

THE

EXPRESS

Merry Christmas

WEEKLY NEWS

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Snowlarious winter adventure

EXPRESS PHOTO BY CORRINE EINARSSON

Reindeer try to warn Santa Logan Hollands to buckle up as bad weather looms — but he doesn't listen, falls from his sleigh and forgets he's Santa. Rudolph and the reindeer are played by Hazel Friesen, Amy Chartrand, Daphne Peters and Olivia Ball as students in grades 3 and 4 at Arborg Early Middle School present *A Snowlarious Winter: Penguins to the Rescue* during their Christmas concert on Dec. 17.

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A snowlarious winter concert delights Arborg



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY CORRINE EINARSSON

Students in Grade 3 and 4 at Arborg Early Middle School present *A Snowlarious Winter: Penguins to the Rescue* during their Christmas concert on Wednesday, Dec. 17, with a performance held at 11:30 a.m. The evening performance was cancelled due to storm conditions. Left photos: Hazel Friesen, soloist; Leo Chomokovsk, the paperboy.



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Gimli council rejects barrier proposal around den to protect garter snakes from ORVs

By Patricia Barrett

A zoologist with ties to Gimli asked municipal council to protect a garter snake den in the municipality and its snakes from being killed by off-road vehicles, but her proposal was turned down.

Roberta Olenick was a delegate at council's Nov. 19 committee of the whole meeting where she gave a presentation on the garter snake den and provided council with a report titled *Saving Gimli's garter snakes: a proposal for permanent barricades to protect a vulnerable snake den on RM Gimli land.*

Olenick said hundreds of snakes are being killed or maimed by off-road vehicles such as ATVs, dirt bikes and utility vehicles.

The snake den is located on RM-owned land north of Gimli. The den is surrounded on all sides by trails that have been carved out by ORV drivers.

Olenick, a zoologist and wildlife photographer who grew up in Winnipeg and Gimli, asked council to let her install — all expenses paid by her — permanent wooden barricades at the den.

"As mayor and council, you have a unique opportunity here to confirm that Gimli truly is a town that values



Red-sided garter snakes form mating balls in the spring and slide down the den slope onto the lower trail where they can be killed or maimed by off-road vehicles.

and protects its wildlife neighbours," said Olenick. "All you have to do is say yes to saving the lives of countless garter snakes with some all-expenses-paid permanent barricades on RM land."

Olenick presented council with photographs of dead and maimed, still-living snakes hit by off-road vehicles, as well as photographs of snakes in mating balls, an ORV on the trail, temporary snow fencing and the site layout.

Red-sided garter snakes have a distinctive red-flecked yellow racing stripe along their flank. They are non-venomous reptiles and harmless to



EXPRESS PHOTOS/IMAGES BY ROBERTA OLENICK AND TAMMY SKOGAN

Roberta Olenick's proposal to put barricades at a garter snake den to protect snakes in the spring and fall would not impact off-road vehicles as they can drive on the already available alternative trails (bypass routes) she has outlined above.

humans. They're vital to the ecosystem, preying on and helping control rodents and insects. They leave their dens (called hibernacula) after mating in the spring but return to the den in the fall when it starts to get cool. Garter snakes are listed under the

Manitoba Wildlife Act. The snakes are impacted by habitat loss that includes wetlands, road/trail mortality from vehicles, pesticides and human persecution (deliberately killing them).

Continued on page 5

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A child watches a garter snake at the den on RM-owned land north of Gimli.

> ORVS, FROM PG. 4

The den on Gimli municipal land is composed of a 20-foot-high earthen slope with a sandy trail running along the top and a narrow rocky portion running along the bottom.

When they form mating balls in the spring, the snakes can slide down the den's slope onto the trails where motorized vehicles drive. They're also vulnerable in the fall when they're returning to the den.

"Given the topography here, off-road vehicle drivers can end up running over snakes before even realizing the snakes are there until it is too late," said Olenick.

She said she spent several weeks at the den in 2022 and spoke with a number of ATV drivers who indicated "very strong support" for closing the area around the den to traffic, she said.

"All the ATVers I met who did not know about the snakes were amazed when I informed them and happily

chose a different route," she said. "Only one person, who did know about the den, reluctantly turned back when I intercepted him. It was either that or run me over."

In 2022, Olenick said she was able to get seasonal snow fences installed around the den in the spring and the fall. She had approached then mayor Lynn Greenberg and council who "kindly arranged" to have RM's public works department and the provincial department of conservation work together to protect the site.

While that effort was "much appreciated," the fences haven't been working effectively, said Olenick. They can fall over in the sandy soil, are "far too easy" for people to remove and are infrequently checked. Predicting the temperature during spring and fall is difficult and sometimes the snow fences are installed too late or removed too early to protect the snakes.

"This past July I found these fences just heaped beside the trails, a hazard for entangling everything from squir-



Snow fences erected by Manitoba conservation to protect the garter snakes in spring and fall can fall down or be pulled down by off-road vehicle drivers.

rels to songbirds," she said.

Effective protection for the snakes requires robust, year-round barricades, plus signage, she said. She pro-

Continued on page 7

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**Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year!**

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your home with love and peace
and the new year be filled with
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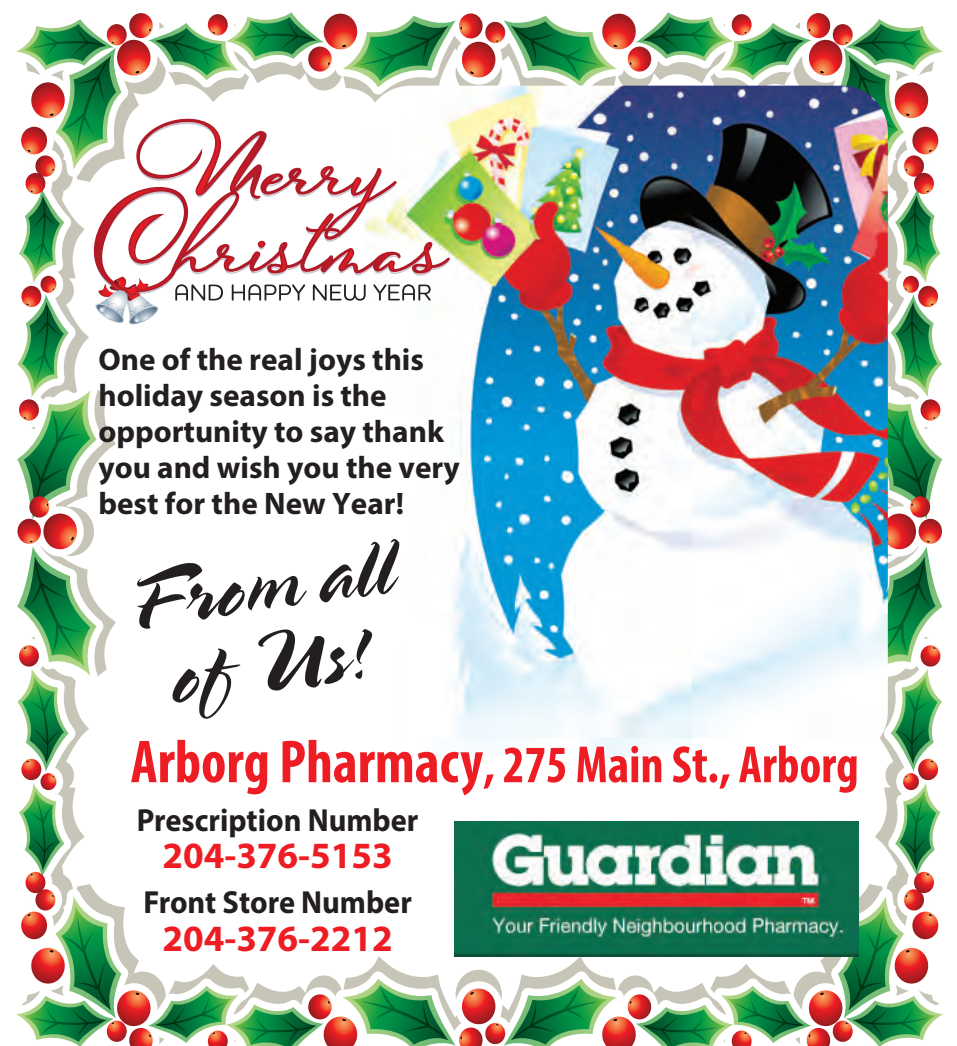
A Season for Remembering

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GrainFox provides 2026 market outlook and releases AI assistant

By E. Antonio

GrainFox delivered its annual grain market outlook and announced a new artificial intelligence tool during its Bin to Bank webinar on Nov. 19. GrainFox chief market analyst Neil Townsend and AgResource Company founder and president Dan Basse outlined the top 10 variables expected to influence grain markets in the year ahead, citing global supply and demand, geopolitics, weather volatility and trade relations as key drivers.

GrainFox's Variable Countdown

10 – Breakout candidates (barley, oats and durum): Townsend said tightening global supply and increased offshore market activity are creating renewed interest in several crops. Canada's durum crop was described as "representative," making transactions easier, while oats emerged as the strongest breakout candidate due to U.S. market dynamics and trade relationships. "If I had to pick one of the three in terms of having a bit of an uprise from here, it would be oats," Townsend



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Neil Townsend, GrainFox chief market analyst, and Dan Basse, founder and president of AgResource Company, addressed their "Top 10 Variable Countdown" list impacting the 2026 grain market, while Christina Wood, GrainFox director of marketing and communications, announced Sinoa— GrainFox's new AI tool.

said.

9 – Black Sea war and export potential: Basse said worsening conditions in the region continue to threaten export infrastructure, raising concerns similar to those seen in 2021. While wheat remains oversupplied, he expects global availability to gradually decline into next year if disruptions persist.

8 – India's pulse supply:

Townsend said India's domestic supply situation does not currently support higher prices, which could result in stricter import policies. He noted this poses challenges for Canada, adding he does not see conditions that would create a major upswing in pulse prices.

7 – South American weather:

Basse said favourable weather is currently supporting corn and soy-

Continued on page 9

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Gimli council appoints its strategic projects coordinator as new chief administrative officer

By Patricia Barrett

Gimli council appointed a new chief administrative officer in mid-December.

During a special meeting held on Dec. 15, a majority of council appointed DJ Sigmundson as CAO. He had been working as the strategic projects coordinator for the municipality.

Mayor Kevin Chudd, Deputy Mayor Kurt Reichert and Coun. Thora Palson voted in favour of appointing Sigmundson. Councillors Andy Damm and Richard Petrowski voted against appointing him.

Valorie Unrau of Way to Go Consulting was serving as the RM's interim CAO after council had put in place acting or interim CAOs to manage the municipality after former CAO Trilby Stirling-Kattler resigned.

When asked why Unrau stepped down, RM spokesperson Christine Payne said council chose Sigmundson's "proposal" over the one submitted from Way to Go Consulting (Unrau), and that "Valorie will be moving on to new challenges after six months of service."

When asked if Unrau applied for the permanent CAO position, Payne said: "No formal application process occurred. Valorie submitted a proposal through Way To Go Consulting, which was not selected."

Way to Go Consulting is a private company that was founded in 2011 by Ernie Epp and Dale Lyle. It provides senior management and financial services to municipalities, school divisions, associations and other organizations. Valorie Unrau joined the company in 2022 as a di-

rector, using her previous CAO experience to specialize in client services.

Payne said it was "unknown" how many CAO applications council received, but council "reviewed at least two proposals," the one from Sigmundson and the other from Way to Go Consulting. The CAO position "was not posted publicly."

There were no conflicts of interest "reported" regarding council's decision, said Payne.

The RM of Gimli has had a number of changes at the senior management level. Assistant CAO Doreen Steg resigned in 2023, taking the director of finance job before quitting in November or December of 2024 and leaving the RM. Assistant CAO Kristin Strachan resigned in the summer of 2024 and left the RM. CAO Kelly Cosgrove resigned in the summer of 2024 and stepped into the assistant CAO job. CAO Jim Fenske assumed the interim CAO role in July 2024, but he resigned two months later and left the RM. DJ Sigmundson became interim CAO in September 2024 and served until Stirling-Kattler came on board. She quit after only three months on the job. She had been appointed in December 2024.

Sigmundson has a number of years of CAO experience. He previously served as CAO for the RM of St. Clements then as CAO for the RM of St. Andrews.

His new appointment with the RM of Gimli takes effect on Dec. 22, 2025.

The Express asked councillors Damm and Petrowski for comment.



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO

DJ Sigmundson, shown in 2018, was appointed as the new CAO for the RM of Gimli. His appointment takes effect Dec. 22, 2025.

> ORVS, FROM PG. 5

posed a series of permanent wooden posts, about six feet high and two feet apart, be installed around the den, the full cost of which she will cover; there would be no expense to RM ratepayers.

The posts would impact a small portion (1.5 per cent) of the entire site. The posts would not prevent ORV drivers from accessing the snake den site; they would just divert the vehicles to already existing trails farther from the den.

Olenick had started a petition in October on Change.org in favour of installing permanent barricades and had 386 signatures by Nov. 17. She received signatures from people across the Interlake, including communities such as Arnes, Gimli, Sandy Hook, Fraserwood, Dunnottar, Petersfield, Selkirk, Meleb, Komarno, Inwood, Teulon, Stonewall and the RM of St. Andrews, from those in other towns in Manitoba, and from people in Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, the United States, England, France, Germany, South America and South Africa, to name a few.

People in the immediate area told Olenick they tried to prevent the snakes from being run over by stringing a rope across the lower trail and by placing logs across the trail with a sign.

"Lots of other people also want these snakes protected. An online petition I started recently has already garnered hundreds of signatures in support of permanent barricades," said Olenick. "Many are from Gimli or nearby. Some from Winnipeg may have cottages in Gimli. Others come from all around the world. Maybe they have visited Narcisse [in the RM of Armstrong] and appreciate Manitoba's iconic garter snakes. As one signer said: 'Visitors notice when a

town values and protects its wildlife neighbours.'"

Wendy Buelow from Dunnottar sent Gimli Mayor Kevin Chudd and council a letter, urging them to agree to Olenick's barricade proposal. Garter snakes are an important part of the Interlake ecosystem and shouldn't be harmed, she wrote, and added that the barricade will be "privately funded" and "professionally built."

RM of Gimli spokesperson Christine Payne said council did not grant Olenick permission to install barricades, but her request is being considered.

"Council has not granted permission for permanent barricades at this time. The request is under consideration, and any decision will take into account environmental impact, public safety and expert recommendations," said Payne. "Our public works team will review the space in coordination with other trail user groups and stakeholders to ensure all perspectives are considered. We welcome Roberta's input and ideas, and safety — for both people and snakes — will be a key factor in any proposed solution."

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AA Eriksdale

Eriksdale United Church building
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AA Winnipeg Beach

Lady of the Lake RC Church
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Gimli RCMP detachment focusing on reducing property crime, enhancing road safety, crime prevention

By Patricia Barrett

The Gimli RCMP detachment released its first quarterly report for 2025-26 to the municipalities it serves, showing its main focus is on reducing property crime.

The first quarter report covers the period July 1 to Sept. 30 and was released in November on the RM of Gimli's website.

Detachment commander Sgt. Rob Gray wrote that the detachment's three priorities for 2025-26 are to increase police visibility, reduce property crime and enhance road safety.

To increase police visibility, the detachment plans to continue its community patrols, either on foot, by snowmobile or water. Members will also patrol bars.

Over the course of the reporting period, detachment members completed 34 community patrols, 15 foot patrols during the Icelandic Festival, 10 bar walk-throughs and nine school patrols.

"Members are actively patrolling our detachment area from Winnipeg Beach Kernstead Road north towards Matheson Island and west including the RM of Armstrong," wrote Gray.

Detachment members were in attendance at 24 community events including the Gimli Car Show, The Arborg Street Festival, Winnipeg Beach's Boardwalk Days, Canada Day events and a crash-response exercise at the Gimli Airport.

RCMP patrols in and around the Matheson Island area north of Hecla-Grindstone Provincial Park were also completed when the number of on-duty members and other operational events permitted. During the report-



EXPRESS PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Impatience and weaving in and out of traffic that is adhering to the maximum posted speed limit is a chronic problem on Highway 8. Shown here are two vehicles that have entered the oncoming traffic lane at the same time to pass a line of cars travelling at the maximum 100 kilometres per hour.

ing period, there were calls to Pine Dock and Matheson Island.

The service's focus on property crime entails a number of initiatives.

First, the detachment is undertaking compliance checks to ensure that people released from custody by the court on specific conditions are abiding by them.

"This quarter, members have completed 52 compliance checks which resulted in four subjects being remanded into custody and one warrant of arrest," wrote Gray. "With having the local probation officer and the FYRST program [youth and adult crime-prevention program] working conjunctively has been a benefit to all organizations."

Second, the service is partnering with community groups such as COPP [Citizens on Patrol Program] members, who act as extra eyes and ears in their community to detect suspicious activity, as well as with the Youth Community Committee and the FYRST program.

FYRST continues to support about 20 local youth and six adults in its program.

Third, the detachment is analyzing property crime data to reduce crime to 330 occurrences. The current reporting quarter has 216 occurrences whereas last year (same quarter) had 147 occurrences, or a 16 per cent de-

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Gimli restaurants, bakery get cooking to support food bank staff, volunteers

By Patricia Barrett

Restaurants and the bakery in Gimli got cooking last week to support Evergreen Basic Needs' staff and volunteers as they packed Christmas food hampers for people in need.

EBN executive director Karen Bowman said they're so grateful for the local support as the food bank's volunteers and staff worked flat out last week to pack up the food hampers.

"This was very much appreciated by our staff and our volunteers. Packing the hampers is a big job with lots of heavy lifting," said Bowman. "They didn't have to worry about preparing a lunch. This is a special treat for them."

EBN used to have a café in its building but it had shut down a few years ago, she said, and EBN used to pay for lunches to feed volunteers on hamper days. Having local restaurants and the bakery step in with food and goodies is a wonderful way to support them during hamper week.

"This year we had Chicken Chef, Ship & Plough, Sugar Me Cookie (bakery) and Carlo's Cucina feeding our staff and volunteers," said Bowman. "Last year we had the Ship & Plough make us wonderful soups,



Pizzas supplied by Gimli Chicken Chef.

and Chicken Chef and Sugar Me Cookie also gave us meals and desserts."

As of Dec. 11, the food bank had packed 247 hampers and Bowman said she expects "there will be more."

Volunteers from the local seniors' resource centre and the Diageo distillery are delivering Christmas hampers to food bank clients.

Gimli Chicken Chef owner Melanie Specula said she was happy to step up and provide lunches for EBN.

"We provided four large pizzas yesterday [Dec. 9] and we're doing 10



EXPRESS PHOTOS COURTESY OF KAREN BOWMAN

Staff and volunteers who were part of EBN's Christmas hamper packing crew sat down to a hearty meals last week courtesy of Carlo's Cucina, Gimli Chicken Chef, the Ship & Plough Pub and Sugar Me Cookie Bakery.

sandwiches today [Dec. 10] for the people who are putting together the hampers. We provided specific numbers of items based on what Karen said she needs," said Specula. "I like

to support my community."

In addition to EBN, Specula said she provided food for 18 Gimli Operation Red Nose volunteers on Dec. 5.

> RCMP, FROM PG. 8

crease.

The RM and the town of Gimli had the highest reported property crimes this quarter.

The RM of Gimli had 37 property crimes, the town of Gimli had 34, Winnipeg Beach had 15, the RM of Armstrong had 15, the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton had 14, Arborg had 7, Matheson Island had 1 and Pine Dock had zero.

In terms of calls for police service, the RM of Gimli and the town of Gimli had the highest volume during this quarter. There were 313 calls from the RM and 249 from the town. Bifrost-Riverton had the next highest number of calls for police service at 128 followed by Winnipeg Beach at 109.

The Gimli detachment's third priority, road safety, saw "proactive enforcement" through the issuance of 81 traffic offences notices, 17 warnings and 17 Criminal Code traffic violations.

> GRAINFOX, FROM PG. 6

bean planting, particularly in Brazil. If conditions hold into early January, Brazil could plant a 180-million-tonne soybean crop, though weather risks remain a constant concern.

6 – Macroeconomics:

Townsend said inflation pressures following the pandemic have created affordability challenges, though agriculture has performed relatively well compared to other sectors. He cautioned, however, that economic uncertainty continues, with recession fears frequently resurfacing.

5 – U.S. exports and balance sheets:

Basse said U.S. farmers produced a corn crop comparable in size to the combined corn and soybean output of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. He expects export demand to remain strong, with end stocks for corn, soybeans and wheat remaining ample.

4 – Demand:

Townsend said demand for Canadian wheat is solid but lacks the growth momentum seen in previous years, particularly with limited expansion in biofuel initiatives.

"It's not that demand's poor; it's just that it doesn't have that built-in dynamic growth that it had for many years," he said.

3 – U.S.–China relations:

Basse described the relationship as an ongoing economic conflict, particularly

around soybeans, and said the global ag trade landscape is becoming increasingly fragmented as countries align with competing power centres.

2 – Canada–China relations:

Townsend said unresolved trade disputes, including restrictions on Canadian canola, continue to slow negotiations. He added that the lack of perceived equality between the two countries complicates efforts to restore full market access.

1 – Donald Trump:

Basse said former U.S. president Donald Trump remains the biggest wildcard in global markets due to uncertainty around tariffs, trade policy and political influence.

"I have not been at an ag conference this year that didn't bring up President Trump as being the big unknown," he said.

GrainFox also announced the launch of Sinoa, an AI-powered grain market assistant it describes as a major AgTech advancement heading into 2026.

"Sinoa is a major leap forward for AI-powered ag intelligence," said Mark Lepp, CEO and founder of GrainFox. "This isn't just a chatbot — it's an AI grain market analyst built for real-world decision-makers."

According to GrainFox, Sinoa draws from more than 20 years of proprietary data, including historical pricing, fundamentals and seasonality to generate real-time, explainable insights tai-



Sinoa provides users with fact-checked, data-backed answers in minutes, setting the program apart from typical AI bots.

lored to individual users. Responses are built through live analysis rather than prewritten answers.

"Producers and commercial agribusinesses don't just get a market summary — they get a deeper, personalized understanding of what that information means for them," said Richard Surrendrakumar, GrainFox's chief product officer.

Access to Sinoa requires a GrainFox membership subscription. More information, including a recording of the Bin to Bank webinar, is available through GrainFox's website and social media channels.



Christmas STORIES

FIRST

TRACKS IN THE SNOW

By Claire Langan, Grade 9, Winnipeg

I'm cold and lost and have been walking for days. The only life I've encountered is a hare bounding away, in which direction, I wish I knew.

But then to my surprise, below the pines of the trees, I see what I've been looking for, seemingly staring back at me. The tracks in the snow led down into the woods, and I follow, too cold to examine them thoroughly.

This was my leap of hope, that another walked here, and as I trudge through the white, I glance down at my path; but the tracks I recognised not. I pondered perhaps a large man with large boots could have left these marks, but no animal to my knowledge could have imprinted so boldly.

Fighting the winds through the trees, I take a risky look ahead in hopes of glimpsing my saviour walking with those mighty feet in those mighty boots, but I see not a one.

They go on and on, the tracks, with the snow seemingly avoiding blowing within them, but that only enhances my hope, that I would not lose my way.

The pines whistle in the freezing winds and to my horror, my vision grows darker. I refuse to give up, I refuse to pass out, but I begin to see the light dim all around me. I am terrified of the end when I suddenly realise, with a sigh I have not the energy to produce, that it is not my eyesight but the night engulfing the sky.

A wolf howls in the distance, but I descend my frozen eyes once more to the tracks that lead me. But with a pang, I see that the man's once mighty tracks are now enormous hoof tracks, and I stop to look around. I could not have walked abroad, I think. But in the dark, it is impossible to see, and so I decide to follow the hoof tracks, keeping my gaze firm on the snow.

My mind begins to wander; I am tired beyond measure and sleep tugs at my frosted eyelids. But I cannot stop now, the hooves continue far

ahead, far into the darkness that I pray will soon reveal home.

I halt for but a moment, to close my eyes tight and melt the thin icicles in which have begun to grow from my lashes.

After I recover, I open my eyes once more and look down at the tracks. With a horrible sense of confusion, I see that they are no longer hooves, but now resemble those of a wolf's, although bigger and broader all around.

I cannot think clearly in the freezing temperatures, and so I continue to drag myself, following the large paw-prints that lead where, I know not. But this time, I step within the tracks, to ensure that they don't escape me.

I follow and I follow, not daring to blink, fearing that my path should be changed yet again. I stare down at them until finally, my boots touch cement and I see that I have trudged onto a road; road with lights either way in the distance, which I assume are automobiles, but my frosted mind cannot comprehend.

Just as I think I shall faint of the chill, I see on the roadside opposite of me, something shadowy and broad, and I think it is offering me a wave. But I cannot return it as neither of my arms can move and the light of the automobiles approach me.

I close my eyes, wondering lastly of just what had left me the tracks in the snow.

SECOND

THE SHATTERED WORLD

By Randi P, Alf Cuthbert Moosehorn

Once upon a time, there was a girl who didn't know how easily her whole world could be flipped upside down...

It was Christmas Eve, and Amy was snooping for presents while her parents were at work. Little did she know how terrible the outcome could be.

She looked everywhere and hadn't found a single present. After what felt like hours of searching, she got to the last room in the house, her parents' bedroom. She stepped inside, "silent night" played from the tv in the corner. She ignored it and continued to search. She stepped into the closet; a cool breeze swept through the room, sending a chill down her spine. She pushed away the hanger's full of Christmas sweaters, set aside the pajama pants, and peaked through the small shelf of shoes that had never been worn.

She found nothing.

As a last resort, she went to the dresser and dug through the socks. She was carelessly tossing socks aside when she saw something peaking through the pile, something that wasn't a sock. She reached her hand in, pulling out a beautiful snow globe wrapped in a red ribbon. Inside, a tiny snowman family, smiling, hand in hand. She turned the snow globe, it felt cool and smooth in her hands. As it turned in her hands she saw a tiny label, "to Amy, Love Mom and Dad."

She smiled, then made the horrible mistake of shaking the globe.

"POP."

She landed on something plastic and sharp. The room was spinning; her head was pounding. She stood up, her legs, quivering. She lifted her pant leg, red angry marks from landing on the plastic throbbed.

She lifted her head, looking at her surroundings.

Glass.

She ran to the glass and pressed her face against it. The closet, same as she'd left it, but giant...

"What ifs" flooded her mind, had she shrunk? Was she dreaming?

She pressed her hands to her face, "wake up..." she whispered to herself as silent tears poured down her face.

"It's not real..." she tried reassuring herself, but the words tasted metallic and fake coming from her mouth.

She turned around, the once tiny snowman family looked to be about 30 feet tall. Yet still hand in hand, smiling, almost taunting her.

She slammed her fists against the glass and screamed. nothing.

She cried uncontrollably, her sobs echoing of the glass dome.

"Wake up..." she cried through tears.

When suddenly, she felt a breeze of air woosh past, snatching the oxygen from her lungs. She toppled over, wheezing for air. She opened her eyes, still blurry from her tears. She was back in the closet, "silent night" still playing in the corner.

She stared at the snow globe, trying to understand.

Then, she lifted it high above her head and smashed it.

It shattered. Glass shards and plastic snow exploded on the floor. It was over

Yet, one question remained in her head...

Was it all just a dream?

THIRD

SANTA'S SLEIGH

By Isaac Y, Alf Cuthbert Moosehorn

It was the night before Christmas, and all throughout the day, the spirits of world leaders were stocking Santa's sleigh.

George Washington put in a pick, for a miner back in the hicks. John Trudoh put in a beaver, though the rest of the people there wanted one either.

Abraham Lincon Hollered "Come boys, were not done yet!" none of the Canadians replied, but someone else shot back

"Then help yourself, mister lazy bones,

for your worse than Dave Jones!" One leader got so excited, He pushed Santa's bag over the side. Down it rolled, heading for cider creek, for if you go in there, you sure do reek.

Suddenly Santa asked "What's the fuss?"

I heard more yapping than a teenage platypus!"

"Do I smell cider? Santa Clause said, "For if I smell cider, I want to go to bed."

"Oh, I forgot, if a bag with cider touches my sleigh, it will blow itself away."

Suddenly, without warning, the sleigh rocked back and forth, all the way up there in the north.

The sleigh let out a great amount of steam,

as Grumpy mc grouchy, The grumpiest Elf, screamed.

Suddenly Santa's sleigh went Ka-boom!

Santa's sleigh was now a pile of presents,

Then Santa hollered "Stay present!" "You blew up my sleigh!"

Santa Clause moaned, Then he told everyone to fix it, Everyone groaned.

Grumpy mc grouchy snarled "You better do it, you silly things, or else I'll have you thrown into the ring".

So, for the rest of the night, They fixed the slay without a fight. Finally, it was done, and Santa said, "Thanks everyone, but you only get coal tonight." Happy Holidays!!!

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This holiday season, we're grateful for the trust and support of our community. May your days be filled with peace, joy, and togetherness.

Happy Holidays and a Prosperous New Year!



EXPRESS PHOTO BY CORRINE EINARSSON

Students from kindergarten to Grade 2 at Arborg Early Middle School presented their Christmas concert for friends and family on Dec. 16. Kindergarten students performed 'Tis the Season, Christmas Makes Me Sing, Jingle Bells and Good Things Come in Little Packages, while Grade 1 students sang A Nice, Nice Christmas, Jolly Old St. Nicholas, Man in the Bright Red Suit, Old Toy Trains, Xmas Tree (What Will You Be?) and Santa Claus Is Coming to Town. Grade 2 students performed The Little Snowflake, 12 Days of Canadian Christmas and Peace of Christmas, with all students joining together for A Million Little Snowflakes and We Wish You a Merry Christmas.





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December 25, 26th	(7:00 am to 10:00 pm)
December 31st	(7:00 am to 10:00 pm)
January 1st	(7:00 am to 10:00 pm)



As we gather to celebrate
the holidays, please
remember to make safety
part of your plans.

Derek Johnson
MLA for Interlake-Gimli
204-641-8525 (Gimli)
204-376-3401 (Arborg)
InterlakeGimliMLA@gmail.com

Riverton Early Middle Years School hosts winter concert



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY CORRINE EINARSSON

Students from Riverton Early Middle Years School filled the stage with holiday cheer during their Christmas concert on Dec. 16, featuring performances from kindergarten through Grade 6, including Frosty the Snowman, Run Run Rudolph, Santa Claus Is Coming to Town and a whole-school finale of Jingle Bell Rock.



Riverton Elks member Mitch Johnson, left, presents a \$10,000 donation to Riverton Early Middle Years School principal Randy Seminuk in support of the school's playground project.



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Heartfelt thanks to all our wonderful volunteers & to all
 those who so generously donated to the Heritage Village!

Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

*Wishing everybody a
 Merry Christmas and a Healthy,
 Happy and Prosperous New Year!
 Thank you to everyone who came
 down and purchased bulls from
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With our Thanks

We hope you enjoy a blessed and beautiful holiday season and a prosperous New Year to follow.

From Brenda & David

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Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year

Continued from page 10

THE BIG RED SACK

By Carina Poworski, Grade 4, Dr. George Johnson School, Gimli

Christmas Eve was finally here and Santa was so excited! Santa and his elves had been preparing for months for this night. Santa loaded the sleigh, sat down on his comfy seat and the reindeer took off. Everything was going smoothly until he reached a small town in Italy. There was a big storm and the north wind was tough to go through. Santa couldn't see anything so he told the reindeer to stop. As the reindeer stopped, a big sack of toys flipped off the back of the sleigh. Santa didn't even notice. He decided to take a break and have some hot cocoa from his magic mug while he waited for the storm to clear up. Meanwhile, a little girl named Tiffany had heard

a bang from her bedroom window. She put on her slippers and tiptoed outside. She couldn't believe her eyes, there was a ginormous sack of toys. Tiffany didn't know what to do, this sack doesn't belong to her, but someone had to have dropped it off on her property. Tiffany didn't think Santa would give her small family such a large sack of toys. There were so many dolls, stuffed animals, and legos inside. Tiffany dragged the sack in the house. In the morning her parents asked her why there was such a big red bag at the doorway. Tiffany said she found it outside her bedroom window. Her parents were surprised when Tiffany said she wanted to bring it to the orphanage to share it with all the kids there. Tiffany's dad thought that was a great idea. He put on a red suit and they lifted it in the back of his truck. Tiffany and her dad drove to the orphanage. They placed the bag on the front step with a note that said, "Merry Christmas boys and girls!" If you're wondering if Santa ever noticed the missing bag of toys, he did. He didn't bother looking for the missing toys, he went back to the North Pole to get some more toys to finish his special deliveries.

THE LOST SACK OF CHRISTMAS

By Jayden Symynysen Grade 8, Silver

It was Christmas Eve, and the sky was sparkling with stars as Santa Claus guided his sleigh over rooftops and chimneys. The reindeer pranced eagerly, their bells jingling in the cold night air. Santa's big red sack was packed full of presents, ready to bring joy to children everywhere.

But just as Santa was about to land on the roof of a small town, a sudden gust of wind caught the sleigh. The sack

Continued on page 18



*This holiday season,
we extend our heartfelt
thanks to our clients,
volunteers and workers.
Wishing each of you a season of
warmth and a New Year filled
with health and happiness.
From the Gimli Seniors Resource
Council & Staff*



*Wishing everyone a Joyous Holiday
and to all our past and future
guests, a Silent Night!*

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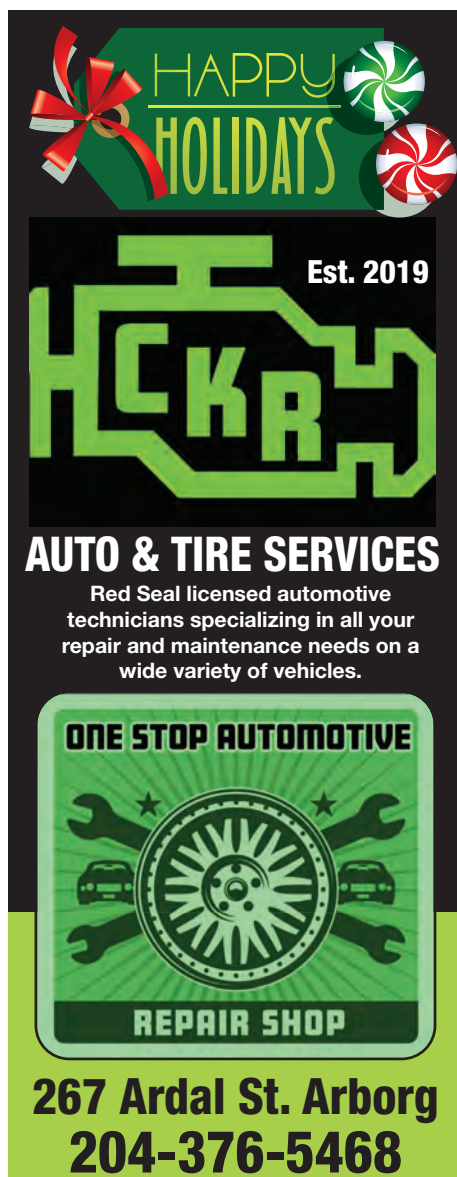


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HOLIDAY Songbook

Up on the Housetop

Up on the housetop reindeer paws, out jumps good old Santa Claus
Down through the chimney with lots of toys
All for the little ones, Christmas joys
Ho, ho ho! Who wouldn't go? Ho, ho ho! Who wouldn't go?

Up on the housetop, click, click, click
Down through the chimney with old Saint Nick

First comes the stocking of little Nell
Oh, dear Santa fill it well
Give her a dolly that laughs and cries
One that can open and shut her eyes
Ho, ho, ho! Who wouldn't go? Ho, ho, ho! Who wouldn't go?

Up on the housetop, click, click, click
Down through the chimney with good Saint Nick

Look in the stocking of little Bill
Oh, just see what a glorious fill
Here's a hammer and lots of tacks
Whistling ball and a whip that cracks

Ho, ho ho! Who wouldn't go? Ho, ho, ho! Who wouldn't go?

Up on the housetop, click, click, click
Down through the chimney with good Saint Nick



Lyrics courtesy of Lyrics.com

Jingle Bells

Dashing through the snow
In a one-horse open sleigh
O'er the fields we go
Laughing all the way

Bells on bobtail ring
Making spirits bright
What fun it is to ride and sing
A sleighing song tonight! Oh,

Jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way,
Oh what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh. Hey!

Jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way,
Oh what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh.

The Christmas Song

Chestnuts roasting on an open fire,
Jack Frost nipping at your nose.
Yuletide carols being sung by a choir,
and folks dressed up like Eskimos.

Everybody knows a turkey and some mistletoe
help to make the season bright.
Tiny tots with their eyes all aglow
will find it hard to sleep tonight.

They know that Santa's on his way.
He's loaded lots of toys and goodies on
his sleigh.
And every mother's child is gonna spy
to see if reindeer really know how to fly.

And so I'm offering this simple phrase
to kids from one to ninety-two.
Although it's been said many times
many ways:
Merry Christmas to you!

Written by Robert Wells & Mel Tormé
Lyrics courtesy of Lyricsforchristmas.com



Silent Night

"Silent Night"

Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
'round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing, "Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born!"

Silent Night

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All is calm, all is bright
'round yon virgin mother and child!
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Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing, "Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born!"



Deck the Halls

Deck the halls with boughs of holly,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
'Tis the season to be jolly,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Don we now our gay apparel,
Fa la la, la la la, la la la.
Toll the ancient Yule tide carol,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

See the blazing Yule before us,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Strike the harp and join the chorus.
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Follow me in merry measure,
Fa la la, la la la, la la la.
While I tell of Yule tide treasure,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Fast away the old year passes,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Hail the new, ye lads and lasses,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Sing we joyous, all together,
Fa la la, la la la, la la la.
Heedless of the wind and weather,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

English lyrics written by Thomas Oliphant
Lyrics courtesy of LyricsforChristmas.com



Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from Thy holy face
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth!
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth!

Silent night! Holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing
"Alleluia" to our King:
"Christ the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born."

Lyrics courtesy of Hymnary.org

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

It came upon the midnight clear;
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold;
"Peace on the earth, good will to
men,
from heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay,
to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they
come
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats
o'er all the weary world'
above its sad and lowly plains,
they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow,
look now! for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road,
and hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on,
by prophet seen of old,
when the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song
which now the angels sing

Written by Edmund Sears
Lyrics courtesy of Hymnary.org



We Wish You a Merry Christmas

We wish you a merry Christmas,
We wish you a merry Christmas,
We wish you a merry Christmas,
And a Happy New Year!

Good tidings we bring for you and your kin;
We wish you a merry Christmas and
a Happy New Year!

Now bring us some figgy pudding,
Now bring us some figgy pudding,
Now bring us some figgy pudding,
And a cup of good cheer!

Good tidings we bring for you and your kin;
We wish you a merry Christmas and
a Happy New Year!

We all like our figgy pudding;
We all like our figgy pudding;
We all like our figgy pudding;
With all its good cheer.

Good tidings we bring
for you and your kin;
We wish you a merry
Christmas and a Happy New Year!

We won't go until we get some
We won't go until we get some
We won't go until we get some
So bring it out here!

Good tidings we bring for you and your kin;
We wish you a merry Christmas and
a Happy New Year!

We wish you a merry Christmas,
We wish you a merry Christmas,
We wish you a merry Christmas,
And a Happy New Year!
And a Happy New Year!

Good tidings we bring for you and your kin;
We wish you a merry Christmas and
a Happy New Year!

Lyrics courtesy of Hymnsandcarolsofchristmas.com



Jingle Bells

In a one-horse open sleigh.

A day or two ago,
The story I must tell
I went out on the snow,
And on my back I fell;
A gent was riding by
In a one-horse open sleigh,
He laughed as there I
sprawling lie,
But quickly drove away.

Jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way,
Oh what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh.

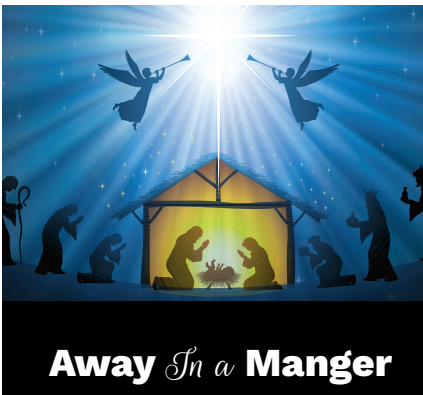
Jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way,
Oh what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh.

Now the ground is white
Go it while you're young,
Take the girls tonight
and sing this sleighing song;
Just get a bobtailed bay
Two forty as his speed
Hitch him to an open sleigh
And crack! you'll take the lead.

Jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way,
Oh what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh.

Jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way,
Oh what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh.

Lyrics written by James Lord
Pierpont



"Away In a Manger"

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep in the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky
And stay by my cradle til morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
And take us to heaven, to live with Thee there.

Lyrics courtesy of LyricsforChristmas.com



O Christmas Tree O, Christmas Tree,
Your branches green delight us.
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,
Your branches green delight us.
They're green when summer days are bright;
They're green when winter snow is white.
O, Christmas Tree, O, Christmas Tree,
Your branches green delight us!

O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,
You give us so much pleasure!
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,
You give us so much pleasure!
How oft at Christmas tide the sight,
O green fir tree, gives us delight!
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,
You give us so much pleasure!

O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,
Your branches green delight us.
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,
Your branches green delight us.
They're green when summer days are bright;
They're green when winter snow is white.
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,
Your branches green delight us!

Lyrics courtesy of LyricsforChristmas.com

Here We Come A-Caroling

Here we come a-caroling
Among the leaves so green
Here we come a-wand'ring
So fair to be seen

Love and joy come to you
And to you glad Christmas, too
And God bless you and send
you a Happy New Year
And God send you a
Happy New Year

We are not daily beggars
That beg from door to door
But we are neighbors' children
Whom you have seen before

Love and joy come to you
And to you glad Christmas, too
And God bless you and send
you a Happy New Year

And God send you
a Happy New Year

Bring us out a table
And spread it with a cloth
Bring us out a moldy cheese
And some of your Christmas
loaf

Love and joy come to you
And to you glad Christmas too
And God bless you and send
you a Happy New Year
And God send you a Happy
New Year

God bless the master of this
house
Likewise the mistress, too
And all the little children
That round the table go

Love and joy come to you
And to you glad Christmas, too
And God bless you and send
you a Happy New Year
And God send you a Happy
New Year

Good master and good
mistress
While you're sitting by the fire
Pray think of us poor children
Who are wandering in the mire

Love and joy come to you
And to you glad Christmas, too
And God bless you and send
you a Happy New Year
And God send you a Happy
New Year
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!

Lyrics courtesy of Christmassongsandcarols.com.





Continued from page 15

of presents, tied tightly but not quite tight enough, slipped off the back and tumbled through the sky. It landed with a soft thud in the snowy woods below.

"Oh no!" Santa exclaimed, looking back. "The sack! It's gone!"

The reindeer circled above, but the sack was nowhere to be seen. Santa sighed, "I can't deliver these gifts without the sack. I need to find it quickly."

In the woods, the sack lay half-buried in snow. Presents are scattered, as a curious fox sniffs them. Children sled-ding nearby spot the sack.

"Look! A sack of presents!" shouted Emma, the oldest of the group. "Santa must have dropped it!"

The children gathered around, eyes wide with excitement. However, a problem arose for them. "What do we do now?" asked Max, nervously. "If we keep the presents, Santa might not be able to finish delivering gifts tonight."

Emma thought for a moment. "We have to help Santa.

Let's try to get the sack back to him."

The children decided to follow the sleigh's tracks in the snow, hoping to catch up with Santa. They pulled the heavy sack behind them, laughing and slipping as they hurried through the forest.

Up in the sky, Santa was searching frantically, "I need to find that sack soon. Christmas can't be ruined."

After a while, the children saw the sleigh landing in a clearing ahead. Santa was looking around, clearly up-set.

"Santa!" Emma called out, waving the sack. "We found your presents!"

Santa's face lit up with relief and gratitude. "Thank you, children! You've saved Christmas!"

Santa invited the children to help him load the presents back onto the sleigh. The reindeer stamped their hooves, ready to fly again.

Before taking off, Santa smiled warmly, "Because you helped save Christmas, I have a special gift for each of you."

The children beamed as Santa handed out small wrapped boxes. Then, with a hearty laugh and a wave, Santa and his reindeer soared into the night sky, delivering joy to children everywhere.

As the children watched the sleigh disappear, Emma whispered, "This was the best Christmas ever."

And from that night on, the children always remembered the Christmas they helped Santa save.

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT AGAIN

By Makayla Wozlowski, Grade 6, Dr. George Johnson School, Gimli

"Wrong way," yelled Gwen. I had not realized that I was going down the wrong side of the toboggan hill and "plunk" I hit the bottom. "Come back up," yelled Gwen. "It's too steep to climb," I shouted back. As I looked behind me, I saw very peculiar tracks. Those are weird, I thought to myself. "Should I see where they go?" "No, are you crazy," Gwen replied. "But I want to see where the let to." "Well, I am not coming with you," Gwen hollered from the top of the hill. "That is fine...that is just fine by me," I said as I followed the tracks into the forest. "Come back," said Gwen. "No,"

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Continued from page 18

I yelled back. "I need to know where they go."

As I slowly walked, I noticed that the footprints were not human feet...they were way too small. They could not be a kids foot because they were too pointy, but what else could they be?

Then all of the sudden I heard crying. With a right turn here and a left turn there, I saw a tiny elf sitting on a log. "Oh no," I said. "Are you not supposed to be at the North Pole?" "Well, that is the problem." Replied the elf. "The North Pole sent me to go to the mall and spread Christmas Spirit, but I got lost on my way there. "Well, I can help you find your way." "I would love that. Thank you!" "Not a problem." I replied.

As we walked through the forest, I was trying to think of ways to spread Christmas Spirit. Then I heard my phone

ring...it was my mom. "Where are you?" she asked. "Oh sorry! I forgot to let you know but I am going to the mall. Actually, we are almost there. I'm with an elf."

"What!" she choked, "that is not possible. I'm coming to the mall right now and I would love to see this elf." "Okay, see you there."

When I hung up, the elf asked me who I was speaking to. "That was my mom. She is meeting us at the mall." "Okay," the elf replied. "What is your name?" "I asked. "Oh, it's Buddy. "I love that name," I cried. "Thank you. What is your name?" asked Buddy.

Before I knew it, we were there. The second we stepped into the mall, I saw my mom with her arms crossed. That isn't good I thought to myself. "Oh my gosh! There is an elf!" I just smiled, "yep, and his name is Buddy."

"So, are you one of Santa's elves?" "Yes, I am," replied Buddy, "and I'm here spreading Christmas magic. "Alright then," said my mom, "then I have an idea. We have to go to the security guard and ask him if we can sign a Christmas song on the mall's intercom."

It worked! Within 10 minutes, the whole mall was singing songs like "Jingle Bell Rock", "Winter Wonderland", and many more.

"Yah, there is Christmas magic again", Buddy and I shouted. At that moment, I noticed Gwen out of the corner of my eye, and she was smiling and singing. Magic was everywhere!

THE LITTLE SNOWGLOBE

By Era Loewen, Grade 5, Dr. George Johnson School

Julie quickly finished making tea for mom and ran back to the living room, where her parents and little brother sat waiting for her to open presents, Julie opened her first present from her little brother, it was a snow globe! She shook it and found herself in front of a glowing shop! She peered inside then she saw someone walking toward the door she was standing in! She waved to the person, than that's when she realized it was one a elf! The elf said hi and said his name was Tom. And told her that he needed her help to deliver presents! Julie agreed to delivering presents with the elf, and soon enough she was flying up in the air. Soon enough they where finished delivering presents. And as soon as they got back Santa gave them some cookies and milk. And Julie found a snow globe and shook it and saw a picture of her house. She said good bye to Santa and Tom and stepped in, and found herself in her bed and it was the best Christmas ever!!!



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A CHRISTMAS PHENOMENON

By Reid Duguid, Age: 11, Dr. George Johnson School, Gimli

Julie bolted as her heart was jumping in her chest. She swore she heard screaming coming from downstairs, she decided to creep downstairs. The noise led her to the snow globe. She squinted to see what's there, and she heard a swooshing sound. When she opened her eyes, she thought she was in a dream. Candy canes, gingerbread houses, Christmas lights everywhere. A high voice interrupted her thoughts. "Hello Madame," said a short man dressed in all green. "I'm Sargent Jingle. I run the Sleigh Express. Julie blurted out, "Oh really, where does it go?" "There's no better way to know than to go for a ride." Said Jingles. As soon as Julie stepped in the sleigh it pulled her into her seat as it took off. Sargent Jingles was pointing out things as they flew by. There's the Chocolate Factory, and Santa's Lodge. He threw a dignified scowl in the direction of a brewing storm. Julie quickly noticed and asked what's over there? Jingles looked deeply ashamed, and he spoke with regret. "That's Scrooges' Palace. Last night our Nutcrackers failed to protect the presents and Scrooges men

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took them by force. That's why you heard screaming, there's a riot by the Tree of Tradition." Santa's been trying to assemble a team of Nutcrackers to go and retrieve the presents, but he doesn't have a captain yet. Julie felt sympathy for all the elves and told Jingles she can help. Faster than light they were Infront of the lodge doors and Miss Claus herself opened the doors. "We need to see Santa." Said Jingles in an authoritative voice. Mrs. Clause ushered them inside and there sat Santa Clause at the end of the table with a distressed look on his face. "Santa" said Jingles, "Julie said she

can help get the presents back." The mood of the room lightened as Santa said, "We've had a challenging time finding a captain for our group. Are you sure you want to do this?" "Yes!" said Julie. Almost instantly. "Pack up then we will deploy the team in 20 minutes." Said Santa. "I need the presents by 11:00 P.M. so I can deliver them. "Got it," said Julie. Soon after she said that her and five people were already standing on top of the lodge by a glider. "Okay you will land in the Candy Cane Forest and creep to the palace." Said Santa, "Yes sir, yes sir!" said the Nutcrackers. "Okay, jump on the hang glider now and off you

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Continued from page 21

go!" Suddenly Julie's ears were ringing and faster than sound they were in the forest. They heard maniacal laugh-

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ter and froze in their tracks. They were closer to the palace than they thought. Now they must sneak into the pipes of the palace. "Julie, you will sneak through the pipes and open the gates. "If they catch you, you will have to fight. Just don't go by Scrooge," said the tallest Nutcracker. "Okay, but how will I get up to the pipe?" "Using a Candy Cane Ladder of course" Stated the same Nutcracker "Got it." Julie told him Soon enough Julie was in a pipe She took a few steps, and the floor of the pipe gave out, and Julie was on the floor. Right in front of Scrooge! Charge said Scrooge's bodyguard... Julie, Julie where are you the presents are ready. That was a good dream Julie thought. As She stood up, she looked out the window and there it was Santa's Sleigh outlined by the shine of the moon. Maybe it was a Christmas Miracle after all .



THE MISSING PERSON

By Tilley Kilpatrick, Age: 10, Dr. George Johnson School, Gimli

On a dark winter night Zoe heard her sister's ear-piercing scream. Immediately she sprinted to find her, but Addy was nowhere to be seen. The next day she was reported missing, but a year later she was still never seen. Zoe never gave up hope. She got a tip that Addy was last seen in a local park. Zoe went to the park and found kid footprints in the snow. Zoe decided to follow the footprints to see where they led. The footprints led to an old steel gate with a big iron lock. Zoe thought she should touch the lock to see if it was loose but, when she touched the lock, she got teleported to the other side of the gate! When she tried to touch the lock again, she couldn't get back. She thought at least it's not a creepy forest behind me. But when she turned around it was a dark forest. But in the shadows of the tree Zoe saw a girl. The girl was wearing a leaf dress. She had a flower in her scraggly brown hair. As Zoe got closer, the girl asked her name. Zoe whispered, "hi, my name is Zoe. What is your name?" The girl answered, "my name is Addy, your sister". They hugged and whispered, "we need to get out of this place". They walked back to the gate which was still locked. Zoe told Addy to find a stick to pick the lock. At the same time Zoe looked to see if there was a way over the gate. Then she saw a carving in gate that says, "only one can leave". She immediately turns to tell Addy. But Addy cannot be found. Now Zoe, is trapped and alone.

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PRESENTS

By Brooklyn B

It all started when I pretended to be a penguin! I was making snow angels outside and waddling around, I looked up and saw Santa's ruby red sleigh I waved to him. I was sad because he did not wave back. suddenly presents fell on my head "CRASH" I Looked around and saw presents falling from the sky.

Out of nowhere my magic sleigh came I piled all the presents in my magic sleigh. Then in the snow there was glittery Santa Tracker. I picked it up and dashed back to my sleigh. I said "Merry!" "The sled took off after Santa. Snow flies in my face It was watery. Ahead I hear the bells on his sleigh up ahead.

I found Santa and gave him the presents, and he was soooooooooo happy that next year I can be an elf!!!!!!!



TIMMY THE TINY MAN

By McKinley B

Eve, Bruce and Petter were playing a game of tag behind an old brown apartment building, when a massive ruby sack fell from the snowy sky. They looked inside of the sack and there were a whole lot of presents Eve was yelling for Petter and Bruce. They open all the presents, suddenly all the presents were gone, there were no more presents anywhere, it was a trap! A net closes around the "clang!" They see a little man running to them he starts to yell at them in a different language and he cuts them free with his sharp candy cane, they all run to their houses.

As Eve licked a candy cane that Petter gave her she found a tiny key. As Bruce was putting up some Christmas lights, he found a key that was shaped like a light bulb, and as petter was raping a present. He found a key in the raping paper. "What could this mean", they all thought. The next day, as they woke up, they noticed the keys started to glow and shake; they turned into shapes. Eve has a heart, Bruce has square and petter has a triangle. After breakfast, they called each other and talked about what happened this morning with the keys.

Then after a long talk they decided to play behind the same apartment building this time they saw the very same guy, but this time he was yelling at someone else, then they saw a door. It has 3 shapes on it. Eve went up to the door! She pressed hard on the heart! Bruce and petter did the same. They all got some presents! Eve received three dolls, petter unwrapped a snow racer and Bruce received a new hockey stick. The little man yelled "MERRY CHRISTMAS!"

THE NIGHT SANTA DROPPED A SACK OF PRESENTS

By Cate E

One Christmas Eve Lila's family was peacefully sleeping when suddenly, they heard a loud crash!

"What was that "they all asked. They went to go investigate and they saw an enormous cherry red sack

In their fireplace "Santa must of accidentally knocked it off of his sleigh" Lila says.

"We must get him to turn around "exclaims mom.

So, mom calls the north pole to ask him to turn around because he dropped a sack of gifts. When Santa came to pick up the sack of gifts, he decided to stay a while they had cookies and milk while they watched home alone.

Sadly, Santa had to leave but he promised to come again next year. They said their goodbyes but before he leaves, he gives Lila one last gift

The Express Weekly News

and tells her "Open in the morning ", he jumped on to his sleigh "proof "

Deliver the rest of the presents

In the morning Lila is bouncing of her feet, and she was so excited to open her gifts she even woke up at five am she was so excited before she starts opening her presents mom tells her "Remember open the one from Santa last. ok?" "Ok mom "says Lila she received so many gifts from her parents' barbies, blankets, squishmallows, and art supplies. She thanks her parents and gives them a huge hug. Finally she can open the gift from



Santa but before she does she makes everyone hot coco. Now she starts opening the one from Santa when she carefully unties the ribbon and starts unwrapping the present and boom! Mini candy canes burst into the air.

THE MYSTERIOUS WALK

By Zoey M

So once upon a time my brother Liam, my BFF Talon and Me were walking on the street and all of a sudden we saw a portal so we jumped in and we were teleported to Alaska. And we saw something on the ground and it was so we followed it thinking it would be fun (not) so we saw who it was it was an elf talon screamed me and my brother told him to be quiet so he listened but he was flabbergasted so we followed it and it LED us to a gate there was a code we could not see what the elf was typing in a matter of time the gate opened we ran and the elf caught us and aimed snowball launchers at us we were frightened but Santa stopped him in time what are you doing to the children you should know what they look like you should recognize them Timmy So we arrived at the North Pole the other elves were stunned one was having a candy cane attack so Santa brought us back to his mansion and there was only cake but my brother was vegan

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but there was even vegan cake so by 12:50pm he told us to go to bed and we fell asleep 10 hours laterwake up kids there's an Avalanche us oh no rush us back home now. We're trying to do that if you guys just get out of that bed of yours OK, we're coming now. So now we hopped on the sleigh, and it was so cool, but we managed to get home happily ever after and enjoyed hot chocolate (Hehe).

KAINE'S CHRISTMAS STORY

By Kaine P

One-night Kaine was sleeping, then he woke up, and his dog needed to go to the bathroom. So, he let him outside. And let his dog back inside. Until he seen a mysterious tracks. So, he was curious. So, he went back outside and seen a glowing light in the distance. And he started his journey. To walk to the glowing light. He thought to himself "am I going to reach this glowing light"? "Is this worth it"? an hour has passed since I was at my house. "I see a bench in the distance". Said to himself. So, he sits on the bench looking around his hands and sky. "Now I'm serious now". So, he starts running to the other bench he sees in the distance. So, he sits down again. And said to himself "it's getting cold out" so he looks at his phone and started looking at google maps and finds the exact location where he is, so he got up and...

He started following the glowing light again. Until he got to the glowing light.so he said to himself "I'm just a mile away." So, he just ran and ran until he got to the glowing light. I see the light getting closer until he seen a hill and started a walk again "now up a hill" said to himself. And he got to the light "it just an ordinary light"? what is that in the distance. "Another light"!!!! "Ok now I'm walking home and nether going to look back". So Kaine nether looked back and he's on

The tracks again. So, on Kaine seen a bench in the distance. So, he sat down and went back up and started walking home

CHRISTMAS LAND

By Cali S

One morning Julie woke up and went to the table and sat down beside Mom, "What's for breakfast Mom?" Julie asked "Waffles!" Mom said happily. Julie ate as fast as she could, then got ready for school as fast as she could and ran to school. She threw her stuff in her locker and ran to her classroom, she found herself stopped in the doorway, shocked, she was the first one there! Not even their teacher was there." That's strange," Julie said,

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"the classroom is never decorated for Christmas." Julie saw a snow globe on Mr. Jellybeans desk. She grabbed it and shook it; she loved how the little town was getting snowed on. Suddenly, the snow globe started to shake, the room started spinning, Julie started floating and landed with a thud!

"Ouch!" Julie muttered. "Where am I?" you're in Christmas land!" said a little talking marshmallow man about the size of a lamp shade. "Do you want some hot cocoa?" the little man asked. "sure" Julie said. Marshmallow man took her back to his gingerbread house and they had hot cocoa by the fire. "let's go!" said the marshmallow man. "Okay, where?" Julie asked, "to find a yeti!" the marshmallow man yelled. And off they went to find a yeti! Ten days later they found a yeti! They took it to Mr. Bacon's lab and Mr. Bacon gave the Yeti a purple needle. The yeti got huge and turned purple and it smashed all the potions.

Mr. Bacon tried to clean it up. The room started to shake. The room has got a crack in the wall. The potions into marshmallow people. BOOM! The lab exploded and turned into milk! Was everyone okay? Does Julie make it home? Does Mr. Jellybean find out his snow globe is missing? Does Julies mom find out that Julie never returned from school? What do you think will happen next?

CHRISTMAS DAY

By Clarabell V

Christmas means you get presents and family time. Family time has my cousins, grandma and grandpa have a yard sale inside my home. Sometimes we sit by fire in my home and talk.

My favorite memory is on Christmas when I play hide and sneak with my aunt, Cole and sister. I like to hide in my closet where I am hard to find.



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Sometimes they hide in a sneaky spot and they scare me.

When I am older, I want to invite my family over and have supper together. I will make turkey, stuffing and pie. I want to set up the tree with a star on top.

THE FATEFUL NIGHT OF PRESENTS

By Maddy W

The night before Christmas, and all throughout the world, everyone was asleep, boys and girls, all except Quinn, who couldn't sleep, she tossed and turned, mumbling, until she sat up straight, "I can't sleep" mumbled Quinn, "I'm going to take a walk..." she mumbles before throwing on her coat, and boots, as she walked outside, the cream white snow crunched under her feet, the midnight sky calming, and comforting in a strange way, Quinn was always the stubborn type, until something falls on top of her! "Get this off me." Quinn growls, then 2 elves land beside her, "hey! What's up with you?" the elves say curiously, "I'm stuck!" Quinn growls, the elf's names are jade and Zach, the siblings of the north, as they call themselves, an awkward silence fills the air, as Quinn processes the information, "that's...nice...? But can you get this off me..." Zachs eyes widen as he processes that Quinn is stuck under a bag, Zach stammers, "how'd you get that on you!" "Just get it off me!" Quinn shouts, the siblings scramble it lift it off.

Quinn looks through the bag, that fell on her, "what is this..." the bag opens, it's full of presents! "Presents..." Quinn said quietly, an awkward silence fills the air, as she looks at the siblings, Zach looks horrified as his face goes pale, "that's Santas present bag!" Zach exclaims "were so fired when we get back" jade says, as they scramble to pick it up, their faces showing pure horror, Quinn picks up a present, showing the neighbors present, "hey, what if we deliver these are self?" the siblings stared at Quinn as if she grew a second head, "are you crazy? That's going to take ages!" the siblings say, before long, the siblings and Quinn are delivering presents, town after town, they deliver endlessly

After what felt like 100 days, they finally finished with the help of some technology, Quinn and the siblings were exhausted, and collapses, "I'm never doing that again" Quinn declares "me either" says Zach, then Quinn realizes that if she doesn't get home before dawn break, shell be in major trouble! She sprints home, leaving the siblings confused. The snow crunches under her feet as she rushes home, just as it turns light outside,



she dives into bed, pretending to be asleep as her mother wakes her up, saying its time for presents, Quinn goes downstairs and opens her presents.

THE CHRISTMAS MIRACLE

By Marek B

"Santa Santa" the smart elf yells "it is time to go" but there is no response as the elf gets closer to Santas bed, the elf hears "ho ho ho". The elf jumps to the sound of Santa. "I know I'm all ready are you", Santa questions the elf stop "umm yes", Santa goes to the toy bag "we have a big bag of toys this year" Santa mumble's, the smart elf corrects there are 500,480,630,100 that is 240 more hoses than last year, so we should get going then" just as Santa and the smart elf are going to the sled the not so smart elf warns that "all of the rain deer are sleeping so we might have to use the original rain deer" "what" Santa replies you know snow flake, blizzard, frostbite, sugar plum, snow bell, snow cap, frost paw, frosty and to guide your slay will be orange nose the rain deer" Santa goes silent and goes to his sled.

All of the elves loaded the gifts on to the sled and the not so smart elf and the smart elf. ones Santa got on they were gone sins they did not have Rudolf, it took them longer to get off the ground, when they got to the first town it seemed that it was all going well. But then orange nose fell asleep for a hot minute, the smart elf and Santa did not realis what just happened the gifts and the not, so smart elf was gone. "Help help" the elf yelled for help but no response after 10 minutes of processing what just happened, he made a disison he had to get the toy to the good boys and girls, after he walk for a long time, he sides "this is not going to cut it." So, he called upon his goat with his new transportation he was going way faster, after hours areal Christmas miracle happened, he seen an orange lite in the sky "Santa Santa," he yelled.

"Santa is that him" the smart elf yelled Santa looked at the ground and seen green red and a goat "that is him all right" as they swept down to finish Christmas whit everyone this time even the goat . back at Santa work shop there was a party when they got back.

WHAT CHRISTMAS MEANS TO ME

By Sawyer B

I love it when it's Christmas time
Family friend it's finally here
Small snowflakes falling from the snowy sky
Grateful people opening gigantic, gifts it's finally the time of the year
Feasts of food on my plate fresh smells go by
I love it when it's Christmas time
Christmas parties
Amazing family all around attending Christmas games
Yummy Christmas food on the table
Everyone singing crazy Christmas carols
Minty candy cane melting it my mouth
Light small snow falling into my cold hands
I love it when it's Christmas time
My wish when I am older and wiser
Continue crazy Christmas parties
Decorating the twinkly tinsely tree
Christmas is important to me
Festive feasts with family and friends
Gathering to make great gingerbread houses
Candy cane hot coco crispy cookies on the side
I love it when it's Christmas time

MEANING, MEMORY, TRADITION.

By Tay F

"What does Christmas mean to you?" To me Christmas means celebrating with family and friends, gifting presents to people you care about, going to church, baking desserts like cookies, cakes and Christmas themed

Continued on page 25

Continued from page 24

cupcakes. Just having fun with family and friends.

Christmas Memory: I remember a Christmas I spent at my dad's before he passed away. My amma drove me there for my first Christmas with my dad. I spent Christmas with my dad, stepmom (Tiffany), three stepbrothers, 1 half-brother, 1 half-sister, and 1 stepsister. I stayed over for the weekend; I woke up Christmas morning. When everyone was awake, we sat in the living room. We opened presents together. My younger sister and I both got I-o-l later we played together and drank hot chocolate.

Tradition: One tradition I will be keeping when I'm an adult is going to be spending Christmas with family I don't see every single day. It's important to me to spend time with family because you'll never know how long your loved ones have left in their lifetime, spend as much time as you possibly can with them.

HOLLY'S ADVENTURE

By Chloe K

Crunch, crunch, crunch, went the snow under Holly's charcoal black boots when she was going for a walk. Then Holly seen a glimmer in the corner of her twinkling eyes. Then Holly dug in the snow and picked up a beautiful shiny snow globe and shook it.

The next second Holly was in front of Santas mesmerizing workshop. Then three little elves picked Holly up. Their names were Ginger, Nutmeg, and Peppermint. They caried Holly all the way to Santa, and I was really delighted. Then Santa asked me." What would your wish be this year?" And Holly happily said." I want to become an elf and help you. Okay Holly! Santa happily exclaimed. Then Holly was so happy. All night Holly helped Ginger, Nutmeg, and Peppermint with gifts. Then Santa asked "would you like to help deliver presents on my sleigh.

"Yes, I would love to! Holly happily replied and hopped into his sleigh. Then Holly and Santa went to all the houses then finally roed holly off at the north pole and they all started making presents for next year. Happy Holidays!



THE CHRISTMAS GLOBE MAGIC

By Cole V

Once upon a time at the North Pole, Julie bought a snow globe To Julie this Snow Globe wasn't normal. It was not like any normal snow globe you would see. It was magical with Christmas Eve Magic. She walked home that day thinking about Christmas, and the glorious presents! When she walked into the house she shook the snow globe. Poof! Nobody saw her vanish except Mr. Crispy the cat. Julie was now in a Snowy mystical snow globe. She was Freezing! It was snowing. She saw a distant cabin up ahead. The cabin was blurry, but she could see it in the snow. She slowly started walking toward the cabin until she was at the front door. She knocked on the door, to her surprise nobody opened it. She looked through the coral glass windows. All she could see was Hot coco and a warm fireplace. She went trumping back to the door. She tried opening the door, it was unlocked the whole time.

When she was inside there was something else in the backyard of the cabin. It was a giant silver wall! She went to the other windows and saw magical creatures of all sorts. She saw a wall, there were no guards at all. Just an open gate leading to a village. She walked into the village and saw a giant castle just like the one in the snow globe! She saw everyone in one area with a person on a Mic talking. Julia immediately knew he was Evil! She saw a robot, and Elf. She started talking to them. Their names were Will and Johnathin, they also agreed he was Evil. An Evil King! They went on their way to talk to the Residents of the Village.

They found out that they were right, he is Evil. He steals from nice people and gets money from the trapped king in the castle. They also found out that the real king is trapped under the castle. Since the parade is on, they decided to sneak in. The castle Well they did, rescue the king Robot. And Elf went on their way to get the Queen after finding her they went to the Evil king and fought him. The guards tumbling the Croud cheering and the Evil king crying, after all that Julia said she needed to go home. The king opened the portal to Real World to home. Poof! Julia was home. The Kingdom saved! They all lived happily ever after.

THE CHRISTMAS SNOW GLOBE

By Danika V

I was walking, trudging through the thick, heavy snow. I went for a walk, but it started to flutter. By the time I got to my house I was exhausted so I stopped to take a small break before I went inside. I looked at the ground,



and I saw tracks. Not the tracks I used but a lot bigger... I walked towards the tracks, and I saw something hidden under the thick icy snow. It was an arrow, red with paint. It pointed to a pale red light faded from the blizzard. There was a snowstorm, but that was the least of my worries, I was worried about that light, what it meant, why I was following it, but then I snapped out of it. I was getting too afraid of something that might not be true. So, I went up to the light, but it wasn't what I expected. They were Christmas lights; they flickered like a fire on a frosty night.

I followed them, I followed those

lights through the snow, and I went up to the house but then I remembered that that was that house. The house from Halloween... legend says that that house was sold on Halloween night, the guy that had the house before disappeared that night to never return, people still spread rumors that that house is haunted. I saw a snow globe on a small wooden table in that house.

I picked it up as the world around me shifted... Something clicked... I was in the snow globe, I broke the glass, I was free, free to do whatever I wanted, and I had saved Christmas on that foggy night.

By Wanda Bencke

Christmas In Heaven

I see the countless Christmas trees around the world below
With tiny lights, like Heaven's stars, reflecting on the snow.
The sight is so spectacular, please wipe away the tear
For I am spending Christmas with Jesus Christ this year.

I hear the many Christmas songs that people hold so dear
But the sounds of music can't compare with the Christmas choir up here.
I have no words to tell you, the joy their voices bring,
For it is beyond description, to hear the angels sing.

I know how much you miss me, I see the pain inside your heart.
But I am not so far away, we really aren't apart.
So be happy for me, dear ones, you know I hold you dear.
And be glad I'm spending Christmas with Jesus Christ this year.

I sent you each a special gift, from my heavenly home above.
I sent you each a memory of my undying love.
After all, love is a gift more precious than pure gold.
It was always most important in the stories Jesus told.

Please love and keep each other, as my Father said to do.
For I can't count the blessing or love He has for each of you.
So have a Merry Christmas, and wipe away that tear.
Remember, I am spending Christmas with Jesus Christ this year.

Merry Christmas

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to all of the families we have served.
It was our privilege to help you, and your loved ones. May you find comfort in your memories, until you are together again.

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Ice Dawgs delivering 100 pounds of food to the local cheer board

By Patricia Barrett

The Arborg Ice Dawgs went the extra mile on and off the ice to raise food for their local food bank as many residents in the area are struggling to make ends meet during the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.

With high food prices holding steady and expected to increase in 2026, the team wanted to give back to its community for all the support it sees during the hockey season.

Last week, Ice Dawgs' players donated about 100 pounds of food to the Arborg & District Christmas Cheer Board, which provides food hampers at Christmastime to ensure that everyone in the community can celebrate the day.

The team, which is a member of the Capital Region Junior Hockey League, played St. Malo Warriors on Dec. 12 at the Arborg Arena. It invited fans to bring a tin for the bin.



EXPRESS PHOTO COURTESY OF TOM CHWALIBOGA

The Arborg Ice Dawgs delivered around 100 pounds of food to the Arborg & District Christmas Cheer Board to support people in Arborg and surrounding areas.



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Merry Christmas

Isaiah 9:6: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."



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CELEBRATING 30 YEARS

Team Anderson chasing new horizon with Bunge Championship berth

By Kieran Reimer

A new challenger has thrown its hat into the ring for the provincial men's curling title.

Team Derrick Anderson, the 2025 Curling Club Men's Provincial Champions, dominated their zone championships with a 3-0 run last week in Beausejour to win the tournament.

With the victory, Team Anderson qualified for the 2026 Bunge Men's Provincial Championship (formerly the Viterra Championship).

"It's a big step competitively," said skip Derrick Anderson. "None of us play too many competitive spiels, so we kind of just decided we'd give zones a try, see if we could have some good games and hopefully win."

The Bunge Championship will be a new experience for Anderson and his Gimli rink, with Anderson and Chris Sigurdson set to make their tournament debuts, while teammates Justin Hoplock and Wade Ford have both

competed at the event in prior years.

It will also represent a significant jump in competition, with the squad set to face some of the top curlers in the province.

Anderson and his team, however, are embracing the challenge.

"I feel we have a chance to play well and maybe get a few wins," Anderson said. "But those top teams in Manitoba — the ones playing consistently and some of the Grand Slam guys like Reid Carruthers, Jordon McDonald and Braden Calvert — those guys were on the Olympic chase this year. It'll be really cool to play against them and see how that goes."

The Bunge Men's Provincial Championship will run Feb. 3–8, 2026, at Selkirk Recreation Complex.

The winning team will earn the right to represent Manitoba at the 2026 Montana's Brier, scheduled for Feb. 27 to March 8 in St. John's, N.L.



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Team Derrick Anderson qualified for the 2026 Bunge Men's Provincial Championship by winning its zone championship in Beausejour. The Gimli rink will compete Feb. 3–8, 2026, at Selkirk Recreation Complex.



*Merry Christmas
& Happy New Year*

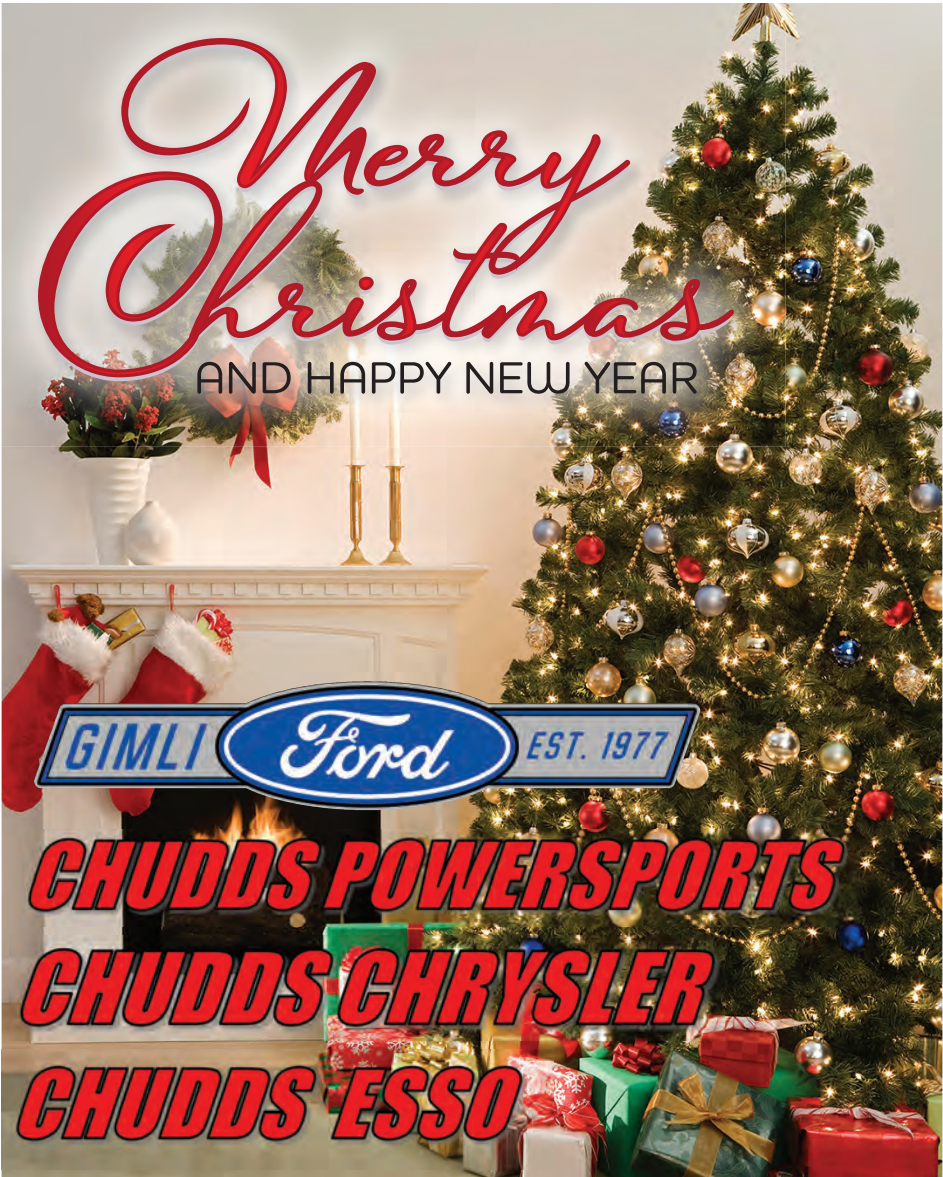
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Total Area: 160 acres

Land Use: Approximately 140 acres of cultivated crop land, 20 acres to clean (bush has been removed). Property goes up to community pasture on North and East side.

Tender Requirements

- All tenders must be submitted in writing and include:
 - Tender amount
 - Name, mailing address, phone number, and email of the bidder
 - Confirmation of ability to complete the purchase
- A deposit of \$5000.00; by certified cheque, bank draft or cash required from the winning bidder.

Closing Date for Tenders: January 20, 2026

Tenders must be received on or before 4:00 p.m. on the closing date.

Possession / Closing Date: April 1, 2026

The highest or any tender will not necessarily be accepted. The seller reserves the right to reject any or all tenders.

Submit Tenders To:

Alysha Jonasson (Leonard Finnson)
PO Box 177 Arborg, MB R0C 0A0
alyshajonasson@gmail.com
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Please submit tenders by January 6, 2026 at 4:00 PM. Tender after this time will not be accepted.

Please direct all questions to the RM of Fisher 204-372-6393 or email fishercao@mymts.net. Mail tenders to RM of Fisher Box 280 Fisher Branch, MB R0C 0Z0 or drop off at 30 Tache Street, Fisher Branch. Please label the envelope "Tender 2001 Ford" with all relevant contact info.

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NOTICE OF TENDER

CARETAKING MUNICIPAL OFFICE

The Rural Municipality of Fisher invites tenders for the position of **Caretaker** of the Municipal Office and Fire Hall Office and washroom.

Complete job description available at the RM of Fisher Office.

Cleaning supplies to be provided by the RM of Fisher.

Tender to state expected salary per month (two cleans per week).

Criminal Record check required

Closing Date for receipt of tenders is 4:00 pm on January 6, 2026

Duties to commence Friday, January 9, 2026 for one-year term.

Sealed envelopes marked "Caretaking Municipal Office and Fire Hall"

Please submit to:

The Rural Municipality of Fisher
Box 280, Fisher Branch, MB, R0C 0Z0

Drop Off or email fishercao@mymts.net (Persons are responsible for receipt of email)

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get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



Turkey Bacon and Spinach Quiche with Sweet Potato Crust

Recipe courtesy of the American Heart Association with support from Eggland's Best

Servings: 5
Nonstick cooking spray
1 medium sweet potato, peeled
1 teaspoon canola or corn oil
1 medium yellow onion, diced
6 slices uncured, nitrate-free turkey bacon, thinly sliced
10 ounces frozen chopped spinach, thawed
3/4 teaspoon dried dillweed, crumbled
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
4 large egg whites
2 large eggs
1/4 cup fat-free milk
1 1/2 tablespoons fat-free feta cheese
Preheat oven to 400 F. Lightly spray 9-inch pie pan with nonstick cooking spray.
In medium bowl, using box grater, grate sweet potato. Measure out 2

cups. Gently press sweet potato on bottom and up sides of pan, forming crust. Sweet potato will be loose but will hold together once cooked.

Bake 20 minutes, or until crust is cooked. Remove from oven. Let stand to cool. Reduce oven temperature to 350 F.

In medium skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat, swirling to coat bottom. Cook onion 6 minutes, or until almost translucent, stirring frequently. Add turkey bacon. Cook 3-4 minutes, or until onion and bacon begin to brown, stirring frequently. Add spinach, dillweed, salt and pepper. Cook 1-2 minutes, or until water from spinach is released. Remove from heat. Transfer mixture into sweet potato crust.

In medium bowl, whisk egg whites, eggs and milk. Pour over mixture in crust. Sprinkle feta over top.

Bake 35-40 minutes, or until knife inserted into center comes out clean. Transfer to cooling rack. Let cool 10 minutes before cutting into wedges.



Broccoli and Cheese Egg White Scramble on Whole-Wheat English Muffins

clean.

In large bowl, whisk egg whites, milk and pepper until combined.

Lightly spray skillet with cooking spray. Heat over medium-high heat. Pour in egg white mixture. Cook 2-3 minutes, or until almost firm, stirring constantly with spatula. Stir in broccoli and cheddar cheese. Remove from heat.

Just before serving, split and toast English muffins. Transfer to plates. Spoon egg mixture onto muffins.

Egg "Muffin" Cups with Turkey Sausage and Mushrooms

Recipe courtesy of the American Heart Association with support from Eggland's Best

Servings: 6
Nonstick cooking spray
1/2 tablespoon canola or corn oil
1 yellow onion, finely chopped
1 package (8 ounces) sliced white

Recipe courtesy of the American Heart Association with support from Eggland's Best

Servings: 4
Nonstick cooking spray
1 1/2 cups finely chopped fresh or frozen broccoli florets, thawed if frozen
1/4 cup water
8 extra-large egg whites
1/2 cup fat-free milk
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1/4 cup shredded fat-free cheddar cheese
2 whole-wheat, low-sodium English muffins
Lightly spray large skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Heat over medium-high heat. Cook broccoli and water 4-5 minutes, or until broccoli is tender. Remove from heat. Transfer broccoli to dish. Using paper towels, wipe skillet

Ask the Money Lady

Dear Money Lady, I know it's not tax season, but have you got any tips on how to reduce the amount of taxes I pay every year?

Carol

Dear Carol,
Unfortunately, the more money you make the more tax you pay, thanks to the marginal tax rate system in Canada. Many people make financial decisions based on their gross income; however, from a planning perspective, it's not good enough to know how much money you make, but rather to know how much money you keep. Making a dollar today doesn't mean you can count on spending that dollar tomorrow.

We all have two layers of taxation in Canada: federal and provincial. The one thing that is guaranteed with taxation, is that it is progressive. So, over time it continues to go up. Just to give you an example: when RRSPs first came out in 1957, the highest marginal tax rate in Ontario was 11.5 per cent, now it is 53.5 per cent. Knowing your marginal tax rate is one part of understanding your net income; however, there are specific strategies that you can utilize to help minimize the taxes you pay. The three best ways are to Deduct, Defer and Divide. Let's talk about each method.

1. Deduct: This would be a deduction or claim to reduce your taxable income. The best way to do this is to have a home-based business, be an independent contractor, or be a self-employed entrepreneur to write off expenses against your gross taxable income. Look for ways to lower your income through various expenses or income-splitting.

2. Defer: Deferring tax means you move the obligation to pay current taxes into your future years. The advantages to deferring taxation works on the premise that it is better to pay the taxation in the future; perhaps when your income is much lower, than to pay it today, when your income is in a higher marginal tax



bracket. This can be done through registered pension plans (RPP + PRPP), registered retirement savings plans (RRSP + RRIF), registered education savings plans (RESP), and registered disability savings plans (RDSP).

3. Divide: Income splitting is the best way to divide your income and lower taxation. Now I know that many of you who are single will say that this is not relevant – and you're right. Dividing income can only be done with your partner (so you will need to have one to do this last taxation step). Here are some of the ways you can split income.

- * Spousal RRSPs
- * Sharing CPP benefits
- * Paying wages to family members through a business
- * Using trusts
- * Using partnerships or corporations to earn business income

Tax planning is easier than you think. Try to utilize a TFSA (tax free savings account) as much as possible. If you were 18 or older as of January 1, 2009 when TFSAs first started you can contribute up to \$102,000 in the cumulated contribution room since inception.

Good Luck and Best Wishes,
Money Lady

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

mushrooms

1 package (6.4 ounces) frozen, cooked, nitrate-free turkey sausage links, thawed

7 large eggs

1/4 cup fat-free milk

1/4 teaspoon pepper

1 cup shredded fat-free cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 350 F. Lightly spray 12-cup muffin pan with nonstick cooking spray.

In medium nonstick pan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Cook onions

and mushrooms 10 minutes, or until soft, stirring occasionally.

Warm turkey sausage according to package directions. Chop turkey into bite-size pieces. Stir into onion mixture until well blended. Spoon into muffin cups.

In small bowl, whisk eggs, milk and pepper. Pour egg mixture into muffin cups. Top with cheddar cheese.

Bake 25 minutes, or until eggs are set. Remove from oven. Let cool slightly. To easily remove muffins from pan, run knife around edges of each muffin.

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IN MEMORIAM



Gilbert Ivor Geisler
March 17, 1945 - December 24, 2023
Those we love don't go away;
They walk beside us everyday.
-Love Pat, Shauna and Ron,
Kurby and Terry, A-Lynne and Doug
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Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

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

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

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

Sudoku Answer

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

Crossword Answer

X CROSSWORD

- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Light cavalry
 - 5. Coconut palms
 - 10. Rounded knob
 - 14. Central Japan city
 - 15. Sandwiches
 - 16. Shape produced by a curve
 - 17. Ancient region in modern-day Syria
 - 18. French modernist painter
 - 19. Grandmother
 - 20. Mammary gland of cattle
 - 22. Rocky peak
 - 23. Secret plan
 - 24. Songs to one's lover
 - 27. More (Spanish)
 - 30. Father
 - 31. Chinese principle underlying the universe
 - 32. Ballplayer's accessory
 - 35. Together
 - 37. A person's brother or sister
 - 38. Evil spirit
 - 39. Monetary units
 - 40. Partner to cheese
 - 41. About Sun
 - 42. Group of like-minded people
 - 43. After B
 - 44. Seaside room
 - 45. Recipe measurement
 - 46. Partly digested food
 - 47. Flat-faced dog
 - 48. People of southern Africa
 - 49. Salts
 - 52. Beard lichens
 - 55. Sanders is one
 - 56. Fencing sword
 - 60. Ethnic group of Albania
 - 61. Metric weight unit
 - 63. Italian seaport
 - 64. Longtime late night host
 - 65. Extremely angry
 - 66. Miami mascot
 - 67. Mid-month day
 - 68. Marked for omission
 - 69. Body part
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. Two-toed sloth

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
20				21		22				23				
			24		25				26					
27	28	29		30				31				32	33	34
35			36				37				38			
39						40				41				
42					43				44					
45				46				47				48		
			49					50			51			
52	53	54				55				56		57	58	59
60					61				62		63			
64					65						66			
67					68						69			

- 2. Fat from a pig's abdomen
- 3. Romanian city
- 4. Specifies
- 5. Rounded, glaciated valley
- 6. Spoke
- 7. Collection of sacred books
- 8. Extravagantly theatrical
- 9. Very fast airplane
- 10. Forearm bones
- 11. Ancient kingdom
- 12. Legitimate: ___ fide
- 13. Semitransparent gemstone
- 21. Counsels
- 23. Head honcho
- 25. Cool!
- 26. Touch lightly
- 27. Extract money via taxation
- 28. Dyes
- 29. Cloying sweetness
- 32. Sodas
- 33. Coastal village in Guam
- 34. Chemical ring
- 36. The bill in a restaurant
- 37. Car mechanics group
- 38. One-time presidential candidate Dole
- 40. Health care for the aged
- 41. Wise persons
- 43. Passage with access at one end
- 44. Make a wound
- 46. America's spies
- 47. Roof of the mouth
- 49. Plants of the lily family
- 50. Pinkish-red color
- 51. Vaccine developer
- 52. Mottled citrus fruit
- 53. A place to store garden tools
- 54. Rare goose native to Hawaii
- 57. Popular Hollywood pig
- 58. Musician Clapton
- 59. A move exposing one to danger
- 61. Historic Spanish soldier
- 62. CNN's founder

Announcements

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OBITUARY



Douglas Macintosh

Douglas Macintosh, aged 88 of Meleb, MB sadly passed away surrounded by his loving family on December 8, 2025.

Born on April 13, 1937 in Selkirk, MB to parents Donald and Gertrude Macintosh.

On his 17th birthday, Douglas joined the Navy for five years where he got to travel the world.

He met the love of his life, Albina, and they were married in 1961 and were so lucky to be together for 64 wonderful years. They had two daughters, Shelley and Dawn. They lived in Selkirk when they were first married and Douglas worked at a furniture store. Then they moved to Red Deer, Alberta where he worked as a prison guard. Next, they moved to Gimli where he was a truck driver, after that they moved to Arnes and Douglas got a job at Seagrams where he worked till his retirement. Their final move was to Meleb

in 2023.

During their marriage they took many driving vacations as driving was one of his favourite things to do. They went right across Canada as well as into the U.S.

He was an amazing wood carving artist, he won ribbons for some carvings that he put in art shows, but showing them just wasn't his thing, so he only attended a few. His family feels so privileged that we all have the most amazing keepsakes made from his own hands that will be handed down for generations to come. He also made model boats, did puzzles and was an avid reader, as he liked to keep busy.

He was an amazing man and was always there for whatever his family needed. He will be forever missed.

He leaves to mourn his passing, his loving wife, Albina; daughters Shelley (Jack) and Dawn (Larry); his grandchildren, April (Anthony), Scott, Andrea (Jesse), Brandi (Blair); his great-grandchildren, Madison, Hunter, Tessa, Callie, Emmy, Nixon, Briar and Beckett. Also, his loving dog Odie. He also leaves numerous brothers and sisters-in-law, nieces and nephews.

His cremation has already taken place and there will be a private family celebration of his life at a later date.

Tributes: www.gilbartfuneralhome.com

Gilbart Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



OBITUARY

Leonard Oscar Lennstrom

January 24, 1935 – December 10, 2025

In his home on December 10, 2025, Leonard Oscar Lennstrom, aged 90 years old of Lundar, MB, passed away.

Leonard is survived by his stepson Clarence, step grandson Dylan, half sister Gail and her family, half brother Larry and his family along with many nieces, nephews and other family members.

Leonard is predeceased by his loving wife Clara, sister Bernice and her husband Archie, nephew Darren and many other family members.

Leonard enjoyed his life living in Lundar with his wife Clara. They enjoyed hosting family and friends at their home to share a homemade meal, drinks, music and many laughs. Leonard worked at many farms in the area before finding his job with Sigfusson Northern as the tire repair man until he retired.



With sadness we say goodbye to the last of our older veterans, Leonard Lennstrom. He served as a very respectful Royal Canadian Legion member for nearly 70 years. Serving on the Executive, "holding almost every position except President" he once told his friend, Darlene. His longest position was as Sargent at Arms. Leonard was honoured to lay the Veterans wreath at the Remembrance Day services including this last November. He enjoyed organizing the color party for different events, especially leading the group carrying the Legion flag with pride during the Lundar Fair Parade, opening ceremonies, sporting events or funerals, always with dignity.

Leonard was the Grand Marshall in his final parade in June 2025 with current serviceman Bombardier Lynch, 1st Regiment Royal Canadian Horse Artillery as his escort. Leonard could always be found at the Legion lounge on the days it was open, in his regular spot at the head of the first table accompanied by his group of regular friends who were like family. Lots of camaraderie and laughs. Leonard would always enjoy a warm Canadian.

Leonard always appreciated those that helped around the house, or yard. He enjoyed the food that was brought to him and was thankful for those that dropped in to check on him.

Cremation has taken place and a Memorial Service will be held in Leonard's honor at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, December 29, 2025 at the Lundar Legion Hall with Cindy Thorkelson officiating. A Legion tribute will be led by Darlene Sweetland.

An interment will be held at a later date in the Minnewakan Cemetery in the RM of Coldwell.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Royal Canadian Legion # 185 Lundar Branch, PO Box 47, Lundar, MB R0C 1Y0.

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December 26	noon-4
December 27	9-5
December 28	CLOSED
December 29	CLOSED
December 30	9-6
December 31	9-1
January 1	CLOSED
January 2	9-6