder do your Elves like to make toys? This year I have been good by cleaning my room. My wish for Christmas is to get a puppy, a stuffy named Anna and new shoes.

Love, Leah

Dear Santa Claus
My name is Liam. I am 6 years old. I live in Riverton, MB. I wonder how many elves you have? This year I have been a good boy by doing my homework. My wish from you Santa is for a toy semi, a trap set and a van with a trailer.

Love, Liam

Dear Santa Claus
My name is Lilly. I am 6 years old. I live in Riverton, MB. I wonder how your reindeer fly? This year I have been a good girl by listening to my mom. My wish for Christmas is to get a Lego friend set, or a nerf gun, or an elf on the shelf.

Love, Lilly

Dear Santa Claus,
My name is Marcus. I am 7 years old. I live near Riverton, MB. I wonder how cold it is up north? This year I have been good by cleaning up my room and the dog's room. My wish for Christmas is to get a monster truck and a semi.

Love, Marcus

Dear Santa Claus,
My name is Mya. I'm 6 years old. I live in Riverton MB. I wonder how small are your Elves? I have been very good by playing outside. For Christmas I would like a Teddy bear, Ipad and a Ipod.

Love, Mya

Dear Santa,
Hey Santa! I am so excited for Christmas! Of course, I can't forget to write to you.

How are your reindeer and elves doing...especially Rudolph? I won't forget him, as he is my favorite. How are you doing? I bet you are busy working late nights getting all the toys ready for Christmas Eve.

I was wondering if I could

ask for a Pokemon Booster Box for Christmas; as my brothers are kind of beat me every time I have a Pokemon battle with them. I need to have the booster in order to be competitive with them.

My little brother just received a Pokemon Pack for his birthday (with two decks)! Also last year you gave him a Pokémon Booster Box which has left me at a disadvantage. The cards that were in it, he could put in his deck. So, as you can see, I am going to plan on losing every battle until I can get a Pokémon Booster Box and more cards!

That is all I want for Christmas. Merry Christmas Santa!

Love, Carter

A Christmas Birthday

By Vernette

How many of you with birthdays that fall within five days either way of Christmas have heard "What a rip-off" or "You must hate that" or the popular question "Are your presents combined?" Well, my birthday is Christmas Eve. You might think that Christmas Eve is OK because it is the day BEFORE Christmas, stores are still open, people still work on that day, etc. I am of Icelandic Heritage and the Icelandic Tradition is to open gifts and celebrate on Christmas Eve. (My Mom would say "Santa Claus always came to our house FIRST.") Did I ever feel that I didn't have a special day that was all mine? Not in my almost 53 years have I ever felt that way. As a matter of fact, I love having a Christmas birthday! Why, you ask? EVERY year my family is with me. I always get more cards because more people remember it. Everyone is celebrating the joy of friends and family whether they know me or not. When I was younger and doing the "bar" thing, my friends were always there whether I called them or not. "Tis the season." I am lucky enough to say that I have never worked on my birthday or had to be in school. Who else can say that Santa comes to their house on their birthday? Did I ever feel ripped off? My mother always made sure that the day was mine. I would get up in the morning to find my birthday present wrapped in non-Christmas paper on the coffee table. Sometimes I wouldn't open it until 11:01 am (the time I was born). After lunch we would have birthday cake (sometimes with money hidden in it). Even though it would have been difficult to have other kids for a party, my two brothers didn't have birthday parties either. The Christmas Celebration would not begin until early evening and we were off to our "Ammma and Afi's" house. Thank you to my parents for keeping my birthday a special day for me. I think about my mother in the hospital on Christmas with my two brothers (aged 2 1/2 and 13 months) at home. Both of them and my father had Christmas without Mom that year. Thank you both for that. So here's to the rest of you with birthdays at Christmastime! Rejoice! Celebrate! As my family would sing ... "Joy to the World, Vernette has come..."



Continued from page 18

on the couch! When we woke we realized that we only had one hour until Santa would be here. We looked at the tree and half of the garland was torn off and our dog Jonesy was sleeping on it. Cookie was furious and ready to pounce. Her claw's came out like an owl chasing a mouse.

Just as she was about to attack I yelled "WAIT! We have extra garland that we can put up, I'll run and get it!"

Just as we were finished redecorating the tree we heard "HO, HO, HO!", and Santa appeared in our living room like magic.

He gave me a hug and said, "I will spare you a cookie or two if you go to sleep and let the magic come through". I went straight up stairs and snuggled in my bed with my little Teddy Bear named Fred. I fell fast asleep.

When I awoke in the morning, I ran to the tree and saw that the super secret present was for me. I tore open the present and guess what it was? It was a little glass figurine of a cat climbing a Christmas tree.

Crash Landing

By Rhianne Clarke, age 10

All the elves were hard at work in Santa's workshop, all but one that is. Her name was Holly Claus, Santa Claus's daughter. Her father sent her to work to learn about making toys. She was to take over the workshop when she was older.

But Holly did not want to work, in fact she would much rather sing carols and join a choir than make toys! Santa loved when she sang but he also wanted her to join the workforce. Santa had a plan. He had dealt with this before you see.

He would make choir and he knew Holly would join. And once she did, Santa would get all that music out of her! Santa's plan was sure to work, and it did! After a few days Holly's voice was so tired that she could not sing anymore. It got quiet around their home, almost too quiet. Santa had it! He wanted music and fast. He told Holly to sing her heart out. And she did. She sang 9,999 (almost 10,000) carols and songs without breaks. All the elves thought she was a lean, mean, singing machine!

Two hours later an agent called. He wanted Holly to be signed to his record label. Before she could commit to it, Holly had to fly Santa's sleigh.

Holly was up to the challenge. Turns out that Santa's reindeer loved Holly's voice and were eager to help. Ten hours later... Holly was really, really, tired. She was so tired that she drank 15 very big mug of hot cocoa for caffeine. Two hours later... Holly signed the record label. So I guess it's time to say the end.

Quest to Save Christmas

By Liam Harapiak, age 12

I woke with a start. What had woken me? I listened hard. Yes, there it was again! Bells! I could hear jingling bells.

Just then one thought crossed my mind! Santa's here!!! Instantly I got up, I put on my robe and bunny slippers and headed down stairs. When I was half way down the stairs I could hear the bells getting closer. I was almost down the stairs when I heard a big BANG!

I stopped in my tracks. I was so frightened, I thought that I would explode. I calmed myself and took a flash light from the shelf right next to me. I sneaked to the kitchen without making a sound. I heard the sound again. It was coming from outside. I was so scared to look through the window, but I forced myself. Guess what I saw?

Deer! No wait it has a collar on and bells. Out from the bush came seven more deer. Then I realized that these were NOT deer. They were REIN-DEER!!!

They started to lead me somewhere. So I followed. They led me to a sleigh where I saw SANTA!!! He said that he could not continue delivering presents tonight because Rudolph was sick. Without Rudolf to guide his sleigh the would get lost. Just then I had an idea... and Santa and his Reindeer went on their merry way.

The next morning I got up, filled with joy. I ran downstairs and opened up my present and found my flashlight!

The Story of the Best Christmas Ever

By Cade Helstrom, age 11

Dr. George Johnson Middle School

This is the story of the best Christmas ever. In the middle of night Jack ran downstairs and found an empty space under the tree, where he expected his presents to be. Jack glanced to his left, peering at the laid out plate of cookies with a tall glass of milk. He was confused! He heard a loud thump!

The noise was coming from the chimney! Jack ran quickly to take cover behind the living room couch. While peeking over the couch, he heard jingle bells and then he heard big footsteps coming toward the couch. Jack quickly ducked under the couch when he heard someone yell, "Ho, Ho, Ho!"

Jack remembered that voice-- it was Santa! Jack got up to see Santa. He saw an older, white haired man, who was wearing a red and white fur trimmed coat. He had a huge sack on his back. He was munching down the cookies and the glass of milk was already empty!

Santa put down his sack down on the living room floor, reached into his bag and pulled out a bunch of gifts which he carefully put under the tree one by one. The gifts said to: dad, to: mom, to: Jack, Jack walked toward Santa, Santa turned around. He saw Jack and Santa whispered, "Make sure you don't tell a single soul that you saw me!"

Then he quickly disappeared.

His secret is safe with me.

Best Christmas Ever

By Leif, Grade 6

This is the story of the best Christmas ever! It started out a little bit weird. Young Jack ran down the stairs and gasped as he saw non of his families' presents were there yet!

What happened next, caught him by surprise. It was Santa coming down the chimney! The first thing that came to Jack's mind was that he wanted to figure out how he could go to the North Pole to have the time of his life! He wondered how he could somehow get on Santa's sleigh. Jack figured that when Santa came down the chimney, he would slip into Santa's big red bag.

Jack managed to do it! Santa gathered up his bag and left. He got on the sleigh and then the bumpy ride started to happen. It seemed like hours flying over the world until he poked his head out of the bag and the cool air hit his face. Jack knew he was at the North Pole.

Time to have some fun! He jumped off the sleigh and saw a Candy Cane Forest, the Elves' Workshop and the Reindeer's stables and of course, Santa's castle.

Jack decided he should go to the Candy Cane Forest first. He ran as fast as he could to play in the snow. Jack saw some sugar plum fairies as he ran to the Elves' Workshop to see what would happen. There was nothing going on in there. He reasoned

with himself, that would make sense because Christmas is almost over and the toys are all made. Jack then went to the stables, but there was nothing there either.

Jack thought, it's time to go to Santa's Castle. That's probably where everyone is. Jack thought that maybe he could get Santa's autograph. Then he thought, I will probably get sent home, but then thought, who cares? This is the best Christmas ever!

Jack made his way to Santa's Castle hearing some wonderful Christmas music playing in the distance. He walked out on the dance floor and the music stopped.

Jack then explained to Santa everything that happened, but Santa wasn't mad. He gave me his autograph and took me home before my parents woke up and worried about me.

It was 1:00 am in the morning and my parents were sound asleep. They will never know about my adventure.

A forgetful Christmas

By Emmalee Dalman

Homeschooled, age 9

On Christmas Eve the Dalman family was in a rush, they had so many things that still needed to get done for tonight's Christmas dinner. Mom still had to finish getting supper ready, Dad had to find something nice to wear (but of course he doesn't have anything), Emmalee had to find the curling iron to curl her hair, Alaska had to find her special Christmas dress and Dirk only had to play.)

When everything sorta fell into place, their forgetful Amma showed up with her granddaughter. Shortly after that everyone started showing up. When they had their delicious supper their forgetful Amma completely forgot how to eat, they had to try to show her but she didn't understand it.

It was a fun night full of love and laughter! Everyone had fun dancing and exchanging gifts! The oldest daughter Emmalee got a new iPhone, the middle child Alaska got a Hatchimal and the youngest Dirk got a bunch of trains and a train table! The forgetful Amma forgot who was who when they were giving gifts so they got the wrong gifts: (When everyone was tired they left they said goodbye and gave their hugs and kisses!

Gimli Art Club showcases members' talents and diverse artistic media

By Patricia Barrett

The Gimli Art Club highlighted its members' creative talents during its second annual Christmas Table Art Fair held Dec. 10 and 11 at its gallery.

The Club, established in 1969, encourages exploration of all artistic mediums, from sketching in coloured and pastel pencils and painting using watercolours and acrylics to stained glass and photography.

Club members, all of whom live in

the Interlake, teach a number of different techniques and hold in-house workshops to help those new to a particular medium hone their skills.

The club began painting murals on the harbour seawall in 1997, depicting the rich history and events that had occurred in the region.

Visit the gallery at 3 Centre St. near Gimli Harbour to view members' work or visit them on Facebook or at www.gimliartclub.com.



EXPRESS PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE GIMLI ART CLUB



Province releases flood forecast outlook for 2017

By Jeff Ward

According to the province, a single major weather storm, similar to the one that occurred in the summer of 2014, could cause major flooding in Manitoba.

The 2016 Fall Conditions Report released last week didn't bring the good news that many Interlake residents were hoping. Instead, talk of major flooding and watersheds being closely monitored were big talking points in the 34-page report. Manitoba Infrastructure

Minister Blaine Pedersen said that it is still very early in the timeline of flood forecasting and that a number of factors are at play when looking

ahead. The report notes that higher than average precipitation through the summer and into the fall caused lake levels to rise. The report states that Lake Manitoba is expected to remain near 812.4 to 812.5 feet throughout the winter and that Lake St. Martin is expected to reach near 803 feet before the spring runoff.

The conditions outlined in this report indicate there is a chance of moderate to major flooding in some locations in Manitoba. "As spring approaches, the province will further assess the flood potential and work with our municipalities to prepare as required," said Pedersen.

Lake Manitoba is still below the

flood stage level of 814 feet, but the report said that a quick spring melt or one major winter storm could mean major flooding. The report also mentions that the accuracy of this information at this stage is ambiguous.

"It is not very practical or feasible to provide a long-term flood forecast for spring 2017 as conditions could change significantly during the coming months," said the report.

The unfortunate part for Manitobans is that Saskatchewan saw "above normal to well above normal" soil moisture conditions and high base flow conditions. Much of that water makes its way down the Assiniboine River and is diverted through the Por-

tage Diversion into Lake Manitoba.

Curiously, there was not a single mention of the Portage Diversion in the entire report.

"Overestimating or underestimating the flood potential four months in advance of the spring runoff is very risky. The hydrologic forecast centre will continue to monitor the basin conditions closely and will release spring flood outlooks through the winter as required," said the report.

The first flood outlook is expected to be available in February with the final flood outlook released in March. Anyone interested reading the 2016 Fall Conditions Report can do so by visiting www.gov.mb.ca/flooding.

RCMP remind anglers to stay safe out on the ice

By Dave Baxter

Ice fishing and snowmobiling season has officially arrived across the Tri-S area, but local RCMP officers want to remind residents how they can stay safe when they venture out onto the ice.

"There is no fish in the world that is worth risking your life for," Selkirk RCMP Const. Jim Dao said.

Dao knows that rows of ice fishing shacks will soon begin popping up on the Red River near Selkirk and on other Manitoba waterways.

He said anyone that goes out on the ice should first know what the ice conditions are and never head out on the ice blindly.

"Check with a local tackle shop for ice thickness suitability and find out if it is safe for human traffic or for vehicles to drive on," he said. "Keep in mind that fast-moving water underneath may change ice conditions without notice."

Dao added there are ways that those who go out on the ice can distribute their weight.

"Use a sled to carry your gear instead of backpacks so that the weight is spread across the ice and does not weigh you down if you happen to go through the ice," he said. "Stay away from open water and areas of ice jams as this would mean that the integrity of the ice may have been compromised."

Dao also cautioned that residents should never head out on the ice alone.

"Try not to go fishing alone," he said. "There's a greater chance of being able to summon for help in an emergency if there is more than one of you."

Dao knows that colder temperatures also means vehicles, including trucks



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY LINDSEY ENNS

RCMP would like to remind ice fishers and snowmobilers to be safe while venturing out onto the ice this season.

and snowmobiles, will start heading out onto the ice.

Dao said those in vehicles or on snowmobiles should always know what kind of ice they are about to head out on and should first consider walking to their destination beforehand if possible.

"Driving vehicles onto the ice greatly increases the risk factor due to its weight. Try walking across instead to your ice fishing spot," he said.

The snoman.mb.ca website states that ice should be a minimum of six inches thick for it to be safe for snowmobiles to head out.

RCMP officers in Manitoba have been forced to deal with a number of incidents involving snowmobiles this month, including one that ended in tragedy.

On Dec. 1, a 51-year-old teacher from Nelson House went missing and was later found dead when his snowmobile went through ice near Nelson House.

On Dec. 10, Treherne RCMP rescued two men that had got lost snowmobiling on trails in Spruce Woods Provincial Park.

RCMP said the men were located after being lost for more than six hours in -35C temperatures, but they survived "because they were prepared."

Both men were dressed for the weather and were able to start a fire, RCMP said.

Last week, RCMP released tips on what snowmobilers who ride on waterways and on trails in Manitoba can do to stay safe.

RCMP tips for Manitoba snowmobilers:

- Don't ride alone.
- Be prepared: carry spare fuel, survival gear and ensure you are dressed for the weather conditions.
- When travelling in areas you are unfamiliar with, always make sure to carry a charged cell phone and GPS when you can.

- Travel on marked trails when in areas you have never travelled before.
- Always advise someone of what route you plan to take and when you plan to return.
- The law requires that you always wear an approved helmet.
- Snowmobiles are not to be operated on roadways, shoulders or sidewalks unless circumstances fall under other provisions laid out in the Off Road Vehicles Act.
- To cross a roadway on a snowmobile, a driver must have a valid driver's licence.
- Like any other mode of transportation, only operate a snowmobile when sober and alert.
- Anyone under the age of 14 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian who is a minimum of 18 years old.
- Young persons over the age of 14 can ride without parent accompaniment, but cannot cross a roadway until they obtain a valid driver's licence.

> REFUGEE FAMILY, FROM PG. 8

The family now lives in a house in Selkirk which has been filled with donations from community members who have warmly welcomed them to the city.

Last Friday evening the family was busy decorating a small Christmas tree with donated lights and ornaments from Selkirk Walmart.

"We're excited," Yaya Ramadan said with a smile about celebrating Christmas.

The family also experienced their first major snowfall earlier this month.

Yaya said they're finding the weather to be "very cold."

"I don't really like the snow but

this is the first time," he said.

Some of the family members have also taken up a part-time job this winter shovelling snow.

"I like it. It's good. It's fun," Yaya said. "We want to work more."

The family is still working on their English and have been taking lessons in Winnipeg since September.

Wilma Nicol, a volunteer with the RRCRT, said the family will be heading to her house for Christmas celebrations on Christmas Day.

Another volunteer will host the family on Boxing Day and then the Selkirk United Church is hosting a special celebration for them on Jan.

1.

Since all of the family members don't officially have birth dates, they will celebrate their first birthdays in Canada on the same day.

Nicol said they are making sure they will have birthday presents to open.

She added the amount of donations the family has received from the community has been overwhelming.

"If we didn't have things donated, we'd have to buy them," she said. "Everything that's given is something we don't have to buy."

As for things they are currently in need of, Nicol said they are look-

ing to gather some pairs of skates, some sleds and hockey sticks. They are also looking for more volunteers to drive the family around. For more information, visit rrcrteam.com.

She added although warm winter clothing has been donated to the family, they don't always wear it because they aren't used to the cold.

"So they have to learn about that a little bit still," Nicol said with a smile.

Nicol said the team also plans to bring another refugee family to Selkirk sometime next year.

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Local teams notch KJHL wins

By Brian Bowman

Local teams won two of three games played last Sunday.

Peguis defeated OCN 11-6 while Arborg crushed Fisher River 16-3. Lundar was beaten 8-2 by the Selkirk Fishermen.

In the Falcons' loss, Milan Horanski and Talon Kelly each led the winners with a pair of goals while Mike Smiley, Griffin Steeves, Kale Ilchena and Coel Forsyth also tallied.

Jack Clinton and Mason Medeiros replied for Lundar. Travis Schalk earned the win in goal.

The scoring summaries from the other two games were not listed on the league website at press time.

On Saturday, Arborg crushed Cross Lake 7-3 while OCN outscored Peguis 8-5.

Clint Torfason (two), Clayton Nich-

ols, Ryan Pochailo, Jordan Woytowich, Corbin Pasternak and Spencer Kilbrei scored for the Ice Dawgs while Theoren Spence, Dylan Stevenson, Quinton Flett, Devon Garson and Tyrome Spence-Bair tallied for the Juniors.

On Friday, Lundar trounced last-place Norway House 11-4 as Landen The Gray led the Falcons with five goals and four assists.

Dennon Schewski (two), Craig Wiess, Sam Gelardi, Shayne Desjarlais and Jack Clinton also scored for the winners.

Fisher River was also in action that night, defeating North Winnipeg 5-3. Trailing 2-1 in the third period, the Hawks scored four of the game's final five goals.

Brennan Cochrane scored for Fisher River in the first period and then Darryl Thaddeus added a hat trick in the

third. Johnny Beaulieu also scored in the final frame for Fisher River.

Last Thursday, the Ice Dawgs defeated the Juniors 5-2 in Arborg.

Derric Gulay scored a first-period power-play goal for Arborg and then Peguis' Quinton Flett and the Ice Dawgs' Jordan Kristjanson traded second period goals.

Arborg increased its lead to 4-1 as Clint Torfason and Spencer Kilbrei, on the power play, tallied. Flett scored his second of the game and then Colton Davies secured the win with a goal with 5:57 remaining.

Dylan Ossachuk made 41 saves for the win.



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY LANA MEIER

The Ice Dawgs' Clint Torfason celebrates a power-play goal in Arborg's 5-2 win over the Peguis Juniors.



The Juniors' Quinton Flett (13) scored twice for Peguis last Thursday.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY BRETT MITCHELL

The Lundar Falcons' Dennon Schewski makes a nice move to gain some open space against the Fishermen during KJHL action last Sunday in Selkirk.

Cvar brilliant for Balmoral Hall at recent tournament

By Brian Bowman

Olivia Cvar has several lofty goals in the sport of women's hockey.

So, it was only fitting that she scored several big goals for her Balmoral Hall Prep team at the Mandi Schwartz Memorial Tournament in Wilcox, Sask., on Dec. 8-11.

The tournament boasted the top Midget "AAA" and Canadian Prep hockey teams in western Canada.

"We made it to the finals, losing in the final 4-2," explained Cvar in an email last week. "Our team had four wins and one loss. It was a good experience and I was fortunate to get three game-winning goals over the weekend. There were scouts from college and Team Canada at the tournament."

Cvar, whose dream is to play either NCAA Division 1 women's hockey in the United States or CIS college hockey in Canada, would also love to be part of Team Canada one day.

The Balmoral Hall Blazers Prep team competes in the Junior Women's Hockey League. The league's goal, said Cvar, is to help promote in the development and growth of women's hockey. The JWHL prepares players for NCAA and CIS programs across North America.

Meanwhile, back on Nov. 17-20, Cvar and the Blazers played league games at a JWHL showcase in St. Catharines, Ont.

"Our team did well, finishing the weekend with four wins and a tie and were successful against the stronger teams in the league," she recalled.

Cvar, a Grade 10 student, has no problem playing against older players. "Although I am in Grade 10, I feel really good competing against the senior players who lead the other teams," she said. "(Midway) through the season, I am currently third in league scoring. I have six goals and 21

assists through 14 games."

Last month was a busy one for Cvar on the ice. She was in Regina with Team Manitoba at the U18 nationals on Nov. 9-13.

"I thought our team was well prepared and should have won our early games, but the puck did not go our way," she said. "We outshot B.C. and Alberta, but lost 3-2 and 2-1, respectively."

Despite her young age, Cvar played some important minutes for Manitoba. "Early in the tournament, the Team Manitoba coaches trusted me with power-play time and a regular shift," she said. "And, as a 2001-born player, I was very excited and proud to be there."

"That gave me a lot of confidence as it was a long, but exciting, week of hockey. It was a great experience to play in front of so many people and Team Canada's scouting staff."



Olivia Cvar

Bantam Lightning win first league game this month

By Brian Bowman

For most people, Dec. 10 was just another cold day in a Manitoba winter.

But for the Interlake Lightning Bantam hockey team, it was a reason to celebrate.

The Lightning earned its first league win of the season with a convincing 9-4 victory over the Rangers.

Trailing 2-1 in the second period, Interlake exploded for seven goals in just a 13:54 span.

Hunter Warman and Lyle Murdock each had a goal and two assists for the winners while Brett Tataryn and Cody McMillan added a goal and two help-

ers apiece.

Easton Hazelton (two), Nathaniel Murdock, Hunter Olson and Michael Crave also scored for the Lightning.

Chris Fines made 19 saves for the win.

Interlake continued on the road the next day and was doubled 6-3 by the Central Plains Capitals.

Cadrick Dueck led the Lightning with two goals while Lyle Murdock had a goal and an assist.

Interlake, which lost 10-0 at home to the Hawks last Thursday, will wrap up play for 2016 against the Cougars on Friday in Stonewall. Game time is 7 p.m.



EXPRESS PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

The Lightning's Cadrick Dueck led the Lightning with two goals in Interlake's 6-3 win of the Central Plains Capitals on Dec. 11.

Interlake Provincial Lightning snap five-game losing streak

By Brian Bowman

The Interlake Lightning probably asked Santa for a couple of things this Christmas.

And, at the top of that list, was definitely some much-needed victories.

Interlake received an early Christmas gift after a very deserving 4-3 road win over the Eastman Selects last Saturday evening in Beausejour.

That win snapped Interlake's five-game losing streak to begin this month.

Trailing 3-0 just 14:58 into the game, Interlake responded extremely well to pull out the comeback win.

Jack Einarson scored his second goal of the game to tie the score at 3-3 just 41 seconds into the third period and then Emmitt Farebrother netted the eventual game winner at 4:27 of the final frame.

Dallon Wilton, Braydon Brown and Matthew Osadick had scored first-period goals for Eastman and then Einarson, on the power play, and Corbin Mariash answered midway in the second.

Riley Buhay made 39 saves for the win.

On Sunday, the Lightning dropped a 4-3 home decision to the Central

Plains Capitals.

Central Plains' Jason Blight tied the score at 3-3 at 14:30 of the third period and then Logan Calder scored the game winner just over two minutes later.

The Capitals took a 2-0 lead on goals by Tyler Van Deynze and Reilly Funk but the Lightning responded with three straight goals.

Mariash, on the power play, and Evan Klyne-Geisler scored for the Interlake in the second period and then Einarson tallied in the third.

Einarson finished the game with three points.

The Lightning started the week with another good effort in a 3-1 road loss to Central Plains in Portage la Prairie.

Tyler Broda scored a first-period power-play goal for the Lightning while Funk replied later in the period. Joey Moffatt then scored goals in the second and third periods.

The Lightning (7-16-0-0-2) will now be off from league play for the holidays until Jan. 7-8 when they host the Kenora Thistles in Teulon. Saturday evening's game will start at 7:30 p.m. while Sunday's game will begin at 2 p.m.

If these displays are any indication, the judging for the competition will be pretty difficult.



Narrows West Lodge 2nd annual Christmas bazaar

Due to the generosity of the vendors for the silent auction items, the cheques and donations sent prior to the event and shoppers' donations, the Lake Manitoba First Nations School winter breakfast program received \$200 in cash as well as two full tables of breakfast items.

Teagan's Treats cupcakes stand was all ready for the holidays with her "Holly" and candy cane cupcakes.

MANITOBA JUNIOR								Pembina Valley								27	16	10	0	33	99	75							
HOCKEY LEAGUE								Southwest								25	13	12	0	26	84	97							
Steinbach Pistons	GP	W	L	OTL	PTS	GF	GA	Eastman								27	12	13	2	26	88	86							
Winkler Flyers	34	28	5	1	57	144	66	Kenora								27	10	13	0	24	79	117							
OCN Blizzard	35	22	10	3	47	112	89	Parkland								26	8	15	1	19	78	126							
Portage Terriers	33	23	10	0	46	145	104	Interlake								26	7	17	0	16	67	119							
Selkirk Steelers	33	21	10	2	44	111	98	Norman								30	5	24	0	11	74	192							
Winnipeg Blues	35	18	13	4	40	128	110	AAA CITY MIDGET																					
Virden Oil Capitals	36	17	13	6	40	94	105	HOCKEY LEAGUE								GP	W	L	OTL	PTS	GF	GA							
Swan Valley Stampeders	32	11	18	3	25	87	123	Winnipeg Monarchs								20	18	2	0	36	117	56							
Dauphin Kings	35	9	21	5	23	83	134	Winnipeg Sharks								19	14	5	0	28	85	56							
Neepawa Natives	33	9	22	2	20	85	135	Winnipeg Warriors								19	11	6	1	24	91	75							
Waywayseecappo								Winnipeg Hawks								20	8	8	2	20	81	76							
Wolverines	35	5	26	4	14	91	164	Eastman Selects								18	2	13	2	7	48	85							
KEYSTONE HOCKEY LEAGUE								Interlake Lightning								20	3	17	0	6	50	124							
Central Division								GP	W	L	OTL	PTS	GF	GA	AAA BANTAM														
Arborg Ice Dawgs	20	13	7	0	26	129	77	HOCKEY LEAGUE								GP	W	L	OTL	PTS	GF	GA							
Peguis Juniors	19	12	7	0	24	131	103	Winnipeg Monarchs								20	16	4	0	32	122	31							
Fisher River Hawks	16	7	9	0	14	102	120	Winnipeg Warriors								21	12	8	0	25	87	63							
South Division	GP	W	L	OTL	PTS	GF	GA	Winnipeg Hawks								18	11	4	1	25	112	48							
Selkirk Fishermen	22	16	6	0	32	128	39	Eastman Selects								18	11	7	0	22	87	59							
St. Malo Warriors	20	15	4	1	31	150	77	Winnipeg Sharks								19	7	10	1	16	47	67							
Lundar Falcons	19	7	12	0	14	80	101	Interlake Lightning								17	1	15	1	3	44	134							
North Winnipeg Satellites	17	5	11	1	11	62	93	MANITOBA FEMALE MIDGET AAA																					
North Division	GP	W	L	OTL	PTS	GF	GA	HOCKEY LEAGUE								GP	W	L	T	OTW	OTL	Pts							
OCN Storm	16	12	4	0	24	147	94	Westman Wildcats								17	12	2	-	2	1	29							
Cross Lake Islanders	19	7	11	1	15	95	111	PV Hawks								17	12	2	-	1	2	28							
Norway House North Stars	20	0	20	0	0	39	248	Winnipeg Avros								18	8	6	-	4	-	24							
AAA MIDGET								Yellowhead Chiefs								17	11	5	-	1	-	24							
HOCKEY LEAGUE								GP	W	L	OTL	PTS	GF	GA	Eastman Selects								16	7	4	-	1	4	20
Wild	26	19	4	0	41	135	54	Norman Wild								18	3	13	-	2	-	10							
Yellowhead	28	17	4	2	41	123	86	Central Plains								15	3	9	-	-	3	9							
Brandon	27	19	6	1	40	116	75	Interlake Lightning								18	-	15	-	1	2	4							
Central Plains	30	19	10	1	39	125	100	STATS AS OF MONDAY, DECEMBER 19																					
Thrashers	25	16	6	1	35	115	56																						

Classifieds

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take a break

> GAMES

SUDOKU

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

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!

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

Sudoku Answer

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

Crossword Answer

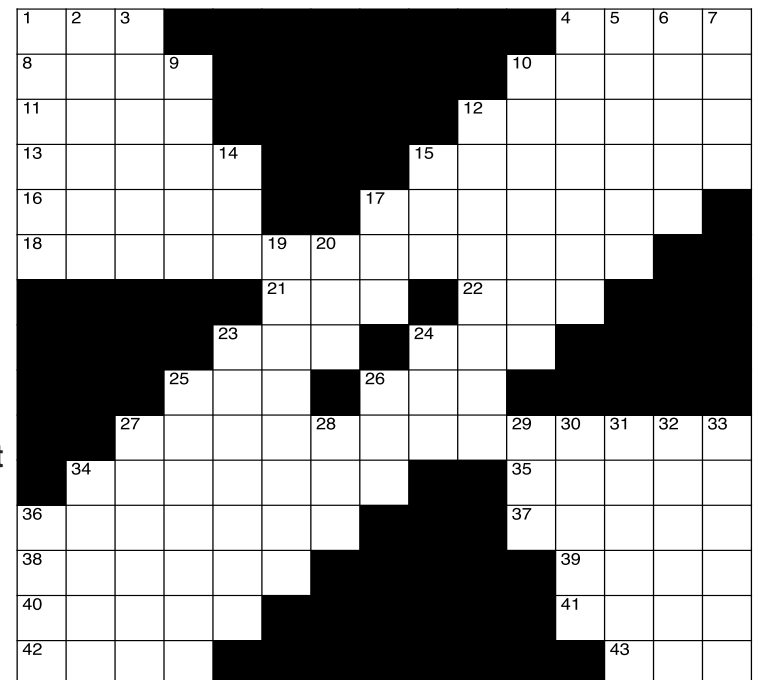


CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

1. Way to fish
4. Not us
8. "M*A*S*H" actor Alda
10. A store of valuable things
11. Bring on
12. Gave birth to horse
13. British poet Hunt
15. Swine-like
16. Asteroid 1532
17. Devout
18. A boost
21. Licensed for Wall Street
22. Tooth caregiver
23. Political action committee
24. Make a soft murmuring sound
25. Porky is one
26. Taoism
27. 1950s sex symbol
34. Imprisonment
35. Small freshwater ducks
36. Happening later than it should have
37. Unit of measurement
38. Coen Bros' "The Dude" does this
39. The destroyer (Hindu)
40. Kids take these to school
41. Flow or leak through
42. East Greenwich High School
43. Midway between south and southeast

CLUES DOWN



1. Many-colored flower
2. Strangers
3. One who is outcast
4. Transmitters
5. Theory of interconnection
6. Happening
7. Native of ancient Asian kingdom
9. Black (Span.)
10. Destructive storm
12. Condemn beforehand
14. Baseball players do this
15. Exclamation that denotes disgust
17. When you expect to get there
19. Dreams up
20. Peacock network
23. Robbers
24. Beverage container
25. Celebrations
26. A way to change color
27. Bullheaded
28. Type of visual display
29. Easily purchased type of medication
30. City along the western Rhine
31. Animal disease
32. Martinis have these
33. Run away
34. Remove errors from
36. Slugger Ruth

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STEER PRICES		HEIFER PRICES	
400-500	180-230	300-400	180-200
500-600	175-213.50	400-500	170-195.25
600-700	170-197.50	500-600	160-184
700-800	130-180	600-700	150-174
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**LAKESHORE
SCHOOL DIVISION**

EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

Lakeshore School Division is accepting applications for a permanent Head Custodian at Ashern Central School, in Ashern, MB, commencing as soon as possible.

Responsibilities include:

Under the direction of the Principals and/or Maintenance Supervisor, the Head Custodian shall be responsible for performing regular cleaning and maintenance of the school building, property and furnishings, supervision of cleaning staff, monitoring and repair of building systems, responding to alarms and performing periodic inspections on the entire facility and grounds.

Qualifications:

- must be physically fit
- must be capable of working from elevated platforms and ladders
- shall respect the confidentiality of students and staff
- building trade experience is an asset
- previous supervisory experience is an asset

Shift: Monday to Friday (8 hours/day)

Salary: As per Collective Agreement

Start Date: As soon as possible

A complete job description is available at the school.

Please submit a resume no later than **Monday, January 9, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. to:**

Mr. Mark Parkes
Director of Operations & Infrastructure
Lakeshore School Division
Box 100
Eriksdale, MB R0C 0W0
Phone: (204) 739-2101 Fax: (204) 739-2145
Email: parkesm@lakeshoresd.mb.ca

We thank all who applied for their interest, but only those selected for an interview will be contacted. Lakeshore School Division may contact former employers.

Successful candidates must complete a Criminal Record and Child Abuse Registry check prior to commencing employment.

Job Opportunity

Gimli Harbour Master

Open Water Season 2017

For detailed job description
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NOTICE OF HEARING

UNDER THE HIGHWAYS PROTECTION ACT

THE HIGHWAY TRAFFIC BOARD

Notice is hereby given that a hearing of the Highway Traffic Board will be held on Tuesday, January 3, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 204-301 Weston Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

**PERMITS - PART I - SECTION 9 H.P.A.
AND PART III - SECTION 17 H.P.A.
2/009/245/A/16 - WILFRED ARNASON
O/B/O RAYMOND
& ALMA SIGURDSON**

Application to Widen Access Driveway (Public) onto P.T.H. No. 9, N.W. 1/4 28-18-4E, R.M. of Gimli.

The Highway Traffic Board will be prepared to consider all submissions, written or oral, on the above applications by contacting the A/Secretary prior to or at the hearing.

200 - 301 Weston Street Michelle Slotin, A/Secretary
Winnipeg, MB R3E 3H4 THE HIGHWAY
Phone: (204) 945-8912 TRAFFIC BOARD



REQUEST FOR BIDS

The Icelandic Festival of Manitoba in collaboration with Betel Home and the RM of Gimli invite qualified bidders to bid on the GIMLI VIKING PARK REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT.

Bid documents are available now at the Icelandic Festival offices in Gimli 107-94 1st Avenue or through the project consultant HTFC Planning & Design in Winnipeg at suite 500-115 Bannatyne Avenue East.

All inquiries during the bidding period should be addressed to the consultant via the project contract administrator Aileen Zubriski at 204-944-9907 ext 293 or azubriski@htfc.mb.ca.

The tender closes on Monday January 9th at 4pm central time.
All bids must be delivered to 500-115 Bannatyne before this date and time to qualify for consideration.

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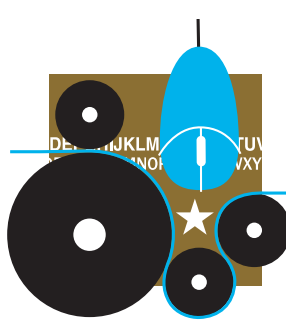
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